

## Thank you from Fr. Tom

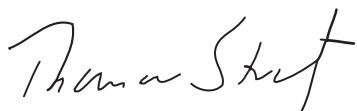
Dear Members of the Notre Dame Family,

I write to you six months after the January 12th earthquake, and despite the faith and good cheer of the Haitian people, whose bravery in the face of unspeakable adversity is nothing short of astounding, Haiti remains in dire need. I want you to know that a significant portion of the optimism here stems from your support. Whether you have helped in the clinic, pharmacy, contributed money, housing, encouragement or prayers: thank you. Your help has made a real difference in countless lives.

I want to thank Fr. Jenkins and key University leaders who came to lend a hand and support our CSC religious and Haiti Program workers during a time when despair could easily have won the day. Fr. Warner and Fr. Scully have helped restore and enhance the Haitian Holy Cross Fathers' educational service. A network of ND-connected health professionals is continuing to save lives. ND engineers have already helped determine the viability of important structural assets in several communities, while ND architects are part of a massive 11 school building project in Leogane. Many alumni are working in response teams addressing nutrition, relief logistics and development planning.

We must continue to be in Haiti for the long haul. Léogâne's Parish (St. Rose) celebrates its 500th anniversary this coming October and ND's Haiti Program has been in this country for nearly two decades.

Haiti requires the kind of support that is both immediate and enduring as well as a profound commitment to the idea that if we are part of the Body of Christ together, we are all at this moment Haitians.



Fr. Thomas Streit, CSC, PhD  
 Founder of the Notre Dame Haiti Program



The remnants of St. Rose Church in Leogane.



The Notre Dame truck being used as an ambulance

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For more information please  
 visit our website at  
[www.haiti.nd.edu](http://www.haiti.nd.edu) or  
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 ND Haiti Experience -  
 Leogane, Haiti

## In Transition: the NDHP's shift to earthquake relief and back



In truth, the Notre Dame Haiti Program's mission in Haiti has never changed. For 17 years the program has aided and fought for Haiti by researching elimination methods for lymphatic filariasis (LF) and neglected tropical diseases (NTD). But since the beginning, the overarching goal has been improving the lives of the people of Haiti, and in that respect, the last 6 months have been no different.

Since the earthquake, the NDHP's relief mission in Haiti has been to bring aid and comfort to a country torn apart by a brutal natural disaster. But the NDHP did not act alone nor did they fully have the means to. Instead the program was able to serve as a direct connection to the heart of Haiti and facilitate the outpouring of generosity and charity that came out of the Notre Dame community.

By April 2010, the NDHP had received close to ½ million dollars. With that, the NDHP spent thousands on infrastructure rehabilitation, housing for Haitians, direct aid to Haitian survivors, schools and churches in the Leogane area. Much of the money was invested in immediate, tangible relief for the Haitian people in the form of food, tents, bednets and other relief supplies. Furthermore, due to the NDHP's unique position within the area of Leogane at the Residence Filariose, the program was able to provide safe lodging for relief groups.

By no means can the aid efforts in Haiti now be considered "work performed". Countless days must still be devoted to the revitalization of a country torn apart. But with the community of Leogane at least partially settled, the constraints of time have necessitated NDHP's return to the public health initiative against LF and NTDs. The program is still attacking LF with its three-pronged plan for elimination: community-wide drug therapy;

distribution of medicated table salt; and treatment for those individuals disabled by LF.

"NDHP spent thousands on infrastructure rehabilitation, housing for Haitians, direct aid to Haitian survivors, schools and churches"

In the months since the earthquake, the continuing mass drug administration's (MDA) have treated 712,415 people. We recently conducted our first MDA within the municipality of Tabarre in the Port-Au Prince area. The NDHP is now almost ready to begin

construction on salt ponds on the island of La Gonave allowing NDHP owned salt to be directly transported to the fortification plant in Port-Au-Prince where it will be sprayed with DEC to help combat LF and iodine to address iodine deficiency disorder. New funding has been secured from several donors in order to allow the operation to begin (see page 3 for story) and though the salt fortification factory sustained limited damage in the earthquake, it is now being repaired. Lastly, the LF clinic in Leogane remains open to all patients and work is currently being done for laboratory rehabilitation.

The NDHP is building Haitian leadership from the ground up. In the aftermath of a devastating natural disaster rebuilding must not only build what once was, but what can be. The program's goal has never been clearer and despite the setbacks, it will move forward.

## Renewed Funding

Notre Dame Haiti Program's mission to eliminate lymphatic filariasis in Haiti has been funded by multiple grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation since 1999, but funding is due to run out September 2011. The program has however recently received an anonymous 2 million dollar grant that will help fund part of the program.

After months of hard work the program has compiled a comprehensive business plan highlighting the effects and goals of fortified salt distribution in Haiti. The additional 2 million dollars is a tangible reward for the significant work done on the business plan to allow the Haiti Program to continue its mission of eliminating LF. There have been further donations from both the McKenna Foundation and the Sabin Institute. The NDHP is grateful not only for the donation itself but for these institutions' support of our efforts.

With this money, the project on the island of La Gonave will begin construction on the first of the Notre Dame salt ponds as soon as possible. This will bring much needed relief to the village of Picmi, where the ponds are to be located, in the form of both jobs and female empowerment. Women will be the primary workers doing the salt harvesting.



