

HAITIAN EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES



rebuilding Haiti, child by child
Haitian Educational Initiatives

IMPACT REPORT 2023



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FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Haitian Educational Initiatives (HEI) is steadfast in its mission to transform lives in the Jacmel area of Haiti through education. In 2023, we sought to ease the cycle of poverty by providing educational opportunities to impoverished children, equipping them with knowledge and skills for a brighter future. Our goals were ambitious but clear: to expand access to available education and thereby foster sustainable community development.

Achievements in 2023

2023 presented its share of challenges, from funding shortages to the complexities of operating in a country riven with political instability and violence. Thankfully, the level of violence in the Jacmel region is much lower than elsewhere in Haiti, enabling our partners to operate in relative safety. This year, HEI proudly covered the educational tuition for over 200 children, providing them not just with access to education but also with the necessary school supplies and uniforms.

Our Haitian partners have been central to the delivery of our aid. Our local teams worked tirelessly to adapt our operations to the changing environment, ensuring that education remained accessible despite the obstacles. HEI provides close oversight to make certain that our donors' funds are properly applied for maximum impact.

HEI's Broader Impact

The ripple effect of HEI's initiatives in the Jacmel community cannot be overstated. By providing funding for tuitions in local schools, along with after-school meals and tutoring, we catalyze a transformative process that extends far beyond the classroom. These efforts not only alleviate the immediate financial burden on families but also elevate the value placed on education within the community. As children receive consistent, nutritious meals, their ability to concentrate and excel academically improves significantly, showcasing the critical link between nutrition and cognitive function. The after-school tutoring sessions reinforce this progress, ensuring that students not only keep up with their studies but also develop a deeper sense of community.

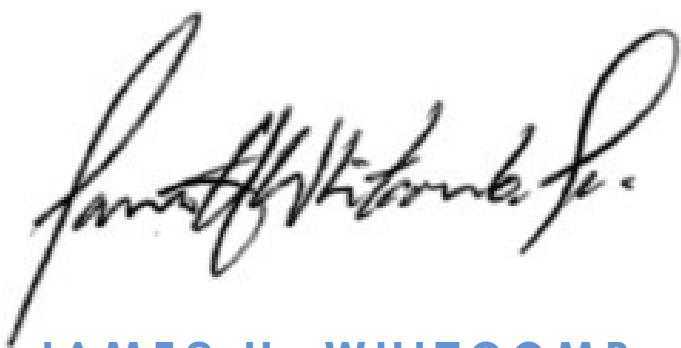
Moreover, this holistic approach to education fosters a sense of hope and possibility. Parents, witnessing the tangible benefits of education, become more engaged in their children's academic journeys and the broader educational system. This increased engagement has a compounding effect, encouraging a culture of educational prioritization that influences neighbors and relatives, gradually shifting community norms. Local schools, buoyed by HEI's support, are motivated to remain open and employ local teachers, leading to a cycle of positive change. Businesses and local employers, too, begin to feel the impact as the emerging workforce is better educated, more skilled, and ready to contribute to the local economy. In essence, HEI's investment in the children of Jacmel plants the seeds for a flourishing community, where education becomes the cornerstone of sustainable development and empowerment.

Future Directions

Looking ahead to 2024 and beyond, HEI is committed to sustaining our impact as we navigate unstable conditions in Haiti. Our vision is clear: an educated, empowered generation capable of leading Jacmel, and Haiti, to a better future.

The journey of HEI in 2023 is a testament to what we can achieve together. As we look to the future, we invite our donors, volunteers, and stakeholders to continue standing with us. Your support is crucial in turning our vision into reality, one child at a time.

Together, we can create a legacy of education and opportunity in Haiti.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James H. Whitcomb, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

JAMES H. WHITCOMB, JR.

