

# *Haitian Center for Inclusive Education with Dr. Don DeVito*

Serving the Lord in Haiti



The Haitian Center for Inclusive Education participated in educational collaborations this past month with the Margika program for children with disabilities and the Rawlings Elementary Center for Fine Arts in Gainesville Florida via WhatsApp and Zoom.

We are trying to help increase the connectivity and broadband power at the Haitian Center for Inclusive Education. There are currently gas shortages for the generator and rioting. This makes it difficult for the children and teachers to get to the school, but their love of music education and learning continues.

We would appreciate your support in helping to raise the funds need to purchase supplies that allow the school to connect with the outside world for education allowing them to use expand their horizons of learning.

You can give a gift online at [www.HarvestInternaitonal.org](http://www.HarvestInternaitonal.org) or by mail at PO Box 6690, Ocala, FL 34479. Notate HCIE.



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The Haitian Center for Inclusive Education wishes everyone Christmas thoughts and prayers for your families and for our children with disabilities who attend our inclusive school.

This has been a difficult year for everyone there to say the least. Gang violence, government instability, kidnapping, sickness and lack of fuel and supplies for the school and the Notre Maison Orphanage where the majority of the children come from has not resulted in the school being shut down permanently. Lessons are still taking place and now more than ever we need what support and prayers you can send to us.

The mission of this school is undaunted and we continue to pray for the safety of the children and teachers at the HCIE in Port-au-Prince. Gertrude Bien Aime who founded this school and the Notre Maison Orphanage is a blessing from God for the more than 40 children with disabilities she has currently saved and raised. Below is a link on my collaboration with Gertrude.

<https://exceptionalchildren.org/100/stories/devito>

My name is Dr. Donald DeVito. I am an educator in Florida and the 2011 national Council for Exceptional Children teacher of the year (special education). This organization is celebrating their 100th anniversary and I was selected among 100 teachers to share a story. Mine is our collaboration between the Rawlings Elementary Center for Fine Arts and my involvement leading to the development of the Haitian Center for Inclusive Education.

If you are looking for a positive reflection and uplifting story on Haiti and the work being done there please see the link below. After this story I was introduced to Danny Thomas and the Haitian Center for Inclusive Education joined with Harvest International!



## Celebrating Jeanne Maryse as the 1st annual Haitian Center for Inclusive Education's student of the Year



Maryse was born one year before the devastating Earthquake in Port-au-Prince . Orphaned and born with physical disabilities, her future was bleak, but she was taken into Notre Maison, an inclusive children's home, by Gertrude Bien Amie at the age of four. When she arrived she could not walk due to the deformity of her feet, but Bien Amie made sure she had the surgery needed to repair her feet soon after her arrival.

Maryse was determined to not only learn to walk but to become the best dancer at the new inclusive school that she began to attend in 2017. Prior to that she was educated at the orphanage as children with disabilities rarely have the opportunity to attend school. Despite the challenges she has had to face at such a young age, Maryse continues to approach her life as if there were no barriers.



Maryse is an inspiration for all her classmates and teachers. She is vivacious and has a can-do attitude despite her physical and learning challenges. She speaks up in class proudly when called upon and shares her knowledge and spirit with visiting teachers. She absolutely is a leader for the other children in her academics and school activities celebrating her customs and celebrations. She sings and dances and approaches any activity in the school with a creative, skilled, and inclusive spirit. Even despite her ability to safely attend school during the past violence in Haiti, Maryse is determined that school and her peers succeed with joy in their hearts. She is an inspiration not only for all her peers at the orphanage but an example as well at her school that with the right support and guidance she can transcend her circumstances and continue to succeed in her endeavors.



After eight years at Notre Maison orphanage and having limited opportunities for adoption due to the environmental and political difficulties that plague Haiti, Maryse has grown and blossomed into a remarkable young woman and has become a leader and mentor. She has become a surrogate teacher and role model to the younger children both on an emotional and academic manner. She spends countless hours supporting Gertrude's mission in offering an inclusive education for all children and exemplifies the power of perseverance and the power of the human spirit. She is my hero.