



## IRIS Mundial newsletter

October 2016

# MIRAGOANE, HAITI, 2016

## Mission accomplished for the IRIS Mundial volunteers

*By Dr. Francine Lavallée and Dr. Marie-France Duguay, optometrists- On May 3rd, IRIS Mundial volunteers returned from Haiti with a strong sense of accomplishment. 1,725 individuals were examined in the course of this one-week mission in Miragoane, a small town about three car hours from the capital, Port-au-Prince. The people live in precarious conditions and their visual needs are great as there were no eye care services in the area until the arrival of the IRIS Mundial team.*

### Visual care for 1725 people among the poorest

We are delighted and proud of the work done by our multidisciplinary team of **28 Canadian and Haitian volunteers**. After transporting the luggage, equipment, eyewear and medication trays, the team moved into the Miragoane Ste-Therese Hospital premises. Ophthalmologists, optometrists, opticians, a medical doctor, nurses and assistants worked tirelessly, for long days, despite the heat, with incredible energy. Haitian nurses and assistants working for the IRIS Mundial permanent eye care programs in Limbe and Labrousse also joined the Canadian team.

It would have taken much more than five days to meet all patients in need; some walked for several hours under a blazing sun to reach us. The volunteer professionals examined more than 1725 people and 1,500 of them received prescription eyewear, which will allow some to work, others to study or simply help them carry out their daily activities. For most of them, it was their first eyewear. All received sun protection against ultraviolet radiation, which often leads to cataracts and/or pterygium.



**Mrs. Caroline Anderson, Optician, who verifies the near vision of a patient**



**2016 mission team in Miragoane, Haiti**

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Chrisbeline, with Dr. Christian Gagner, Optometrist, and Mrs. Élisabeth Duncan, Optician

***“You can leave the hand of your daughter; she can walk alone now,”***

Elizabeth Duncan, optician and director of the dispensary, told the mother of this little girl.

## MIRAGOÂNE, HAÏTI 2016– SUITE

### Changing lives through the gift of sight

1725 stories could be told thanks to the colossal work of this caring, devoted and determined volunteer team providing quality health care to disadvantaged people. It's through little stories that our intervention makes sense, when lives are transformed by the gift of sight ... Chrisbeline, a seven year-old girl, received prescription glasses of -14.00 diopters after her eye exam. The girl will soon have the chance to receive a pair of glasses perfectly adapted to her view, courtesy of Nikon Optical Laboratories. “You can leave the hand of your daughter; she can walk alone now,” Elizabeth Duncan, optician and director of the dispensary, told the mother of this little girl.

### Awareness of visual impairment

The main objective of the mission was to educate the population and medical authorities about visual problems, and make them aware that most visual impairments can be avoided or cured simply with a pair of glasses or ocular surgery. “Glaucoma screening for each patient helped prevent blindness in several patients; these people didn't suspect that their vision was in jeopardy because of this endemic disease in Haiti.” says Dr. Francine Lavallée, optometrist and director of visual care. More than 200 patients with eye diseases had the opportunity to be examined by volunteer ophthalmologists as well as receiving advice and eye medication. Patients with cataracts will be operated in the coming weeks by a Haitian ophthalmologist thanks to an IRIS Mundial special grant.

**The challenge of this mission in Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, was successfully met;** people will remember the visit of our team for a long time. The contacts established will help with the implementation of permanent ophthalmological services.

Thank you to our partners and our volunteer directors who made the mission possible! Congratulations and THANK YOU to all the volunteers for their generosity, determination and exceptional dedication!

Our principal partners: IRIS The Visual Group and the 160 IRIS stores across Canada, the National Blindness Prevention Committee in Haiti (CNPC), the Foundation for Economic and Social Development (Nippes, Haiti), Alcon Foundation, International Health Collaboration, Maui Jim and Nikon Lenswear.

To see the complete article, click [here](#).

To read the French testimony from a mission volunteer, click [here](#).



## 2016 Annual General Meeting

The IRIS Mundial Annual General Meeting, which took place in the afternoon, allowed active members to get to know each other and confirm their involvement in the organization. Subsequently, the 2015 annual report was presented to the members as well as a summary of the activities that took place over the last 18 months. The document is now available on the website. Please click [here](#) (available in French only). The meeting also enabled us to carry out the first official elections for members wishing to get involved on the board of directors. Welcome to our new administrators!



