



THE *Isabel Allende*

FOUNDATION



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NEWS RELEASE

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Isabel Allende Foundation Announces 2009 Espiritu Awards

2009 Winners: www.isabelallendefoundation.org

SAUSALITO, CA, October 15 — Internationally acclaimed author Isabel Allende announced today the recipients of her foundation's annual Espiritu Awards. After spending four years researching for a novel set in Haiti, recently published in Spanish, Allende felt compelled to support three nonprofits that work among the poorest in that country.

- **Haiti Projects, Inc.** www.haitiprojects.org
- **St. Boniface Haiti Foundation, Inc.** www.haitihealth.org
- **Partners in Health (Haiti)** www.pih.org

The first Latin American nation to gain its independence as the result of a successful slave rebellion in 1804, Haiti is today one of the poorest nations in the world. It is well known that the living conditions for 70% of the population in Haiti are dire. The majority are children whose families live on less than \$1 day.

All three of the nonprofits being honored provide health care as well as educational programs and humanitarian aid. "For generations, Haitian women have survived without losing their creativity and zest for life," says Allende. "I am grateful to be able to draw attention to programs that recognize their courage and resilience, and contribute to their well-being."

About the Isabel Allende Foundation

Isabel Allende established her foundation in December 1996 to pay tribute to her daughter, Paula, who died at the age of 28. During her short life Paula worked as a volunteer in poor communities in Venezuela and Spain offering her time and skills as an educator and psychologist. She cared deeply for others. When in doubt, her motto was: What is the most generous thing to do?

For more information, visit www.isabelallendefoundation.org. Additional information about the author can be found at www.isabelallende.com.

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The 2009 Espiritu Grantee Profiles

Haiti Projects, Inc. is a nonprofit operating in Fond des Blancs, a mountainous region where there is a high birth rate, high illiteracy rate, rampant deforestation and soil erosion. Widespread poverty and malnutrition, coupled with virtually no employment opportunities or industry, make this region one of the most destitute anywhere in the world. Haiti Projects is working to empower the locals through healthcare, education, vocational training and micro-lending—creating opportunity for families where none existed before.

SAYS ALLENDE: “The partnership between Sarah Hackett, the founder of Haiti Projects, and the women of Fond des Blancs enables both to find greater joy, purpose and meaning in life. It seems to me that they have empowered one another—Sarah demonstrating how one person can affect great change, and the women of Fond des Blancs proving that they are among the most brave, creative and resilient anywhere in the world.”

Research has shown that poverty and population are closely linked. At Haiti Project’s *Clinique de la Santé Familiale* (Family Planning Clinic), women are offered information and choices about how to control their fertility. Haiti Projects also trains and employs 80 women through its sewing cooperative (*Cooperative d’Artisanat des Femmes de Fond des Blancs*), encourages literacy through its lending library (*La Bibliotheque Communautaire*), offers computer classes to the community, and empowers women to develop sustainable small businesses through its micro-lending program.

CONTACT: www.haitiprojects.org

St. Boniface Haiti Foundation, Inc. is a nonprofit providing health care to the poor of Haiti in the rural area of Fond des Blancs and the surrounding region. Since its founding in 1983, its efforts have grown from an immunization project to a full-service hospital which is the only source of healthcare for a quarter million people living in a 100-square-mile area.

SAYS ALLENDE: “St. Boniface Haiti Foundation was created 26 years ago by Nannette Canniff in response to the great kindness shown to her by the people of Fond des Blancs, Haiti. She discovered while visiting their village that although they are resource poor—desperately so—they are extraordinarily generous. The Foundation’s success is testament to Nannette’s commitment, and the wealth of spirit of the people of Fonds des Blancs. ”

Among the services provided by St. Boniface Hospital are inpatient and outpatient care, a 24-hour emergency room, ambulance services, prenatal and obstetrics care, neonatal and pediatric services, and a dental clinic. The hospital also offers educational programs on topics such as nutrition and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. The St. Boniface Haiti Foundation’s Community Development initiatives include building clean water wells and homes, and implementing projects that provide food and employment for desperately poor families.

CONTACT: www.haitihealth.org

Partners in Health (PIH) was founded in 1987 to deliver health care to the impoverished residents of Haiti's mountainous Central Plateau. Beginning with a small community clinic, *Zanmi Lasante* ("Partners In Health" in Haitian Kreyol) today features a 104-bed, full-service socio-medical complex serving half a million people with two operating rooms, adult and pediatric inpatient wards, an infectious disease center, an outpatient clinic, a women's health clinic, ophthalmology and general medicine clinics, a laboratory, a pharmaceutical warehouse, a Red Cross blood bank, radiographic services, and a dozen schools.

SAYS ALLENDE: "Partners in Health acts with a sense of urgency for each person who comes to them for help. They use every means possible—from lobbying policy makers to pressuring pharmaceutical companies—to be able to offer the best possible chance of recovery. This work is a labor of love and solidarity, and is a model for healthcare providers everywhere."

Women's health is a strong focus of *Zanmi Lasante's* outreach activities. One of its first projects was a women's clinic, *Proje Sante Fanm*, which offers family planning, pre- and postnatal care, assisted deliveries and caesarean sections, vaccination of women and children, and screening and treatment of HIV, other sexually transmitted infections and cervical cancer. It provides services and counseling to 40,000 women annually and serves hundreds of thousands more through outreach in the countryside.

CONTACT: www.pih.org