

# many hands

QUARTERLY

SEPT 2017 - THIS ISSUE

- 2 BUNDLING BOTTOMS | OUTLET OPENS
- 3 NEW FACES | IRENE'S PLACE | 1000 DAYS
- 4 TEAMS IN HAITI | COLOR BLAST



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## GARDENS OF GROWTH

BY HILLARY HAMILTON



The team from Connecticut installing a new system



MH4H Assistant Agronomist Kely will help manage two hydroponic systems

Haiti is a country based upon agriculture. But infertile soil, limited resources, and scarce rain cause many Haitians to struggle with farming. "Not everyone understands farming or how to do it properly," shares Agronomy Technical School student, Pastor Odis "(but) they are thirsty for the knowledge." Many live in poverty, averaging a \$2 per day income. Because of this, Haitians cannot afford land, machinery, or an education that teaches farming techniques appropriate to the country's conditions.

Our continued goal is to develop sustainable agronomy practices, which would decrease poverty levels by providing a source of income and food. Member of the standing panel on Impact Assessment for CGIAR (Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research) and agricultural researcher Bob Herdt, agrees, "Charity donations are good, but they're not enough because they eventually run out. We need to find a way to help the people become self-sufficient." Enabling the Haitian population to be self-sufficient in food production would dramatically decrease malnutrition, and in turn also stimulate the economy. Sustainable farming practices need to be supported to flourish the country.

Many Hands for Haiti has been studying farming practices suitable to the land, while communicating with local leaders. From this, we have recently begun to employ new hydroponic systems to develop sustainable agriculture in the Pignon region.

In July, a team from Bloomfield, Connecticut, led by Christian Heiden, were able to build and install eight new individual hydroponic systems outside of the Many Hands campus. These hydroponic gardens will give local farmers a chance to learn how to run these systems efficiently. Since then, locals have been showing new interest in these systems, increasing their desire to learn new techniques. Kely, our MH4H Assistant Agronomist, will be providing support to locals in charge of these hydroponic gardens. He will also be overseeing the Many Hands Campus systems, and two systems that have been installed in his yard.

"Currently, the hydroponic system on the Many Hands for Haiti campus has the potential to produce up to 400 pounds of food per month. If we can replicate these systems out into wider Pignon, there is real potential for them to completely transform lives and communities," shares Tim Brand, MH4H Executive Leader. It will especially create a massive impact in communities where resources are scarce. Also, because it does not require a large initial investment, it can be taught to people with no prior agricultural knowledge.

Through these new hydroponic systems we hope to start laying a foundation to creating real long-term change throughout Pignon. These hydroponic systems are already blessing many, providing jobs, nutritious foods, and new hope. We are excited to see how they will impact Pignon and transform lives in the months and years to come.



Washing the seedlings



Planting the seedlings



Preparing for installment



Let the growing begin!



# BUNDLING BOTTOMS FOR GOOD

"We're all called to do something," says Many Hands for Haiti's Executive Leader, Tim Brand. Even if you do not feel called to serve in Haiti, you can still make a difference. Haiti is an impoverished country, and there is a need for job creation. Many families are unable to afford clothing or undergarments for their children. This creates a problem because the houses often have dirt floors.

Since children do not have undergarments, families are exposed to open defecation in homes. The floors are difficult and often impossible to clean because they retain bacteria, causing sickness and disease to spread and linger among the people.

However, there is a solution! Marcena Schwab, MH4H Office Manager, is in charge of our Bundled Bottoms program to transform the health and lives of Haitian families. The Bundled Bottoms program began in Trinity Reformed Church when Marcena was asked to help sew diapers for a children's home in Haiti. After creating a few, Marcena asked herself why they were only given to children's homes as many Haitian families are unable to provide diapers for their babies. With the hope of making mothers' lives more convenient, Marcena proposed that MH4H start distributing the t-shirt diapers to families in Haiti.

The program began, and it became popular! The diapers made life in Haiti easier, but they also impacted health and sanitation in a positive way. Soon, Bundled Bottoms became an official MH4H program, and people started hosting cutting parties.

By downloading a free printable pattern and cutting diapers out of t-shirts, any age or gender is able to help combat health problems in Haiti. After the diapers are cut, they are sewn together by our Haitian seamstresses. This gives an economic opportunity to women by creating jobs and providing fair wages for workers. Once the diapers are created, they are given to food distribution recipients and families involved in Thrive for 5.

For more information on becoming a Bundled Bottoms supporter or hosting a Bundled Bottoms party, call us at 641-629-6633, or email our expert, Marcena at [mschwab@mh4h.org](mailto:mschwab@mh4h.org). Find out more by visiting [www.mh4h.org/ways-to-help/bundled-bottoms/](http://www.mh4h.org/ways-to-help/bundled-bottoms/).



One of many cutting events held in the last year



Final diapers sewn by local seamstresses



Distributing Bundled Bottoms diapers

# DESIGNER OUTLET OPENS IN SPENCER

On August 5 in Spencer, Many Hands for Haiti opened MH Designer Outlet, an outlet store carrying high-quality designer goods. This store is an extension of the Many Hands Market in Spencer. The two stores share a building, however they remain their own establishments.

"We are excited for the opening of MH Designer Outlet and the blessing it will provide," shared Karmen Brown, store manager. "First, we will give the public the chance to shop and save in big ways. Second, just like the Market, all profits will support mission work locally and globally. Shoppers will be able to save money on brands they love while making a difference in the world!"

