

## **August 2012 Newsletter**

### **June 30-July 7, 2012: 11<sup>th</sup> Medical Team Treats Over 300 Patients**

A medical team visited Jacsonville for the eleventh trip since February 2009. Team members from Maryland included: Dr. Barbara Weis, Dr. Kristen Miller, Dr. Arieda Gjipopulli, and Christina Stiles. Team members from New Orleans were: Dr. Domnica Fotino, Dr. Julia McDonald, Dr. John Roberts, Matthew Marx, Ashley Sarver, Leah Nuss, Naomi Gadinsky, Gabe Baltaz, Sally Baker, and Alison Smith. The team ran clinic at the Mission House and treated patients for many medical conditions, including high blood pressure, diabetes, malnutrition, and infections. Many patients return every three months to receive treatment from the group. Also involved with the clinic were several young girls from Jacsonville who have previously learned how to take vital signs and several local translators. The next medical team is scheduled for September.



From left to right: 1- Dr. Julia searches through medicines while local children look on. 2- Medical Team, July 2012. 3- Matthew Marx entertaining the local children with his juggling skills outside the Mission House.

### **Clinic progress: Walls and the Roof are coming!**

The medical team also participated in a celebration in honor of Catherine A. Weis and Warren G. Weis, parents of Dr. Barbara Weis. Dr. Barbara has visited Jacsonville five times with her daughter, Christina, and plays an integral role in helping to continue the work of Sante Total. A donation made in their honor will help Sante Total to continue progress on the clinic. With this donation, the walls and roof will be close to completion. We are hoping to be able to use the clinic by Summer 2013.



From left to right: 1- Dr. Barbara presents Gaby Thelus with a plaque in honor of her parents, Catherine A. Weis and Warren G. Weis 2- The clinic construction progresses!

### **Update on Hypertension Study**

In July 2011, members of the Sante Total and Haiti CSR team led by Tulane medical student, Charley Murphy, conducted a study of high blood pressure or hypertension in the Jacsonville community. Just over a year later, we are ready to submit our work for scientific publication. After reviewing 229 medical records, we found that the prevalence of hypertension in Jacsonville is 51.9%. The prevalence of underweight individuals in Jacsonville is 17.5%. From our analysis of urine samples from 37 individuals, we found that the local diet is high in sodium and low in potassium, but no differences were found between individuals with hypertension and normal blood pressure. Informal dietary surveys indicated that the likely source of sodium in the diet is bouillon and premade cooking sauces that most households use. One possible area for intervention to help decrease the prevalence of hypertension in Jacsonville could be efforts directed at lowering the salt content of the local diet. Finally, our genetic analysis from oral DNA swabs indicates that 38% of the population carries a gene that puts them at risk for kidney disease from a variety of sources, including hypertension and diabetes. Additionally, in a collaborative effort with Dr. Charles Rene and medical students Danielle Taylor and Tiffany Wesley from Louisiana State University (LSU), we have collected samples from patients at a clinic in a village named La Valle, in the southern part of Haiti. We plan to analyze these new samples this fall and will combine the results with those from Jacsonville. Finally, we would like to thank the communities of Jacsonville and La Valle for participation in our study, and Dr. Lee Hamm and Dr. Kathleen Hering-Smith from the Tulane Internal Medicine Department for their guidance and support.

### **Jacsonville Needs Assessment**

In Summer 2011, three volunteers from Tulane School of Public Health and LSU School of Medicine, Carl Mickman, Gretchen Newby, and Rex Suter, conducted a "needs assessment" in Jacsonville, seeking to quantify and prioritize community health needs and provide baseline health statistics in preparation for the new Sante Total health clinic. The volunteers analyzed medical records, sent out surveys, and conducted extensive interviews with healthcare providers, community leaders, heads of household, and teenagers on many diverse topics. Subjects addressed include diet, sanitation practices, health and sex education, health-seeking behaviors, and cultural and religious beliefs regarding healthcare. The study identified many problems including inadequate nutrition in the pediatric population, lack of sanitation and infrastructure, and insufficient education about health issues. More importantly, the assessment identified why many of these problems exist, leading to proposed solutions for how best to solve them in partnership with the community. Leaders of Jacsonville continue to work tirelessly on these issues,

but as always, we are looking for volunteers with the expertise and dedication to help! For further inquiries, contact Carl Mickman ([ctmickman@gmail.com](mailto:ctmickman@gmail.com)).



