

# many hands

QUARTERLY

Transforming together, to be love in action, in a broken world.

JUNE 2021 - THIS ISSUE

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MANY HANDS  
FOR HAITI

P.O. Box 204 Pella, IA, 50219  
www.mh4h.org | 641.629.6633



## FIRST 1,000 DAYS TO BEGIN IN NEW COMMUNITY



Land (highlighted above) for the Jean Boule Equipping Center is located on a main road in the area



The land sits at the foot of a mountain



A construction crew starts digging the foundation



The community praying during a preliminary community meeting held by Many Hands at a local church

Many Hands is excited to announce the construction of a third Equipping Center in Haiti. Jean Boule, two miles northeast of the main Sylvain campus, is the newest location for the center. Programs will focus on the first 1,000 days of a baby's life, offering support to both the mother and the child through the First 1,000 Days program.

Tim Brand, CEO at Many Hands, said, "This provides daily feedings, health checks, educational opportunities, and spiritual development for attendees. It [the center] also is the base of operations for future community development, including safe homes, leadership development, power to the parents, and educational support."

Brand said, "These Equipping Centers allow us to close the gap between us and those we serve, by physically being in their community on a daily basis. We've seen how this can work in our previous two communities, and we are excited to be able to add this third location to reach more people."

Because a primary mode of transportation in Haiti is on foot, Many Hands' hope is for the center to be accessible to the people it serves. The 'zone' of Jean Boule is a combination of five small communities. Christi Gabhart, Director of Benevolence at Many Hands said, "According to Many Hands Haitian management staff, this is a zone that has not benefited from an outside organization." The Many Hands team created community assessments to determine this location such as water availability and demographic makeup of families. Gabhart noted, "The zone of Jean Boule [has] an abundant number of young families, which translates to many pregnancies and babies, which is our target in this program."

Over the last five years, Many Hands has seen the effectiveness of these Equipping Centers in strengthening families. In an interview about the First 1,000 Days program in Sylvain, Haiti, Jean Ronel Joseph, a Many Hands Chaplain in Haiti said, "According to what people said, we would have a lot of malnourished kids, they used to die malnourished, and that would continue. But now because of Many Hands being here, we don't have any cases of malnutrition in Sylvain."

The Jean Boule center hopes to serve 90 people in the first year. Brand said, "Over the next five years, it is our desire to walk with these families through pre-school and kindergarten, encompassing another 75 children. When it is all said and done, that will be 335 direct people." Many Hands also plans to add concrete floors to families' homes, which would serve around 1,500 people.

Although Many Hands' focus in this center is on prenatal care and nutrition in the first 1,000 days of life, the community has voiced many needs including food for their families, housing, paying for kids' schooling, and medical help. Because the center is unable to address all these day-to-day needs of the community, the community has concerns about what the center will provide. However, the center will work to address some of these needs as well, such as safe homes and educational support. Gabhart said, "When you spend all your energy day after day just figuring out how to get the next meal for your family, there is little energy or desire left for a big plan for the future. This is where [Many Hands] hopes to be able to 'hold the vision' for the development and growth of these precious children so that one day, the goals for each day can go beyond survival."

# NEW FACES AT MANY HANDS

We have some new faces and position changes at Many Hands! Help us welcome and congratulate these people in their new roles.



## Magen Andrasko

*Executive Assistant and Marketing Specialist*

Magen will support Tim Brand and the marketing department with communications and engagement. Magen started as an intern for Many Hands three years ago. She graduated from Central College in May 2020 and worked various jobs while living with her parents in Florida after graduation. She also took an online course in digital marketing through UCF and Trilogy. One of Magen's favorite topics to learn about outside of work is sustainability and finding sustainable practices she can incorporate into her daily life! She's also a big fan of Bob Marley and reggae music. Magen said, "I am excited to be back on the team at Many Hands! One of my favorite things about Many Hands is the intentionality in all its actions."



## Jon Pedersen

*Director of Human Resources (HR)*

Jon said, "[In this role,] I'll take all the great HR work that's been done so far by a number of people and build that out some more. All of this work will need to be aligned with the heart and soul of our mission." He will work on the strategic and tactical elements of HR at Many Hands. Jon said, "I feel a bit like a broken record because I keep telling everyone here and my HR peers in other organizations that I couldn't be happier [in this role]!" Jon came to Many Hands after working at Principal Financial Group for many years, 20 of those in Human Resources. About his family, Jon said, "I'm the luckiest man in the world! I am married to the most wonderful woman – Billy. She is the love of my life. We are lucky to have three daughters: Bridget, from my previous marriage, and Brittany and Hailey from Billy's previous marriage." Jon also plays the guitar and likes to read and garden.



## Laura Nicholson

*IMPACT Manager*

Laura Nicholson is the new IMPACT Manager, moving from the Executive Assistant role. In this role, she will oversee all the Many Hands IMPACT Journey trips. She will focus on creating new material for teams, leading trips, and managing all the logistics of the trips. She said, "I am excited to explore what Many Hands has to offer individuals and groups to encounter, engage, and embrace the world around them. We have some exciting new things underway – look out for more details soon!" She received her Masters of Arts in Communication – Public Affairs and Advocacy from Drake last December. This is her second year coaching high school volleyball for Pella Community High School. Laura's passion is "to live an intentional life that strives for constant growth and understanding of the world and people around me."



