



# 2018 Annual Report



**#StrongerThanHIVStigma**

# About CHOAIDS

Caring for Haitian Orphans with AIDS, Inc. or CHOAIDS, was conceived out of the knowledge that human life is fleeting. With a little work and a lot of compassion our organization was created to house and care for HIV+ orphaned children in Haiti and employ HIV+ women as "house mothers." If we don't care for them, who will?

We carry out our mission by offering a home environment to HIV+ children that have lost their parents or have been abandoned. We provide basic necessities, education, medicine and opportunities that the children in our care may not have had otherwise. Most importantly we provide a space where they can simply be kids!

## What We Do

Our mission is to continually enhance the quality of life of HIV+ orphaned children and women through education and care in a family-centered environment.

We **PROTECT** the children and young adults in our care from potential harm by offering them a safe place to live and go to school.

We **PROVIDE** necessities and opportunities for the children of CHOAIDS to help them lead healthy and meaningful lives.

As our children age, we **PREPARE** them for life's next steps through education and skill-building so they may have successful transitions into adulthood.

# A Note From Our Founder



Words cannot express how thankful I am to be surrounded by loving and generous friends that have helped create an organization that seeks to do nothing but good in the world. Working in Haiti these past 15 years has presented many different challenges, but each challenge has made our victories that much sweeter. I believe we have the support of our loving Savior who leads us to press on with our mission. Looking into the eyes of our children, you see the beautiful gift of life. Joy glimmers in their eyes and it's hard to imagine the lives our children may have led without an opportunity to grow up in a family-oriented household with access to medical care and education.

HIV is still prevalent in Haiti and around the world, but with education and understanding, we can begin to address disparities that prevent HIV+ individuals from obtaining good working jobs, healthcare and a good quality of life. I am touched by the love and compassion you have expressed to our children over the years. We greatly appreciate your kindness and generosity. Thank you for continuing on this journey with us.

Blessings,

Marie F. Denis Luque, Founder/Executive Director

**As of 2017, an average of 150,000  
persons were living with  
HIV/AIDS in Haiti.**



# In Summary

2018 has been a big year at CHOIDS. We have transitioned into a season of more sustainability. With our generous sponsors, partners and supporters we hope to continue to empower the children and young adults in our care by pursuing more partnerships and opportunities that will help them discover their passions and feed their curiosities. We have created a safe space for HIV+ women and children to have the opportunity to live, grow, learn and be loved.

In 2018, we welcomed three new children in our home, moved into a more spacious house, hosted our first annual Milwaukee fundraiser and convinced three more talented people to join our growing board! Through all the tears, bumps and bruises this year has brought, we have been blessed with gracious supporters who keep us smiling, warm our hearts and help us carry on. As we reflect on the past year, we look forward to another year of working toward our vision of a stigma-free environment where HIV+ women, children and families can enjoy opportunities to work, receive quality health care and live meaningful love-filled lives.





A photograph showing several children sitting at a table, engaged in painting. They are using brushes and paint palettes to create colorful designs on white paper. The scene is brightly lit, and the children appear focused on their work.

# What We've Accomplished

New logo, new house, new school and new friends!

Here's what we've done in the past year:

1. Moved out of our cramped quarters into a more spacious [home](#).
2. Hosted our first Board of Directors [strategic planning](#) meeting at Grace United Methodist Church in Vermilion, OH.
3. Steve Hailer of Stow, OH, and Dr. Aimee Simpson of Richland, MI and Roger Skelley-Watts of Vermilion, OH joined the CHOIDS Board of Directors.
4. Created and launched a new hand drawn logo to capture the youthful [essence](#) of our organization.
5. John Hill (Board Chair) and Hope Walton (Communications Specialist) made their annual visit to the CHOIDS house in June. Marie Denis Luque (Founder/Executive Director) visited the children in November.
6. All 27 school age children switched to a [new school](#).
7. Hired our first marketing and communications coordinator for a few hours a week.
8. Hosted our first Milwaukee, WI based fundraiser in November and raised \$4,000.
9. Built three [picnic style](#) multi-purpose benches with the help of volunteers.
10. Raised \$23,700 in our first [#GivingTuesday](#) fundraising event
12. Our friends blessed our children with seven modernized ceiling fans, new bed frames, mattresses, household items and other furniture. For Christmas, they and their churches graced all of our children with presents!

# Concert for the Kids

*Our first annual fundraiser in Milwaukee, WI*



As a volunteer led organization with members scattered across the US, we are only able to come together once a year making fundraising events challenging for us. In November of 2018, we hosted our first concert fundraising event. It was an evening of incredible music and poetry and laughter. It was a blast!



