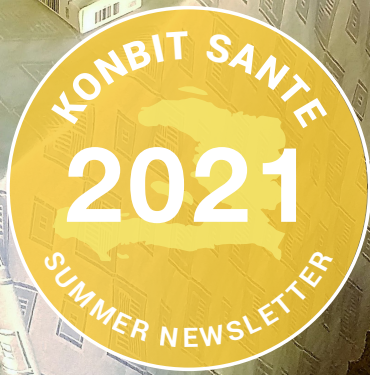


Konbit Sante

CAP-HAITIEN HEALTH PARTNERSHIP



Donate Online: konbitsante.org
Tel: (207) 347-6733 • 362 US Route 1, Falmouth ME 04105 USA

Konbit Sante
CAP-HAITIEN HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

Non-profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Portland, Maine
PERMIT #348

Ultrasound Training Program

We would like to highlight one of our projects that focuses on strengthening ultrasound imaging capacity in the Northern department of Haiti. The ultrasound machines are donated to Konbit Sante by Humanitarian Radiology Development Corp, a non-profit organization that is led by our collaborator, Dr. Berndt Schmit. The organization donates equipment and provides training and tools for the users.

This project is currently being conducted at Unite de Lutte pour la Sante (ULS) Health Center and Serving Sante (SS) with the plan to expand to more hospitals and health centers. The ultrasound machines have been extremely helpful to conduct prenatal exams for expectant mothers.

In both cases, the medical directors at the facilities identified the need for support. At ULS Health Center, this is one component of a maternal and child health project funded by a grant from SG Foundation. The project covers comprehensive prenatal care services, including ultrasound screening for pregnant women. On the other hand, SS had been offering prenatal ultrasounds as part of their routine care until a part of their machine malfunctioned last year. The equipment was made in China and they were unable to find the replacement parts. Dr. Nelly Osias, the medical director of SS, approached Konbit Sante for assistance to obtain a new machine.

The screenings conducted by the machines have been able to help make births safer for women and their newborn children. Data from ULS Health Center indicates they were able to conduct sixty scans from December 2020 to April 2021, and only seven of those pregnancies had fetal complications which required special health treatment. Data from SS indicates they were successfully able to screen 634 patients between February 2020 to July 2021.

Our programs team on the ground at Konbit Sante, is working alongside our healthcare partners and collaborators to strengthen this project. We are hopeful that this project will improve and facilitate better health outcomes for pregnant women.



Making Births Safe for Women

This project was awarded a \$15,000 grant from SG Foundation last year through Konbit Sante. We collaborated with Unite de Lutte pour la Sante (ULS) Health Center on this project.

This has been a year-long project focused on making births safe for women and improving the health outcomes of children living in Band du Nord, a peri-urban community of 25,000 people located on the outskirts of Cap-Haitien, Haiti. This project has encompassed four interventions: prenatal clinics, mobile clinics, rally posts, and support for traditional birth attendants.

Prenatal clinics provide pregnant women with basic prenatal care focused on risk identification, prevention and management of pregnancy-related complications, and health counseling. Mobile clinics occur once a month at geographically isolated communities. These clinics offer a range of preventive and curative services for the whole family, including screening and hospital referrals for malnourished children. The clinics also serve as vaccination sites.

Finally, traditional birth attendants meet monthly with ULS Health Center nurses to receive birthing kits, discuss challenging cases, and review topics for continuing education and skill-building interventions. Traditional birth attendants also identify and refer at-risk pregnant women to ULS Health Center.

This project had 4423 direct beneficiaries between December 2020 and April 2021. We estimate there were approximately 14,000 people that were indirect beneficiaries. Despite some financial and political disturbances in the area, ULS Health Center continued to provide quality care and services to a significant portion of the population.



