

Haiti Summary

I have to say that I really did enjoy my trip to Haiti. Although it was not a typical spring break vacation it was a huge eye opener. I have always seen poor countries on T.V. but actually going there and seeing everything for yourself is totally different. I was shocked to see how many homeless people and beggars there were. Living in the U.S., I have never seen so many people in poverty. There were also totally different standards there compared to here. For example, living here without air conditioning is pretty uncommon, but living there with air conditioning is a huge luxury. Everything was so unbelievably different from here that I could never even have imagined it. There were trash piles everywhere and the entire city of Port Au Prince was a mess. People lived everywhere, in houses, tents, sheds, or just on the streets. There were no safety regulations, or if there were then nobody enforced them. Five people could ride on one motorcycle, a regular pick up truck could be a bus for more than 15 people. Everyone drives so close to each other and there were no lanes on the roads. It was common to see more people in the bed of a truck rather than riding in the cab. The air in the city smelled of car exhaust and it was inescapable. I can't imagine how bad it must be for your lungs to live in that city and breathe that air all day everyday. I was also surprised at how everyone worked so hard outside in the heat. I was just sitting in the back of a truck and I couldn't stand still without sweating. When driving to the village in Fon des Blanc, Chuck pointed out piles of rocks that we were passing that were actually somebody's property and worth money. It surprised me that rocks had value and that people would just leave their piles laying around everywhere. Once we got closer to the village we turned onto this extremely rough road that I was surprised was even drivable. Along this road there were lots of animals like goats and donkeys tied to trees or fences. These also belonged to people but there were no people around and they were in the middle of nowhere. Once we got to where the school was, Chuck said "We are in the village now", but I couldn't help thinking that the whole place reminded me of a big campground rather than a neighborhood. We saw the school and although it was in use, there were a lot of things missing like textbooks and paper and pencils and desks. There is also an entire building that still needs to be finished and another that needs an actual roof. My goal is to raise between 3 and 10 thousand dollars to help the school. This money would not only help finish the construction of the school, but it would pay for more kids to go to school that can't afford it and for the salary of more teachers. Teachers there work for only 100 dollars a month and it only costs 15 dollars a year for a child to attend the school. While we were in the village Abner translated for Chuck to tell the teachers that he was going to try and send money every month for the teachers' salary. Chuck also organizes large shipping crates to be sent once in while that will send lots of much needed things to the school such as books and pencils and clothes, as well as medical supplies for the local hospital. I was so glad that I was able to go on this trip and represent the Victim's Rights Foundation and help Chuck with his organization which is called U.S. of Haiti.