President

FROM OUR FOUNDER

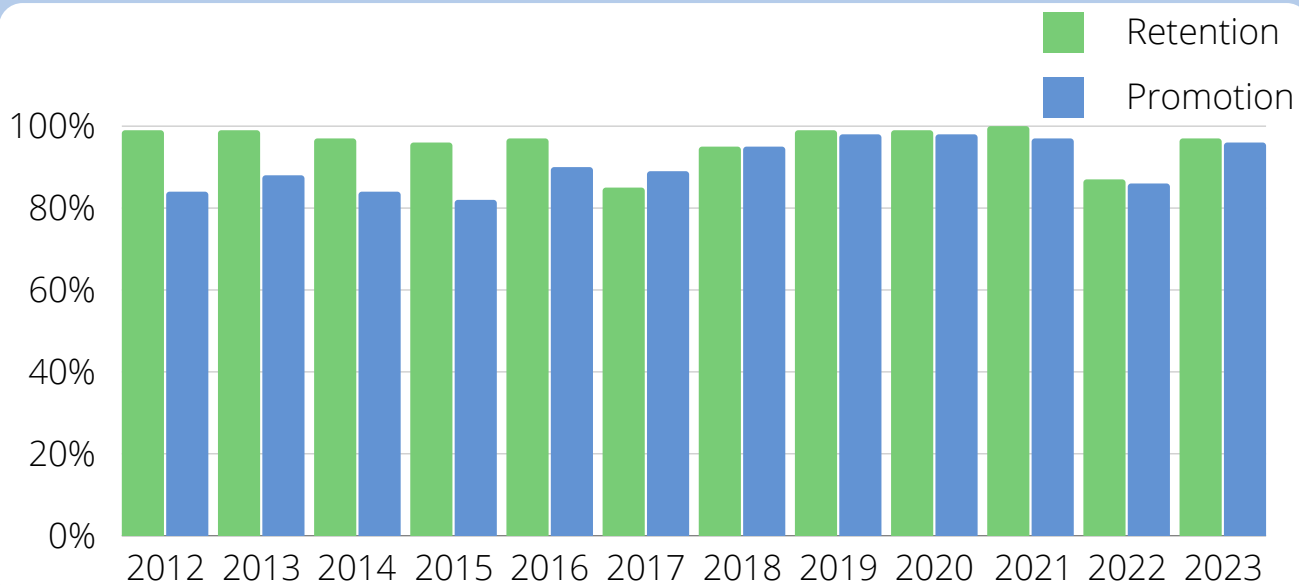
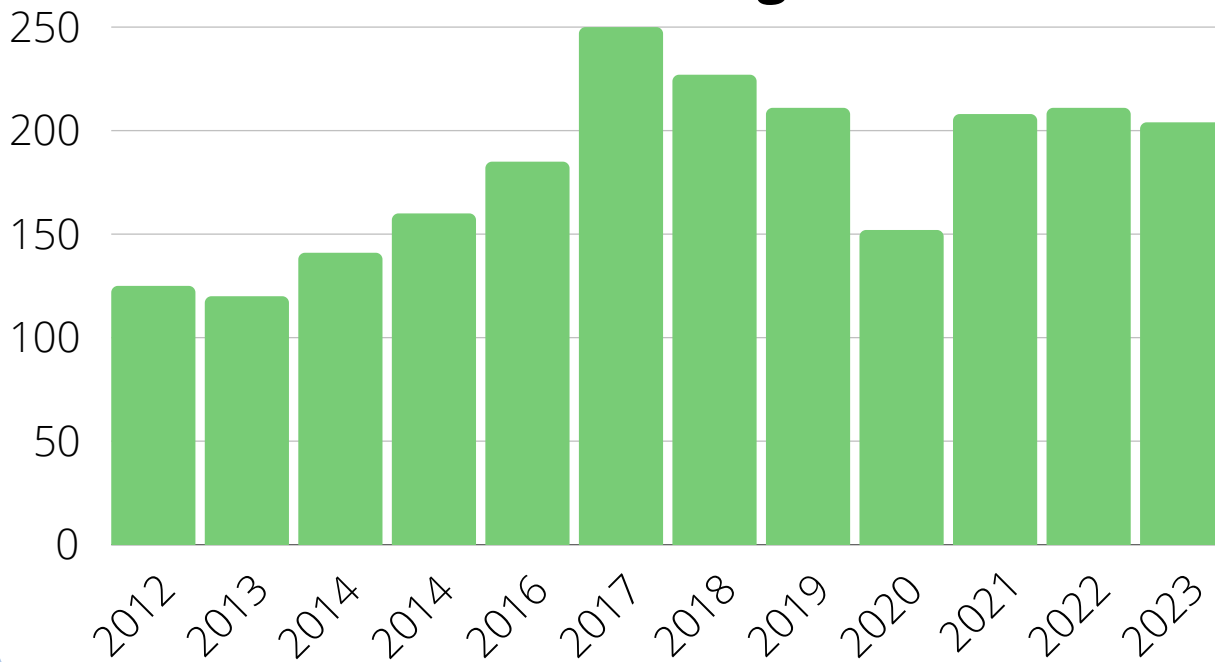
The contrast between the atmosphere of order and safety in the Jacmel area and the fear, political corruption, and gang violence in Port-au-Prince could not be greater. Jacmel citizens control their streets and vigilantly expel perpetrators of unrest. They suffer severe shortages of food, supplies, and fuel: gang control of roads and transportation outside the city has driven food prices up 28% vs. last year (which was then +62%) and there has been no fuel since November 2023. Jacmel is an area of deprivation but relative stability.