For more information, visit Konbitsante.org

Fundraising & Community Partner: Earth & Soul Pottery

This year, we have been collaborating with Sarah Sorenson Coppi, a local artist and owner of Earth and Soul Pottery in Hollis, Maine. She makes mosaic shower installations and other mosaics out of clay in her studio, which is attached to her beautiful farm. She is a farmer and mother of three, who loves nature, travel, and people. Sarah stated, "My honest belief is that people should be connected. Kids are kids, no matter where they are and it's the same for adults. We should make the time to help those who are struggling in any way, because if it were me I would want someone to help. The way I can help currently is by spreading the word and letting as many people know about Konbit Sante as possible."

Sarah got involved with Konbit Sante about 12 years ago when a former staff member connected her with an asylum seeker. She thought art might be helpful for their transition and to this day, they are still connected. She enthusiastically said, "I just like being involved where I know I can make a difference. Konbit Sante is a small non-profit organization and you can see that the work they do in Haiti is very helpful. I also have my own friends from Haiti. I was really happy when the executive director, Rupal Ramesh Shah, contacted me. It has been a while since I was involved with Konbit Sante so it is nice to be back!"

Sarah hosted a fundraiser and open house event this Spring at her farm where Konbit Sante was invited to showcase the metal art from Haiti and share about our work. Sarah also serves on our Fundraising and Communications Committee. She is actively helping us to develop ways to raise funds for Konbit Sante. We are lucky to have such a bright and creative personality on our team at Konbit Sante.



Meet our Pediatrics Program Manager, Dr. Rony Saint Fleur

Q: What part of Haiti are you from?

A: I am from Saint Marc, a city in the Artibonite department of Haiti.

Q: Where do you currently work and what is your current position and role?

A: I am a pediatrician and I work in the pediatrics service, at Justinien University Hospital (JUH) as an attending pediatrician and at Konbit Sante as a program manager.

Q: Why did you become a pediatrician?

A: I couldn't be a pediatrician without a medical degree. When I was a kid, my father often brought me to the hospital and I didn't like the way the general physicians treated the kids who were at the hospital. One day my father took me to a pediatrician in Port-au-Prince, the capital city of Haiti, and I realized the difference between a pediatrician and other doctors. So I finally said to my father that I am going to be a pediatrician.

Q: How did you hear about Konbit Sante, and why did you join us?

A: I first learned about Konbit Sante in 2003 when I was in my last year of residency. The founder Dr. Michael Taylor and his wife came to visit JUH and talked with some of us about his dream. After my residency, I worked in Milot, at another hospital for 5 years but during that time, I was always in contact with JUH. Subsequently, I used to hear about Konbit Sante. Dr. Serge Charles, the chief of the pediatrics service, used to encourage me to come back and work with him. At another meeting with Dr. Nathan Nickerson, the former executive director

of Konbit Sante, I was convinced to join the team. In our continued discussions, I understood that Konbit Sante would help me realize my dream to help the healthcare system in Haiti.

Q: What does your day-to-day life look like at Justinien University Hospital?

A: I come in the morning at 8:00 am, complete a morning report or conduct a lecture with the residents and interns. After that I follow up with bedside rounds till noon. When there are a lot of outpatients I have to also take care of them. Apart from that, I complete my administrative tasks and am usually available at the hospital until 3:00 pm.

Q: What is your most proud moment as a healthcare provider? Do you have some interesting stories to share?

A: I have several. One of them is when I was in my second year of pediatrics residency training. Another pediatrician had to take care of a severely premature newborn. After 2 days he decided to abandon the baby because he thought that the baby had no chance to survive. That baby weighed 0.8kgs. The mom came to me and asked me to help her save the baby. She said after two days of observation she believed I could perform a miracle. And we did it together. We cared for the baby and the baby survived. That baby is in her second year of university today.

Q: Where do you see yourself in 3 to 5 years?

A: That is a difficult question. I hope I will be in Haiti, continuing to do what I like to do. I also hope to continue to train and support others around me. For example, I will encourage the training of young pediatricians and to continue, through Toastmasters International, to help people develop their communication and leadership skills. I would also like to continue to help Konbit Sante realize our mission in the Northern department of Haiti.

