



Growing Leaders

TODAY

for Haiti's Tomorrow



UFondwa USA is dedicated to growing leaders by significantly reducing the financial burden on students, ensuring that every qualified student has the opportunity to attend the University of Fondwa tuition-free.

149

STUDENTS
SUCCESSFULLY
COMPLETED THE
2023/2024
SCHOOL YEAR.

THE STUDENT BODY
IS NOW

7x

LARGER THAN WHEN
THE UNIVERSITY WAS
FOUNDED IN 2004.

A message from University of Fondwa President, Ludsonde Lafontant

Your contributions are helping us shape a generation of students who are not only pursuing academic excellence but are also embodying a remarkable spirit of resilience, hope, and determination. I want to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation for your unwavering support of higher education in Haiti.

I would also like to share with you the ethos that defines the University of Fondwa and how it empowers our students to persevere against all odds.

At the University of Fondwa, education is about more than acquiring knowledge—it's about equipping young people to become leaders who will uplift their families, communities, and the entire nation of Haiti. Our students come to us not only seeking an education, but with the understanding that they are building a better future, both for themselves and for the country. From the moment they step onto our campus, they are immersed in an atmosphere of determination and responsibility.

University of Fondwa students know that the road ahead will not be easy. Most of them come from rural areas where resources are scarce. The barriers to success are so high. Students accept that success requires perseverance: long nights of study and early mornings of hard work. We remind them to hold fast to their vision.

We wholeheartedly reject the notion that Haiti's problems are insurmountable. Where there are scarce opportunities, we train students to create them. Students learn to ask not what Haiti can offer them, but how they can contribute to its growth and progress. This sense of purpose, of being part of something greater than themselves, drives us all to persevere.

Our students draw deep inspiration from the sacrifices made by their families. Parents often endured incredible hardships to send their children to primary and secondary school. Their example fuels our students' drive. University of Fondwa students know that they are the ones who will carry Haiti forward. Every step they take at the University of Fondwa is part of a process that builds character and prepares them for the role of leadership they will assume upon graduation.

UNIF students leave our university not only with the knowledge to become agronomists, veterinarians, or managers but with a deep sense of civic duty. They emerge as leaders, role models, and agents of change—ready to take on the challenges facing Haiti and transform them into opportunities for growth and development.

Your generosity makes this possible. Thanks to your support, the University of Fondwa continues to provide students with not only an education but a reason to hope. Together, we are helping to create a brighter future for Haiti, one bright and extraordinarily determined young person at a time.



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29

STUDENTS ARE EMBARKING ON THEIR FIFTH AND FINAL YEAR.

Why UNIF?

Students find an academic refuge at Fondwa's unique rural campus.



Landecy Leger

2ND YEAR AGRONOMY STUDENT

"UNIF graduates are always seen as experts, which is why I chose to study here. My parents have already benefited—I helped them apply permaculture in our garden, and now they get a harvest every month instead of just once a year. After I graduate, I want to return to my hometown to start a chicken farm. Later, I plan to pursue a master's degree focused on raising chickens and pigs."

Frantzcia Saint-Germain

4TH YEAR VETERINARY MEDICINE STUDENT

"If we don't take care of our animals, we will suffer too. That's why I'm studying to become a vet. When I'm finished, I plan to return to my hometown with my sister who is also a student here. There's no animal clinic there, so we are going to start one."



Wesly Saint-Vil

2ND YEAR AGRONOMY STUDENT

"I'm the first in my family to finish high school and go to college. My parents are farmers, and thanks to what I've learned in agronomy, their harvests have improved, and they're making more money. When I graduate, I want to grow citrus trees and share what I know about conserving the soil to help other farmers."





Professor Lesly Joseph
distributing seeds during
agronomy lab

Meet Professor Lesly Joseph, MSc

Lesly Joseph is an agronomist and statistician, specializing in biostatistics. He was born in the Limonade community of Haiti and graduated with a degree in agronomy from the State University of Haiti in 2014. He then completed a master's degree in tropical agriculture with Atlantic International University in Hawaii in 2015. Finally, he received a full scholarship to complete a second master's degree in Belgium in 2019. He earned this second master's degree in agro-environmental sciences at Ghent University, one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in Belgium, regularly ranked among the top 100 universities in the world and among the best research universities in continental Europe. After obtaining this degree, he returned to Haiti in 2019 to join the University of Fondwa team as a professor of research methodology. Now serving as Dean of Agronomy, Lesly Joseph has successfully strengthened the curriculum, enhanced research initiatives, and fostered partnerships with both local farmers and international institutions to promote sustainable agricultural practices in Haiti.

