

# many hands

QUARTERLY

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

JUNE 2022



MANY HANDS

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## CHANGES THAT LAST

By Liz Clarke, Director of First 1,000 Days



The team of cooks and coordinators who run the Jean Boule Love in Action center



A child plays with toys during on-site childcare



A mother and child share a playful moment during a lesson



People in the community of Benjamin

We live in the countryside of Haiti, and we're participating with people that are the poorest of the poor. Many Hands' program focuses on the vulnerable: pregnant mothers, mothers, nursing mothers, and children in the first 1,000 days of life. We provide nutrition, basic health care, and education about how to care for and love your family. Through the program, we encourage them to understand who God is, who they are, and how they can participate in God's kingdom. Our goal is to cover a territory where every child and mother can receive what we're offering in the program.

I can sense this year that there's a lot more confidence that what we're doing is the right thing. We've built and restructured the program, and now we see the moms are responding. We've had enough time to experience what that looks like and what it can look like in the future. I believe in this model and that if we're consistent, we will be building up the next generation. It's not just about the kids; it's also about the parents. They need transformation as well. That's what Many Hands models, transforming together.

We have to be consistent and walk this road with these people for long enough so that the true shift can happen. We have the opportunity to positively affect children that are going through school and rising as leaders in their community. They have the chance to impact the lives of their families, their parents, their brothers, and their sisters. I believe that the Many Hands' model is the right way because we believe in transforming the mind through Christ Jesus. That is what's going to bring about a complete change in someone's life.

There's a cultural expectation of being like everyone else, so this level of change can be a foreign concept. We're trying a different model to encourage and equip them to be the champions for their own families. We know this model has to create a mind-shift change that allows them to live in truth, be confident in themselves, and understand what they need and want. We then help them achieve those goals.

For many years, they sort of went along with us. Then there was this moment where it became a reality. The parents have new confidence, and they see how this works. They think to themselves, "I can do this. It's not as difficult as I thought it was and not foreign anymore." There's way more buy-in, and we're going to see how that affects the community way down the line.

I've seen them forming a community full of trust in each other, sharing their lives when it gets hard. They share, "Hey, I'm sick...we have this problem in our family. Can you pray for us?" They are generous [in] serving, helping each other out, cleaning up after one another. They have taken ownership of what they're doing and love doing it with all of their hearts.

# APPRECIATING OUR VOLUNTEERS



Karmen Brown, Store Manager in Spencer, speaks to volunteers at their appreciation event



Volunteers and staff pose for a group photo at the Des Moines appreciation event

National Volunteer Appreciation Month is celebrated in April, so our stores took the opportunity to pause and recognize our outstanding volunteers.

The staff and volunteers in Spencer came together for a delicious lunch cooked by the store manager, Karmen Brown, and her husband, Rick. Director of Marketing, Rob van Beek, shared and reflected on their word of the year, joy. It was a time to celebrate their accomplishments and be encouraged. Over 100 volunteers, staff, and family members from all three Des Moines locations gathered in Des Moines on a Sunday evening. Together, they enjoyed a meal donated by Hy-Vee and listened as CEO Tim Brand shared their work's impact in Haiti and beyond. Each volunteer was recognized throughout the night.

Engagement Manager, Emily Van Gent, looks back on these events with gratitude, "Every day, we are so grateful for the work our volunteers do. They work hard processing donations, displaying items, and filling the gaps for our hard-working staff. They are an integral part of our culture. It was great to take time to celebrate them together!"

So far in 2022, volunteers have served over 12,000 hours across all four Many Hands Thrift locations. Many of these individuals serve faithfully week to week, working incredibly hard in their respective departments.

If you are interested in joining our volunteer team, please visit:  
[www.manyhandsthrift.com/volunteer](http://www.manyhandsthrift.com/volunteer) for Des Moines-based opportunities  
[www.manyhandsmarket.com/volunteer](http://www.manyhandsmarket.com/volunteer) for Spencer opportunities.

Learn more from Kari, Assistant Manager at Clive, as she shares the impact our staff and volunteers are having through our thrift stores.



## New Construction Continues



Building work continues on the classroom additions to the Sylvain Christian School of Light and the construction of the new school admin building. Both of these buildings are needed as the school grows year-to-year.

The new pod of three classrooms will house grades four to six, with fourth grade starting in September this year. Teachers are excited about the admin building, gaining the space to prepare lessons and train together.

"In the future, I hope to see the children who attended this school become important people in the country," shared Micul Pierre, Principal of the School of Light. "We are praying that God would pour out His blessings on us so that we can work to better our community so that we can make Haiti a country where people want to live."

## Building Community and Faith



Many Hands Spiritual Shepherds have started several new Bible study groups. Six communities have invited our Spiritual Shepherds to lead these exciting new studies. People who attend are learning from the Bible and growing their faith. The people are always hungry for more! Our Shepherds see this as an opportunity to bring these communities closer together, sharing their joys and grief, and building trust.



Scan the QR code to watch an interview with Micul, Principal of our School of Light, and learn how education is transforming lives in Haiti.

