



October 2020

LA GONÂVE = HAITI = PARTNERS

BUILDING ON
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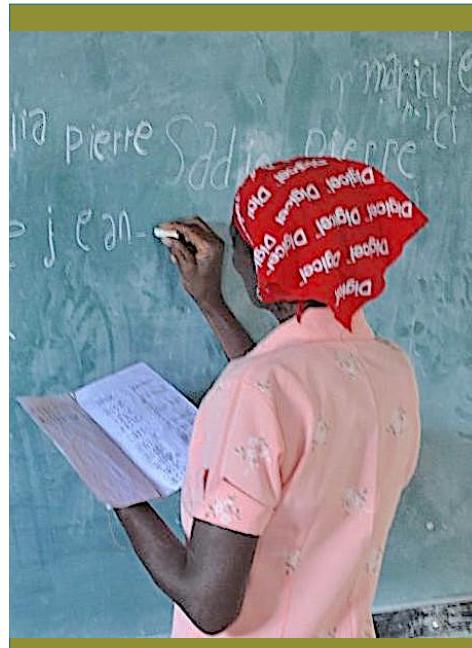
Partnership Newsletter

Students of All Ages Return to School

More than 6 years ago, a young mother bravely spoke up at a community meeting in Nan Mango on the Haitian island of la Gonâve. She told the visiting team from Covenant Presbyterian Church that she wished to learn what her children were learning in school. She wanted to know how to read her Bible and how to write her name. An adult literacy program was developed using a curriculum from Fonkoze, a microfinance institution in Haiti.

After 24 months, local lay leaders and school principals on la Gonâve worked with Haitian project manager, Dantal Martin, to revamp the program to better fit the needs of adult students on the island. The curriculum centers on the goals of basic literacy and elementary math skills. Class members are supplied with workbooks, pencils and pens. Students are evaluated at the end of each session. Despite the coronavirus, the Adult Literacy program has continued with students meeting in small groups of 5 in schools and at homes.

Dantal Martin has ably run the program since its beginning and has been instrumental in strengthening the curriculum and improving the professionalism of the teachers. Two years ago, students and teachers in the program reached out to M. Martin, and requested more classes. An advanced class in French has now been added. Today there are 9 classes in Kreyol and 7 in French.



Over 1100 adults have participated in the literacy program since its beginning. Literacy provides adults the opportunity to participate in worship by reading scripture and singing the hymns. Literacy gives a woman the chance to start her own business selling sundries at a roadside stand. Literacy offers a farmer the ability to understand prices posted at market on the mainland. Literacy gives adults the courage to speak up in their community. Literacy is dignity.

A Safe Return to School

The availability of clean water has been a focus for 30 years in the many programs and projects sponsored by La Gonâve Haiti Partners. Clean water is critical in preventing the spread of serious illnesses like coronavirus, cholera, and typhoid.

Today, with students and teachers returning to school, clean water for washing hands is more important than ever. Father Jean Madoché Vil, in partnership with La Gonâve Haiti Partners, is positioning 23 hand washing stations for the students and teachers in 10 partnership schools. An additional 3 stations will be placed at the Bill Rice Community Health Center for clinic patients as well as the medical staff. Pere Vil, as he is called on la Gonâve, continues to preach the need for wearing masks, staying socially distance, and washing of hands to prevent the spread of COVID on the island.

Middle School Update

With the campus wall and gates now complete, Engineer Pechley begins construction on the first classroom building for St. Marthe and St. Marie Middle School. The building crew has stockpiled large amounts of concrete, gravel, sand, rebar and block on site to control costs in the volatile economy. The dump truck transports the materials to the site where they are secured. Although the pandemic slowed the timeline, Pere Vil projects the first students will begin in Fall 2021.

