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INTEGRATING STUDENTS: CLASSROOM INCLUSION IN ST. KITTS & NEVIS



With the literacy rate in St. Kitts & Nevis over 90%, education seems an unlikely topic for a successful mission. However, the integration of struggling readers and students with special needs, such as physical and learning disabilities into general education classes has created serious problems for students, teachers and parents. Clarice Cotton, education officer for seven primary schools and the [Education Unit of the Ministry of Education](#) in St. Kitts, requested a workshop on various topics that could go a long way in promoting the healthy integration of all students. Pamela Crawford, a return volunteer from St. Augustine, and first time volunteer Sheribeth Marquis from Tallahassee, conducted a training workshop May 31st – June 10th, 2007. Crawford, of the [Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind](#), and Marquis, of the [Riley Elementary School](#) and [Florida State University](#), each targeted primary and secondary education, respectively, during their presentations. The workshops on Differentiated Education, the Struggling Reader, Behavior Management and Student Retention reached over 35 teachers and administrators.

YOUTH HIV/AIDS PROGRAM A VALUABLE TOOL IN BELIZE

According to a study conducted by [MIT](#), Belize has the highest HIV/AIDS per capita infection rate in Central America. Add to this ominous distinction one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the region, and a clear and present danger exists. It is a danger that Dean of the [St. John's College School of Professional Studies](#), Deborah Domingo worked to address when she requested FAVACA's assistance in establishing prevention programs in secondary schools.

Answering the call was first time volunteer Ayasha Richardson from Tallahassee. Richardson is a Prevention Program Evaluator with the [Florida Bureau of HIV/AIDS, Division of Disease Control](#) under the [Department of Health](#). She used all of her experience in facilitating a workshop from June 4th – 9th, 2007 in Belize City. The more than 20 participants that attended the workshop was made up of teachers, health professionals and community representatives learned the skills and knowledge needed in order to develop prevention programs and advocate their implementation in secondary schools. The result of the week long mission was a national action plan with specific, achievable and measurable objectives.



GUNS GANGS AND GOVERNANCE: G3 ROUNDTABLE A SUCCESS IN JAMAICA

Recent studies have named crime and violence as the greatest threats to democracy and sustainable development in the Caribbean and are having a particularly debilitating effect on governance in Jamaica. [USAID/Jamaica's](#) Community Empowerment and Transformation (COMET) project, which works on crime and violence reduction and civil society capacity-building in select inner city communities, held the first of a series of roundtable discussions on Guns, Gangs, and Governance (G3), possible solutions and regional linkages, in Kingston on June 11-14, 2007 and was convened by Bertrand Laurent, Chief of Party, COMET, MSI in Jamaica. FAVACA President Carolyn Rose-Avila gave opening remarks at the event where participants discussed strategies to prevent gang violence. FAVACA supported three participants which provided a regional perspective, including first time volunteers Commander Gary Eugene from the [City of Miami Police Department](#), Jean Philippe Willem Bertin, Agent-4 and Media Coordinator for the Haitian National Police in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and Jacques Juvigny, Demilitarization, Demobilization, and Rehabilitation (DDR) Officer with the [United Nations Mission for the Stabilization in Haiti](#). The FAVACA volunteers played a critical role in broadening the discussion amongst the Jamaican participants. Gary Eugene discussed the history of the Haitian immigrant population in South Florida and the growth of Haitian gangs. Jacques did an excellent presentation on the work that he is doing with the DDR in helping to neutralize gang activity in the urban neighborhoods of Haiti.

EMERGENCY RESCUE TRAINING A LIFESAVER IN CAP HAITIEN



President of the Haitian Foundation for the Future (FHA), and former Fire Chief of Cap Haitien Haiti, Mr. Adouin Zephirin, contacted FAVACA for a tailored training program for emergency personnel. Veteran volunteers Lt. Nathan Lasseur, [West Palm Beach County Fire Dept.](#), and Captain Lee Silverman and Rich Steer of the [Montgomery County Fire Dept.](#) in Maryland were more than willing to donate their services once more to their Haitian counterparts.

