

## The Haiti Initiative

The Haiti Initiative was created in 2013 and supports the Haitian people both in South Florida and Haiti. A board of six members oversees the funds.

In the first three years in South Florida, the board collected and delivered:

- Over 7,000 lbs. of food for Haitian Children's breakfast program
- Hundreds of boxes of school supplies
- About 300 toys for an annual Christmas party for Haitian children

From those initial years to the present, our work in South Florida has continued helping needy Haitian families with furniture, clothing and groceries.

During the same first three year period in the Pignon area of Haiti, with the support of local labor and supplies, we:

- Repaired an orphanage purchasing 100 new beds for the children
- Constructed desks and new trusses for local schools
- Provided teacher training classes for five local schools.
- Poured several concrete floors in homes to replace dirt floors
- Built eight new homes using a "pass it forward" concept where families committed to giving some support of either labor or materials.

In 2016 in Haiti, the board committed to local community development with the construction of a primary school in a remote area of Haiti called Donne. The Donne school was entirely built with local labor and materials at a total cost of about \$25,000.

Our community commitment included:

- **Funding the administration of the school** mainly through student and teacher sponsorships. Currently, there are 10 fulltime teachers and 2 staff members. The fulltime teachers' pay averages \$100 per month. Our current monthly payroll is about \$1,600 paid via Western Union.

- **Feeding 100 students a daily meal.** Since late October 2017, with the support of the Ajram Foundation, we started a meals program beginning with 3 meals per week and now serving 5 meals per week for the entire year. We currently serve over 15,000 meals per year.



- **Digging a well.** In September 2018, a sponsorship drive was started to dig a well at the school because water had to be hauled for miles and was dirty. In May 2019, the well was completed, providing fresh water for drinking and preparing meals for the school and supporting the needs of the surrounding community.



- **Planting a garden.** In order to help sustain our feeding program and support the community, in the spring of 2019, we initiated a planting project with the help of a local agronomist to teach the students and members of the local community the best techniques to prepare the soil, plant, fertilize, nurture and harvest crops that are suited for the local area. Our garden has produced several good crops including tomatoes and peanuts. With the help of Convoy of Hope (an agricultural non-profit), we plan to expand its scope and grow into a cooperative between the school and the community. Our goal is to make the community more self-sufficient and give the Haitian people pride in their accomplishments.