MH Designer Outlet carries brands including Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, Michael Kors, London Fog, Free People, Jessica Simpson, and many more. The store offers women's clothing, men's clothing, shoes, accessories, and plus size items.

"I am just blown away at the support our new Designer Store has received from the Spencer area and surrounding communities. What a blessing in so many ways," shared Karmen. "Again, we could not do this without our wonderful volunteers and staff. These folks serve with such loving hearts, all to reach out in Jesus' name, locally and globally."

Come visit MH Designer Outlet at 1019 S. Grand Ave. Spencer, Iowa. For more information, visit [www.mhdoutlet.com](http://www.mhdoutlet.com), or follow MH Designer Outlet on Facebook.



# NEW FACES

## Jeff Thomas - Store Manager

Jeff joined the MH4H team in June 2017 as Store Manager of the Many Hands Thrift Market in Grimes. He says, "After 40 years in corporate retail, I found my retail calling working for Many Hands Thrift Market. I can now be proud and empowered in knowing that my last 10+ years in retailing will be working for a wonderful purpose and cause." In addition to Store Manager, Jeff is also a coach, teammate, and friend to those at the Thrift Market.

Jeff's 40 years of retail experience includes management roles in Bed Bath and Beyond, Buy Buy Baby, and Burlington Coat Factory. He is passionate about his work and strives to put God first in his life. With MH4H, these two things intersect. Jeff says he is thankful to work with MH4H, and we are blessed to have him on our team.



## Micah Aurand - Administrative Coordinator

Though Micah joined MH4H a year ago as assistant manager of the Many Hands Market in Grimes, she has transitioned to being the administrative coordinator for MH4H in Pignon, Haiti. She assists communications between Haiti and the US, serves the leadership staff through administrative oriented tasks, and studies the language and culture.

When asked why she was drawn to MH4H, Micah said, "As a teenager, I knew God had called me to serve this beautiful people group. I love the fact that MH4H allows me to have a local and global impact." She uses Isaiah 58:6-7 to guide her work in Haiti.

Originally from the Des Moines area, Micah graduated in 2014 from Christ for the Nations Institute in Texas, with a BA in Practical Ministry with an emphasis in Youth Ministry. However, since 2010, she has worked in customer service, first as a customer liaison in Texas, then as a coffeehouse assistant manager in Iowa. These experiences primed her for her work with us at MH4H. We are thankful for Micah and are excited to see the blessings she will bring in Haiti.



# IRENE'S PLACE COMPLETED

We are excited to share that Irene's place, the new building on the Many Hands Campus, is now complete! Irene's Place is a three-story building providing accommodation to long-term teams, guests, and U.S. staff members.

The first floor provides housing and shared spaces for teams staying longer than the usual week. The second floor has an apartment-style layout. It houses staff members, couples, and families. The third floor is an educational space. It is used for classes, group discussion, and education.

A team is set paint the building in early September, with remaining tiling work to be completed soon after.



# FIRST 1000 DAYS TO BEGIN

Recently, we announced the beginning of our First Thousand Days (in Haiti known as Premye Mil Jou) program. In September, we will begin implementing the first phases, focusing on stimulation and brain development for the 0-2 year olds in the program. Program days will be in the afternoon, rather than mornings, to give caretakers a chance to work first, and then come for classes on campus.

With so many things to accomplish, it is important that we hire more staff. Currently, we are in the process of hiring cooks, one lead teacher, and four helpers. Premye Mil Jou was designed to benefit children during their most important years in childhood development. Please keep the program in your prayers. Pray for the children who will be starting in the program this September. Also, pray that those teaching early childhood development concepts do so clearly, making the information easy to understand and engaging for parents.





# TEAMS IN HAITI - JUNE TO AUGUST



**Third Reformed Church, Pella, IA**  
June 8-15 , People: 10



**Celebrate Church - Knoxville, IA**  
June 15-22, People: 19



**Market Rewards , Spencer, IA**  
June 22-29, People: 15



**Hydroponics Team, Bloomfield CT**  
June 29 - July 6 , People: 5



**MFI Team, Fort Pierce, FL**  
July 6-13 , People: 11



**Fresno Bible Church - Fresno, OH**  
Jul 13-20, People: 7



**Trinity Reformed, Pella, IA**  
July 19-27, People: 6



**Christ's Family Church, Davenport, IA**  
Jul 27-Aug 3 , People: 11

## DONATE AND MAKE AN IMPACT

If you feel led to help us impact lives through our programs, you can donate using the envelope provided or via our website through secure electronic transfer. Checks can be sent to MH4H directly to PO Box 204, Pella, IA, 50219. Donations are tax deductible.

[www.mh4h.org/donate](http://www.mh4h.org/donate)



**SEPTEMBER 23, 2017 | 9AM START**

**RACE STARTS AT TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH, 407 FRANKLIN ST, PELLA, IA**

It's that time of year again! The Color Blast is back for 2017 and we are excited to bring you an amazing day of fun and color, while giving you a chance to transform lives in Haiti! Run or walk as you take photos with friends, and stop to watch your family members get blasted with colored powder, moving through five different color stations! So join us, have a BLAST, and help make a difference in Haiti.

**ADULTS \$40 | CHILDREN \$15** REGISTRATION INCLUDES SHIRT AND SWAG BAG!

**REGISTER ONLINE NOW! [WWW.MH4H.ORG/COLORBLAST](http://WWW.MH4H.ORG/COLORBLAST)**