



Dear Friends and supporters of Haitian Connection,

Let me apologize for the late edition of the 2025 Annual Report of Haitian Connection. I have been unusually busy with new Haiti projects. All joyful work, but at times causing delay, delay also caused by travels back to Haiti as well as a few bouts of illness.

Haitian people are often described as being resilient as if that is a badge of honor. They seemingly can undergo so many natural and political calamities but always stand back up. Gabor Maté, the Hungarian Jewish Psychiatrist, defines true resilience not as a harsh, individualistic "toughness," but as an innate capacity to heal and return to one's true nature. He emphasizes that resilience has a social, and not just an individual dimension

Haitian Connection continues its work in Haiti in solidarity with Haitians. Fr. Rick Frechette says, "The world we do not inherit by entitlement, we can build together with determination."

And it is that determination that allows us to continue our work in Haiti and stand side by side with Haitians. Despite the ongoing violence (over 5000 people and over 1 million displaced), natural disasters, such as floods, and landslides, and strong storms, we have persisted in maintaining our programs. All this with the help of our generous donors.

THANK YOU ALL for making our work possible!

In the spirit of Gratitude and Hope,

Dr. Renate Schneider



Haitian Connection Annual Report 2025



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After School program continues

In the beginning of 2025, school was closed due to continuing and increased violence. Our **after-school program** filled a gap for our students who came diligently to the program 5 days a week.



College Group Collects School Supplies



A big shout out to the Global Outreach at Chicago State for their incredible success in collecting school supplies for Haiti. Haitian Connection shared this huge donation with the Centro Cultural in the Back of the Yards neighborhood. Collaboration and connections between all who want this world to be a better place, bridges differences in language and culture. This is what gives hope.



Renate was presenting at the Caribbean Studies Association

“On behalf of the Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) 2025 Program Committee, we are pleased to confirm that your submission: Building a Community Mental Health Program in

Rural Haiti from the Bottom Up, has been accepted for inclusion in the Annual Caribbean Studies Association Conference, scheduled for St. Martin, June 1 - 7, 2025.”

I was fortunate enough to travel to the island of St. Martin from June 1 to June 7, 2025. The conference was an enriching experience, and the level of scholarship was phenomenal. Living in the USA we are not always aware what is happening in other parts of the world, and traveling widened my horizons and increased my respect for what scholars in other parts of the world are doing. There were over 700 participants with more than 98 workshops. Just to give you an idea, the workshops included Racial Injustice, Climate Disorder, and Reparations for Haiti; Afro-Latina Broadcasting: Digital Resistance from the Caribbean; Building Environmental and Cultural Resistance among Black Resistance from the Caribbean; Building Environmental and Cultural Resistance among Black Youth; Race, Class, and Nationalism in the 21st Century Caribbean; and Malcolm X and Caribbean Resistance. There were also authors’ celebrations and poetry readings as well as a cultural excursion. St. Marten is a fascinating island with two colonies, one French and one Dutch, each with their own government and laws, and yet the common and most spoken language is English.



Internally Displaced Villagers Receive Mental Health Support.



The people in these photos are from a rural area outside Deschamps. They had been displaced by a gang and were now returning to the Deschamps area. When they came to the church, Pastor Erik took the opportunity to talk to them about stress reduction and some techniques he learned in the mental health training. Pastor Erik reported that the villagers appreciated the training and want to return for more information and training.

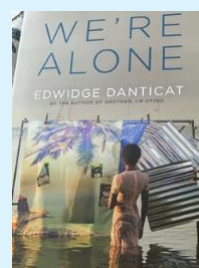
Renate Attends Haitian Summit in Indianapolis

Dr. Renate Schneider, President of Haitian Connection, was able to participate in the Haitian Summit which took place in Indianapolis from May 1 to May 3. Leaders, advocates and community members from across the United States came to together for a three-day summit focused on building a collective roadmap for the Haitian diaspora's future. Hosted at the Global Village Welcome Center— in partnership with the Haitian American Alliance of New York (HAANY), Dieudonne Foundation, Lakou Indiana, and Pillars of Haiti (PoH)— the fourth Haitian Community Summit served as both a gathering and a call to action, organizers say.



Renate Lunches with Edwidge Danticat

On May 13, I attended a luncheon in honor of Edwidge Danticat, best-selling Haitian American writer. The gathering was hosted by The Daughters of Haiti and included many interested in Haiti. Danticat is the author of numerous books and the recipient of many awards, including a MacArthur Fellowship. Her latest book is “We’re Alone”. The essays gathered in it explore abiding themes: environmental catastrophe, the traumas of colonialism, motherhood, and the complexities of resilience, as well as tributes to mentors and heroes such as Toni Morrison, Paule Marshall, Gabriel Garcia, and James Baldwin.