# NEW FACES

Many Hands continues to be blessed with a strong staff. Meet two of the latest additions to our team:



## Pam Osborn, Special Projects Manager

Pam Osborn has joined the Many Hands team as the Special Projects Manager. Pam has faithfully volunteered with Many Hands previously and is excited to continue her support in a more official position. As the Special Projects Manager, Pam will plan and execute projects that support the continued growth of Many Hands for Haiti. She will also identify and assist with needed improvements in our systems for daily and long-term functions. Pam says:

“I am passionate about the mission of Many Hands, I have been to Haiti twice with Many Hands and have seen firsthand the impact being made and how lives are transformed daily. Many Hands truly cares about the people their organization touches. We live in a broken world and people yearn to be noticed and appreciated for their unique gifts. It is energizing to be a part of an organization that walks alongside others towards transformation.

“[Through my position] I want to encourage others towards a fuller relational life with Jesus and to provide opportunities that weave together lives of different cultures to build and strengthen God’s kingdom.”



## Kelsey O'Connell, Graphic and Media Designer

As a graphic and media designer, Kelsey will assist the marketing team in developing quality content that will be shared with you - our ministry partners and sponsors! Kelsey will also collaborate with our retail locations to implement brand direction and to create advertisements, signage, and event materials. Kelsey shares:

“I am overjoyed to work alongside incredible people who also have a heart for positive impact in our world. My hope is that this role will help me fulfill my passion for transformative storytelling. I wholeheartedly believe that the act of telling stories that matter is a powerful tool to generate a positive impact in our world, and I think that Many Hands does just that.”

“I think what separates Many Hands from other organizations is their model of walking alongside people and transforming the lives of everyone they touch, regardless of where they come from. Many Hands is working to impact anyone who has contact with the organization, whether that be volunteers, donors, staff, customers, people on the street - you name it - they are working to make a positive impact on your life.”

## Celebrating Haiti



Students getting ready to plant trees on campus



Teachers and students celebrating Flag Day

Agriculture and Labor Day (May 1), and Flag Day (May 18), are two national holidays in Haiti held in high regard. Haitians are known for their pride in their country and pride in their hard work. Our staff uses these celebrations to teach students the importance of both!

During Agriculture and Labor Day, Head of Agronomy Claudin Augustin led a program encouraging the students to love agriculture and hard work. Children had a chance to taste some of God’s harvest, enjoying pineapple, papaya, mangoes, sweet oranges, and carrots. Students also enjoyed a practical lesson, each planting one of 72 papaya trees on the Sylvain campus. This celebration was also for the parents of the students, who received two acacia trees, four papaya trees, and one orange tree to plant in their own gardens.

On Flag Day, teachers led students in traditional Flag Day songs. They marched and sang around the whole campus using the prayer path. Hearing them from a distance was easy because of their enthusiasm. All of the teachers offered such a spirit of enthusiasm to motivate more than 120 kids for well over an hour and a half! We are thankful that these future leaders can take pride in their country.

## 1,000 Floor Milestone



The family stand proudly in front of their newly poured floor

In March, many Hands reached a significant milestone of 1,000 concrete floors poured in Haiti. A concrete floor helps provide a sanitary environment for families, decreasing the risk of infection and disease. The 1,000th floor was poured into a home in the community of Benjamin. The mom and youngest child are enrolled in our First 1,000 Days program at Jean Boule. Many Hands estimates more than 7,000 people have benefitted from new floors since 2015.

This 1,000th floor was installed entirely by a Haitian crew. Director of Ministry and Benevolence, Christi Gabhart, shared how pouring the concrete floors helps employ the community, “The day this picture (of the family) was taken, Many Hands was already doing the next concrete floor in the same community. The husband is not pictured because he has a job working on that next concrete floor!! It’s a cool ripple!”

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JUNE 2022 NEWSLETTER

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**SIGN UP FOR IMPACT WITH  
TIM BRAND'S WEEKLY  
EMAIL NEWSLETTER**

## PUTTING IN THE WORK FOR A HARVEST TO COME

Tim Brand, CEO | An excerpt from his weekly email and blog, *3...2...1 Impact*



*"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." -Galatians 6:9*

Recently, I spent time in Haiti with our amazing Many Hands staff. I truly am blown away by their attitude and commitment to the work at hand. During one of the mornings, we were doing seedcorn training for local farmers, utilizing a product designed specifically for their growing conditions yielding over 158% more production versus local varieties. We started the training and in comes through the gate one of our physically handicapped ladies on a Personal Energy Transportation (PET) cart, coming onto our campus to tend to her raised garden beds. She overheard the seminar and when we went out to plant the demonstration field, she tagged along.

Now, remember, she is physically disabled, with one leg significantly shorter, to the point she can't even stand up straight. Walking over 400 meters to the planting site, she sat on the dirt and started to plant by hand. All the time, with a smile on her face. After some time, Christi and I lean over to her and ask her why is she doing this? And her response was priceless. "If you don't work, you don't live," with a huge smile and laugh at the end. No truer words were spoken during my time in Haiti. Her willingness to show up and do the hard work, despite the many obstacles to overcome in her life, speaks volumes about the philosophy of her life. She doesn't have time for excuses or for someone to feel sorry for her. She wants to live, so she needs to get to work! At the end of the training, she received around 500 kernels of seedcorn. If all goes right, this will produce hundreds if not thousands of pounds of food. Whatever you are investing your time and energy into these days, will it help you live the best version of your life? Will it multiply? We can all take a page from our little old lady friend in Haiti.