## Crystal Peace

*Manager, Many Hands Thrift Market, Clive*

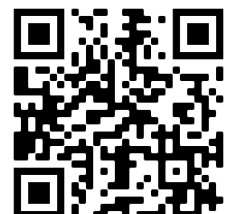
Crystal started this position part-time in October 2020 and full-time in January 2021. She said, "I've been learning about different aspects of our mission, the thrift industry, and working to get our store fully staffed." She also noted, "I'm excited and grateful to be a part of this organization. It's such a great feeling coming here each day knowing exactly who it is we are working to help! I can feel myself changing for the better each day, knowing I am using my God-given skills." For the last six years before Many Hands, Crystal worked in a financial institution. She and her husband have been married for 12 years and they have one daughter and a dog. In her free time, Crystal likes reading, listening to true crime podcasts, and baking – she loves trying out new recipes!



## SIGN UP FOR IMPACT

Many Hands CEO, Tim Brand, has recently released 3...2...1 Impact, a weekly newsletter with a collection of 3 points to ponder, 2 points to share, and 1 story of impact.

You can sign up for these weekly emails using the link below, or by scanning the QR code provided with your phone!



[www.mh4h.org/321-impact](http://www.mh4h.org/321-impact)



# MAY CELEBRATION IN HAITI

*Adapted from Christi Gabhart's blog post at mh4h.org*

May 1 is a special holiday in Haiti: 'Fet Agrikilti e Travay', or Agriculture and Labor Day!

Friday, April 30, Many Hands Chaplains and Agronomy department together offered a special day of activities for hands-on learning for all the students on Many Hands campus. Approximately 100 students started the time together in the Equipping Center by hearing from Pastor Jean Ronel who encouraged them to honor God by clapping their hands to acknowledge God created all things.

Jean Ronel led the students as they learned and recited Hebrews 11:3. Se konfyans nan Bondye ki fe nou ka konprann se ak pawol Bondye te kreye tout bagay. Li sevi ak sa je pa ka we pou li fe tout sa je ka we. Ebre 11:3 Haitienne. (Christi Gabhart's translation of the Kreole version is: It is confidence in God that makes us able to understand it was God's word that created everything. He uses all the eye cannot see to make all the eye can see.)

Agronomist Claudin helped the students realize the importance of agriculture in economic development by stating that many countries with economic success have strong agriculture. The proclamation, "If you don't work, you don't have food", is commonly heard in Haitian society.

The students then transitioned to the shade house where class by class, Claudin helped them see and understand this beautiful growing environment. Food produced here is part of lunch that is prepared and served during the Many Hands education programs.

Next stop was the newly prepared space for planting nearly 100 papaya trees. Agronomy workers had pre-dug the holes and Claudin demonstrated how compost is added into the soil when the trees are planted. The compost is called 'bagas' and is decomposed sugar cane stalk: leftover after the sugarcane goes through the sugar cane press.

A precious gift came at the end of the day. Each student went home with a Papaya tree seedling\* to plant in their 'lakou', their yard. The teachers were excited to also be blessed with some seedlings to take home: Papaya, Sweet Orange, and Avocado.

*\*Haiti is one of the most deforested countries in the world (<https://www.pnas.org>), so these trees and this community sharing their knowledge are crucial to transforming the land and agriculture in this area!*



## LIZ CLARKE ALDONZA WELCOMES NEW BABY!



We are excited to share that Liz Clarke Aldonza, director of the First 1,000 days program, and her husband, Odelin, welcomed a baby boy into their family on April 21. His name is Adonijah Kenyon Clarke Aldonza, and at birth weighed 7lb 2 oz and was 19" in length.

Liz and Odelin shared, "Adoni-jah means "my Lord is Yahweh" and that is our hope for this little man. That he would serve and honor the one, true, living God all the days of his life."

Yes and amen! We join the Aldonza family in praising God for this new little one, and we are excited to watch him grow. Congratulations and welcome to the Many Hands family, Adonijah!



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**BUSINESS  
BREAKFAST**  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2021 | 7AM TO 9AM

WITH KEYNOTE SPEAKER  
**JOHN O'LEARY**

IOWA EVENTS CENTER | DES MOINES



**TICKETS AND TABLES ON SALE:**

[mh4h.org/bb2021](http://mh4h.org/bb2021)

## NEW DIRECTOR TO LEAD SCHOOLS



Meet Micul Pierre! He is the new school director in Haiti and will direct the two schools on our Sylvain campus: The School of Light Preschool (PS1, PS2, PS3 grades) and the Sylvain Christian Grade School (eventually going through 9th grade). Before joining Many Hands, Pierre studied Education Science and Developmental Science. He is completing a Master's degree in Management of Territorial Communities this year. He also worked for several other Haitian national and international non-profits in the education and development field in Pignon and Hinche, working as a professor, principal, director, and teacher trainer.

Pierre will help the Sylvain campus schools achieve full school accreditation through the State and the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (MENFP). If our schools are not licensed, the State can close them at any time. Pierre said, "If that happens, the community of Sylvain will lose out on one of the best things Many Hands is doing for them and that can truly change the lives of people living in Sylvain and the surrounding areas." Pierre will also be the link between Many Hands and the community. Pierre noted, "I will continue to explain to [the community] the role and importance of schools in community transformation and encourage [the community] to take an active role in the school."

As far as plans for the school, Pierre has big goals! He wants to see the school become the largest in the area and in the country. His goal is for the school to train students to be "honest, helpful citizens who are ready to engage in all that can enable us to change Sylvain, Pignon, the country and the world."

Pierre was born in Pignon, Haiti. He has lived in Sylvain since he was married in December 2017 and he has a son and daughter whom he and his spouse adopted last year. Pierre shared, "What I will love most about this job is working with the entire team. With them, I am very confident that I will get the results I wish for. We will have a great and very beautiful community where life will reign in abundance as God wills."