

# Fondwa News

December 2014



## Dear Sponsors,

Greetings from Haiti! As important members of the Saint Antoine School of Fondwa, I want to thank you for your support and share an exciting update. Over the past few months, Natalie and I have settled into our new life in Fondwa. We are in communication with the FHM office in Durham, NC everyday by phone and email. You can reach us at [fondwa.sponsorship@familyhm.org](mailto:fondwa.sponsorship@familyhm.org). We are so thankful for the opportunity to be of service to the Fondwa community and look forward to sharing with you photos and updates more frequently.



Last month, Jamalyn Peigh Williamson, FHM's Fondwa Project Manager, visited us in Fondwa. While meeting with Sister Simone of the Saint Antoine School she learned that the Haitian government officially licensed / accredited the school! This is a proud accomplishment for the Fondwa community, FHM, and our supporters. The school's licensing is a testament to strong leadership in the community and your continuing support of the school. To receive the licensing, the school enrolls a large number of students and maintains its success through high exam scores.

Please keep the needs of Fondwa in your thoughts as you continue to support the Haitian people. We look forward to many more exciting updates from Fondwa as the Saint Antoine School educates the youth of this Haitian community.

## Meet Chris & Natalie Wallace

FHM's new In-Country Fondwa Project Coordinators Christopher and Natalie were married in July 2014 in Indianapolis, Indiana. They have been living in Fondwa since September 2014.



Chris graduated from Indiana University - Bloomington with a Bachelor of Arts in history, anthropology, and classical civilizations in 2013. After being involved with a campus ministry at Indiana, he spent his first weeks post-graduation on a service trip in Ukraine. Since then, Chris has worked in various roles and internships with several political organizations in Indianapolis including the Indiana State House of Representatives. He also pursued his interest in international cultures in an internship working with the local international business community.

Natalie Harris Wallace graduated from Indiana University - Bloomington with a Bachelor of Arts in history and anthropology and with minors in French and public and environmental affairs. She gained a passion for missions in high school through many trips with her church. She studied abroad in the Netherlands studying social and international policy. She interned with FHM and Jamalyn Williamson in the summer of 2013. Natalie greatly enjoyed her experience last year and looks forward to continue working with the Fondwa community.



Natalie teaches English at the Saint Antoine School.

# Student Spotlight

## Magdala Lubin

Magdala Lubin is 18 years old and is a 9th grader at the St. Antoine School of Fondwa. She currently studies English with Natalie at the school and will be 19 in January. For many of the younger kids at the Fatima House Orphanage, Magdala serves as a mother figure. As one of the oldest girls living there, she takes on many roles to help everyone. A normal day for Magdala (like many her age in the USA) begins at school and involves a lot of studying. It is a rare occasion when we visit the Fatima House and no one is studying. In addition to her role as a student, Magdala spends a lot of time caring for the younger children, cooking, cleaning, and hand washing clothes. Another role she has gladly embraced these past few months is that of our friend. You would be hard pressed to find someone with a more contagious personality than Magdala. She shares her joy with everyone around her.

Following 9th grade, Magdala has four years remaining at the Saint Antoine School. Her hopes do not end with her time there. Her experiences growing up at the Fatima House Orphanage lead her to dream of studying nursing at a university. Her natural gifts are very conducive to a future in nursing; she is both passionate in her care and attentiveness to the children's needs.

Magdala is an important leader at the Fatima House and we have no doubt that she will continue to make an impact in the future.



will be part of a singing and dancing program there later this month. Jed also organizes some of the younger kids and us to play games of “Mama and Papa” or “Tag.”

Jed hasn't let his young age stop him from dreaming of his future. Following his graduation from high school in Haiti, Jed wants to study to be a medical doctor. After he completes his MD, he hopes to get married and have about five kids. He doesn't want to stop there though as he hopes to adopt another five kids. Jed has even developed an elaborate plan that will allow him to work in the United States for a few years, followed by work in Haiti. It's easy to see that he will full heartedly pursue it with all of his strength. Jed has big dreams and the skills to pursue them.

