



# The J.A. Clermont Foundation

## News from the Center Fall 2016

### *Hurricane Update*

We are so grateful that the Center was spared the worst of Hurricane Matthew and our hearts go out to all those who are still struggling with the aftermath of that horrific event. Our two biggest issues at the time were the lack of electricity and the ability to communicate with the Center. Renee spent two harrowing weeks not knowing how the boys had fared. We can now report that everything is back to normal and the boys are back in school. Since the town's electricity has been somewhat restored, the boys can even work on their homework on most evenings. They may or may not be excited about that. They are boys after all. Electricity was a problem before the Hurricane, intermittent at best. That has not changed, if anything it is worse.

Part of our plan for the future is to try to provide our own electricity through solar energy. That dream is still in the planning stage.

### *Aspiration, Hope and Loss*

We think it is essential that you understand the important function that you fill in supporting us and the work Renee started so many years ago. That work has and always will be about the children. There are three children whose stories we would like to share with you, three of the lives that you have touched.

### *Aspirations*

As you know, we are a secular institution and we accept all boys regardless of their religious affiliations. However, Haiti is a very Catholic country and most if not all of our children are Catholic. The Center is located in St. Yves parish and opportunities are provided for the boys to attend services when possible. Junior is 18 years old. He has been with us for a long time, almost 12 years. He is a very quiet boy, very studious and very devout. He aspires to be a priest. He has already spoken with the Bishop about entering the Seminary once he has finished senior year in High School. A local parish in Maryland has expressed an interest in sponsoring him as he studies to fulfill his dream. None of this would have been possible without your support in his early years.

### *Loss*

Eddy, one of our former students, passed away last month. We assume it was from diabetic complications. His nickname was Lele and he was 19 years old. He had lived at the Center for 10 years, a fun loving child in spite of his illness. After 18 of course, the law required that our boys return to whatever relatives they might have or essentially try to provide for themselves, an extremely difficult thing to do in Haiti. We offer whatever help we can once the boys leave us but sometimes they move too far away. Through Lele's years at the Center, he had people who watched what he ate,

scolded him when he wasn't being careful and made sure he had any necessary medication. On his own we suspect he was perhaps not as careful or too far from medical help in an emergency situation. Haiti is a hard place to have a serious illness.

The point of sharing this story with you is not to make you sad or discouraged but to look at the "glass half full" Lele did not live a long life but the life he had was secure and safe and happy thanks to good caring people. We will honor his memory through our continued efforts on behalf of these children

### *Hope*

Meet Roberto, age 12, quick, funny and bright as a new penny. Of course, we adore all of the children that we have been given to shelter and protect but sometimes one or two really stand out. It might be because they have some musical talent or a gift for comedy or as in Roberto's case are very, very bright. Robert had been attending the local public school, as do most of our children. He did extremely well there but he was not challenged. Haiti is a poor country and the schools do the best they can with the resources available. We have wanted for a long time to send him to a local private school that could offer him more rigorous content and set higher expectations but the cost was prohibitive. Just recently a sponsor has stepped forward. Roberto will still live at the Center and we, you and I, will be responsible for his general care but the sponsor will cover the cost of the school. We are so delighted for him. It's wonderful what we can do

### together *The Well and the Pump*

It's really true that a picture is worth a thousand words. Behold our brand new well! We wanted to share this moment with you because sometimes we move right on to the next important thing and don't take the time to congratulate ourselves on what has been done so far. We really do have to thank SamanHuas for helping to expedite our getting the well, Water for Life for it's construction and you for your financial support that allow the miracle of water to happen.



We are currently trying to figure out how to pipe the water into the Center for washing, cooking and toilets. SamanHaus has shown us some designs for a solar powered pump that would allow us to do that. But for now, we are just enjoying the fact that our well exists.