Helen W. Little

Helen Little loved working at NCSU (1962 until retirement in 1990), but when she made her first trip to Haiti, she quickly realized there was another job she wanted to spend most of her work efforts toward. During this trip, Helen was appalled by what she saw—little children walking around naked, families living in poor conditions, and the great lack of education for children. The main impetus for Helen's retirement was her desire to spend more time working to help the people of Haiti.

Since 1990, Helen has made 52 trips to Haiti. She has helped build seven schools, four wells, two churches, and a childrens’ home. When not in Haiti, Helen spends her time in North Carolina going to yard sales to gather clothing, children's shoes and school supplies for Haiti. She does fund raising—telling stories about Haiti to church members and local residents and handwriting personal letters to friends and businesses asking for financial support. While home in the USA, Helen spends time speaking to many groups seeking support for the people of Haiti.

Helen believes that the greatest need in Haiti is for education. She feels that education is the way out of poverty and a way to establish a middle class, which is almost nonexistent in Haiti. Since she started her trips over 20 years ago, she has seen a rise in funding for children to attend school. She has recruited over 100 people to pay for school expenses for children, and she has personally been paying school tuition for a young Haitian boy for 22 years.

During her two decades of working in Haiti, Helen has seen improvements -- the streets are cleaner, more children are attending school, and the generation growing up seems more aware that things need to change. Helen was in Haiti with a mission team when the earthquake of January 12, 2010 struck and greatly increased Haiti's need for help.

Helen plans to continue helping as long as she can. At age 80, she is collecting funds and planning for another mission trip to Haiti in July, 2011.

May 18, 2011
The University Club