Danticat is an irresistible presence on the page: full of heart, outrage, humor, clear thinking, and moral questioning, while reminding us of the possibilities of community.

Finding Light when the Shadows Seem Overwhelming

After much discernment, I decided to travel to Haiti in November of 2025. As part of my discernment, I reflected on some of the conditions that the country finds itself in. As my friend Fr. Rick Frechette points out, “Haiti is a country of deep anguish, lived out in the shadowy edges of human concern. The entire population is in agony.” 1.4 million Haitians have been forced to flee their homes amidst ongoing violence this year alone. Businesses are closing and medical facilities are under attack or barely functioning. The people who live in camps have no access to services, sexual violence against women and girls is rampant. Hunger is reaching famine proportions, because of the delay in funding.



Reginal Marcelin, a scholarship student through Haitian Connection, finished his medical school education and is now a doctor. He is happy, because his internship is in Jeremie.



Renate Trains As Community Navigator

As a member of the Haitian American Museum of Chicago, I have been trained as a community navigator, to inform people of their rights. We give presentations at Olive Harvey College, churches, and libraries around the city. which was well received. The presentation can be given in 4 languages, English, French, Spanish and Haitian Creole. If you would like to schedule a presentation contact Carlos at the museum, 773/213-8169.

Youth Empowerment Exchange Encourages Young Leaders

The 4th annual 2025 Youth Empowerment Exchange took place from August 17 to August 23 in Jeremie and from August 24 to August 31 in Cap Haitian with 24 young leaders who were selected from 150 applicants for the program. Despite the insecurity and logistical difficulties, the Youth Empowerment and Exchange Program (YEEP) was successful in providing 2 full weeks of instruction and training with a diverse selection of themes: Democracy and Human Rights – utilizing a new generation as actors of change, Organizational and Inclusive Leadership, Community Mobilization, Debate and Oratorial Skills, Development and Management of Community Projects. Haitian Connection is a financial contributor to this effort, since all expenses for the participants are provided.



Summer Camp #1: Jeremie Summer camp in Jeremie took place under the direction of Eliasme Jean Silfin who is our after-school coordinator. 15 children participated from 7 to 12 years old. The children enjoyed arts and crafts and listened as a nurse taught about the common illnesses in Haiti and explained ways to prevent illness such as handwashing.



Summer Camp #2: Deschamps Pastor Erik led two 1-week camps in Deschamps. He is also one of our community mental health agents. These camps were also very successful. The children had Bible study, games, and maybe the most important item, a warm meal every day. Food is an important part of the experience, especially in the rural area of Deschamps. While food is plentiful in the region, people do not have money to buy food. For the children attending camp this was likely the only meal of the day. There were 25 children in this program ranging in age from 7 to 12. Pastor Erik believes that the summer camps are a great marketing tool for the school that is right next to his church.



Partnership Agreements Look to Build a More Sustainable Future

Thanks to a miraculous donation from a supporter of Haitian Connection, we are now able to consider branching out beyond the Jeremie region and our usual charitable activities. Yes, charity has its place in the current context of Haiti, but we also want to look at more sustainable programs in the future. To expand our reach, we have entered into two new partnership agreements. Haitian Connection has worked with these groups for several years already, and these agreements allow us to make these collaborations more formal and accountable. The first partnership agreement is with Fondase, a microcredit organization in Fondwa started and directed under the leadership of Moise Iraus, the CEO of Fondase. The second partnership agreement is with the Youth empowerment program under the Leadership of Love-Kendy Jourdan.

Haitian Connection Helps Fight Hunger in Jeremie

While food is readily available in the Jeremie area, most people lack the resources to purchase food, and the price for everything has skyrocketed. Haitian Connection decided to supplement some food for the women in our "cash without conditions" program. The women were very grateful,, because this is a difficult time for them, since there are many expenses to cover, especially with the new



Financials

Sincere thanks to all our donors who have supported our programs this past year. Just to give you an idea as to how your money is being spent:

Staff stipends	5,640.00/year 2025
Mental Health	2,600.00/year 2025
Cash without conditions	3,600.00/year 2025
Teachers' salaries	1,600.00/year 2025
Summer Camps	2,000.00/year 2025
Poor People's Fund	3,000.00/year 2025
Fees	1,200.00/year 2025
Youth Empowerment	2,000.00/year 2025
Total	21,640.00/year 2025