

Thank you for your concern and interest in nursing in Haiti. Haiti Nursing Foundation welcomes your participation in fulfilling our Mission: to support the advancement of nursing in the Republic of Haiti. The focus of this support is on nursing education, and especially on *Faculté des Sciences Infirmières de l'Université Episcopale d'Haïti* (Faculty of Nursing Science of the Episcopal University of Haiti, or **FSIL**) located in Léogâne.

We know that ***relationships with U.S. organizations – Schools of Nursing in particular – will be vital to nursing education in Haiti for years to come.*** Haiti Nursing Foundation (HNF) can offer suggestions and guidelines that make it easier for you to develop your efforts. We hope that one or more of the following will appeal to your organization, your faculty or students.

Support for the FSIL School of Nursing

HNF works closely with the school's Governing Board to help provide what is most needed at FSIL.

Visiting Faculty

Nurse educators from the U.S. will be playing a major role at FSIL during the next few years, to include distance learning as well as short- and long-term visiting faculty. Nurse educators teaching at FSIL need to be Master's or PhD prepared. While the language of instruction at FSIL is French, English translators are available.

A subcommittee of the FSIL Governing Board made up of nurse educators reviews the credentials of potential volunteer faculty. Inquiries on serving as visiting faculty can be sent to info@haitinursing.org.

FSIL Student and Operating Support

It may not be glamorous, but a commitment of financial support to FSIL is the most concrete and essential way you can help. FSIL cannot survive without significant help from outside Haiti. Given the average Haitian's income of about \$800 per year, the \$3,000 annual cost per student was impossible for most Haitian families to manage (even before the earthquakes). All of our students have since lost a great deal: friends and family members, many even their homes and belongings. Yet today they are focused and eager to continue their educations – and more in need of our help than ever.

Even before the January 12 earthquake, a number of student nurses associations had conducted fundraising events to benefit FSIL. Since then nursing school student bodies and SNA's across the U.S. have rallied for FSIL. One group had a "blood pressure-a-thon." Others hosted a variety of events like a Movie Night, a "Sweet-tea Pong" contest, Book Signing and Art Show. Another had their third "Hope for Haiti" ball, now an annual event, and raised over \$6,000. (All funds of this kind go to FSIL and do not support Haiti Nursing Foundation's management or fundraising expenses – though of course we need that support as well.)

Haiti Nursing Foundation would be happy to help you with fundraising. We can send a PowerPoint presentation or a DVD to use in your fundraising efforts. We can also send brochures or other informational materials. We may even be able to visit your area to make a presentation. What people want to see or know about HNF and FSIL varies, so you can let us know what would be most helpful in your situation.

Building a Relationship with FSIL

Partnerships with U.S. nursing schools and student nurses associations are a natural connection. Beyond financial support, it may be possible to establish student exchanges between FSIL and your SON. Students from two U.S. schools traveled (pre-earthquake) to FSIL to attend classes, hold community health fairs with FSIL students, and tutor them in English. Such experiences were deeply rewarding for all involved. We hope that conditions in Haiti will soon allow for such exchanges to resume. In the meantime, FSIL students can benefit from email correspondence with nursing students in the U.S. Haitian students' English skills are strengthened, and they gain moral support through the demonstrated concern of other nursing students.

Maggie Wolf, Wisconsin Student Nurses Association President 2010-2011, wrote in a letter accompanying her organization's donation to HNF: "WSNA fully supports dedication to lifelong learning about other cultures and recognizes that being culturally aware not only results in better client care, but it is also a step in eliminating health disparities and inequalities. Being mindful of what is happening on a global front relative to our fellow student nurses is integral to our organization..."

Donations of Supplies and Materials

Unfortunately, we cannot recommend collecting books or supplies for FSIL. There is no practical way to get supplies into Haiti, other than what can be carried by people who are traveling down. In some cases large items or large quantities can be shipped through organizations specializing in this. We can give you information on such organizations if requested. However, you would want to be sure that it doesn't cost more to ship and clear customs than what the items are worth.

It's also crucial to remember that what doesn't work well here becomes a burden in Haiti. The FSIL Governing Board has developed a Policy on Donations that can be forwarded, and is available on our website (www.haitinursing.org). Haiti Nursing Foundation normally wires funds FSIL for the school to purchase in Haiti whatever is needed. This is better for the Haitian economy. However, many things aren't available yet since the earthquake – or they must be ordered, with long waiting periods. It is a difficult situation at best.

Other Support for Nursing Education in Haiti

Haiti Nursing Foundation's mission to advance nursing in Haiti is also realized through efforts such as hospital nursing support, community health screening and education events, and continuing education for nurses. HNF is planning a Continuing Education conference for nurses and nurse educators in 2011, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

A current project is HNF's convening of a Symposium on *The Future of Nursing Education in Haiti*, to be held August 20-22, 2010 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Haiti Nursing Foundation will make it possible for a Haitian contingent to attend without cost. If you would like more information please contact us at 734-353-9565, or by email at info@haitinursing.org.

If you haven't already visited our website we encourage you to do so (www.haitinursing.org). There are many photos of FSIL, and news of the school since the earthquakes.

We would be delighted to provide more information, and look forward to hearing your ideas. The need for your support in Haiti is long-term; ***there will be much work to be done for decades***. We hope you'll stay involved in our efforts to improve nursing education, and especially in supporting the FSIL School of Nursing in Léogâne.