

# MARQUER LE MONDE POUR CHRIST



Arriving on campus one could tell right away that something special was happening at STEP. Flags of different countries hung in the arches of the Underwood Building. The library, cafeteria, administrative offices, and chapel also displayed flags, inflated globes hanging from the ceilings, and large collage posters displaying startling pictures of people from around the world.

Instead of starting the second semester with normal classes, STEP devoted the first four days to a world missions conference. The program each day included a testimony from a STEP graduate. Eleazar and Marie Maude, now missionaries in the Dominican Republic, openly shared about the difficulties and barriers they face in ministry. Students encouraged them and pledged their prayer support, and some even committed to joining them in ministry over the summer months. Zenas kept his audience spellbound for over forty minutes as he honestly recounted from his heart how God directed and worked through him during his trying first year as a pastor in a small village in NE Haiti. Erna praised God for all that He taught her and how He provided for her every need as she faithfully fulfilled her faith promise giving following STEP's first missions conference in 2002.



Zenas Pierre

Each conference day featured a short video introducing a different people group, exposing many of these students for the first time to the darkness and hopelessness of people around the world who have not heard the Gospel. Three STEP professors challenged the faculty and student body each day in very direct and convicting messages.

The theme, *Marquer le monde pour Christ* (Impacting the World for Christ), was a challenge for all and demanded a response. During the final session the roughly 150 in attendance divided into groups of four and shared with each other their specific commitment to Impacting the World for Christ. Among the responses:

- ◆ "I commit to praying specifically for a missionary in a Muslim country."
- ◆ "I will expose the children I work with to the needs of the world outside Haiti."
- ◆ "I have decided to financially support a missionary in another country."
- ◆ "I commit to going myself as a missionary, Lord willing."

Join us in asking the Lord of the Harvest to mobilize and enable a Haitian mission force to *marquer le monde pour Christ*.



Professor Wadebrant Jean-Baptiste

Details of STEP's 2004 Missions Conference were remarkably brought together by Dr. Bruce McMartin and his wife, Professor Cindy McMartin.



# Making STEPS

## A Progress Report

Séminaire de Théologie Évangélique de Port-au-Prince

March 2004

### CURRENT EVENTS

How quickly things change. The following comments were written in preparation for this mailing:



Haiti is once again racked with socio-political turmoil. Growing opposition to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his Lavalas party is beginning to erupt in varying degrees of violence.

Since November university students, teachers, lawyers, blue-collar workers, doctors, businessmen—in fact, the entire gamut of Haitian society—have joined forces to hold massive marches in the capital city of Port-au-Prince calling for the president's resignation. Nearly every demonstration is met with violent reprisals.

Farther north, civilian militias formerly aligned with Aristide have turned on his regime and taken control of several towns. They have burned police stations and city offices, and either killed or chased the government's policemen from those towns.

As you have certainly heard by now, the president did in fact resign from office and jetted to safety on February 29. The turmoil, however, is far from over. The president's populist gangs thoroughly pillaged and looted Port-au-Prince—the destruction is astounding. Time will tell how damaging these events will be for the Haitian economy and Haitian society in general.



After word spread of the president's departure, angry Aristide supporters roamed the streets armed with old rifles, pistols, machetes and sticks. Some fired wildly into crowds on the Champs de Mars, the main square in front of the National Palace...

Anarchy reigned for most of the day in Port-au-Prince. More than 3,000 inmates held in the National Penitentiary were released. Looters emptied containers at the city's port and hit pharmacies and supermarkets. Scores of banks, businesses and factories were pillaged and looted.

STEP's class schedule was frequently disrupted during December and January, and like nearly every other institution in Haiti, the seminary has been closed since February 20. As of this writing, the date for resuming classes is uncertain. Besides the obvious concerns for safety, transportation difficulties due to the stoppage of fuel deliveries and the destruction of many gas stations will hinder students and staff. In addition, electrical service has been nonexistent and STEP's fuel supply for its own generation system is very low.



Excerpts from various news sources help tell the story:

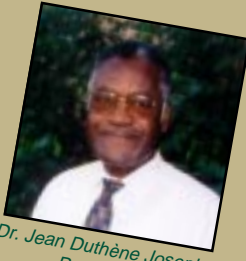
President Jean-Bertrand Aristide resigned and flew into exile Sunday, pressured by a bloody rebellion and the United States. Gunfire crackled as the capital fell into chaos, and President Bush dispatched Marines...

"Chop off their heads and burn their homes," rioters screamed, echoing the war cry of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, the general who ousted French troops and torched plantations to end slavery in Haiti...



The entire STEP family will appreciate your prayers for its safety and for a quick resolution to the present crisis.

# PERSONNEL NEWS



Dr. Jean Duthène Joseph  
President

In May 2003 the Governors granted a one-year leave of absence beginning January 2004 to STEP's president, Dr. Jean Duthène Joseph. The primary purpose of the sabbatical is to complete the writing of a doctoral dissertation that addresses the impact of Haitian voodoo on the evangelical church. The board's desire is to see the results of Dr. Joseph's research published in a form that will prove beneficial to the Christian community—Haitians and foreign missionaries alike.

Dr. Joseph has settled in Spring Valley, New York. While working on the project he will lend a helping hand to the Haitian church planted there by his recently deceased brother-in-law. Caring for the congregation of nearly 600, mentoring two candidates for the pastorate, and preaching three or four Sundays each month will certainly provide the kind of challenge he enjoys!

