



HÔPITAL ALBERT SCHWEITZER

HAITI



YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

By Dr. Herriot Sannon

As the Medical Director of Hôpital Albert Schweitzer Haiti (HAS), I have precious little time for reflection. Days – and nights – can be very long and the work incredibly challenging.

But every day I witness countless examples of the significant impact we have on patients' lives. By "we," I mean not only the capable staff members of HAS, but also you, our donors and partners, whose support makes possible everything that we do.

Day in and day out, thanks to your generous support, I see mothers and infants survive high-risk pregnancies, children recover from malnutrition, and people afflicted with serious injuries or illness return to productive lives.

Families who never thought their loved one would survive have shed tears of joy as they thank us for performing life-saving surgery, for providing essential medication, or for diagnosing and treating an illness that no one else within their reach could.

In the community, there are also many healthy people who do not need hospital care, thanks to HAS.

Children are in school because they have been immunized by HAS community health workers and because their mothers have been educated by HAS to provide them with proper nutrition. Young women are continuing their education because they have had the benefit of reproductive health education provided by HAS. People are working without interruption by cholera or other infectious diseases because they have access to clean water – thanks to HAS consultants who have partnered with communities to build wells.

Your support means the world to many, many people.

I wish you could experience firsthand the gratitude of our patients for your kindness and generosity. It is gratifying to be able to help so many in such significant ways. On behalf of our patients and all of us on the HAS team, I offer my heartfelt thanks. You are making a difference.





EVENTS

YALE STUDENTS WHO VISITED HAS GIVE BACK

Graduate students and faculty from Yale University raised \$4,749 to support HAS through a benefit held on the Yale campus in New Haven, Connecticut, on May 2nd.

The Haitian Soirée was organized by students and faculty of a graduate-level course entitled Sustainable Development in Post-Disaster Context: Haiti. Students of this course have visited HAS annually for the past four years, as part of a partnership established in 2011 by course professor Gordon Geballe, Associate Dean of Alumni and External Affairs and Lecturer at Yale's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Dr. Gary Desir from the Yale School of Medicine co-teaches the course with Dr. Geballe, and Yale Professor Robert (Bob) Lamothe, a native of Haiti, helps the students learn Creole.

"We were inspired by our visit to HAS," said Yale student and event co-organizer Daniel Tam-Claiborne. "We are grateful to HAS staff members for their hospitality, guidance, and enthusiasm, and wanted to repay them for their efforts by raising money to fund additional projects and staff salaries."

The event drew about 100 attendees, and featured student presentations, a silent auction, Caribbean cuisine and music, and live performances, including a performance by Bob Lamothe's Blues Band.

"It was a joyous evening in honor of a tremendous organization and the hard work the people of HAS do day in and day out to improve healthcare and overall quality of life in the Artibonite Valley," said Angel Hertslet, the course teaching fellow and former HAS Partnership Facilitator and Hospitality Manager.

HAS Board member Jenifer Grant, who spoke at the event, said, "It was my great pleasure to attend this fundraiser. HAS' relationship with Yale is a wonderful



Yale University graduate students and faculty are pictured during their stay at HAS in March 2014.



Yale University graduate student Kaylee Weil, right, with HAS staffer Melissa Sanon.

partnership, which benefits both Yale students and HAS community programs."

HAS is grateful to Professors Geballe, Desir and Lamothe, to Ms. Hertslet, and to all involved in the planning of this successful event. Student organizers were Musleehat A. Hamadu (lead organizer), Alexandra Adams, Tayla Ash, Laura Benoit, Jessica Bonthius, Karin R. Bucht, Mikaela J. Davis, Terrol M. Graham, Ruth Metzler, Matheus T. Pires do Couto, Yinka Taiwo, Daniel Tam-Claiborne, Abigail R. Taylor, Samuel A. Teicher, Sarah Tolbert, Lucas Tyree, and Kaylee R. Weil.

Visit www.hashaiti.org to read about more recent and upcoming HAS events.