With help from our talent, Aftin Warren and Jake Beyler from Fressure Point and rap artist and poet Cory Cifax, we had a great night! With in-kind donations from small businesses and supporters for our silent auction and raffle items we raised over **\$4,000** with our first Milwaukee fundraiser! Hamilton tickets anyone?

One of our new Board members, Steve Hailer, brought his guitar and ended the night with a wonderful performance of "Good Night Moon." While we didn't reach our fundraising goal, we certainly enjoyed meeting and connecting with old and new supporters who were able to attend.

**Thank you to  
everyone who made  
our event possible!**

# Welcome to the Family!

***Welcome to Joseph (17),  
Dieudonne (10), and Shely  
(16)!***

**Joseph Watson Jirelien** came to us by way of an American good Samaritan named Josh McKenna. Joseph had been living on the streets and in a bar before Josh found him and contacted us. Although Joseph is much older than our typical resident, he has been an excellent student and helper at the orphanage. He is excelling at school never before having experienced a structured learning environment and is a joy to behold in our household!

**Dieudonne Raymonvil** came to us by way of Grace Children's Hospital. Prior to coming to CHOADS, she lived with her mother and three sisters. Dieudonne's mother was not tested positive for the virus. Like two-thirds of all births that



Joseph, 17

take place in Haiti, Dieudonne was born at home. It is possible her infection happened during the birthing process through potentially unsanitary practices, but we do not know for sure.

After her mother's death from AIDS complications, **Shely Wilna Metellus** was taken care of by her neighbor. Shely was treated as a child slave, or *restavec*, in her neighbor's household. The neighbor and his family relocated to the United States leaving Shely with no where else to go. One of the family members contacted us and we were happy to welcome Shely into the CHOADS home.



# Overcoming Challenges

*Together we can face challenges as deep as the ocean and as high as the sky. ~ Sonia Gandhi*

## Health

In general, our children have been blessed with good health. However, two of our children, two-year-old Edison Ceceron and eleven-year-old Angela Lartigue spent at least 10 days in the hospital. In addition, one of our newest family members, seven-year-old Oscar Prevalus had a tuberculosis (TB) infection resurface which caused him extreme pain and weight loss. As a precautionary measure all the children who share a room with Oscar were placed on TB prophylactic medications.

## Electricity

Electricity in Haiti has now become a 4 to 6 hour affair for most people. Our generator is at least six years old and has broken several times over the years. Because of the sporadic nature of electricity it has been difficult for us to manage our refrigerated items such as meats. With support we will be able to purchase a new generator, inverter, and batteries making a wonderful improvement in the lives of our children and staff. We are also working to

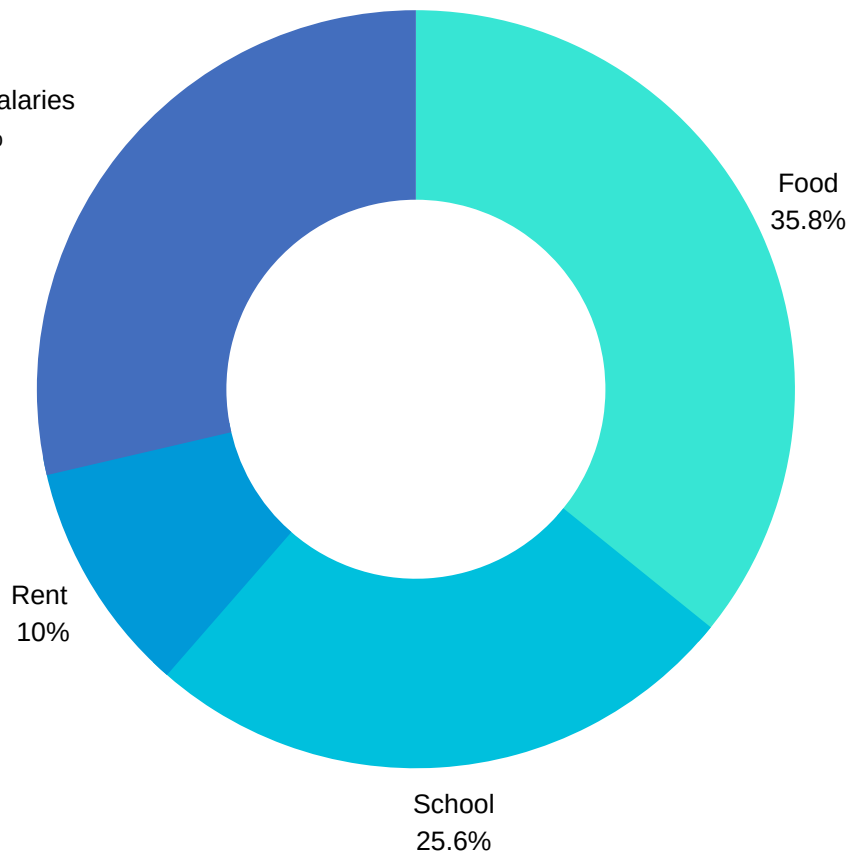


secure a solar operated freezer and a water filter. A water filter will not only save us money in 2019, but offer our children SAFE drinking and cooking water.

