



## WINDOWS ON OUR WORLDS

News from **PARTNERS IN PROGRESS (PIP)** – Summer 2013

### Fondwa Classroom Construction Moving Rapidly Towards Fall Completion



Classes have ended for the current academic year at the **St. Antoine School** in Fondwa creating an opportunity for rapid advance of the construction of a new classroom complex that will permanently replace the one reduced to rubble by a massive earthquake that shook Haiti in 2010. The complex of spacious classrooms and open galleries will house both elementary and secondary levels with a combined enrollment of nearly 600 students. Completion of the complex is expected in time for the opening of the 2013-2014 academic year, following nearly 3 years of steady progress!

The new complex includes a twelve-room, three-story main building with an upper story of wood and a lower story anchored into the bedrock

below the main level of the school campus in order to provide increased earthquake resistance. A separate two-story building at the main campus level provides 4 additional classrooms. The Haitian engineering firm of **M. Philippe Magloire** is in charge of the project with much of the labor being supplied by Fondwa locals.

Reconstruction of the school has progressed steadily, despite the challenges of integrating the work with Haiti's rainy and dry seasons and of maintaining a full schedule of classes on the already-crowded campus.

**Partners in Progress (PIP)**, together with **Family Health Ministries (FHM)**, provides operational support for the school. PIP funding derives from the generous support of parishioners from **Sacred Heart Church** (Pittsburgh, PA) through its "Hearts for Haiti" program and from parishioners of **St. Margaret Mary Church** (Lower Burrell, PA).



### For Deslandes Farmers: Agroecology Strategies = Better Soil + Bigger Yields



**Agroecology** is the science underlying sustainable agriculture through the design of food-producing ecosystems modeled after natural ecosystems that do not depend on external chemical and energy inputs. Rather they produce soil fertility and abundant yields as well as protection from pests through ecological interactions and biological synergies. In practice agroecology involves the rediscovery of traditional values and methods of managing land and water resources such as poly-cropping, companion planting, cover-cropping, agroforestry, and construction of various "ramp vivan" and "ramp de pay" to help manage the flow of water.

Since 2009 more than 50 farmers from the Deslandes region have been achieving impressive results by adapting such strategies through the "**Konbit Vanyan Kapab**" ("**Together We Can**") "soil health" initiative. For example, corn grown where a nitrogen-fixing "cover crop" (such as "jack bean" or "velvet bean") was previously grown is seen to be twice as tall as the same variety corn planted at the same time but without previous "cover cropping". Farmers also report higher yields of "*pitimi*" (millet) and other staple crops!

**Partners in Progress (PIP)** provides technical and financial support for this farmer-driven, farmer-to-farmer project.



## **Deslandes “Elders” Invite Expanded “Earth Block” Construction Collaboration**



In May **Partners in Progress (PIP)** completed a, multi-year strategic partnership with the Centre d’Inspiration Jeunesse (CIJ) following an internal re-organization of CIJ and a re-visioning of its mission. The successful partnership resulted in construction of a seven-room classroom complex for the **Deslandes Community School** employing local workers and “compressed earth blocks” (CEBs), an environmentally friendly technology that uses locally available materials to produce high-quality building blocks on site. Funding for the project came largely through the efforts of “**Anne Mullaney’s Friends for Haiti**” a Pittsburgh-based group committed to raising funds in memory of former PIP board member Anne Mullaney, who initiated fundraising for the project before her untimely death in 2011.

With the departure of CIJ from Deslandes the “**Komite de Planifikasyon**” (“planning committee”), a group of Deslandes “elders” whose advice helps guide long-term development in the region, saw an opportunity to invite PIP to continue efforts in Deslandes through a direct, strategic partnership with the school parent association and the planning committee. Specifically they have requested that PIP provide continued technical and financial support for construction of two additional classrooms that would provide space for a solar-powered computer lab and for an environmental learning center that focuses on sustainable agriculture (agroecology). Details of such a partnership remain to be worked out, but pending procurement of necessary materials and formal approval of the project by the PIP board of directors, a third phase of construction could possibly begin as early as November 2013!



## **“Education for Change” Supports Summer Soccer and Leadership Training**

Solino is a neighborhood in Haiti’s capital of Port au Prince that is dominated by poverty, violence, disease, and despair. It is a place where street gangs attract youth who have few opportunities to attend school or earn a livelihood. The **Rev. Patrick Eugene, CSSp**, with support from PIP’s “**Rich in Mercy**” (RIM) division, is helping to change that. This summer more than 200 Solino youth are participating in a soccer camp that offers wholesome athletic opportunities, strong leadership formation, and renewed HOPE! The camp is organized by Fr. Patrick and partially financed by the Rich in Mercy “**Education for Change**” fund.



## **“Skip A Lunch” Supports Early Education and Nutrition “Head Start” Program**



Children in Haiti are born into some of the harshest conditions on the planet and are seriously disadvantaged in terms of growth, development, and potential to thrive. Malnutrition and chronic hunger affect more than half the population. Created by **Marlene Shaw** of Republic, PA following a “reverse mission pilgrimage” to Haiti coordinated by PIP’s “**Rich in Mercy**” division, the “**Skip a Lunch, Save a Child**” fund provides partial financial support for a nutrition and early education “head start” program directed by **Sr. Eileen Davey**, a Holy Union Sister from Fall River, MA working in the St. Louis de Montfort church in the Delmas section of Port au Prince. Supporters of “**Skip a Lunch**” program contribute \$5 a month (about the cost of a fast-food lunch) to provide a daily, nutritious meal and various educational activities for “at risk” children. Beginning with 30 children in 2002 the program now serves more than 100 of the “most vulnerable” preschoolers in the area.

### **Partners in Progress**

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