

There is also the cost of impression material, the cost of the custom ear molds, and in-country travel and expenses for the team. So we also need money. We have gotten funds from Vacation Bible School offerings, from special Mission Weekend offerings, from UMM Units, from UMC and other churches, from Rotary and other service clubs and from individuals.

Why Haiti, and how did this get started? One of the team members went to Haiti in 1988 for what he thought would be his first and last foreign mission trip. While there, due to his experience with the deaf, he was asked to help in a school for children with special needs. Deaf education in Haiti is very limited, with no hearing aids, limited resources and teachers who always want additional training. Since that first trip, he has returned with professional colleagues each year. Haiti continues to be the poorest country in this hemisphere and one of the four poorest countries in the world.

Please keep the children of Haiti and this project in your prayers.

For more information or to send hearing aids or other donations
Contact; Gil Hanke, 803
Wildwood Dr. Nacogdoches, TX
75961, 936-560-6746,
ghanke@sfasu.edu

The Hope Of Hearing

**Opportunities for UMM
to change the lives of
children with
deafness in Haiti**



The Hope of Hearing

Mission: The purpose of the Hope of Hearing is to provide hearing aids, batteries and educational support to children with significant hearing loss in Haiti.



Relationship to UMM: The Hope of Hearing is an Affiliate of the National Association of Conference Presidents of United Methodist Men. As an Affiliate, the Hope of Hearing is one of the mission projects supported nationally by UMM. Participation is not restricted to the UMM or the United Methodist Church; funds and donated hearing aids come to this project from many sources.

Scope of this Project: Each year since the early 1990's teams of audiologists and speech/language pathologists have traveled to Haiti to work in the various schools for the deaf. Children are tested, looking for those children who have enough residual

hearing to benefit from a hearing aid. Many of the children tested have hearing losses so severe that the type of hearing aids available will not help them. But each annual trip, from 50-75 children and some adults are identified who can benefit from a hearing aid. After these are tested, an ear mold impression is taken. These impressions are taken back to the US and a custom ear mold is made. The day of the testing these children are fit with a temporary ear mold and their hearing aid. Once in place, the hearing aid is turned on and adjusted for each child. Seeing the expression on the child's face as they hear amplified sound for the first time is miraculous. Most light up the room with a smile, acknowledging that they hear their voice, the voices of others, even their hands clapping for the first time. They begin to experience what we take for granted every day, and to see the beginning of that process is humbling for the team. They feel honored to see this miracle take place.

Where do we get hearing aids?

We have a special relationship with the Starkey Foundation, a foundation supported by one of the largest hearing aid manufacturers in the world. They sell us reconditioned hearing aids for this specific project. The price of the hearing aids is based on the number of used hearing aids we send to them.

So, what do we need?

HEARING AIDS! We need hearing aids, any size, shape, type or brand; in any condition. The more we send in the

less the price. In some years we have enough donated hearing aids that they actually covered the cost of the 75 hearing aids we take each trip. Many UMM Units collect hearing aids in their congregations and in their community. In 2002, a Boy Scout selected this as part of his Eagle Project and collected many hearing aids even though he was in a very rural setting. Some persons who use hearing aids send us their old ones; some contact their hearing dealers in their communities for additional used hearing aids. Many come from families whose loved one is now with the Lord and these family members want to find a special use for their hearing aids.

What else do we need? Each of the team members pay their own way to Haiti. But there are other significant costs for this ministry to take place. Each time they go, they take hearing aid batteries for each child they have fitted, now over 600. Just that cost is \$20 per child per year.