

# THE CATALYST

A publication of the Haiti Plunge

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*The Haiti Plunge mission is to challenge and empower young people to make a difference with their lives and to be of service to others.*

## A BLAST FROM THE PAST



Trisha  
Walsh

Sr. Eunice  
Tassone

Claire  
Dignan

Dan  
Potvin

Haiti Plunge Inc. hosted its first Seamless Team Reunion on August 1, 2015. After 31 years running, there was a lot to reminisce about. Team members at the event represented multiple generations of Haiti Plunge participants, including some members from the very first teams in 1984. It was a great opportunity for old and new members to reconnect, share stories and give updates about the developments that have happened in our nine partner villages throughout the years.

The event included a photo slide show of the early years, a memory book for Team Members to contribute their stories to, and a traditional meal of rice and beans. In a post-reunion reflection, Sr. Eunice Tassone wrote: "Aug. 1st turned out to be a memorable reunion for [members] near and as far away as California."

For me, it was a bit overwhelming to see some of the 'kids' who actually founded the Haiti Plunge. It was a day of laughter, telling funny stories and enjoying each other's company."

The reunion also highlighted how dedicated Seamless Team members are. As a result of the event three primary school students and two secondary students were sponsored to go to school this fall and many hand crafted bags and bracelets were purchased. Your continued support for the organization and to our Haitian partners is truly what has kept this program running for 31 years. We look forward to seeing you all next year at our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Reunion (or before then in Haiti)!

On September 12 the Progressive Palette of Williamstown, MA hosted a fundraising event for the Haiti Plunge at Mongo's Sports Bar and Grill in North Adams, MA. Participants in this fundraising painting class learned to paint a picture of the Cabaret Mountains in Haiti while supporting the Haiti Plunge. With a portion of ticket proceeds donated to the Haiti Plunge, as well as a Haitian craft basket raffle, the organization was able to raise \$120 for school and educational initiatives in our partner villages.



Budding artists showing off their paintings of the mountain area that Haiti Plunge Inc. serves. The pictures reflect what Haiti would look like with trees, the reality is that Haiti's mountains are 90 % deforested.

*None of us are  
guaranteed tomorrow  
so live and share  
today !*

The August team spent several days working with the people in Brely to build benches for the classrooms. The second graders from St. Mary's School in Lee, MA raised the money for this project. The school was finished this past summer and will be open to students in September. Because the village of Brely is high up in the mountains it took several years to build. The greatest challenge was transporting supplies which had to be delivered in between the rainy seasons. The school will serve hundreds of children from smaller villages higher in the mountains. There are no other schools within a five mile radius.



### ***Real Stories Column***

*contributed by Mary Giron Feb. 2013*

I wanted to share a couple small stories about my trip to Haiti. It was too hot to stay in the bunk room so a few souls and I dragged out mattresses to sleep outside. I awoke to see Alex Daugherty standing over me with a shoe saying "Don't move". My heart only skipped one beat when he brought that shoe down hard and said "got it!!!". I looked around and no one else had woken up. Alex went back to bed and in the morning we showed everyone the tarantula that he had killed during the night. Good times!!! lol

The second memory was our walk to the waterfall and the Haitian kids that accompanied us. The Haitian girls were so funny and laughed about how much I sweated on the way. They kept touching my face and my shirt and laughing. They wanted to know why I sweat ...and I wanted to know why they didn't!! Its so amazing how their bodies were used to the heat and the walk. Actually - they were so amazing during the whole trip. Happy girls - didn't have much but were so happy anyway. It taught me that things don't buy happiness - love and family do. It's a trip I won't forget and I thank you and the entire Plunge for being able to be a tiny part of it.

### **2016 Trip dates**

**Dec. 28—Jan. 6, 2016**  
**Feb. 12—21**  
**March 5—15, 12—20**  
**April 8—17**  
**May 26— June 5**  
**June 23— July 3**  
**Aug. 4—14**  
**Oct. 14—23**  
**Dec. 28—Jan. 6, 2017**

**Applications are on the website or send an email to the office. Fundraising brochures are available to participants to help defray the trip cost of \$1,650.**

### **Donors are the lifeline to the mission of Haiti Plunge Inc.**

**“ True riches consist not in material things, but in the heart!” Pope Francis**

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