

PRESS RELEASE

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FATHER JOSEPH NETWORK (FJN) RECEIVES \$1.6 MILLION GRANT AWARD FROM CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION – CATHOLIC SISTERS INITIATIVE

Haitian Association of Indigenous Religious Orders (AKESNA) to build capacity with empowerment from FJN

Dateline: HOUSTON, TX December 2022 — With a two-year \$1.6 million grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation – Catholic Sisters Initiative, FJN will work with AKESNA, as well as, the AKESNA-member indigenous orders of women religious of Haiti to strengthen them, enhancing their ability to carry out and expand their work and mission in Haiti.

First, FJN will work with AKESNA to strengthen their organization to provide a stronger network for religious orders of women throughout Haiti. Secondly, FJN will draw on various skills and resources to build the capacity of the individual AKESNA-member congregations of women providing spiritual and religious formation, opportunities to address gaps in education, and training in areas such as child protection. And, finally, FJN will empower AKESNA-member congregations to engage in rural community organizing and economic activity to create community wealth and jobs.

“Working to build the capacity of indigenous orders of women religious in Haiti pairs well with the goals of FJN,” said Father Joseph Philippe, CSSp, Founder of FJN. “...many of these congregations carry out critical missions throughout Haiti, like caring for children, running

schools and clinics, empowering women, and creating jobs. Strengthening their network and their capacity just makes sense for the future of Haiti."

Sister Jane Wakahiu, LSOSF, Ph.D., Associate VP of Program Operations and Head of Catholic Sister Initiative of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation agrees that Catholic sisters are strategic leaders who can contribute to the future of Haiti. "Building the capacity of AKESNA is a significant step to increasing the vitality of Catholic sisters in Haiti. Strengthening collaboration and ongoing formation will benefit sisters, congregations and outreach ministries in local communities – especially in rural areas where sisters serve."

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[FJN](#) was founded in 2017, and is an umbrella organization that nurtures collaboration and spirituality – harnesses expertise and experience -- among the organizations founded by Fr. Joseph Philippe, CSSP. The organizations founded by Father Joseph include [Fonkoze](#) (founded in 1994), the [Peasant Association of Fondwa](#) (APF, founded 1988), the [Sisters of St. Anthony of Fondwa](#) (founded 1996) and the [University of Fondwa](#) (UNIF, founded 2004).

Created June 22, 1988, AKESNA's mission is to network and strengthen indigenous religious orders created in Haiti.

[uFondwa USA](#) Inc. serves as U.S. fiscal sponsor for FJN on this project.

[Conrad N. Hilton Foundation](#) – Catholic Sisters Initiative provides resources to strengthen the skills of individual sisters, reinforcing the leadership and sustainability of congregations while fostering collaborative networks among Catholic sisters worldwide.