From left to right- Gretchen Newby, Gabriel Thelus, Carl Mickman, and Rex Suter, members of the team who conducted the needs assessment in Jacsonville in Summer 2011.

### **Latrines Coming to Jacsonville**

Last March, Sante Total conducted a site assessment of the sanitation infrastructure within Jacsonville. Currently, 58 households lack access to latrines or other means to enclose defecation and contain harmful bacteria, such as *E. coli*. Another 44 household are using latrines that are inadequate by the World Health Organization (WHO) and also are unsafe to use. Sante Total will begin latrine construction at individual households during the upcoming December trip. The preliminary cost per latrine is estimated at \$175. A goal of the December medical trip is to teach local community members the proper methods and practices to build latrines to WHO standards.



Ben Castleberry and Gabriel Thelus assess the current latrines in Jacsonville, which do not meet WHO standards.

### **Individual Needs**

This section represents some individuals who need specific assistance. If you would like to be involved in helping, please contact Alison ([alison.annette.smith@gmail.com](mailto:alison.annette.smith@gmail.com)).

#### *Jose's education*

Jose Bien-Aime, 24, is one of our translators for clinic and is from a neighboring village to Jacsonville. He has worked hard to master his English skills, and he aspires to become a physician. We are currently working to raise money to put him through medical school in Port au Prince. The cost is approximately \$3,000/year and it will take six years for him to complete his education. Once Jose finishes medical school, he will work in the Sante Total clinic in Jacsonville.



From left to right: 1- Jose studying English at the Mission House in Jacksonville. 2- Jose and his family outside their home in a neighboring village (Photos courtesy of Evan R. Sanders)

### *Burn injury*

A 2 year old girl from a small village that borders Jacksonville burned her hand in June 2012 in a cooking fire. Her family is very poor and she was not able to get her any medical care. When we saw her in July 2012, she was not able to move any fingers on that hand. In order for her to regain some function of the hand, she needs surgical evaluation. Costs of transporting her to a hospital in a larger town are needed, in addition to any medical care. This is a very devastating injury for a young girl in a developing country and she needs some help in order to hopefully live a normal life.



Two year old girl who suffered a severe burn on her hand and now is not able to use it.

### *Volunteers*

We are always looking for physicians who can volunteer their time to come and help us. We cannot continue this work without your assistance! We also need non-medical volunteers to help as well.



Dr. John Roberts, Department of Psychiatry at Tulane University, hangs out with some new friends in Jacksonville

### **Contribute to Sante Total**

If you are interested in making a tax deductible donation, there are two ways. Please keep Sante Total in mind for any fundraisers. We need your support to continue our work!

1) Visit our website and make a donation via Paypal ([www.santetotal.org](http://www.santetotal.org))

2) Mail a check to:  
Sante Total  
c/o E. Alton Sartor  
1511 Dufossat St.  
New Orleans, LA 70115

### **Upcoming Trips**

September 21-28, 2012  
December 29, 2012-January 5, 2013  
March 31-April 6, 2013  
June 29-July 6, 2013

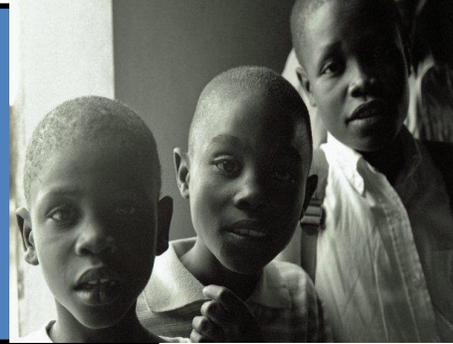
### **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to all of our medical volunteers, especially Dr. Barbara, Dr. Domnica, and Dr. Julia, for their time and energy in helping to make this recent trip successful. Thank you to Debbie and Daniel Wolf for collecting many of the medicines for the trip and thank you to Dr. Mayer Heiman and the International Children's Hospital for medical donations and support. Finally, thank you to all of our supporters for helping us to work together to improve access to healthcare and quality of life in Jacksonville!

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