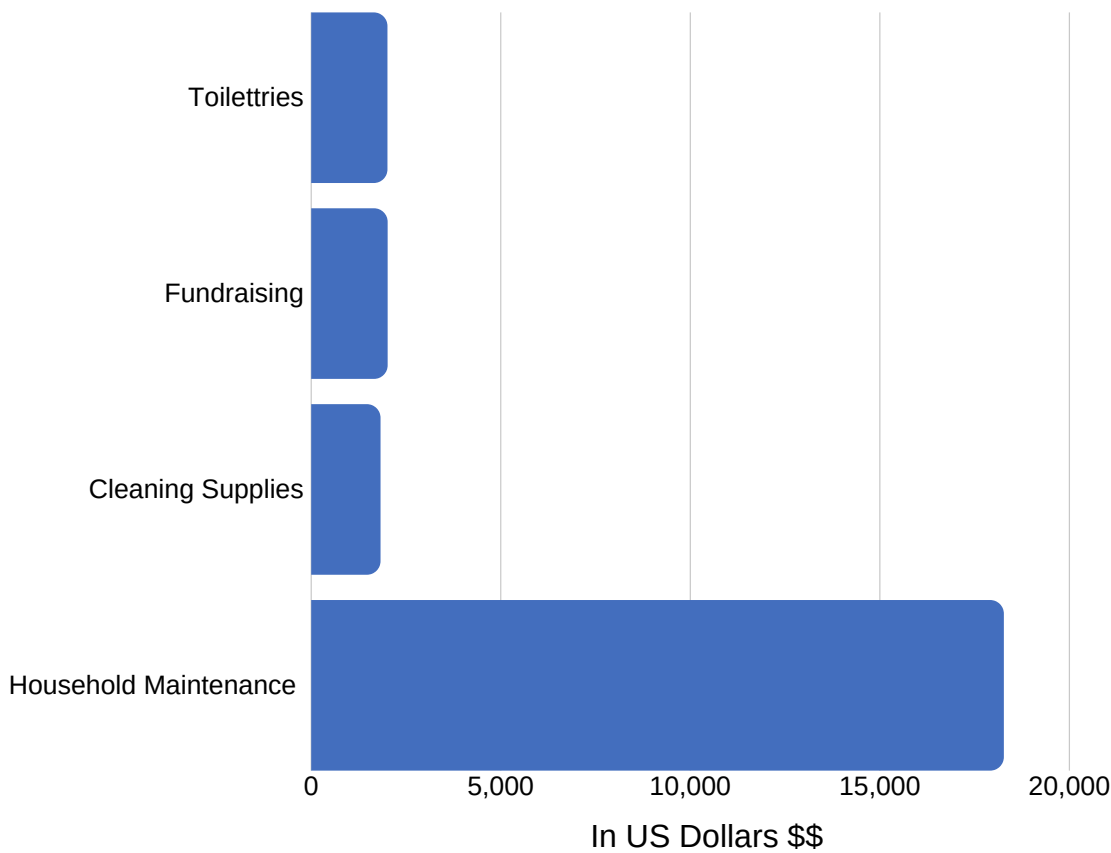
## Travel

With the political protests in Haiti this past year, it has been difficult for our team to safely travel to Port-au-Prince. We hope to continue with our annual trips to bring clothes, vitamins, shoes, hygiene products, other necessities and presents to the children.

## Our Primary Expenses



## Our Secondary Expenses





# Our Team

*Meet the dedicated team who help make our dream reality.*



A huge thanks to our dedicated staff in Haiti and our stateside board members (not all shown here) who manage our household of 27 children and young adults in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

To our staff, their job is not just a job. It's an opportunity to not only provide for their families but to share their skills, their love for children and their country. Family is at the core of what we do and without our brothers and sisters throughout Haiti and the US, our dream to provide a higher quality of life for HIV+ orphaned children in Haiti would not be possible.





# Thank You

*for helping us through 2018 toward a  
better and brighter future!*

Thank you for believing in our mission! We look forward to sharing our passion with you through another great year. We invite you to continue in our journey with us to fight HIV/AIDS stigma in Haiti while providing opportunities to the children, young adults and women we work with.

## **A few things we're focusing on in 2019:**

- Seeking more opportunities for our young adults to learn technical and professional skills.
- Implementing more efficient and cost-effective operational procedures.
- Developing health and wellness programs to promote whole health and well-being practices.