Dr. Francine Lavallée (IRIS Blainville), President, with Mrs. Catherine Rioux, General Manager

## 2016 MEETING VOLUNTEERS

### 2016 Jean-Pierre Tchang Award

To highlight its generosity and great commitment to IRIS Mundial projects, the Jean-Pierre Tchang Award was created in 2009 to reward the volunteer whose contribution stands out. For 2016, during the IRIS Mundial Annual Volunteers' meeting which was held in Deux-Montagnes, the Jean-Pierre Tchang prize was presented to the President of the organization, Dr. Francine Lavallée, optometrist. It would be difficult to mention all her involvement within the organization for the past 8 years: participation to 13 overseas missions, training of the teammates of the permanent eye care programs in Haiti, maintenance and management of the material at the warehouse, website development in order to open the world's eyes to the human misery related to a reduced vision... Woman of engagement, empathic, generous, dedicated and meticulous, Dr. Lavallée had overcome many challenges to ensure the sustainability of the organization. With energy and courage, she helped to establish several elements in order to solidify the foundations of IRIS Mundial and ensure its great standing. On behalf of the world's poorest people, it is with the most gratitude that IRIS Mundial recognizes Dr. Lavallée for her big heart, her devotion and her continuous presence during the last years. Congratulations to Dr. Francine Lavallée!

### Summary of the day

The event took place in a warm and friendly atmosphere at the home of Marie-Chantal Hudon and Denis Lesperance in Deux-Montagnes, on 17 September. Over thirty volunteers were present for the cocktail, the dinner and the evening. BBQ, games, fire on the waterfront, music, dessert contest, karaoke and laughs also gave a wonderful flavor to the evening. It was a memorable and fun-filled day!



Mrs. Miriame Cadet, Head Nurse of the Labrousse PPFB, during an eye screening in

## THE PROGRAMS OF IRIS MUNDIAL: *Access for thousands of Haitians to visual* **Labrousse PPFB results**

As of August 2016

**Consolidation phase III: October 2015 to September 2017**

- 1544 students screened in schools
- 924 adults screened in mobile clinics or at the permanent clinic in Labrousse
- 221 complete eye examinations carried out and 8 eye surgeries carried out
- 166 pairs of eyeglasses provided and 369 medications distributed

The Labrousse program is currently in a restructuring phase until the end of 2016, in order to develop a model better adapted to the reality of the area.

### Follow-up mission in Labrousse

Last May, a one-week follow-up mission was run by the General Managers of the permanent eyecare program in Labrousse, Mrs. Miriame Cadet and Mr. Maxi Marcelin. Despite the heavy rains that made the roads impassable, the trip went well. Several activities were carried out: follow-up of the program objectives, implementation of mobilization strategies for mobile clinics, follow-up of visual tools printing, inventory and selection of equipment, screening patients in a school and in an isolated location, etc. A meeting was also organized with Doctor Gracia Lenode, director of the Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes de Labrousse health center, concerning the objectives of the program and better integration of eye care with other health services available.

### Ophthalmology internship for the PPFB nurses

Thanks to our partners, *Orlo Clinic* in Port-au-Prince and *Vision Plus Clinic* in Cap-Haïtien, the head nurses of the two IRIS Mundial permanent programs in Haiti had the opportunity to experience an ophthalmology internship last spring, in order to improve their knowledge and skills in eyecare. Mrs. Miriame Cadet, head nurse of the Labrousse PPFB, told us that she liked attending surgeries. This will help her to more aware and prepare the patients who will undergo eye surgery. Mrs. Nadia Bazil, head nurse of the Limbe PPFB, told us: "I had the chance to observe the work methods of other healthcare employees... [...] I think that the training will help me a lot in my work, I feel better equipped." Thanks to our partners who made possible this internship!

## History

Eager to offer visual services throughout the year, IRIS Mundial has implemented two "Programs for the Prevention and Fight against Blindness (PPFB)" that aims to make available a quality eye care system to the most disadvantaged population located in isolated areas. The field teams are working tirelessly to enable thousands of people each year to experience better vision.



