



SBHF's Mission

The St. Boniface Haiti Foundation is dedicated to providing essential health services to the people of Southern Haiti, especially the most vulnerable. We are committed to building a comprehensive, efficient, and resilient health system that provides high quality care. We believe that ensuring access to life-saving and life-changing health services is a critical component to building strong and productive communities.

Vision

Working in partnership with local communities, we will transform Haiti's southern peninsula by ensuring that all people, regardless of their ability to pay, have access to high-quality, compassionate health care. By improving health, we will reduce unnecessary suffering and improve the standard of living for the entire region. SBHF's success will prove that quality health care can be a sustainable reality in Haiti, and will offer a model for health care systems in resource-poor settings around the world.

Values

- **WE BELIEVE IN EQUITY AND COMPASSION:** We believe that tout moun se moun (“all people are people”). We ensure that everyone, and particularly the poorest among us, has access to the health services we offer. We treat all of our patients with dignity, respect, and compassion.
- **WE ARE DETERMINED:** We get the job done. We are relentless because we care deeply about the well-being of our patients, and we have a sense of urgency because we know that the work we do saves lives.
- **WE ARE COLLABORATIVE:** We don't believe we have all the answers, nor that our work can be done without input from our partners and members of the community. We are always looking for ways to learn from others and improve our work.
- **WE ARE DATA-DRIVEN:** We measure what we do and use data to make decisions that impact patient care.
- **WE ARE TRANSPARENT:** We are accountable to the communities we serve, our donors, and the partner organizations that help sponsor our work.

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APRIL 2018 NEWSLETTER



PATIENT PROFILE

When beating TB isn't the end of the fight

Teenager survives rare form of tuberculosis only to need emergency surgery.

Tuberculosis is a disease of the past in most of the world. But in places like rural Haiti it remains disturbingly present. In most cases TB infects the lungs and leads to deadly coughs and fevers. But in some cases the TB bacterium infects a person's intestinal tract, and causes a range of other, equally fatal, symptoms. This kind of TB can be hard to diagnose, and patients often wait a long time to get diagnosed and start treatment.

That was the case for 16 year-old Renelson Florestal of Port-au-Prince. He had been suffering from abdominal pain and other GI symptoms before finally getting diagnosed with abdominal TB. Thankfully he was able to get treatment. TB treatments are long and arduous, in many cases nearly as difficult as the illness itself. But Renelson persevered and recovered from TB.

However, his journey to health was far from over.

The damage caused by TB and the treatment for it was extensive, especially in Renelson's esophagus. Several months after finishing his antibiotic treatment, Renelson found he could not swallow easily. His mother Renette was frantic to get her son help. She didn't know what was wrong, and after being sick for so long she was worried about how long he could keep fighting this new challenge.

Renette brought Renelson to hospital after hospital around the city, turned away time and time again due to exorbitant fees, impossibly long lines, or a lack of supplies and equipment. His 16-year-old body, which had already been through so much fighting off tuberculosis, grew smaller and weaker as he struggled to get enough nutrition. One hospital gave them medications to try, but they didn't make a difference. His throat continued to constrict until he could only swallow liquids.

“After spending months searching for help for my boy I was very depressed and started to cry because I felt like there was nothing I could do to help him.” None of the hospitals they had visited could help Renelson, and at this point the boy had been taking in nothing but water and thin broth for three months. He was weak and thin, and so tired.



Renelson with his mother Renette. Renelson successfully beat a rare form of tuberculosis, only to have side effects that almost killed him.

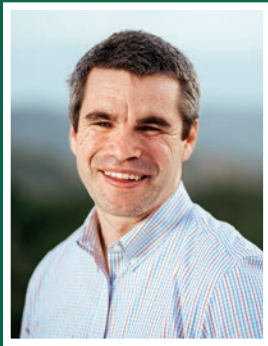
Then his throat closed so much he could barely swallow water.

“I brought my boy with me to church that Sunday. I was crying during the service, wondering what to do. Then, at the end of the service a man came up to me, and we started talking about Renelson and his troubles. This man told me about a hospital called St. Boniface, in the South. He said we might be able to find help there.”

The next morning, Monday, Renette and Renelson made their way to Fond des Blancs. Renelson had barely ingested anything for over a week. He was dehydrated, and his condition was becoming critical.

As soon as they arrived Renelson was rushed to the new Emergency Department at SBHF. “I was so impressed to see how the staff at St. Boniface Hospital took care of my boy right away,” Renette says. “From that moment on I felt comfortable,





A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

CONOR SHAPIRO
PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear Friends,

The passing of Briel Leveillé in late March made me think back on the nearly 35 years that he had been involved with SBHF, and the incredible change that has come about in that time.

Thanks to the work of Briel and many others, Fond des Blancs today looks very different from how it did even 15 years ago when I first visited. Thanks to your support, St. Boniface Hospital has been the largest driver of the town's economic progress and growth.

From a one-room clinic built by hand with the hard work and leadership of Briel and others, the hospital has grown today a 130-bed facility offering advanced surgical care, maternal health services, NICU and ICU, physical therapy and rehabilitation, and some of the best internal medicine and emergency care anywhere in the country. The change is stunning, and what it provides for the people of southern Haiti cannot be overstated.

