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Projects for Peace, The Vision of Kathryn W. Davis  
Cholera Prevention: Service, Solidarity, and Peace

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### **Personal Background:**

I, Wesley Laine, am a second year graduate student, majoring in international policy studies, and specializing in human security and development, at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. I have been working on development projects in Haiti since 2010.

In 2011, I started a small water project (*The Southeast Clean Water Project*) in the Southeast Department of Haiti. It entailed installing chlorinators (a device used for the disinfection of community water treatment supplies) to protect rural residents of the region from waterborne illnesses. This project is currently benefiting approximately 300,000 people. In October 2013, it was highlighted and honored at the Clinton Global Initiative annual meeting. In 2013, I launched Haiti Philanthropy, Inc, a registered 501(c) (3) non-profit organization focusing on grassroots philanthropic projects in Haiti. My Davis Peace Project proposal aims at continuing to sustainably fight against the cholera epidemic in rural Haiti, and renewing the sinews of peace through good health.

### **Project Background:**

In October of 2010, only months after a devastating earthquake, a massive outbreak of cholera started in Haiti. The epidemic has now killed over 8,000 people, sickened more than 600,000, and promises new infections for a decade or more.<sup>1</sup> Today, three years after the initial outbreak, Haiti is still recording an average of 1,100 cholera cases and 9 deaths per week.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the case fatality rate remains 1.2%, with variations ranging from 4.4% in the rural Southeast to 0.6%, in the capital Port-au-Prince.<sup>3</sup>

Poor access to potable water and proper sanitation remains a major risk. However, unlike the unpredictable earthquake, the large-scale social forces that so often determine who gets sick and dies from cholera are evident and can be mitigated. More precisely, it is social and economic forces that dictate the selection of those affected and likely to die—the rural poor in remote areas who are less informed about the disease. Victims are often those who are living in settings of chronic poverty, which are, by definition, settings of structural violence. Precisely, poverty and inequality are the drivers of most diseases, including cholera, and are enemies of peace. The cholera prevention campaign's main goal is to utilize the praxis of public health to deliver peace.

### **Cholera:**

Cholera is an acute intestinal infection caused by eating food or drinking water that is contaminated with the bacterium called *vibrio cholera*. The clinical manifestations are sudden and onset, usually evident through profuse watery diarrhea and vomiting, leading to severe dehydration and death if treatment is not promptly given. Many infections are asymptomatic or mild—80 to 90% mild or moderate severity. However, the cholera organism can be present in feces of asymptomatic individuals for 7 – 14 days, which may lead to the spread of the bacteria in a community.

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<sup>1</sup> Yale University Law School. *Peacekeeping Without Accountability*. Report. New Haven: Yale University, 2013

<sup>2</sup> Pan American Health Organization. *Epidemiological Update - Cholera*. Report. December 5, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Pan American Health Organization. *Epidemiological Update - Cholera*. Report. December 5, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> ~~FoodNet~~ *Cholera Training Resources: Community Health Workers Materials*. Centers for Disease Control. (2011).

## Project Overview:

In public health, it is widely proven that knowledge can transform behavior. Hence, educating the population to protect itself against the dangers of cholera is critical to their personal and community health. If selected as a recipient, the Davis Projects for Peace grant would be used to implement an 8-week public health campaign in the Southeast Department of Haiti.

## Project Detail:

The public health campaign against cholera entails promoting a healthier lifestyle through cholera prevention workshops in 10 communities of the Southeast region. Through the series of workshops moderated by 10 community health workers who are already working with local grassroots organizations, all residents of selected communities will receive education on the cholera transmission cycle and will learn about all appropriate prevention techniques and where to access the inputs necessary to put them into practice. The workshops will be adapted from existing cholera prevention material, developed by the Centers for Disease Control, already used in Haiti since 2011.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, a video in Haitian créole titled “*the story of cholera*” produced by the Global Health Media Project will also be used. [<http://globalhealthmedia.org/story-of-cholera/videos/cholera-haitian-creole/>]

Cholera Prevention Workshop Format	
Introduction and Video in Creole	10 minutes
Cholera transmission cycle	10 minutes
Cholera symptoms (and referral)	10 minutes
Cholera treatment	15 minutes
Cholera Prevention	1 hour
<i>Hand washing</i>	<i>15 minutes</i>
<i>Water treatment and</i>	<i>30 minutes</i>
<i>How to access water treatment products</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
<i>Sanitation</i>	<i>10 minutes</i>

Each module may be adapted to better fit the audience—working adults with a limited amount of free time, elders, children in school, medical staff. The different versions of the workshop will be developed with the participation of community health workers in an effort to maximize the impact of these short presentations on the practices of the target population.

## Expected Outcome:

The cholera prevention campaign will directly impact the health of thousands by disseminating crucial life saving information to the at-risk population. Furthermore, it will strengthen the impact of the chlorinators and other water treatment methods used in the Southeast Department. Indeed, clean water and good hygiene are complementary priorities for better health. The newly informed and aware population will utilize the acquired best practices to protect themselves and live healthier lives. Consequently, they are more likely to direct their capital and resources away from cholera treatment, and toward essential necessities such as agriculture and entrepreneurship, key factors in achieving sustainable development and fostering a peace-promoting environment. Human capital is Haiti’s chief asset. The cholera prevention campaign will help advance peace in rural southeast Haiti through service and solidarity with the Haitian people.

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<sup>4</sup> *Haiti Cholera Training Resources: Community Health Workers Materials*. Centers for Disease Control. (2011). [http://www.cdc.gov/haiticholera/training/chw\\_materials.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/haiticholera/training/chw_materials.htm)