## Widline Louis

Widline is 15 years old and is a 6th grader at the Saint Antoine School. Like the other 6th graders at the school, Widline recently began studying English with Chris on Tuesdays. When we visit the orphanage, Widline is one of the first people we hear. She is quick to shout a greeting and display a broad smile. If she's not outside, it's not long before we hear her boisterous laugh nearby. She has a big personality and seems to bring out the best in the kids at the Fatima House rather than overshadowing those around her.

Natalie talked to Widline about some of her future plans. While she has a number of years remaining at the Saint Antoine School, she has high hopes for the future. Like many other young Haitians, she sees a place for improvement in her country and hopes to be a part of the answer. For Widline, the answer comes in studying agriculture. Following her education in Fondwa, she dreams of studying at a university in the USA to make this a reality. Returning to Haiti with a diploma in hand, work experience under her belt, and big ideas to match her personality, we have no doubt that Widline will bring positive change. She is a remarkable young woman, passionate about her plans and making a difference for Haiti.

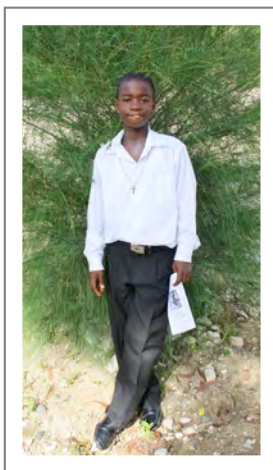
Thank you for being a part of a brighter future for Magdala, Jed, Widline and the students of the Saint Antoine School.



## Jed Oscar Voltaire

In October, Jed celebrated his 11th birthday. He is a 6th grader at the Saint Antoine School and hopes that his current English class is the beginning of a future mastery of the language.

Jed is one of the happiest kids we've ever met, Haitian or American. When we asked Jed what his favorite thing to do was, he couldn't seem to decide. He said his favorite activities are singing, dancing, and playing games. It seemed he has yet to find an activity he doesn't enjoy a lot. We can attest to Jed's love for all of the activities. He often sings in the church choir and



# Fondwa Life at a Glance

## Morning in Fondwa by Natalie Wallace

It is amazing how six in the morning doesn't sound early to me anymore. Most mornings, we arise by 6:30 at the latest, provided we failed to wake with the miscellaneous farm animals that share close proximity with us. Between crowing roosters that seem to be in competition, bleating baby goats trying to find their mother, and the occasional cow mooing, we have quite the natural alarm clock.

With no easily accessible sink first thing in the morning, sanitizer becomes my first stop in my morning routine. Despite the potential hazards, I have found it is better to remove my contact lenses every night, compelling me to replace them each morning. After successfully (God willing) inserting my contacts, I have to start applying my layers of sunscreen. I have already learned the value of diligent, comprehensive sunscreen application. Not only do you save yourself from pain and potential side effects, you also avoid quite a few embarrassing questions.

For women, the typical Haitian outfit consists of a modest top (read: covers the shoulders and shows little to no cleavage) and either a knee length or longer skirt or pants. Especially on school days, you will find me in one of the aforementioned outfits. By the time my outfit is on and my typical routine is finished, I usually have between 15 minutes to half an hour to read or prepare for the school day before the bell rings for breakfast. Much like many schedules in Haiti, we always wait in suspense for when the morning call to breakfast comes!

We have discovered lots of new delicious Haitian foods delicious courtesy of the Sisters of Saint Antoine. It seems to be the goal of several of the sisters that we put on weight during our time here. A typical breakfast consists of eggs, bread, bananas, and our choice of tea or coffee. Some days, we enjoy watermelon, sweet grapefruits, papayas, or mangoes instead of the bananas. The tea is sweetened with grapefruit and is a personal favorite. The only item lacking at the table this morning was the spicy Haitian peanut butter called mamba.