The Board of Governors named John Berger to serve as interim president. As Executive Vice President, Berger has assisted Joseph and been integrally involved in seminary operations and development for a number of years.

# ABOVE AND BEYOND

A matching grant has been pledged to STEP for the 2003-2004 school year. Back in 2002 a North American charitable trust announced a similar grant, challenging STEP's Haitian constituency to contribute \$15,000 to a faculty development project. *Because of the sacrificial generosity of hundreds of Haitians, the goal was met*—and the trust responded by providing the other \$45,000 needed.

We experienced Paul's sentiments when he wrote to the Corinthians concerning the Macedonians:

*"Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability."*

Paul encouraged the comfortable Corinthians to adopt the generous attitude of the impoverished Macedonians.

*The challenge grant has been renewed with some adjustments. The charitable trust will contribute \$44,600 if STEP's Haitian friends and alumni contribute \$25,000 before August 31, 2004. We're tempted to edit Paul's letter to read "WAY beyond their ability"! In a period of national crisis that has deepened Haiti's poverty, it will be astounding to see how God provides.*

*Won't you commit yourself to pray regularly for Haitian believers and for STEP? And will you hear Paul's charge to the Corinthians in our modern context?*

# Financial Update

	<i>thru 6 months</i>	<i>annual goal</i>
Operations	85,135.80	140,000.00
Student Scholarships	6,512.28	150,000.00
TEAM-STEP (employee loan program)	5,000.00	20,000.00
Feeding Program	100.00	6,500.00
Community Development	100.00	3,500.00
Physical Plant, Equipment, Library	10,131.30	25,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106,979.38</b>	<b>345,000.00</b>

# BUSINESS AS USUAL

## A Note from the Interim President



John Berger

The beginning of this new semester has felt unusually stressful. I'm more or less braced for the stress caused by civil unrest and the associated decision-making. But I've been blindsided once again by the emotional turmoil I undergo as STEP students relate their stories. Will I ever get used to this?

Let me give you one example. One among dozens.

Ronald Jeanty is a third-year student; in fact, he's an outstanding student. He's impressed me as **sharp, winsome, devoted to God and to his wife and two kids**. I usually notice him sitting near the front during chapel services, singing with gusto and listening intently to the messages. With God's help, this man will help a lot of people in his lifetime.

Ronald spoke with me recently about his situation. He's unemployed—not unusual in a country with 70% unemployment, but a guy this sharp can't find a job? Not in this deepening economic crisis, especially with the restrictions of his class schedule. He did manage to get part-time work driving a cab last year, but even that has fallen apart... literally. The taxi owner is no longer able to keep the car running, so you-know-who is out of work again.

Now his wife is bothered by a persistent health problem, and they can't afford to follow the treatment through to completion. The medicines are just too expensive. Ronald has managed to eat an occasional hot meal on credit at STEP, but he truly doesn't know where the food will come from for his kids' next not-too-square daily meal (yes, one a day... like the vitamins).

Rent? Forget about it. They've had to move into a single room at his mother's small place.

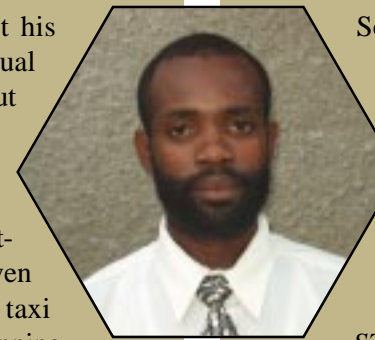
So here he sits in my air-conditioned office as we try to come up with a payment plan for his seminary bill. Does he need any more pressure? My knee-jerk reaction—it's more like an annoying tic—is to reach in my pocket. I do it often enough, but should I pay his bill? What about the next student?

So the stress builds. This political nonsense and the demonstrations, burning tires, roadblocks, looming civil war, and all the other stuff that goes along with it—granted, that's stressful. But when it completely wrecks any chance of making ends meet for a guy like Ronald, that's downright maddening. And it stresses me out (I assume it's a bit stressful for Ronald, too).

So why am I whining about the knot in my well-fed stomach? I'm grasping for a way to help you feel the human element of the challenges faced at STEP. **I want you to know that when you've sent a gift to STEP, there's a Ronald who benefited. And I want to encourage others of you to consider helping students who have their own stories.**

STEP will spend about \$2,900 on Ronald's training this year. **He deserves the best we can provide.** We pay his professors, his faculty advisor, the person who leads his spiritual formation group, the secretaries who type and duplicate his course notes; we buy the computer and software to keep his records, we turn on the lights and air-conditioning in his library, and we generate our own electricity to keep it all running; we give him running water in the restroom, and then pay somebody to clean up after him and his classmates with the mop and disinfectant that we bought—you know, all the normal stuff.

We ask Ronald to pay \$1,300 of that cost. The rest is covered by friends like you. After hearing his story you should be asking, "How in the world can he pay that?" One of you sent a large gift that enabled us to give him a healthy **\$950 scholarship**. Somebody else's gift covered the **additional \$210 in financial aid** our faculty committee granted him. Now he only has to come up with \$140 for the year. And you know what? It's still hard.



Ronald Jeanty