



Akademi Soud Ayiti

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2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following suit with the rest of the world, 2020 presented the Haiti Deaf Academy students, staff and leadership team with many opportunities to demonstrate their ability to adjust to change. When the President of Haiti closed all schools, non-essential businesses, and the country's borders on March 19th, all the students but one eventually returned to their homes. In an answer to prayers for protection, to our knowledge, none of our staff, students and their families contracted COVID.

In the absence of US Directors, visiting missionary teams and visiting Board members, the Haitian staff continued their great leadership, validating the skills they have developed over the years. While the students were away, the staff painted and cleaned up the interior spaces of our facilities. In August, the primary schools re-opened and students joyfully returned to a new fresh look in the dorm and common areas of HDA. Unfortunately, shortly after their return, structural safety issues were noticed, requiring a closing of the facility until an alternative home could be identified. A better home was rented and everyone happily returned in November.

Two new students joined HDA for the fall 2020 school year.

Debora is the four-year-old daughter of an 18-year-old hearing young woman (Debora and her mother pictured on right) who desperately wanted her daughter to receive an education while she attends school herself. Kerbendjy is a four-year-old little boy with some health issues, so for right now, he is a day student. (Photo during hearing screening) Both are learning to sign and enjoying their new deaf friends.



As we continually strive to improve “best practices” for teaching the Deaf in a developing country, we have adjusted our curriculum to include a transition to life skills classes and vocational training as students reach 15 years of age. If a younger student excels in academics, a continued academic education will be made available. To date, however, due to a late introduction to language and general education, our students have not qualified for a higher education and being trained for a role in the home or community to which they will return after graduation is much more realistic.



As the end of 2020 drew near, the leadership team began to sense that dreams of being located on a large campus with cottage style housing could actually become a reality. Conversations in the making for three years were resulting in potential funding that would answer prayers and make a huge impact on the ministry. On December 31st, 2020, we received word that a foundation would build our first cottage on the campus of Lifesong MBO, a like-minded ministry in Bercy, Haiti. So while 2020 was a rocky road at times, it is safe to say it ended on a high note that has everyone involved with HDA singing praises for the blessings ahead in 2021.

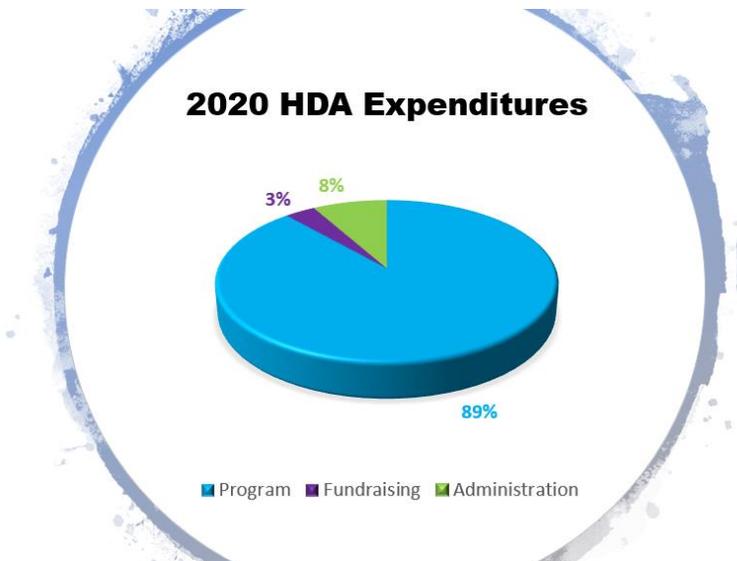


Our numbers

Students enrolled (ages 4-18)	44
Residential Students	39
Day Students	5
Full time staff	18
Part time staff	3



FINANCIALS



Operational expenses for the Haiti Deaf Academy are covered by child sponsorships, grants, church partners and individual donors. The annual budget is approximately \$250,000. Our 990 Tax forms are posted on the organization's website, under About US/Financial Information. HDA remains committed to using funds to invest in the whole person.

Vision Statement

The Haiti Deaf Academy is a non-profit, nondenominational Christian organization striving to educate, employ, empower and encourage, so that every Haitian child with a hearing loss may know and reach their God-given potential.

Mission Statement

The Haiti Deaf Academy offers a transformational program, leading to self-reliance by providing language, academic and vocational training and both physical and spiritual nourishment for deaf & hard of hearing children and their families and deaf adult staff.



Board Leadership

Our five-member Board of Directors is actively involved in the ministry by providing a weekly operations update and prayer support call with the local Haitian Dorm Supervisor and the American Directors serving in Haiti.

