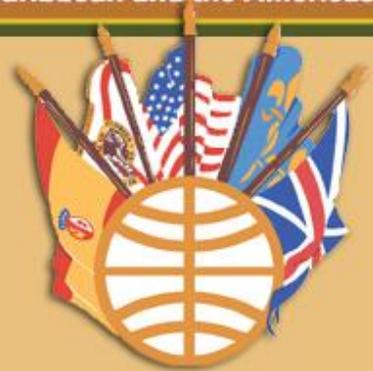


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Breaking News from Florida's International Volunteer Agency



September 2010

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FAVACA'S BOARD CHAIR CLIMBS MT. RAINIER



FAVACA and the Innocence Project of Florida's Board Chair Mark Schlakman summited [Mt. Rainier](#) during the 2010 Labor Day weekend to raise funds and awareness to advance the work of two extraordinary Florida nonprofit organizations: the [Innocence Project of Florida](#) (IPF), that works to free innocent people who have been wrongfully incarcerated; and the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA), that promotes social and economic development in Haiti and throughout the region since 1982.

Mark sees the common ground for this effort in the symbolism and imagery of Mt. Rainier - vast, seemingly insurmountable and dominating the surrounding landscape. "Beyond mountains there are mountains" is a Haitian proverb that characterized life on the island nation long before the earthquake struck on January 12, 2010. Similarly, several Florida exonerees have compared their paths to freedom to "climbing a mountain" even if they have never set foot on a mountain.

Will you step-up to support the work of these small but vital nonprofits? Please consider investing 1, 2, 5 or 10 cents for every foot that Mt. Rainier is high (from sea level to summit it's 14,411 ft.), which amounts to \$144.11, \$288.22, \$720.55, or \$1,441.10 respectively. The money raised will be shared between the two organizations and will help FAVACA expand its capacity to serve the people of Haiti as they struggle to restore their broken lives and IPF to continue

to unlock the truth about wrongful convictions in Florida. Your support would be timely, meaningful, and greatly appreciated!

Contribute by clicking [here](#).

Many thanks for your support!

(IPF and FAVACA are 501(c) 3 organizations; as such, your donation is tax deductible to the fullest extent that the law allows.)

FINANCIAL PLAN GUIDES GREENHOUSE OWNERS IN FINANCIAL MATTERS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

For the past several years in the Dominican Republic, the Ministry of Agriculture and agricultural associations across the country have seen an increase in the demand for fresh produce especially with a growing tourism industry. To help



increase the amount of vegetables grown in the Dominican Republic, small greenhouses have sprouted up across the country. The Asociación Para el Desarrollo de San José de Ocoa (ADESJO) and Fundación Sur Futuro, are two groups that support small greenhouse owners, particularly women run greenhouses, with technical capacity and financial credit to run these small businesses. The problems most greenhouses are facing is the inability to gauge if they are making a profit and how to assess the greenhouses' credit needs. Therefore, ADESJO and Fundación Sur Futuro, both [Partners of the Americas](#) host organizations, requested the assistance of an expert to assess the greenhouses' credit needs, prepare a credit plan to meet the financial needs of these greenhouses and to identify methods to improve the management of their micro-finance loans.

Virgilio Namnum, originally from the Dominican Republic, is a business development officer and business owner of the Ft. Lauderdale based [Marca Design](#) and has over ten years of financial management experience with banking institutions such as Citibank, Union Planters Bank, Regions Bank, Washington Mutual, First Union, and Wachovia. Namnum traveled to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic from July 4-18, 2010 to assess the credit needs of the greenhouses, teach farm accounting, budgeting and record keeping, and was able to help the greenhouses create a credit plan for their financial needs.

Namnum recommended that the greenhouses form an association in order to increase their volume thus attracting buyers from large produce markets and supermarkets. An additional benefit of creating an association would allow the greenhouses to negotiate buyer contracts and receive market price for their produce as opposed to the much below market price they have negotiated. Namnum is currently helping to create a financial report for the group which will serve as a guide for their projected outcomes for an entire year.

SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN HAITI RECEIVE TRAUMA CARE AND COPING LESSONS

Lycée Charlemagne Peralte de St. Raphael is a public high school located in the rural agricultural town of St. Raphael dedicated to the academic excellence of their students and has been recognized as a high achieving school in the north of Haiti due to the success rate of students passing the high stakes baccalaureate exam. Despite the academic achievement of Lycée Charlemagne Peralte, the school staff struggles with the best approaches to support students' social and psychological development. Young people in Haiti have been targeted and exposed to political and social abuses that have never been adequately addressed. Schools have had to change traditional protocols by hiring security guards and adjusting school schedules in times of crisis; nonetheless, the social and psychological issues that exist in every day interaction with the students throughout Haiti remain an area that requires sensitivity, understanding and training. To help increase the knowledge of social and psychological issues of adolescents, teachers from schools throughout the northern department of Haiti came to the campus of Lycée Charlemagne Peralte. To facilitate the requested training, FAVACA sourced Dr. Charlene Desir with the [Fischler School of Education and Human Services at](#)

[Nova Southeastern University](#) and Dr. Pamela Hall, an Assistant Professor of Psychology at [Barry University](#), to train teachers on understanding adolescent student behaviors, trauma, coping skills and the impact on learning. Teachers from grades K-13 were in attendance and local students on summer vacation volunteered their time to allow teachers to practice their newly learned skills in helping students cope with trauma and a variety of behaviors. Additionally, teachers were taught how to incorporate these skills into their lesson plans. Training materials were provided to the teachers and they will return to their schools to instruct other teachers on these skills and help their students adapt to the trauma they've experienced.

JOURNALISTIC RIGHTS AND HIV/AIDS TRAINING BENEFITS HAITIAN JOURNALISTS

In the past, journalists in Haiti have faced censorship for reporting information that might reflect negatively on a political figure or party. Although journalism schools teach about the right to free speech, many untrained journalists often are uncertain about their rights as journalists under the Haitian Constitution. Formerly known as the Association of Journalists for a New Media Concept or Association de Journalistes pour une Nouvelle Conception Médiatique, the Union of Haitian Journalists or [Union des Journalistes Haïtiens](#) (UJH) requested training to increase the knowledge of journalists and journalism professors and students. UJH is based out of Ouanaminthe, Haiti, but the membership is made up of journalists from across the Northeast Department of Haiti. UJH's mission is to contribute to the development and promotion of information to the people of Haiti and beyond. Through a grant by [Levi Strauss Foundation](#) and the [United States Department of State](#), FAVACA was able to identify and send Haitian-American journalist, Patrick Eliancy, to Haiti August 3-8, 2010.



Eliancy is a 25-year veteran journalist, the past ten years of which he has been as the Director and Host for [ISLAND TV](#), a Miami-based television company that produces and airs world-class television programs for the Caribbean/African Pan American market. In addition to presenting a training on the rights of journalists and the press in Haiti, Eliancy further increased

the capacity of the 38 participants by teaching them how to write and report a journalistic story, interview, create special reports and articles, debate, create presentations, and maintain journalistic ethics and professionalism.

To further enhance the training Geraldine Superville, a Board Certified Nurse Practitioner and currently the Lead Nurse Practitioner for [MCCI Medical Group, Inc.](#) in Miami, Florida, where she manages county community health and primary care practitioners and an expert in HIV/AIDS awareness, contraction and prevention provided lectures on HIV/AIDS to allow journalists the chance to take notes, create stories and provide information for debates. During the training, Superville acted as an expert witness to allowing the journalists to practice their newly acquired journalism skills and provided group and individual interviews to allow journalists to create news articles and press releases. At the end of the training, the group of journalists came away with radio and print stories on HIV/AIDS prevention ready to distribute to their local media sources. Local HIV/AIDS organizations Volunteer Service for the Development of Haiti (VDH) and the GHESKIO Center also participated and shared their vast experience on HIV/AIDS risk factors and prevention in the community.

TRACTOR TRAINING TO IMPROVE FARMING FOR LOCAL FARMING COOPERATIVE IN GRENADA

A new and young set of tractor operators have been assigned to operate the Grenadian Ministry of Agriculture's Tractor Service to plough land for farmers; however these young operators have little or no formal training in the safe and efficient use of tractors to perform these land preparation tasks. Therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture requested an expert in land preparation and tilling to work with the Tractor Service employees and agricultural extension officers from the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) on equipment safety and proper land preparation. Lamar Graft, a Farm Safety Specialist, with [Iowa State University](#) and Norm Zimmerman, a specialist in Massey Ferguson tractors, traveled to Grenada August 16-25 to provide the training to 20 participants. A safety course was given to operators and training manuals



were provided to the Tractor Service, which will be used to implement a safety curriculum for future drivers. Since many of the tractors required minor maintenance, Zimmerman and Grafft provided a well developed course on tractor maintenance for both minor and major maintenance overhauls on the Tractor Service's equipment. Lastly, they held a driving rodeo to improve the driving skills of the tractor drivers, which focused on land preparation tilling and steep slope driving. As a result of the trainings, the Tractor Service not only improved their land preparation and driving techniques, but also learned machinery maintenance extending the life of the Ministry of Agriculture's farm equipment.

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