Your support is the catalyst that has driven the hospital's incredible growth and Fond des Blancs' transformation into a place where people come, stay, and thrive. For Briel and his entire community, we will continue working to ensure that all people have access to health and opportunities. Thank you for being a part of this work.

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Conor Shapiro
President & CEO

JOURNEY TO HEALTH CONTINUED ▶

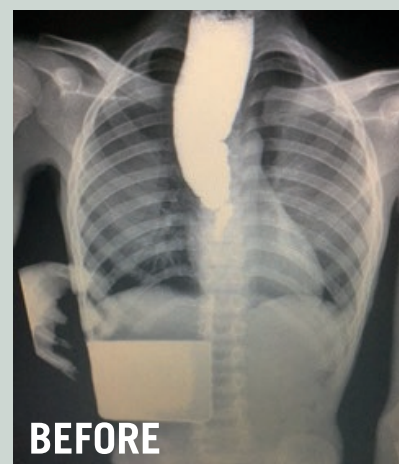
knowing that my boy would be healed." The difference from her experiences at the other hospitals they had been to was striking. It was life saving for Renelson, who was finally getting the care he desperately needed thanks to your support of St. Boniface Hospital's emergency department and surgical program.

SBHF's surgical team, led by Dr. Luther Ward, quickly got involved in Renelson's case. "X-rays showed that nothing was passing down Renelson's esophagus past his mid-chest, and even water was not able to get into his digestive system," Dr. Ward explains. This had been the case for nine days, and Renelson was near death.

The team diagnosed that scar tissue from the tuberculosis infection and treatment had built up and effectively closed off Renelson's esophagus. He was quickly prepped for major surgery to repair the damage and make it possible for him to eat again. "This surgery consisted of opening up both his abdomen and chest, and removing the damaged part of his esophagus. This is a difficult surgery, technically, because you have to separate the esophagus from surrounding organs like the heart and lungs. Then we replaced the damaged esophagus with part of his stomach."

SBHF's robust emergency department and fully-equipped surgical center (both built with the support of USAID/ASHA and the generosity of the American people) made it possible to do this complex surgery on a short timeline. Dr. Ward explains, "this case was only possible because of years spent building a talented and highly trained team of nurses, anesthetists, and surgeons. It's a team that finds solutions instead of saying 'we can't'."

After his surgery, Renelson's follow-up x-rays showed that fluid can now get into his stomach and pass all the way through his digestive system. That means that after months of suffering, and being near death, Renelson can finally eat again. He is on the path to health once more, after a very long journey through illness.



BEFORE: Before surgery xrays showed that fluids could not get past the scar tissue.



AFTER: After surgery fluids (and food) could once again reach Renelson's digestive system.

Renette, his mother, is overjoyed to see her son feeling better so soon after his surgery. "I thank St. Boniface Hospital for this incomparable service that they provide to the people of Haiti," she says, beaming.

Your support makes these services, and this success story, possible.

COMMUNITY FOCUS

Remembering Briel

Briel Leveillé's entire life was dedicated to improving his community

On March 29, SBHF and the Fond des Blancs community lost a champion and dear friend in Briel Leveillé. Briel was the first person Nannette Canniff, Father Gerry Osterman, and the other founders of SBHF met in Fond des Blancs way back in 1983. He was a champion for the hospital and the people it served, and worked in many capacities throughout his life to increase opportunities and welfare for his people.

Briel worked with SBHF for many years as our external relations coordinator—a key link between the greater community and the hospital. He founded RATRAP, a local community development organization, and helped run programs that lifted up local farmers, gave children the opportunity to go to school, and supported the most vulnerable people in town. He was the elected leader of the community for many years, and served as an unofficial leader for nearly his entire adult life. Having only a primary school education, which he began at the age of 13 and completed at age 21, Briel never saw a challenge he didn't want to take on. He sent all 12 of his children through primary and secondary school—schools that existed and thrived in part because of his tireless work to make life better for the children of Fond des Blancs.

Last fall, on a warm day sitting in the shade just outside his house, he said, "My dream was to bring change to the



Briel Leveillé leaves a legacy of tireless work and great progress on behalf of his community.

world, to Haiti, and to Fond des Blancs. Social, economic, health, all kinds of change...When I was young, all young people wanted to leave, go somewhere else. There were no opportunities here. Now people stay, find jobs, and can make a life here. I hope that all of the things that need to be done can be achieved. My dream was to bring sustainable change...we are seeing these changes, but there is a lot still to be done."

In Briel's memory, and in the spirit in which he lived his life, may we continue the work of making the world a better place for all.

SBHF'S FISCAL YEAR ENDS JUNE 30TH

Help us finish the year strong. Your support makes it possible to treat every patient who comes to SBHF in need of care.

Thank You.

To learn about the ways you can contribute to SBHF, visit our website at haitihealth.org/join-us or call 617-244-9800.

Want to learn more about how much of an impact your gift can make? Visit WWW.HAITIHEALTH.ORG for more information and to make your gift today!