



Haiti Deaf Academy

haitideafacademy.com

2017 Annual Report

Executive Summary

The Haiti Deaf Academy is a boarding school for 46 deaf and hard of hearing children living in the west department of Haiti. Students live on the HDA campus, receiving language development, after school tutoring, vocational training and spiritual development while attending a local primary school. Many were rescued from situations of abuse and, without language, lived in isolation. They now learn and play among deaf peers, with deaf adult role models and hopes for a future of self-reliance.

2017 was a year of positive change for the Haiti Deaf Academy (HDA), highlighted by the addition of a missionary couple serving as on-site Directors for the ministry. Meredith and Keith Henderson joined the team in June and have already had a major impact on day to day operations.



HDA students were all promoted to the next academic grade and continued to receive the very important after school tutoring to work on language development and supplement the academic instruction they receive at school. The tutors monitor student progress and work on behavior issues and special learning needs as they arise. Spiritual development for the students remains a priority, and weekly Bible classes supplement Sunday School classes and church attendance.

Improvement in meal planning and refrigeration equipment have resulted in more fresh fruits, vegetables and meats for the children. All are flourishing as seen by the healthy weight gains recorded on regular weigh ins.

2017 was also a good year for the HDA staff. The first ever Godly Leadership Training for employees brought out the best in all. Open to improvement, the staff had numerous honest discussions about challenges and opportunities for better working relationships. They covered honesty, self-control and courteous communication. Rebecca Diley, from Hope Signs, led the training and is committed to continue the teachings in three follow up workshops planned for 2018.

Additional accomplishments are listed below under Highlights. 2017 was a good year and the beginning of many new growth and development opportunities.

New Directors

Coming from positions as House Parents for Amazing Grace, a home for unwed mothers in Minneapolis, MN, Meredith and Keith Henderson understand the unique challenges of running a home for a special population. Among Keith's many skills matching up with our needs are banking, solar panel installation, woodworking/furniture repair, "fix-it" know-how and the ever-popular bicycle repair. All of those skills are being used and taught to our students and staff.

Meredith, a skilled sign language interpreter and interpreter trainer, also brought skills that are a natural fit. Sewing, needle work, baking, menu development with maximum nutritional benefit in mind, and most importantly a love for and understanding of Deaf culture, to name a few.

Meredith and Keith have stepped in to help staff better understand the priorities of their positions and, with their daily presence, are available to help staff work through challenging discipline situations that are typical of dorm school environments.

Together as a couple, the Hendersons model the behaviors of a committed, Christ based marriage relationship, providing a healthy example for the children and staff. Their impact on the HDA will forever be the best thing that happened in 2017.



Our numbers

Children enrolled	46
Full time staff	18
Part time staff	2
Visiting mission teams	6
Visiting medical teams	2
Summer Interns	3



2017 Highlights

- New manager/assistant manager positions were approved and filled by the married couple serving as our boys' and girls' afternoon tutors. Elie Belton Badio is a hearing gentleman, raised in an orphanage and married to Farah Josaphat, a talented deaf teacher. While continuing their tutoring role, the couple lives on site during the week and serves as student and staff supervisors. Badio and Farah work under the supervision of our Directors, Meredith and Keith Henderson.
- As part of a "Hear Haiti" multi-year grant, Hear the World Foundation covered the cost of three visiting screening teams of audiologists, plus hearing aids, hearing aid batteries and testing equipment. Existing hard of hearing students and potential new students were screened, as were newborns in the area. Hear Haiti Project also initiated prototype mobile clinics with various Haitian partners for earlier identification of children with hearing loss and Deafness.
- Project Love, a Georgia based sleepwear company, funded weekday after school tutoring services for our older female students.
- The Halifax Rotary donated a food storage system, which included a refrigerator, freezer and solar panels for powering them. This has greatly enhanced HDA's ability to serve fresh food and store food in a safe place, and has generally improved the level of nutrition provided.
- Several other small grants provided by individuals supported special projects, such as sewing training, metal art training, pastor training, etc.
- Nine staff participated in the first ever Godly Leadership Training
- An outside screened in kitchen area was added to the property

- In July, the HDA began a life skills training program by taking six older students into Port-au-Prince for a grocery store and pizza restaurant visit. Exposure to the outside hearing world in a safe, supervised environment brought them closer to self-reliance and the independent life in our ministry's vision. Regular field trips of this sort are planned for 2018.
- In October, a Family Team Project was implemented with a friendly competition component. The students were divided into seven multi-age teams, led by older students. They ate together, simulating family meal time. With one staff member assigned to each, the student leaders helped their teams straighten their bedrooms before school, complete chores and arrive prepared for the tap tap transport to school. Daily scores lead to winning teams being treated to a meal out at the end of each month. The Family Team Project has been a big success so far.
- A sign language class taught by our older students was initiated for family members. Most do not sign and will be encouraged to learn the heart language of their children. These classes are being expanded to include community members in 2018.

Board of Directors

President and Sponsor Coordination	Darwin Covington Walker, IA darwin@haitideafacademy.com
Hearing Health and Development	Cathy Jones LaQuinta, CA Cathyhjones@gmail.com
Secretary and Development	Margaret Spratlin Atlanta, GA margaret@haitideafacademy.com
HDA Directors	Meredith and Keith Henderson Cabaret, Haiti meredith@haitideafacademy.com keith@haitideafademy.com
HDA Treasurer	Kaelee Coleman Walker, IA Kaleecoleman@gmail.com



Mission Statement

We offer a transformational pathway to self-reliance by providing language, academic/vocational training and both physical and spiritual nourishment for deaf & hard of hearing children, adults and families.

Vision Statement

We are 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.

For more information

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