Despite reduced budgets, HEI maintained total enrollment of 204 students, 97% of whom completed their 2022-23 school year and 96% were promoted to the next grade. Six students graduated in July, bringing total high school graduates to 18, 12 of whom are attending university.

Partner Fondation Jean Bellande Joseph (FBJ) ran our 2022-2023 scholarship and weekly meal and job training programs for 61 students. FBJ also added a summer camp and distributed emergency food kits that fed about 500 people in the month of April. Their retention rate was 100% and 97% of their students were promoted to the next grade. Six students graduated – an astonishing achievement under the circumstances. FBJ held an end of year party to celebrate the achievements of children K-13 with food, drinks, dancing, and speeches. Enrollment rose to 69 students in Fall 2023, providing inexpensive early childhood education to a few more students.

Likewise, partner Foyer d'Initiatives pour l'Education en Haiti (FIEH) ran remedial reading, writing, and math lessons to help students gain ground academically and fed hungry participants. They also offered a summer camp for 83 students. Fall enrollment in our scholarship program decreased from 155 to 135 students, reflecting budget restrictions: there is much more need among Jacmel's children than we have funds to support. Nevertheless, 87% of students completed their school year and 92% were promoted to the next grade. FIEH (formerly Jacmel Scholarship Program) has achieved legal certification and awaits tax status.

Enrollment 2012 through 2023



HEI's dedication to our mission and transparency remains abundantly clear. HEI again achieved a 'Platinum' rating from GuideStar indicating our commitment to the highest level of efficiency, accountability, and transparency. For every dollar spent in 2023, we sent 94 cents to programs in Haiti.

Susan P. Whitcomb

SUSAN P. WHITCOMB, PH.D.

Founder

Our Partners and Programs

HEI partners with two Haitian-led organizations, Fondation Jean Bellande Joseph (FBJJ) and Foyer d'Initiatives pour l'Education en Haiti (FIEH), formerly Jacmel Scholarship Program. As teachers, school administrators, and dedicated caregivers, our partners are excellent role models for the 204 children currently enrolled in our programs (Fall 2023).

Fondation Jean Bellande Joseph (FBJJ), Cayes-Jacmel

The Joseph family foundation operates in the semi-rural region of Cayes-Jacmel, located about 15 minutes east of Jacmel. Led by Paul Brunet Joseph (Director), a history and geography teacher at the Cayes-Jacmel High School, seven members of the Joseph family and their associates have provided leadership and important services to their community since 2007. FBJJ's 69 children and 18 graduates primarily come from subsistence farming families in the mountain and coastal regions of Jacmel. This region suffers from food insecurity because of gang control of roads between Jacmel and Port-au-Prince, crippling transportation and severely inflating food costs. Nonetheless, FBJJ was able to provide these services:



- **Scholarships for 69 children to 26 area schools:** These funds cover tuition, uniforms, backpacks, shoes, books, and school supplies. FBJJ pays the fees, completes the paperwork, and oversees attendance and academic outcomes. Scholarships have increased from 61 in 2022-2023 to 69 in 2023-2024.
- **Weekly meals for 69 children:** For many we supply the only cooked meal they eat all week. Good nutrition helps children resist disease and perform better in school. At home, these children eat only a cornmeal mush augmented occasionally with a vegetable or fruit. FBJJ provides a weekly meal of rice and beans, fried chicken or beef stew, and a vegetable or plantains with fruit juice.
- **Emergency food kits for 61 students:** FBJJ distributed rice, beans, spaghetti, bouillon, and other staples to feed our students and their families (500 people) in April. This food helped impoverished families survive widespread food shortages and high prices in Haiti. Budget constraints required FBJJ to eliminate the November distribution of kits.

