Join Kiwanis Haiti relief effort

The Kiwanis International Foundation has provided a grant from its disaster relief fund to UNICEF to help provide relief aid to Haiti, where a January 12 earthquake left 3 million people in need of emergency aid. Contributions currently are being accepted by the foundation for its disaster relief fund, or you can send your contributions directly to UNICEF.

Wounded people lie in a make shift shelter in the parking lot of the general hospital after an earthquake measuring 7 plus on the Richter scale rocked Port au Prince Haiti on Tuesday January 12. ©UN Photo/Logan Abassi
Worldwide Service Project

What do you think?

You’re invited to review and comment on proposals for Kiwanis International’s next Worldwide Service Project. Online discussions will be conducted in eight languages: Chinese, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.

A task force, comprised of Kiwanians representative of the global Kiwanis family, has reviewed and researched the 197 applications from clubs and child-focused organizations and submitted its findings to the Board. The task force was appointed by Kiwanis International President Paul Palazzolo, Immediate Past President Don Canaday and President-Elect Sylvester Neal.

The Worldwide Service Project will be announced at the Opening Session of the 95th Annual Kiwanis International Convention in Las Vegas, June 24.

KI, KIF name new leader

The Kiwanis International Board of Trustees named Stan D. Soderstrom executive director of Kiwanis International and the Kiwanis International Foundation. This is the first time in the organization’s history that the two entities have shared administrative leadership.

As Kiwanis International executive director, Soderstrom supports the international board, serves as editor of the official publication and directs the organization’s worldwide staff. He also will work with your foundation’s executive leadership to provide grants aimed at helping children.

Shared insights

The Service Club Leaders Conference (SCLC) brings together community-service clubs, such as Lions Clubs International, Soroptimist International and, of course, Kiwanis International, for the exchange of ideas and best practices. Kiwanis International Executive Director Stan Soderstrom attended a recent SCLC conference and shares a few insights he gleaned from the event.

- Never underestimate the value of fine-tuning. If something is not working, don’t throw it out as your first response. Look for ways to make small modifications.
- Membership should be viewed by the organization or club as a monthly interaction, not an annual one.
- Younger members often want the opportunity to scale up and scale down their level of participation.
- A prospective member’s first impression is formed within the first three minutes of interaction. What impression is your club making?
Kiwanis stories

Sharpening students’ skills

Summer break can be a long time for students to remember what they learned in school the previous year. To keep students interested in learning over a 44-day-long summer vacation, the Kiwanis Club of Pointe à Pitre, Guadeloupe, passed out “vacation notebooks” to more than 200 children in their community. The notebooks are full of exercises and learning materials.

This was Step One in the club’s plan to help students retain school lessons, according to club member Inès Marinho. Step Two is to reward children who completed the work in the notebook.

A Guadeloupe child shows off one of the books she received from the Kiwanis Club of Pointe-a-Pitre.
Progress report

The Sandhills, Moore County, North Carolina Kiwanis Club started the 2009-10 year with a plan to grow by focusing on three demographic groups: young professionals, business people and retirees (see December’s Kiwanis International Update for details). With its plan in motion, here’s the club’s first progress report.

What’s working

- The club’s Web site. Two prospective members contacted the Membership Committee Chairman George Hilliard directly online. One of them has joined, and the other is a prospect.
- Personal invitation. George met the new owner of a local store and asked if he was interested in joining. Turns out the new business owner had previously been a member of another service club for 25 years, and he likes fundraising.

What’s not working

- Wednesday night events. Low attendance at two events left club planners scratching their heads, until someone pointed out that every church in the area schedules choir practice on Wednesday nights.

What’s next

- Contact past members. Personal letters will be sent to members who have left the club in the past two years. Temporary circumstances sometimes cause members to drop out. The club hopes an invitation to come back will remind them of what they’ve missed.
Kiwanis One Day

Game day coverage

Are your plans for Kiwanis One Day worth sharing? Get the coverage your project deserves with a professionally produced video or a feature in the June issue of KIWANIS magazine. Enter to win by February 15. Simply explain how you plan to make an impact in your community on Kiwanis One Day.

Watch the video coverage or read the magazine article featuring last year’s contest winners. Find resources for planning a meaningful One Day project.

A helping hand makes the difference

A new video, downloadable in English and French, brings together three presidents of the Kiwanis family. Kiwanis International President Paul Palazzolo, along with Jason Stewart, president of Circle K International, and Abigail McKamey, president of Key Club International, call the Kiwanis family to a united day of service on Kiwanis One Day, April 10:

"The more hands we have helping, the more lives we will touch," the three presidents says. "Lend your hands to make a difference!"
Kiwanis International Foundation

Double your dollars

Make a contribution to the Kiwanis International Foundation between now and April 30, and Kiwanis International will match it. This first-ever philanthropic partnership between Kiwanis International and your Kiwanis International Foundation aims to raise US$1.5 million for the foundation. Contributions will enable the Kiwanis International Foundation to grow and to invest more generously in helping disadvantaged children and communities across the globe through the distribution of grants to Kiwanis districts and clubs. Give today.

Convention updates

Get ready for Vegas

In just a few months, thousands of Kiwanians from around the world will gather in Las Vegas, Nevada, for the 95th Annual Kiwanis International Convention. Visit the convention Web site regularly to stay informed about the many fun and important activities planning for the June 24-27 event.

Cory’s courage

Born with cerebral palsy and suffering a stroke at age 11, Cory Johnson faced many challenges in his upbringing. At age 17, he was hired by Kamp Kiwanis near Bragg Creek, Alberta, as a volunteer counselor and that has made all the difference. Johnson credits the 10 years he spent on staff at Kamp Kiwanis with helping him build the confidence to live life to the fullest and encourage others to do the same.

Now serving as lieutenant governor in the Western Canada District, Johnson knows a lot about overcoming adversity to become a leader. Plan to hear his message on this topic at the Leadership Luncheon at the Kiwanis International convention on Friday, June 25. (The luncheon is an optional US$45 ticketed event.)