100%

IN-PERSON CLASSES,
WITHOUT MISSING
A DAY

Recent Articles Published by University of Fondwa Students and Faculty

Researchers at UNIF and Virginia Tech published this article exploring the role of stewards that can shape food sovereignty.

Sustainable agriculture and food sovereignty in Haiti: sharing knowledge and shaping understanding of food systems at the University of Fondwa

by Lesly Joseph, Max O. Stephenson Jr., Laura Zanotti, and Scutt Ricot

This article was published by UNIF researchers in collaboration with scholars at Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Arkansas.

A broken market: can increased access to broken rice decrease food insecurity in Haiti?

by Matthew Richardson, Lawton L. Nalley, Alvaro Durand-Morat, Phil Crandall, Andrew Scruggs, Lesly Joseph, Jérôme Chouloute, Wei Yang

Community Impact — Mobile Vet Clinics

Through mobile veterinary clinics, professors and advanced students travel to rural communities, delivering essential care to animals. This hands-on approach exemplifies how UNIF's education not only equips students with practical skills but also directly benefits the communities they are committed to serving, fulfilling the university's mission of fostering development in Haiti's rural areas.



School of Veterinary Medicine

In 2023, the University of Fondwa completed construction of a new building for the School of Veterinary Medicine, adding classroom space for 240 students as well as a new lab. This expansion nearly doubles the

university's classroom capacity, helping to meet the growing demand for a UNIF education. The new building supports UNIF's mission of training students to become agents of development in rural Haiti, equipping them with the skills necessary to drive progress.

415

THE NUMBER OF
STUDENTS THE
UNIVERSITY'S FACILITIES
CAN ACCOMMODATE



Donor Profiles

Renee Shea

Formerly an English professor at Bowie State University in Maryland, Renee Shea is pleased to be among supporters of the University of Fondwa. She has long advocated for Caribbean artists, including Haitian writers Edwidge Danticat, Katia Ulysse, and Marilene Phipps. Dr. Shea is committed to working with local school districts to promote discussion of social justice and civic engagement in the curriculum. As a recipient of the University System of Maryland's Regents Award for Public Service and a former board member of Teaching for Change, she believes in the power of education for individuals and their communities -- lifting as they climb. She is a proud supporter of University students in Haiti and encourages others to contribute to this enormously worthwhile endeavor. Dr. Shea currently lives with her extended family in Columbus, Ohio.



Renee Shea and
her dog Lily

Myron F. (Buddy) Steves

Myron F. (Buddy) Steves has served as President of UFondwa USA's Board since 2013. With decades of leadership in the insurance and healthcare industries, he founded Myron Steves Healthcare in 1975, establishing it as a national leader in healthcare liability. In 2004, Buddy and his family acquired Financial Casualty & Surety, Inc. (FCS), now one of the country's largest bail bond sureties, where he continues to serve as Board Chair.

Buddy is passionate about criminal justice reform, racial justice, and supporting community-focused initiatives. He also serves on the boards of various other charitable organizations, including Equal Justice Now and the American Shakespeare Center. His leadership at uFondwa USA helps ensure that qualified students in rural Haiti can access education, regardless of their financial situation. He and his wife Rowena live in Houston, TX and also maintain a farm in the Allegheny Mountains of Virginia.



Rowena and
Buddy Steves

**FEMALE
ENROLLMENT
ROSE TO**

37%

Looking Ahead

ONLY
19
UNIF GRADUATES
NO LONGER RESIDE
IN HAITI

University of Fondwa Scholarship Fund

In August 2024, uFondwa USA launched a new scholarship fund to support both prospective and current students at the University of Fondwa (UNIF) in Haiti. As UNIF continues to grow, this fund ensures that no qualified student is held back by financial constraints. The goal is to facilitate 200 scholarships for the 2024-2025 academic year, backed by a “pay it forward” model where graduates contribute 10% of their earnings once they are employed or their businesses succeed. Funds not immediately used will be held in an interest-bearing account, helping to sustain future scholarships.