- **Weekly computer literacy classes for 30 children aged 9-19 :** Computers donated by Project Redwood allow students to learn Microsoft Word, Excel, and to use the Internet.
- **Weekly needlework and dressmaking classes for children aged 9-19:** The garment industry has been a long tradition in Haiti and tailoring is a proud accomplishment. Our students learn sewing, embroidery, and crochet to make their own school uniforms, clothing for themselves and their families, and items to sell in the marketplace. We also teach jewelry-making, bead curtain-making and traditional crafts to children aged 3-8. Paper flower making for use in parades, weddings and other celebrations is a popular industry in Haiti.

- **Cooking and baking classes for children 9 - 19 (when possible):**



Students learn to cook basic meals and to bake the cookies, cakes and other sweet treats they sell at school and in the market. They also use their skills at home to improve their families' nutrition. Soap-making is another lucrative project.

- **Enhanced job training opportunities for secondary school students (when possible):**

Ten students attended vocational classes in plumbing, tiling, advanced tailoring and dressmaking, and baking.



- **Summer camp:** Provided a safe space for meals, play, and to learn macrame, floral crafts, languages, reading, and theater arts.
- **End of the school year and Christmas parties:** To celebrate our students' courage and hard work in completing their classes despite hunger and lack of transportation, we held joyous parties with abundant food, music, poetry, and dance.

Foyer d'Initiatives pour l'Education en Haiti (FIEH)

Administrator Peterson Jean-Pierre, his assistant Eddysson Pierre, and senior tutor Toussaint Pierre lead partner Foyer d'Initiatives pour l'Education en Haiti (FIEH). Peterson is a graduate of University of Haiti and is Director of Jakmel Ekspresyon, an arts and vocational school in downtown Jacmel. He also co-founded two community programs: the Pasquette High School and an agricultural co-operative. Despite decreasing resources, he oversaw these successful programs:

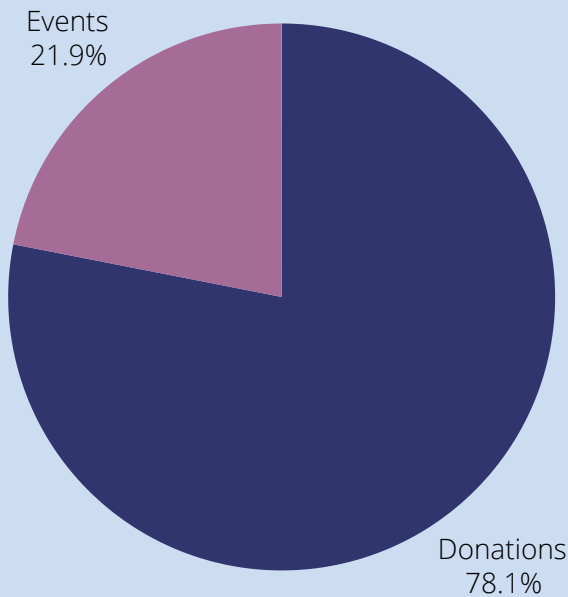


- **Scholarships for 155 children to 49 local schools:** As with FJBJ, these scholarship funds equip the children with everything they need to enroll in school. Budget constraints have led FIEH to support 135 scholarship students in 2023-2024.
- **Remedial classes in math, social sciences, and French reading and writing:** Students facing national exams for promotion to middle and high school receive tutoring in small groups, as well as students who need extra help to catch up.
- **Meals:** Students who participate in remedial classes also receive healthy meals and snacks.
- **Summer camp for 83 students:** Provided a safe space for meals, play and learning floral arts, cooking, baking, macrame, and making saleable liquid products like soap, detergent, and vinegar as exercises in mathematics, physics, and chemistry.
- **End of the school year and Christmas parties:** To celebrate our students' courage and hard work in completing their classes despite hunger, lack of transportation, and the danger of violence, we held joyous parties with abundant food, music, poetry, and dance.