**Interested in hosting your own fundraiser for HAS?
Contact Tran Doan at tran@hashaiti.org.**

STAFF PERSPECTIVE

"WE ARE IT": A HAITIAN RESOURCE FOR DISASTER RESPONSE

By Dawn Johnson



When the earthquake hit Haiti in January 2010, many HAS staff members were still on their winter holidays. When floods of patients, many critically injured, began arriving at the hospital's doors within a few hours of the quake, staff hustled back to Deschapelles as quickly as possible. HAS community health centers chose to close in order to send staff to work at the main hospital. Doctors, nurses and other staff worked double and triple shifts. The operating rooms were busy around the clock. Makeshift cots were set up wherever room could be made, and the inpatient census swelled from about 100 to well over 700. It would stay that way for weeks.

In my nearly two decades at HAS, I have witnessed time and again how quickly HAS must spring into action when a disaster or emergency strikes. The earthquake was the most extreme example, but it was not the first devastating blow to this vulnerable island nation—and almost certainly, it will not be the last. Located firmly in the Caribbean hurricane belt and on earthquake fault lines, regularly burdened by poor harvests and epidemics, Haiti is exposed to more than its fair share of disasters. Deforested hillsides lead to deadly flash floods and washed-away crops, even as families struggle under the constant risk of malnutrition. A legacy of social and economic turmoil only exacerbates these risk factors.

For a number of reasons, HAS is uniquely poised to respond to disasters. Perhaps most importantly, HAS is here—24/7, 365 days a year. International disaster relief agencies can take days or even weeks to arrive on the scene. As crucial as these organizations are, perhaps the most critical time period for treating patients is in the first 12-24 hours after a disaster. That's why it's so crucial for first-responders like HAS, the only full-service hospital operating in our large service area, to be on the ground and operational in Haiti on a permanent basis.

In fact, HAS is one of the few hospitals in Haiti capable of responding to disasters with mass casualties. Countless clinics and small "hospitals" operate in Haiti. But for emergency care and surgeries, especially after regular business hours, very few are open. Even fewer will admit patients regardless of their ability to pay. HAS accepts critically ill and injured patients without question—even when that means our always-lean staff will be stretched even further.

Disaster preparedness extends far beyond the hospital walls. For example, a cholera outbreak last summer hit some very remote mountain communities. Partner organizations provided chlorine bleach, oral rehydration salts, and other needed supplies. HAS had the staff, vehicles and existing relationships to move these supplies quickly over rough, washed-out roads to otherwise inaccessible sites. Each year, HAS staff travel to remote locations to educate residents about preventing the further spread of this highly contagious and deadly disease.

"HAS is the only option for hundreds of thousands of people in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. In a phrase, we are it."

As HAS's response to past cholera outbreaks illustrates, close working relationships with local communities mean HAS can anticipate public health trends and crises as they emerge. Embedded in the Lower Artibonite Valley for nearly 60 years, we put into daily practice our philosophy of preventive care, community development, and listening to patients and communities in order to truly understand their health needs—especially when an emergency occurs.

HAS bears an extraordinary responsibility in the delivery of healthcare in our large service region. HAS is the only option for hundreds of thousands of people in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. In a phrase, we are it. This reality becomes even starker when a disaster strikes.

We are fortunate to have the support of donors like you, who understand the critical role HAS plays in a place that is vulnerable even in the best of circumstances. Thank you for your invaluable partnership in this important effort.

Dawn Johnson is the Director of Integrated Community Services at HAS.