First time volunteer Gayle Nye of [Florida Heart CPR](#) in Vero Beach also added her expertise to the team. The firefighters were in Cap Haitien for one week delivering the potentially life saving skills to 28 local firefighters from various regions in Haiti. The training that ran from June 17th – 24th, 2007 covered a wide spectrum of vital areas of focus for the first responders. Silverman and Steer were able to give instruction on swift water rescue as well as dive rescue techniques; while Lasseur and Nye gave instruction on emergency medical procedures such as

CPR and basic first aid for first responders. In addition to training firefighters, the volunteers were able to train close to 70 youth in basic first aid such as the Heimlich Maneuver and CPR. This project was made possible in large part by the Florida Haiti Initiative.

PUTTING WASTE TO GOOD USE, LANDFILL MANAGEMENT IN NICARAGUA

An escalating hazard in Central America over the past several years has been the mismanagement of solid waste produced by urban populations. In Nicaragua the situation is particularly alarming. Waste collection and disposal services cover only 35% of the urban population, leaving 827 metric tons of waste per day that is not being properly removed. The health risk involved with such quantities of waste is considerable. Compounded onto this is the troubling state of the waste dumps,



only 13% of which have been certified as sanitary. Facing such a grave situation, David Martinez, Executive Director of the Association of Professional and Technical Personnel for the Development of Telepaneca, contacted FAVACA for assistance in locating and bringing experts to the city of Telepaneca to document the existing conditions, evaluate a proposed sanitary landfill and petition the regional government for a permit to operate a landfill. FAVACA responded by sending first time volunteers Kathy Gaynor, former environmental engineer and owner of [Global Garbage, Ltd.](#), and Rosemary Bottcher, former 13 year Hazardous Waste Manager for [Leon County](#), June 23rd – 29th, 2007. After a thorough analysis of the dump and surrounding areas, it was determined that environmental conditions and grading terrain would prohibit any mitigation of contamination to the nearby Coco River. The experts in turn suggested several steps and procedures to help combat the waste: pursuing a regional landfill with nearby community of Palacagüina; public or private collection and transportation of waste; a recycle program; incineration of medical waste; and the consistent enforcement of community regulations. Over 15 community leaders and city officials participated in the survey and planning workshops.

WORKING TO ENSURE BRIGHT FUTURE FOR EL SALVADOR'S ELDERLY

A 2006 estimate calculated that 5.2% of the population in El Salvador is over the age of 65. This represents 352,459 citizens that are in need of organized care and attention. The [National Secretary of Family \(SNF\)](#) of El Salvador is an institution that is committed to promoting, creating, and facilitating opportunities and conditions that encourage the integral unity and sustainable development of the family and its different members. Created by an Executive Order in 1989, they have successfully obtained a very positive image among Salvadorians for being an effective, transparent, and compassionate office working to create a comprehensive and effective program for the systematic care of the elderly. To this end, Ana Morales, Director of Integral Attention to the Elderly, contacted FAVACA for assistance in developing a nationwide program dedicated to El Salvador's aging community. Return FAVACA volunteer and retired gerontologist with the [Pan American Health Organization](#), Dr. Martha Pelaez, committed herself once again to the betterment of the region's elderly. She traveled to San Salvador June 19 - 22, 2007, and worked with Ana Morales and her staff at the SNF, as well as the National Committee on Aging, to conduct strategic planning for the future of aging services in El Salvador and engage them in support of a collaborative effort to improve access and quality of services.

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**Promoting social and economic development in the Caribbean
and the Americas through volunteer service.**

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The Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA) is a non-profit organization established in 1982. FAVACA was founded in the belief that Florida's future is interwoven with that of our Caribbean neighbors. The organization's mission is the improvement of social and economic conditions in the Caribbean and Central America through volunteer service. FAVACA provides technical assistance and training through a diverse combination of federal, private and State of Florida funding sources. To date, more than 1,200 volunteer missions to 29 nations and territories of the region have been completed. A wide variety of training is offered in health and social issues, agriculture, education, environment, disaster mitigation, women's leadership, capacity building and more.

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