2020 Board of Directors

Chairman

Stephanie Deeb, RN Tampa, FL
sdeeb71@gmail.com

Treasurer

Leslie Wildermuth Downingtown, PA
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Financial Advisor

Josh Reaktenwalt
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Darwin Covington Walker, Iowa
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Member at Large

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Advisory Committee

Hearing Health and
Development/Founder

Cathy Jones Ponte Vedra, FL
Cathyhjones@gmail.com

Program Development
/Founder

Margaret Spratlin Atlanta, GA
margaret@haitideafacademy.com

Education and Student
Family Relationships

Ellen Rolader Atlanta, GA

HDA Directors

Meredith and Keith Henderson, Cabaret, Haiti
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kbhenderson56@gmail.com

2020 Highlights

COVID-19 Response

The COVID -19 pandemic closed all schools, including HDA for four and a half months. To our knowledge, our staff, students and their families remained virus free.

Academics

Due to disruption in school attendance for political unrest, COVID-19 and structural safety issues necessitating a facility move, all students repeated the academic year in which they were enrolled at the start of the fall 2019 school year.

Life Skills/Vocational Training

- Ten students received a Certificate of Completion after a Block Wall Construction Class through Extollo International. One student now has a job in block wall construction.



- HDA created a Life Skills curriculum, adapted from a Casey Life Skill Evaluation developed for Haitians. The three-year program for students age 15-18 includes:
Year 1: Food and Nutrition, Health and Self-Care, and Safety and Advocacy
Year 2: Communication & Relationships, Technology, and "My Future" Housing
Year 3: Work & Education, Documents & the Government, Finance, and

In each of the three years, Spiritual Growth will be included.



- As a part of the Life Skills program, our staff taught the older students to make pate (fried Haitian Patties) on a charcoal stove, while younger students watched, eager for their turn in these classes. Since this skill could



lead to a potential business, the students also learned how to calculate the cost of supplies and the profit margin.



Spiritual Development

Daily Bible Classes and weekly church attendance continued for our students and staff, with evening small group discussions about the day's challenges and highlights. During the time between the return to the new facility and the start of school in November, the students spent a full week working on Bible lessons, further developing their strong spiritual foundation. This focus is aligned with our ministry's guiding verse, "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6



Staff

- A part time bookkeeper joined the staff and has done a great job learning and using Quickbooks for our many accounting needs.
- A former student was hired to assist with laundry at HDA.
- Security guard hours were increased to a 24/7 schedule, in response to potential issues associated with political unrest and desperation associated with COVID-19 related food scarcity.
- PèPi, the guard dog, a local stray, was added to the staff, offering his loud barking at the sound of unfamiliar noises that are not heard by our students and deaf staff.

Healthcare

- All present students received two Haitian Orphanage Medical Support (HOMS) visits, providing Height/Weight and upper arm circumference measurements as well as Albendazole for ring worm and Vitamin A

supplements. Vitamin A deficiency is considered one of the single most current causes of some health issues in developing countries. All students were within a healthy height and weight for age due to our supplemental food program for families and none lost a significant amount of weight while visiting their homes.



- All students received daily multivitamins.
- Basic medical needs were met routinely, including visits to the Alpha Omega Clinic in Cabaret, when needed.
- One student, diagnosed with Genu Valgum, (severe knock knees)



causing pain and a deteriorating ability to walk received life changing surgery at L'Hospital Adventiste in Diquini in September. Our social worker attended this surgery and subsequent visits for follow up care. This student also attended twice weekly physical therapy at St. Camille Hospital in Croix de Bouquets. We were blessed to collaborate with Higher Hope Connect Ministries on his plan of care.

- Another student had monthly visits to the neurologist at Clinique d' épilepsie de Port au Prince (CLIDEP). The HDA social worker accompanied her on each visit. The medications prescribed have prevented most of her seizures and improved her behavior. Unfortunately, she does not receive the medications routinely when she is at home, which causes break through seizures, one of which resulted in a fall into a hot fire that burned her face.



- Our new four-year-old student has severe sickle cell disease and was hospitalized at the Alpha and Omega Medical Mission (ALOM) clinic this fall.

Facilities

Shortly after the students returned to our original rental house in August, the staff began to notice cracks in the facility structure and the house was deemed unsafe by local inspectors. The students were moved back home during a search for a new facility. A much better home was located in the same community, Cabaret, and the staff worked very hard to move the 48 bunkbeds and other furniture to the new space. Big smiles were all around as the staff welcomed the students back to their new accommodations on November 3rd.

Families

As the majority of the students come from situations of abject poverty, during the months of the COVID-19 closure, HDA provided food support to more than 25% of the families.



One HDA graduate and one community member continued offering sign language classes to our student's hearing family members, which opens the doors for much needed communication between parents and children.

Looking ahead...

After years of prayer, doors may be opening for HDA to move to a beautiful campus, with cottage style housing and room to play! As we wrap up 2020, due diligence is underway on the part of HDA and our possible new supporters in this God sized venture. While 2020 was filled with both challenges and successes, we are anxiously awaiting the Lord's plan in store for HDA in 2021!

For more information:

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The Haiti Deaf Academy is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization (#20-1150550) and a project of Commissioned Believers Deaf Ministry.



2020 Staff



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HAITI DEAF ACADEMY