

Love Peace Hope

Youth in Haiti for Haiti

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I'd first like to thank the Davis United World Scholars Program for the opportunity to write about the project Love Peace Hope. Project Love Peace Hope is geared towards uniting Haitian youth in Haiti in an effort to promote change through "acts of love." With young and unbiased minds ideas can be formed to target areas that need change. Moreover, there are no greater witnesses to the actual problems within any country than the natives themselves. Having to be a native of Haiti myself, I empathize with the current situation of the country. I believe when youth are united in a positive effort, there are endless possibilities for change.

Youth in Haiti are embroiled in social issues within their country. Whenever political upheaval occurs, they too are faced with the challenges that come as a consequence of that. What great need this would create for a community of guidance and support? However, there are limited places that these youth can meet for mentoring, to share ideas, enjoy a game of soccer, perform community service, or plan a get together. They find no initiative that allows them to participate in an action to form better decisions or help develop the community they live in. Schools are often the primary source of social gathering. But not all are fortunate enough to afford primary education. Quite frequently recreation is found within the streets, where violence, stealing, and prostitution prevail.

Our project will open a youth center to bring young people into a structured, nurturing environment. The center will provide a spacious area for meetings and also include an area for recreation. The goal is to have a place with minor repairs, room, and easy commuter accessibility. We hope to afford a space within the city capital of Port-au-Prince. The final option if these means do not work would be to rent or remodel an old building.

We will recruit youth between the ages of 13-20 will be recruited through various academic and non-academic settings. Once the goal has been met (approximately 20 people) the first meeting will be held to describe the project and its goals. From that point forwards, group leaders will be elected, meetings will take place, and discussions will form opinions and ideas. Under supervision, mentoring, and financial assistance, the youth are guided with their ideas and can better execute them.

Additionally, by using the media to their advantage, the youth will be more successful in exposing issues and thereby gain more public awareness in the process. By taking video images, pictures, and using the advantages of the internet, the youth can gain the tools to draw public attention to their needs. Furthermore, with potential collaborations with non-profit organizations like Yéle Haiti and projects with similar

goals, stronger results can be obtained.

The center will focus on the immediate needs of the community. Project Love Peace Hope is geared toward improving city in various ways. Uniting a group of progressive youth with a concern for the future of their country will provide a common ground to build a foundation. Plans and their execution will be directed by group leaders. Some preliminary goals are a cleaner environment that proposes a less threat to health. Port-au-Prince has had a garbage problem for years. By planning bi-monthly garbage pick-up days, we reduce trash and pollution simultaneously. We also want to equip local schools with better tools. We hope to help provide books, school supplies, and other materials to the schools through fundraising. We also plan to broaden activism amongst the youth, helping them to use to highlight community concerns. We also plan to strengthen recreation for children in the city. It is reported that playing sports and participating in tournaments can have a great impact on a child's physical, social and mental development. These are just a few examples of what Project Love Peace Hope will accomplish.

The center will be open in the afternoon hours between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. depending on the availability of those involved and considering school hours. The youth will meet twice a week. There will be a key holder to the building who is responsible for opening and closing the center. The building will be well supervised and rules will be enforced. Providing that the area will be within the city, security will be in place during every youth meeting.

Project Love Peace Hope is determined to promote greater developments in the future. Through ongoing financial donations and program contributions from volunteers and missionary aid, the program will have potential to expand in more areas within Haiti and recruit more youth to bring more attention to the social and economic issues of Haiti. We hope that Davis United World Scholars Program can support us this action by funding the project.