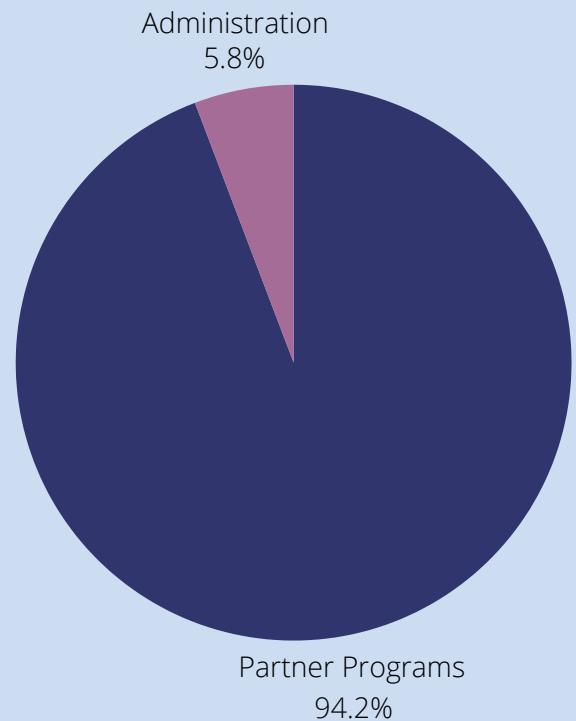
Our Financial Picture

As we enter our 14th year of operation in Haiti, HEI proves that our model of partnering with committed educators in Jacmel holds up to the most challenging of country conditions. Haitian leadership with American financial and administrative support has ensured the consistent and reliable delivery of food, scholarships, remedial classes, and job training programs that helps children not only survive, but also to train as future leaders of their community.

Income 2023



Expenses 2023



INCOME AND EXPENSE SUMMARY - 2023

Income		
		<u>2023</u> <u>2022</u>
Donations	61,014	61,634
Grants	5,000	0
Special Events	18,520	21,132
Interest	11	20
Total Income	\$ 84,545	\$ 82,786
Expenses		
Partner Programs		
FIEH	47,729	31,163
FBJJ	52,445	58,995
Pasquette	0	210
Total Program Expenses	\$ 100,174	\$ 90,368
Administration	6,145	10,745
Total Expenses	\$ 106,319	\$ 101,113
Increase (Decrease) Reserves	\$ (21,774)	\$ (18,327)

BALANCE SHEET AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

Current Assets		
		<u>2023</u> <u>2022</u>
Cash	57,239	82,927
Funds Receivable	8,275	4,433
Prepaid Expenses	0	0
Total Assets	\$ 65,514	\$ 87,360
Current Liabilities		
Payables & Accrued Expenses	48	120
Total Liabilities	\$ 48	\$120
Charitable Funds		
Restricted Funds	10,000	11,550
Unrestricted Funds	55,466	75,690
Total Charitable Funds	\$ 65,466	\$ 87,240
Total Liabilities and Charitable Funds	\$ 65,514	\$ 87,360

Board of Directors

James Whitcomb, President

Jim is a Managing Director at Westbury Group, an investment banking firm headquartered in Westport, CT. He has advised corporate clients on mergers, acquisitions, and corporate finance in markets around the world.

Jim is currently a Director of the British Schools and Universities Foundation and a Director of Zurich-based International Corporate Finance Group. He served as Director, President, and Treasurer of The Southport Conservancy, a 501c3 organization dedicated to the preservation of an historic Connecticut village. Jim was educated in England at Rugby School, received a B.A. in History from Williams College and an M.B.A. from the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. He and his wife live in Westport, CT.

Susan Whitcomb, Ph.D., Founder and Secretary

Susan founded HEI in December 2010 after serving as a volunteer teacher with Global Volunteer Network in Jacmel. She taught English and French to adults recovering from the earthquake and also assisted in childcare facilities in the city. She has taught at Purchase College and the University of Saint Joseph, where she also directed the Honors Program. Susan served on the Board of Directors of the A Better Chance program in Ridgefield, CT and is a docent emerita at the Morgan Library in New York. She earned her B.A. from Wellesley College and Ph.D. in English Literature from Yale University. She lives in Brevard, NC.