BOARD PERSPECTIVE

HAS IS A VALUABLE ASSET TO ALL OF HAITI

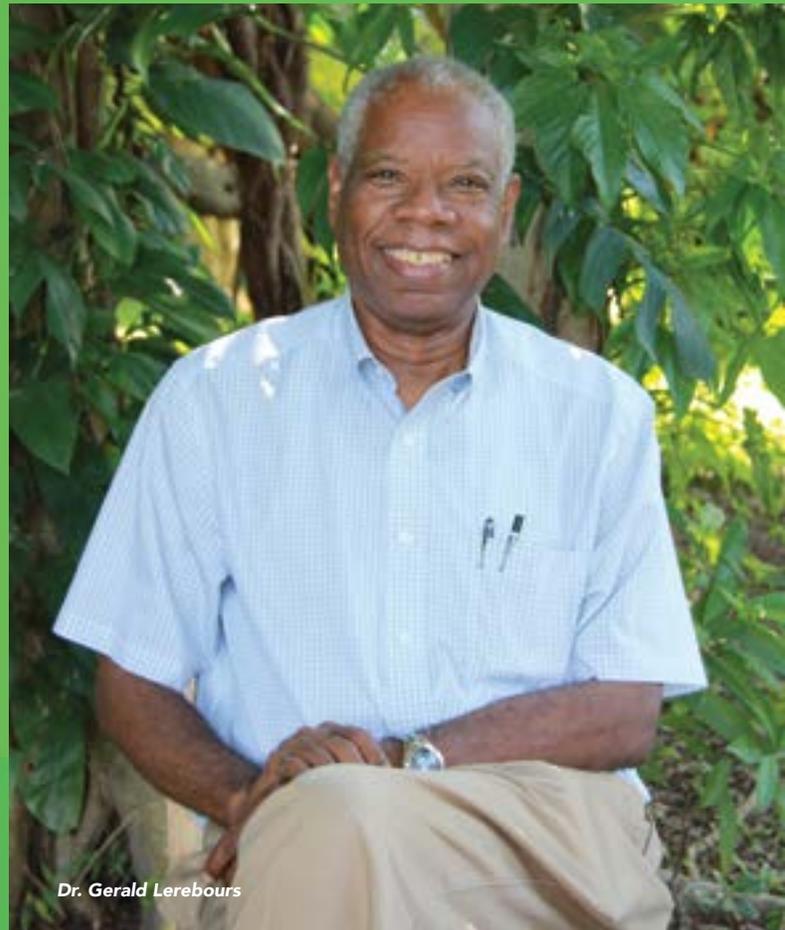
By Dr. Gerald Lerebours

I have always worked and lived in Port-au-Prince, but I have known of Hôpital Albert Schweitzer Haiti (HAS) since I was a child. On paper, the mission of HAS is to collaborate with the people of the Artibonite Valley as they strive to improve their health and quality of life, but in actuality HAS is a valuable asset to all of Haiti.

People travel great distances to seek medical services at HAS. HAS is well known throughout the country for its reverence for life. People understand that a patient at HAS will not die of a preventable death because he or she could not afford to pay for medicine.

In addition, healthcare professionals from all over Haiti seek opportunities to train at HAS. HAS provides extraordinary opportunities for physicians, nurses, physical therapists and microbiology lab technicians to learn from excellent professionals. I am keenly aware of this because my wife, Emmeline, received medical training at HAS in pediatrics in 1982 and 1983. I know that healthcare professionals have access at HAS to an equipped facility with important medical diagnostic capabilities such as x-rays and laboratories. They learn to treat and care for patients with a broad, diverse spectrum of health needs. With this training, they are fully prepared to serve people in all parts of the country.

Recently, I had the opportunity to tour some other healthcare facilities in rural Haiti. I learned that these facilities are closed on weekends and during evening hours. They refer patients to HAS routinely, especially patients with serious illness or those who need life-saving surgery. HAS is there for patients every day, 24 hours a day.



Dr. Gerald Lerebours

By serving patients with respect, by ensuring 24/7 accessibility, and by providing invaluable training for the next generation of Haitian health workers, HAS is making a significant, positive difference in public health while strengthening the national health system.

The HAS Board of Directors recently approved a five-year strategic plan, which recognizes that public health is the foundation of economic health. The plan aims to make HAS an even more effective resource for reducing illness and premature death in Haiti. The broader goal: a self-sustaining Haiti.

As a native and resident of Haiti, I am proud to participate in helping HAS realize its vision. I encourage you to spread the word about this organization among your circles of influence. Let them know that HAS is an organization they can count on in Haiti.

Dr. Lerebours joined the Board of HAS in 2013. He recently retired after serving for more than a decade as the Resident Advisor for MEASURE Evaluation project managed in Haiti by John Snow, Inc., Research and Training Institute in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

GENEROUS PLEDGE HONORS PHYSICIAN'S SERVICE TO HAS

Martha Weinman Lear — writer, editor, and contributor to numerous publications, including *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Magazine*, and NPR — has spent a good deal of her career thinking about the relationship between doctor and patient.