Collaboration with the Association of Indigenous Religious Communities

In 2023, FJN began an ambitious project generously funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation’s Catholic Sisters Initiative. This multi-year project – to assess and build the capacity and self-sufficiency of the Association of Indigenous Religious Communities (AKESNA) of Haiti and nine of its indigenous member congregations of women – requires talent and collaboration. The University of Fondwa is a major implementing partner, especially in the areas of curriculum development, training, and the entrepreneurial and agropreneurial initiatives that will achieve project goals and generate wealth in rural Haiti. uFondwa USA acts as the fiscal sponsor for the grant.

A New Curriculum for Leadership and Civic Engagement

The University of Fondwa is collaborating with the Haitian Education and Leadership Program (HELP) to create a new leadership and civic engagement curriculum for all its students. This curriculum will be customized to fit UNIF’s unique student body, with a strong emphasis on service projects. Since its founding, civic engagement has been at the heart of UNIF’s mission, and this new curriculum deepens that commitment. A joint team from both organizations began development in Fall of 2024, with faculty training planned for early 2025 and student implementation set for the 2025/2026 academic year.

Financials

Statements of Financial Position

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

	2023	2022
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 101,534	\$ 1,478,429
Investments	485,706	
Pledges receivable, net	120,960	105,236
Total Assets	\$ 708,200	\$ 1,583,665
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 14,007	\$ 2,619
Net Assets		
Without donor restrictions	(17,690)	116,711
With donor restrictions	711,883	1,464,335
Total Net Assets	694,193	1,581,046
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 708,200	\$ 1,583,665

Statement of Functional Expenses

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	2023			
	Program Services	General and Administrative	Totals	2022 Totals
Grants	\$ 1,661,937	\$	\$ 1,661,937	\$ 1,052,664
Outside contract services	23,827	33,222	57,049	36,300
Accounting fees		16,560	16,560	29,400
Miscellaneous expenses	4,112	11,541	15,653	9,551
Insurance		6,363	6,363	5,825
Travel and meetings		5,232	5,232	10,439
Total Expenses	\$ 1,689,876	\$ 72,918	\$ 1,762,794	\$ 1,144,179

Donors

MARCH 2019 - SEPTEMBER 2024

\$500,000–\$2.5M

Blue Bonnet Foundation
Conrad Hilton Foundation
Ruth and Julian Schroeder
Myron F. “Buddy” Steves

\$200,000–\$499,000

Schwab Donor
Advised Fund
The Julian Grace
Foundation

\$50,000–\$199,999

Raising Haiti Foundation

\$20,000–\$49,999

Anne Hastings
Donnelley Fund
Terry Steves Skinner

\$10,000–\$19,999

Adrian Dominican Sisters
David McConnell
Edmund Franco

\$5,000–\$9,999

Benoît Maubrey
Leigh Carter
Matthew Balitsaris
Michael Begley
Sisters of Loretto
Texas Solutions Group

\$2,000–\$4,999

Community Foundation of
Central Blue Ridge
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Marina Aranzabal, STJ
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Scott Miller
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\$1,000–\$1,999

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\$300–\$999

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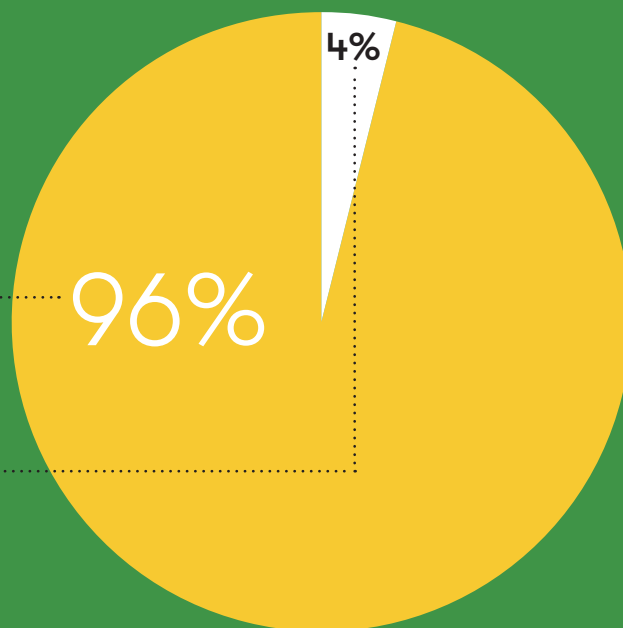
\$100–\$299

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Peg Fourre
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Sherry Todd-Green
Sue Carlson
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< \$100

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Roberto de Angelis
Tyler Tappendorf

**96% of our expenses
in 2023 went toward
our program in Haiti,
while only 4% went
toward administration
and fundraising**



LEADERSHIP

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