

**The Haitian Project, Inc. Community Update:
Just Add Sauce
October 29, 2012**



The Economics class field trip to the Italia Pasta Factory in Port au Prince

First, before heading into this week's update, I want to thank my wife, Christina, along with Esther Paul, Director of Operations – Haiti, the Haitian Staff and our Volunteers for keeping the school orderly and safe during Hurricane Sandy's first malevolent acts. The students are also to be commended for bravely heading out on Friday [October 26th] to help and serve in their neighborhoods, many of which had been hit hard by rains.

I also want to recognize the difficulties experienced in U.S. due to Sandy's continued run up the coast. Fortunately, Patrick Brun and I were inspired by the Spirit and the weather forecasts to head back to Haiti a day early after our Strategic Planning meeting in Providence, RI.

One positive we can take from the shared difficulties resulting from Sandy is that we are connected in one world.

Now, back to the regularly scheduled update: I am very happy to report on another great moment in our Philo (senior) Economics class based on Prof. Mankiw's widely used text. Christina led a contingent of Philo students on a tour of a local spaghetti factory. Many of you know how spaghetti figures into our community story. This is yet another chapter. I will leave it to Volunteer Edward Drislane, who teaches the class, to go over the details...

Recently, twelve Philo (senior) students had the opportunity to visit the Italia Pasta Factory as a part of their study into Economics. Italia Pasta was founded in 1985 and is one of the leaders in pasta production in all of Haiti. The students were able to tour the production lines and the shipping area where they received an explanation of how the machinery works. More importantly, the students gained an understanding of the different factors that go into a functioning company.

After the tour, LCS students were able to ask questions they had prepared to the owner of Italia, Ms. Sylvie Theard. The mission of Italia is to expand (as is the goal for many companies) and eventually to export, but at the moment still has difficulties providing enough food for Haiti. When asked where they get their ingredients from, Ms. Theard said that they need to import wheat and corn from Mexico and Brazil for lack of supply in Haiti.

In Ms. Theard's history of Italia she explained periods when the company had struggled greatly due to instability in the country. We are fortunate to have a business entrepreneur in Haiti with such fortitude and vision—the business is a very positive presence in Haiti. Albeit a long road, there is a way out of the struggle, however, as Ms. Theard articulated the importance of education in the country.

In light of making use of their education, the Louverturians rose to the occasion. Continually declining translators, they spoke English, French and Kreyol during their visit and at one point had the chance to speak Spanish with a manager from the Dominican Republic.

Concerning the overall trip, here is what the students to say:

"It was a great experience that I really enjoyed. I learned a lot about the different parts of a business." --Pierre-Richard Souffrant

"I see that [in Haiti] it is difficult to build a company like that because you need people who work very hard, money to buy machines and relationships with other people throughout the country to make the company work." - Jovin Junior Louis-Jeune

"The thing that I realized is that even though Italia has failed many times throughout their history, they continue because of their goals and because they want to see their dream become a reality." - Leswynska Jérôme Saint-Juste

"I think that topics like supply and demand that I learn every day in Economics class were evident when visiting the Italia factory. They discussed how when they had many customers and there was a high

demand they were able to increase the price while when they had very few customers they decreased the price." - Claudia Simon

Peace, Patrick

P.S. If you are a frequent donor (yay!) and would prefer to receive one comprehensive statement of your gifts at the end of the year for tax purposes in place of receiving a letter after each contribution please contact Elizabeth Cross at development@haitianproject.org. Thank you for your ongoing support!

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Elizabeth Cross

Director of Community Development
The Haitian Project, Inc.
(815) 505-1287

P.O. Box 6891
Providence, RI 02940

“What you receive as gift, you must give as gift.”
“Se gratis nou resevwa, Se gratis tou pou nou bay.”

---Matthew 10:8