Q: In your opinion, what needs to happen for Haiti to have a sustainable health system?

A: The government needs to invest more into the healthcare system. They need to invest in management and leadership skills training. They also need to give the local management team more autonomy to lead because the local authorities have a better understanding of the reality. Ultimately, their decision would have more impact.



Internship Profile: Alice Cockerham

Alice is Konbit Sante's Social Media and Fundraising intern for the summer of 2021. A rising junior at Bates College studying Anthropology and Religious studies, she hopes to pursue work in the non-profit field once she graduates.

"Interning at Konbit Sante this summer has been an incredible opportunity. I have been able to get a taste of what a future career in the field of global health would look and feel like."

Some of her responsibilities include creating, editing, and publishing content for Konbit Sante's social media accounts, interviewing and developing organizational profiles, and writing various pieces for the newsletters. She is also leading the efforts with our summer fundraiser, 'We Walk with Haiti.' She has developed content for it, collaborated with team members to set up their fundraising pages, and raised funds for the walk too!

While working remotely, she has been able to attend our US-based staff meetings and the Fundraising and Communications Committee meetings. In writing the profiles and newsletter pieces, she has had the opportunity to connect with the Konbit Sante team members to learn more about their work and the programs they manage and operate. Alice mentioned, "One of my favorite responsibilities is talking to our partners in Haiti. Their stories are powerful and inspiring. Being involved in such a small part of the work at Konbit Sante has been a very rewarding experience for me."

We're excited to have a summer intern from Bates College and hope to continue the internship program with this and other nearby colleges and universities in the years to come!

We Walk with Haiti

This summer, Konbit Sante hosted a virtual fundraiser to raise funds for our work in Haiti. The fundraiser, We Walk with Haiti, raised over \$60,000 with the help of staff and board members, honorary advisors, and our community supporters. We had over two hundred donors who contributed through various fundraising campaign pages.

People were also able to create team pages and raise funds to reach their team goal. Both the Board of Directors and the Honorary Advisors created teams and had a race to see who could raise \$10,000 first. We also had families create fundraising teams who were able to raise hundreds of dollars for Konbit Sante!

We are thankful for everyone's donations and fundraising efforts. The funds raised not only assist in the COVID-19 response efforts, but also support ongoing healthcare projects in pediatric care, communicable disease prevention, prenatal and postnatal care, community outreach education and immunizations, and more. We rely on this fundraiser to provide a significant portion of our annual budget.

We recognize that this past year has been trying for everyone, and are grateful for any level of support that was given. Every bit helps, no matter how small.



Konbit Sante

CAP-HAITIEN HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

Dear Friends of Konbit Sante,

Greetings from Maine! I'd like to take a moment to thank all of you for your support of Konbit Sante throughout the years. My first year at Konbit Sante, as executive director, continues to be enriching as I learn more and contribute to the work in Cap-Haitien, Haiti.

Haiti has been on the news a lot lately due to the assassination of the former president. Our hearts are with all the people of Haiti and we continue to stand by them during this unpredictable time. Our work with our healthcare partners in Cap-Haitien, continues as it always has and our team continues to drive the work that is much needed.

Your support, during this challenging time, has allowed us to continue the work and we thank you for it. Your generosity allows us to stay true to our mission, even during this time.

We hope this newsletter provides a glimpse of all the activities we have been involved in this past year. There's much to share and this is just a highlight of all the work we are doing. We also have new projects coming up that we will share with you in the coming weeks and months, so stay tuned.

This year we celebrate our 20-year anniversary. As we mark this milestone moment, I am proud of our organization and of the broader community that has stood by us. We wouldn't be here without all of you, so please accept my gratitude for your unlimited support. Depending on the guidelines set due to the pandemic, we hope to celebrate with all of you in some form later this year.

As always, if you're interested in connecting with us and learning more, please email or call us. We are always happy to hear from you.

Kembe Fem,



Rupal Ramesh Shah
Executive Director