## Humbled by Chris Wallace

Spending time at the Fatima House Orphanage has quickly become one of our favorite past times in Fondwa. There are about 50 kids living there, who have grown up learning about the importance of community and interdependence.

Earlier this week, we had the chance to sit down with some of the quieter kids and help them with their work preparing food. It is just one of the tasks they encounter on a daily basis. Today's work included shelling Congo beans for the later preparation of rice and beans. There were no complaints or sad faces. The oldest girl helping (about 10 years old) was in charge and the eight or so other kids who all pitched in with good humor.



The conversation was fun with a few of the girls even asking about some words in English. As we joined them in their life, they were curious about ours. I felt humbled by each of the kid's willingness to jump in and do what needed to be done. Often it might be tempting to pity them and their situation. They weren't asking for our pity as we helped them, only our time and our friendships.

Their wealth is defined in ways that are often forgotten and overlooked in American society. Our friends at the Fatima House will continue to humble us during our time here. Just like American children they work, they play, they study, and they live their lives - an easy thing to overlook, but a humbling reminder.



Natalie spends time with the kids at the Sunday English Club

## A new dining hall for the orphanage by Jamalyn Williamson

The new dining hall is funded by a group based in Indianapolis called Barn Raisers, who helped fund and build the new cistern. The Fatima House kids don't have a place to gather as a community to eat; they eat on their beds. The



A dining hall under construction at the orphanage. (Photo taken Nov. 2014)

The new dining hall will give them a place to eat and also will be a community room for games and studying. It is being built by Bos Ednor Germain and should be completed in January 2015.

# Looking forward to 2015!

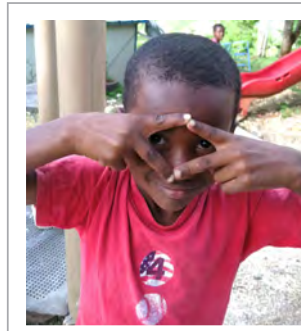


## FHM Welcomes Katelyn Blanchard, FHM Sponsorship Coordinator

Katelyn Blanchard interned at FHM during the summer of 2013 and has been assisting the FHM Durham staff with marketing,

sponsorship since August 2014. She recently graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a B.A. in Environmental and Health Studies. Katelyn traveled to Haiti with FHM in June 2013 where she served on a medical mission team, spent time in Leogane, and while in Fondwa and met the children at the Fatima House Orphanage. "I'm very excited for the opportunity to work with sponsorship for the Fondwa students. Education is such a crucial component to being able to lead a healthier and fuller life. I am incredibly blessed to be part of this program," said Katelyn.

Kathy Walmer, FHM Executive Director says, "Our student sponsorship program is near and dear to my heart. It's success is crucial in our commitment to the Fondwa community. I am so excited to have Katelyn on board to lend her talents and her servant heart to the children of Fondwa." In January, Katelyn will step into the part-time position of FHM Sponsorship Coordinator where she will work closely with Jamalyn Williamson, Chris and Natalie Wallace to communicate with sponsors, provide more frequent updates, and further develop our student sponsorship program. You can reach Katelyn at [FHMSponsorship@gmail.com](mailto:FHMSponsorship@gmail.com) or 919.382.5500.



## We are looking for you!

We need your email address to be able to email updates as they arrive. Please send us your updated contact info to [FHMSponsorship@gmail.com](mailto:FHMSponsorship@gmail.com) or call 919.382.5500.



## Travel to Fondwa in 2015!

There are lots of travel opportunities for service trips to Fondwa,

medical mission trips to the Blanchard Clinic, and construction trips with Building Goodness Foundation to Tombe Gato, near Fondwa, to build the new Carmelle Voltaire Women's Health Center. To find out more and for a complete listing of trips with FHM, visit [www.FamilyHM.org](http://www.FamilyHM.org) and select "Mission Opportunities". If you are interested in a construction trip, visit [www.BuildingGoodness.org](http://www.BuildingGoodness.org) to learn more.