Dan Drake, Treasurer

Dan recently retired from a 45-year career with the nation's largest general contractor. Over his career, Dan built new schools and renovated existing schools throughout Fairfield County. He also worked on major hospital renovations in Bridgeport, Greenwich, and Sleepy Hollow, as well as office renovation projects too numerous to list. One of his favorite projects was the renovation of the historic Ingalls Rink at Yale University. Dan served on the Building Committee at his church for over 10 years. Now that he has retired, he is happy to be able to spend more time with his three daughters and sons-in-law, as well as his six grandchildren. His hobbies include woodworking, astronomy, and repairing anything that is broken. Dan and his wife live in Darien, CT.

Gerard Azor, Jr., Liaison to the Haitian-American community and the Haitian diaspora

Originally from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Gerry is a Core Account Manager for Cardinal Health. He is also the Vice-Chairman of the United Haitian-American Society of Connecticut and the Executive Director of the Haiti Relief Fund. He has been a leader in the Haitian-American community for over 30 years, organizing numerous activities in the tri-state area. He serves as an advisor to many Haitian-American media outlets. Gerry studied Business Management at Sacred Heart University. He lives in Fairfield, CT.

Board of Directors

Virginia Lynch Dean

Virginia Lynch Dean has an extensive background in features, and documentaries, theater and television development and production at NBC newsroom, including most recently, co-producer/director of the short documentary: "Ghost Mountain, the Second Killing Fields" 2021. Author of *Chief Crazy Snake: the Untold Story of Roy Hoffman & Chitto Harjo*, 2021. She is an active fundraiser for non-profit organizations, serving on the executive committee for The Chapin School Capital Campaign, the Governing Board and the Sustaining Board of Memorial Sloan Kettering, and the Board of the YMCA/YWCA of Greater New York. Virginia is an active supporter of the New York City Mission Society and Project Learn, Bridgeport, CT; a founding member of non-for-profit Divine Mortgages, Bridgeport, CT; and organizer of Wings World Quest, NYC. She has also served as a consultant for the Howard Dean campaigns.

Abigail Franklin

Abigail has 25 years of senior management experience in fundraising and marketing with organizations such as The New York Academy of Medicine, New York Common Pantry in East Harlem, NY, The Ms. Foundation for Women, Columbia University and the Brooklyn Academy of Music. She is a graduate of Wellesley College and holds a graduate degree from Yale School of Drama. She lives in New York City.

Edvardine Joseph

Edvardine is President and Founder of the International Student Aid Association (ISAA), which aids nonprofits that help underdeveloped countries become self-sufficient, starting with educating the youth. Under Edvardine's leadership, ISAA has conducted three successful campaigns in Haiti: sending 50 textbooks to students in Jacmel; 50 COVID-19 hygiene kits to a medical clinic in Cazale; organizing the first "Let's Start with the Youth!" Talent Show to fund full tuition scholarships for five accomplished students in Jacmel. Edvardine lives in CT and is of Haitian descent. She is a graduate of Greenwich Academy (Class of 2021) and is currently an undergraduate at the University of Chicago (Class of 2025).

Joan O'Connell

Joan O'Connell brings 40 years of experience in computer software. She recently retired from a career in software sales and consulting. Joan graduated from Boston College, and lives in Darien, CT, with her husband Rick Agresta. She is a member of the Technology and Communications Committee of Project Redwood, spends too much time on a computer, and is always reading more than one book.

Board of Directors

Yvrose Romulus

Yvrose Romulus has over twenty years of experience in Higher Education and has been the Associate Dean/Associate Director of the School of Professional Studies & UB Online at the University of Bridgeport. She has been the President of Fraternité Valléenne of CT for 3 years. Yvrose has served as an Advisory Council Member for Family Economic Security Program (FESP) for Fairfield County's Community Foundation at Housatonic Community College and as Senior Advisor for the Advising Department at Gateway Community College. In 2009, Yvrose was the Marilyn Gordon Woman of the Year Award recipient at the University of Bridgeport and the 2014 Purple Knight Partnership Award Recipient. Yvrose has a keen ability to assist, inspire, and guide others. She earned her M.A. in Counseling with a focus in College Student Personnel from the University of Bridgeport. She lives in Monroe, CT and has family in La Vallee, near Jacmel, Haiti.