



## **\$30,000 in OGHS Haiti Relief Funds to Improve Education for Children**

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 11/26/12)**—Haiti continues to struggle to provide basic education to children in the aftermath of the massive January 2010 earthquake. Haitian schools, many of which are private and church-based, lack basic school supplies, books, pencils, paper, desks, chairs and chalk boards. Teachers who are dedicated to educating the youth of Haiti often lack adequate education themselves.

One organization addressing the educational needs of children in Haiti is the Philadelphia, PA-based non-profit BuildaBridge International. BuildaBridge Int'l. travels the world to restore hope and healing to communities affected by cultural and religious conflict, environmental catastrophe, poverty, illness, and social injustice. Their dream for Haiti is to train 1,000 ministers, community workers, social workers, and educators to effectively work with children in the context of poverty and crisis.

“We envision a world where all children are resilient, experience self-efficacy, and have a vision for their future,” summarized Nathan Corbitt, president, BuildaBridge, in their project proposal to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS).

In October 2012, \$30,000 in OGHS Haiti Relief funds was granted to BuildaBridge Int'l. to continue development of a certificate-level curriculum to be used to train existing Haitian church and community leaders to work with children in Haiti. .

The BuildaBridge Int'l. project was initiated in 2010 in collaboration with the Université Chrétienne du Nord d’Haiti (UCNH), an International Ministries partner of 65 years, with funding for the development of the first courses of the curriculum provided by UNICEF. The OGHS funds granted were made possible by churches and individuals who contributed to Haiti Relief.

Ultimately, “BuildaBridge will prepare Haitians to serve their communities effectively as arts-integrated teachers, psycho-social support assistants and community workers,” explained Corbitt. “The project provides arts-based tools for hope, healing and resilience, and effective ways to better serve children in crisis and poverty.”

American Baptist Churches (ABC) has been a partner with Haitian Christians for 89 years. UCNH was founded in 1947 as the Haitian Baptist Theological Seminary by ABC missionaries, Harold and Ivah Heneise.

As of October 2012, churches and individuals have given \$2.9 million for Haiti Relief through IM and OGHS. \$1.6 million has been provided for relief and rebuilding. An additional \$1.3 million has been committed for multi-year projects related to Haiti rebuilding. Christian brothers and sisters in Haiti are grateful for the prayers and financial support given through the American Baptist Churches.

One Great Hour of Sharing is administered by the World Relief Committee of the Board of General Ministries. The Committee facilitates American Baptist emergency relief, disaster rehabilitation, refugee work, and development assistance by establishing policy guidelines and overseeing distribution of the annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering.

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*American Baptist International Ministries (IM) was organized in 1814 as the first Baptist international mission agency in America. It began its pioneer mission work in Burma and today works in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas serving more than 1,800 long-term and short-term missionaries. Its central mission is to help people come to faith in Jesus, grow in their relationship with God, and change their worlds through the power of the Spirit. It works with respected partners in over 70 countries in ministries that meet human need.*

*American Baptist Churches is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today, with over 5,200 local congregations comprised of 1.3 million members, across the United States and Puerto Rico, all engaged in God's mission around the world.*