

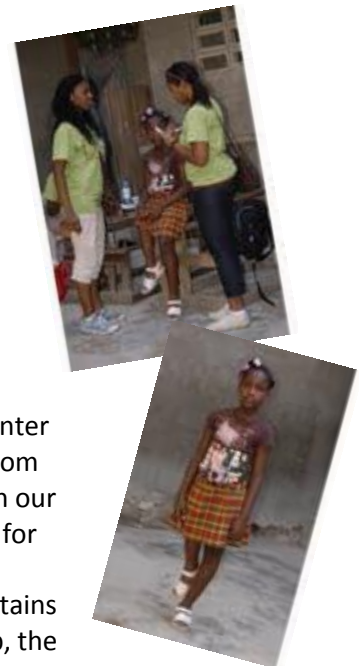
Offering an Umbrella of Hope

Haiti is a country of stark contradictions. A dry and flat land in the midst and vast mountainous terrain. A beautiful and rich culture in the midst of pervasive unspeakable poverty. A land full of people who culturally are full of life and expression in an environment where the lack of basic health care threatens life itself. This is the environment in which the LiLa Foundation has defined their purpose; to be a presence in the midst of bleakness. Whether for education or for health, our goal is to diminish the tremendous gap of the very few “haves” to the majority of the “have-nots”. We purpose to bring education to the masses and to make the masses healthier to improve their quality of life. And we purpose to do this, with one small town at a time, starting with Arcahaie, Haiti.



After a recent trip to Haiti, our assessment team was able to make significant progress that will lead us to achieving our goals. Not only do we service those in Arcahaie, but we also service those in the mountains surrounding the area. The mountain populations are even more disadvantaged than their countrymen of lower altitude as they have an added geographical disadvantage to their plight. In the May 2011 **Foire de Sante** (Health Fair), we saw four hundred patients in one day after making the strenuous hike up the mountains.

While we've been successful with our Foire de Santes (Health Fairs), it is my goals for the Foundation, to not only assess this population, but to forge a new path to proper follow-up and healthcare management and prevention. To help us achieve this goal, we were able to make a partnership with the **Centre de Sante de L'Arcahaie**. This multi-specialty center comprises of seven Cuban physicians and three Haitian physicians in a 24 room clinic. The director, Dr. Teresa Esteva Fdez, has agreed to not only help us in our health initiatives, but to serve as a source of continued health maintenance for those patients we find need more thorough and frequent therapeutic interventions. They have also expressed willingness to go up into the mountains to reach those severely neglected due to geography. With their partnership, the boy that was born with only one functioning eye and the child that was born with debilitating Spina Bifida that I mentioned in the previous December 2011 newsletter, now may be given hope.



Shortly after establishing this partnership, Phedra Lundi and I, another Physician Assistant trained at the University of Florida and acting Health Program Coordinator for the foundation, were asked to assess a ten year old child whose right leg was shorter than her left. After examining the child and eliciting her history from her father, we determined that following an emergent surgery to correct an arterial blockage to save her leg at the age of one, the blood supply to her femur was comprised. This left her with a shortened right femur and deficient L4-L5 and S1 and below functionality to the right side. The amazing part wasn't that we were able to diagnose and offer an appropriate management plan; it was that the sheer shock that something could be done for this child on this father's face was priceless. We gave him hope because we offered him a plan of action. A plan that may secure improved opportunity for a child where



opportunity is hard to find. A plan that may leave this child, and family, with one less handicap that they have to overcome.

This is only one example of how a partnership can be paramount to us achieving our goals. As Physician Assistants, we are well versed in the significance of navigating healthcare via the team approach model. This is a model I intend to replicate in Haiti. It is not enough that the foundation goes and builds a clinic in Haiti. For true success for the Haitian people to occur, we need to develop relationships and partnerships to expand the scope of our reach and the effectiveness of our efforts. This is key to sustaining the opportunities we're creating for future generations to come. If you are willing and interested in partnering with us in any capacity, please contact me at Kaleena@LiLaHelps.org.

To find out more information about LiLa, please visit our website: www.LiLaHelps.org.

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