Mr. Maxi Marcelin, PPFB Assistant, during an eye screening in mobile clinic



## The opening of new premises for the Limbe PPFB

We are pleased to announce that the teammates of the Limbe permanent program now have new premises in the Village of Hope (CEDI-VE). This more spacious building, funded by IRIS Mundial, was inaugurated last June. New ophthalmic equipment will be sent shortly, and the centre will offer a larger range of services to the population. One aspect of the current consolidation phase is to optimize and equip the permanent eyecare clinic. This second phase is possible through a grant from the Quebec International Development Program and the Roncalli International Foundation.



Mrs. Marie-Laurence Bordeleau, Intern, with the Limbe PPFB teammates

## Limbe PPFB results

As of August 2016

**Consolidation phase III: October 2015 to September 2017**

- 1570 students screened in schools
- 980 adults screened in mobile clinics or at the permanent clinic in Limbe
- 505 complete eye examinations carried out and 15 eye surgeries carried out
- 369 pairs of eyeglasses provided and 876 medications distributed

## Manager without borders internship in Limbe

From May to August 2016, Marie-Laurence Bordeleau, a Manager without borders intern, stayed at the Village of Hope (CEDI-VE) in Limbe, Haiti. As an organizational capacity building advisor, she helped the PPFB's team to better manage the different aspects of the program, by identifying issues, making recommendations and providing training. Marie-Laurence has a secondary school baccalaureate and is finishing an International Development Management masters program. Her dynamism and leadership were major assets for the local teammates. This is what she had to say about her experience:

*"It's hard to describe Haiti for those who have never been there. My few months experience in this country can be described by perfumes, landscapes and smiles. It was a fourteen-week love story; it was about getting to know others, seeing beauty in dirt and the good in poverty. Without communication technologies, Haiti forced me to forget the rest of the world and focus on the here and now. The progress made by the organization and the impact of the projects on the Limbe community are undeniable. The presence of the service-users, day after day, proves that there is a real need to fill. In the end, my summer at the PPFB helped me to better understand the issues surrounding development projects. I will always be grateful to IRIS Mundial for giving me this opportunity to grow as a young volunteer!" - Marie-Laurence Bordeleau*



# OUR PRECIOUS PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS



The GUHG team with Dr. Martin, IRIS Mundial Optometrist volunteer and the Limbe PPFB teammates

## Guy Mongrain donates \$ 3 325 to IRIS Mundial!

Our good friend Mr. Guy Mongrain participated last March on "Le Tricheur" (*The Cheat*) program on TVA, a game show where the participants have to answer a series of general knowledge questions. He delivered a strong performance during the week and decided to give his earnings to IRIS Mundial, an amount of \$ 3 325! Mr. Mongrain, thank you for your generosity!



Mr. Guy Mongrain, during his participation to "Le Tricheur"



Dr. Pierre Martin, Optometrist, with his colleagues

## Pediatric eye screening mission in Haiti

**IRIS Mundial joined the ophthalmology residents from the University of Montreal**

From January 30<sup>th</sup> to February 6<sup>th</sup>, a pediatric eye screening mission took place in the north of Haiti through the Montreal University Group for Haitians with Glaucoma (GUHG). The main objective was to collect epidemiological data on visual problems in children aged between 3 to 6 years. The team of the IRIS Mundial Program for Prevention and Fight against Blindness (PPFB) and Doctor Pierre Martin, an IRIS Mundial optometrist volunteer, joined forces with the GUHG to make this mission a great success!


### An undoubted impact

During the four days of work, more than 600 people were examined in two schools. Cases of congenital ptosis, strabismus, congenital coloboma as well as children at risk from glaucoma were observed during the week. More than thirty Haitian young people received eyewear cut in Quebec, sent to them last spring thanks to the teammates of the IRIS Mundial Limbe PPFB.

The GUHG members benefited from the expertise of Doctor Martin, who has participated in more than 10 IRIS Mundial abroad missions, for the supply of eyewear, the logistics of the clinics, the Haitian culture, etc. The PPFB teammates, meanwhile, participated in the planning of the mission, as well as taking visual acuity and translating from Creole. "It is especially thanks to IRIS Mundial and its PPFB that contacts with schools were made. It is with the precious collaboration of [the PPFB and its coordinator] Elvie Maxineau [...] that all families of children assessed were notified." -Doctor Martin, optometrist.