Her late husband Dr. Harold Lear, a respected urologist who practiced in Manhattan, made a number of trips to Deschapelles in the 1960s, working tirelessly and with little fanfare at Hôpital Albert Schweitzer Haiti (HAS) as a visiting surgeon. Martha remembers, "Harold would say that in Deschapelles, he felt closer to the Hippocratic Oath than he did anywhere else in the world." At HAS, the divide between doctor and patient was lessened, and the need for compassion and attentive care became paramount. After several years battling a serious, chronic heart condition, Dr. Lear's own life and career were sadly cut short in 1978; Martha's critically acclaimed book *Heartsounds: The Story of Love and Loss* (to be re-issued as an e-book in September 2014) is a meditation on Dr. Lear's own experience as a gravely ill patient.

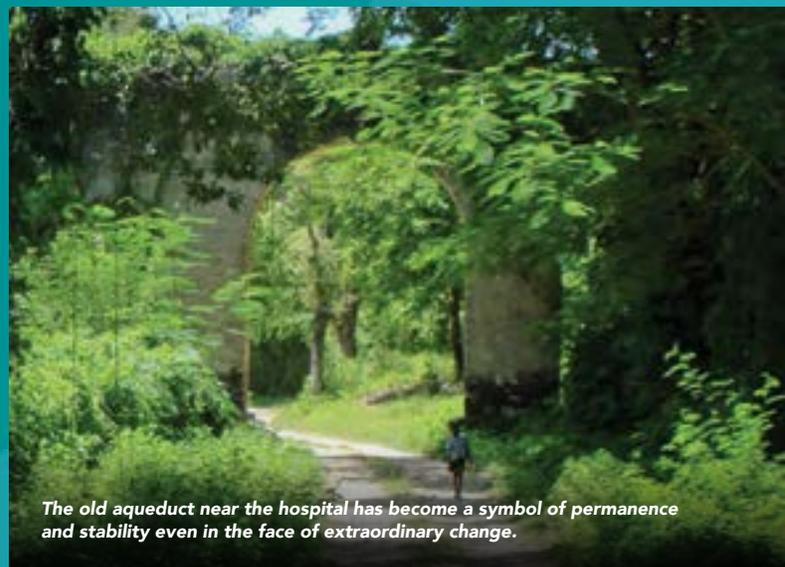
Dr. Lear's trips to HAS, recalls Martha, "were always remembered as the most profoundly satisfying professional experiences of his life," and Martha has chosen to honor his memory and devotion to HAS by pledging an estate gift to HAS. By joining the Aqueduct Society, the planned giving society of HAS, Martha is affirming her belief in the crucial work of the hospital—and helping to ensure that thousands of lives will be saved and changed for the better for many years to come. That the hospital would survive and thrive for future generations was the dearest wish of HAS's founders, Larry and Gwen Mellon. The spirit of HAS, the Mellons realized, was bigger than any one person, family, or even generation. Before she died in 2000, Gwen Mellon wrote that supporting the work of HAS was "a gift one gets in giving and a gift one gets in receiving..."



*Martha Weinman Lear catches up with board members and supporters at a recent HAS event. Her new book, *Echoes of Heartsounds: A Memoir*, a companion piece to *Heartsounds*, will be published in e-book and paper this fall.*

Our challenge is to keep this spark of the founding ethic burning bright."

We encourage longtime friends and past volunteers to join Martha by creating your own legacy at HAS. Becoming a member of the Aqueduct Society is a powerful way to affirm your own belief in the hospital and the doctors, clinicians, and caretakers who will carry on the "founding ethic" of respect, compassion, and care at HAS. To discuss a bequest or other planned gifts to HAS, please contact Katie Matson at 412-361-5200 or katherine@hashaiti.org for more details. If you have already pledged your support of HAS through your estate plans, we would love to thank and recognize you for your generosity!



The old aqueduct near the hospital has become a symbol of permanence and stability even in the face of extraordinary change.



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A NEW WEBSITE FOR A NEW ERA AT HAS

HAS launched a new website this summer that provides a broader and deeper perspective on HAS programs and activities than ever before.

Along with this newsletter, the new website is one of several initiatives to raise awareness of the tremendous work of this organization, which pioneered genuine community collaboration to improve public health in the developing world. Today HAS remains a leader in providing smart healthcare that results in lasting change.

We invite you to visit the new HAS website at www.hashaiti.org, and to encourage others to visit. Please be sure to check back

often for news and fresh content. There is so much happening at HAS that is worthy of your attention. We are eager to share it with you!



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