NDHP staff surveying the proposed site for the salt ponds

These gifts will be used as effectively as possible over the course of the next 2 years but the Notre Dame Haiti Program is always looking for new funding opportunities. If you are interested, contact Sarah Craig at 574-631-3273 or [Craig.20@nd.edu](mailto:Craig.20@nd.edu). You can also log on the Notre Dame Haiti Program website at [Haiti.nd.edu](http://Haiti.nd.edu) and contribute directly or send a check to 001 Galvin Life Sciences, Notre Dame, IN 46615.

## Eyewitness to the earthquake

Sarah Craig is Program Manager for the NDHP.

While the memories of the earthquake remain fresh in our minds, it's hard to believe it has been six months since our fall in the rubble of the Hotel Montana and multiday journey across Port au Prince to the US Embassy. Though we were evacuated out with many US citizens in the immediate aftermath of the quake, our hearts and souls remained in Haiti as we dedicated our energies from afar to the massive rebuilding efforts in Leogane. Much has been accomplished in these past six months, the University and our generous donors have been extremely supportive as we paused the fight against LF to provide the infrastructure and support of hundreds of volunteers who raced to help with medical relief.



We are overjoyed to be part of the effort and appreciative that 100% of the donations we have received have been dedicated directly for use in Haiti. Many Notre Dame alumni have given much of their time, talent and financial resources to help us rebuild our program and rebuild Haiti. We are thankful and grateful. Now that the minor injuries we sustained in the quake are healed we continue to work tirelessly to address the many ongoing and new challenges. We have renewed our charge to address NTDs and are well on our way to rebuild Haiti and support our Haitian Colleagues.

Logan Anderson is the Chief Financial Officer for the Notre Dame Haiti Program.

Looking back it's difficult to comprehend all the forces at work that put me on the 4th floor terrace of the Hotel

## Eyewitness to the earthquake (Con't.)

Montana in Port au Prince, Haiti on January 12th at 4:55pm. Career and life decisions that I made years ago could have placed me in very different circumstances, most likely not in Haiti. The decision to turn down a higher paying job for a more challenging/exciting one. Dr. Vely from the Haitian Ministry of Health and Population deciding to change the agenda so the meeting ended at 3:30pm rather than 5:00pm meant that we were not in the conference room that collapsed.

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I had only been on the terrace a few minutes before it began falling. I can never forget sliding and shaking down to the ground, climbing out of the hotel, getting to solid ground and praying. Helping Sarah Craig splint a colleague's broken leg. Lying awake listening to buildings collapse and people scream in the wake of aftershocks, and then miraculous songs and prayer. Cutting down trees with UN troops to create a landing spot for UN helicopters. Riding in the back of a UN truck through destroyed streets to the US Ambassador's house. Flying out of Port au Prince in the cargo-hold of a Coast Guard C-130 to the Dominican Republic. Hearing the voice of my fiancé and mother on the phone. The events and circumstances of those few days have profoundly changed my outlook on life. I will never be the same.

A few minutes before the earthquake we were carrying beers up to a colleagues room on the 4th floor when we noticed, next to her room, a beautiful terrace overlooking the city. Instead of enjoying the beers in her air-conditioned room we decided to enjoy the view. A few minutes later, the dust settled and we began to climb out of the hotel I looked back to see our colleague's room completely flattened. Drinking beer outside may have been the most important decision of my life..

Marie-Denise Milord, came to Notre Dame from Haiti as a Fulbright Fellow and worked for the Haitian Ministry of Health.

After living most of my life in Haiti, I could not imagine such a disaster happening in my country. On January 12th, after attending the first day of the LF advisory meeting, the UND group decided to stay for dinner. Four of us were sitting on a fourth-floor terrace when the building began shaking with increasing intensity until it collapsed. We miraculously survived the violent collapse, but the worst was to come: people trapped screaming for help, people with broken arms, legs, multiple traumas, moaning in agony. Rubble was covering the roads and access was near impossible. So we were condemned to stay and view the suffering, unable to help. We could only wonder when help would arrive. We prayed together to thank God for saving us, but I had so many questions, "How are my aunts in Petion-ville? When will I see my son?" The reality that surrounded us was unimaginable: the suffering, the panic of each aftershock, the scream of the population. I will never forget the sound of that singular, collective scream.

We found a space with a swimming pool, and it soon became a camp for Hotel Montana survivors. We all spent the night there. A night marked by the songs of people who had lost their homes and now gathered in the streets to pray. It gave me hope to see the people of Haiti come together. "I know these people are strong, they will overcome." We lived during this night and the day after as family and shared the same water bottle, the same piece of food. There was no difference in social class, race or nationality. We were all victims of the earthquake.

So soon after the earthquake, we were back in the US. I was happy to be reunited with my family, but so saddened to leave my country knowing what I left behind. I was leaving when so many were rushing to help Haiti. It was a terrible feeling that I carried for many weeks until I accepted that I could help my country from far away. Today I can say that the earthquake was and still is a sign of human vulnerability, an opportunity for Haitians to analyze and plan for a stronger Haiti, and for the international community that responded so positively to support efforts in Haiti. There is still much to be done, but if Haitians and aid workers work hand in hand, I am sure we will win this battle.

If you are interested in volunteering in Haiti please contact Sarah Craig at [Craig.20@nd.edu](mailto:Craig.20@nd.edu) or Diana Green at [diana.l.green.131@nd.edu](mailto:diana.l.green.131@nd.edu) or call 574-631-3273