To see the French article submitted by the group, click [here](#).

To see the French video made by the group, click [here](#).

To make a  
donation,   
click [here](#)



## Races for the benefit of IRIS Mundial: more than \$ 12,800 collected!

A huge thank you to the 60 runners for their fundraising effort in the Scotiabank Charity Challenge through the Tamarack Ottawa race weekend: the event was a great success! Congratulations to everyone for their performance despite the oppressive heat sometimes near 40°C! The sum raised will help restore the eyesight of patients suffering from cataracts or other ocular diseases, thanks to our permanent program in Labrousse

Thank you to our donors for their generosity!



## IRIS MUNDIAL MONTH

In February, when you purchase new eyewear IRIS will contribute

**\$10 to IRIS MUNDIAL**



IT'S OUR MISSION  
FOR EYES IN NEED.

[irismundial.ca](http://irismundial.ca)



2016 IRIS Mundial month

## A donation of \$74 000 thanks to IRIS Mundial month!

February 2016 was IRIS Mundial Month in the IRIS stores across Canada. For each pair of eyeglasses sold during this special month, a donation of \$10 was made to IRIS Mundial, contributing to the grand total of \$68 000. Also, a donation of \$50 was made to IRIS Mundial for every ocular surgery carried out at the IRIS Ophthalmology Clinic of Laval, which raised over \$6 000. During the past 9 years, IRIS, the Visual Group and IRIS stores has given more than 824 000\$ to IRIS Mundial.

We warmly thank all the owners, the team members of the IRIS stores and the shareholders, professionals and employees at the clinic for their efforts in promoting IRIS Mundial activities.

Thanks to these donations, IRIS Mundial will continue to help thousands of people to better see the world.



L'EXPÉRIENCE D'UNE  
MEILLEURE VISION



## A grant from the Roncalli International Foundation

The Roncalli International Foundation has awarded a grant of \$ 20,000 to IRIS Mundial, in order to provide ophthalmic equipment at its two permanent eye care programs in Haiti! Patients in need will benefit from a fuller level of eye care.

A huge thank you to the Roncalli International Foundation!



# IRIS Mundial thank you!

To achieve all its projects, IRIS Mundial must rely on its valuable partners, collaborators and volunteers!

**Thank you** to IRIS, The Visual Group, the main partner of IRIS Mundial, and owners of IRIS stores!

**Thank you** to the IRIS team members who work on the recycling and preparation of used eyeglasses!

**Thank you** to all of our collaborators and partners for their generosity!

**Thank you** to our valiant volunteers who graciously provide their time and energy!



## Become an active member!

IRIS Mundial is looking for enthusiastic people wishing to become involved in its projects and activities.

Becoming an IRIS Mundial member allows you to:

- Participate in general meetings and vote on important issues;
- Submit your application to become an administrator and select the members of the board of directors;
- Receive privileged information on IRIS Mundial projects and activities;
- Tell us what kind of contribution you would like to make.

**Becoming IRIS Mundial member also show your commitment to the cause and your desire to promote its mission and values.**

For more information (in French), click [here](#)

## About us

IRIS Mundial is a group consisting of Optometrists, Opticians, Ophthalmologists and other professionals who work as volunteers with the most disadvantaged people. Thanks to the contributions of volunteers who offer their professional expertise, time, and availability, IRIS Mundial develops and sponsors activities to prevent blindness in order to help the population. IRIS Mundial also promotes the development of a good relationship with local organizations in the host country.

### Mission

Our mission is to improve the visual health of vulnerable people in developing countries by giving them access to high-quality preventive and curative eye care services, and thus improve their living conditions.

### Values

- Solidarity
- Partnership
- Accessibility
- Respect for cultures
- Excellence
- Contribution of volunteers
- Sharing of knowledge and empowerment:

### Areas of intervention

- Blindness prevention through education and awareness on ocular health;
- Diagnosis of ocular problems by screenings and eye exams;
- Correction of visual impairments by offering eyeglasses, medical and surgical treatments;
- Transfer of knowledge and ongoing training of local professionals.

## To contact us

Do not hesitate to contact us for additional information on our activities.

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*It's our mission for eyes in need.*