

## Haitian Trainees Halfway Through Biomedical Program

Two Haitian men are participating in a biomedical equipment training program through MediSend International in Texas that will prepare them to return to their earthquake-ravaged homeland to service medical equipment that may save lives. Throughout the year, AAMI will provide updates on the trainees' experiences in Texas and after they return to Haiti to work.

Luxon Philogene and Phanel Guerrier now have three months of biomedical training under their belts, meaning they're just three months away from returning to their devastated homeland. During their regular phone calls home, their families encourage them and assure them that their country is eagerly waiting for them.

This encouragement only increases their desire to bring their newly acquired biomedical skills back to Haiti, which so desperately needs their help. "We want to make them proud," says Luxon.

Through MediSend International's intensive biomedical training program, Luxon and Phanel have most recently completed their classroom and lab experiments for direct current (DC) and alternating circuit (AC) circuits, semiconductors, sensors and transducers, and biomedical instrumentation. They've also learned how to install, operate, maintain, and troubleshoot

basic biomedical equipment. And they've demonstrated competency by successfully completing the first semester exam.

"I've never worked so hard in my life," says Phanel. "But my sights are set on the outcome of our efforts."

### Living in the Lone Star State

Life in Texas is quite different from life at home for Luxon and Phanel. Neither had ventured out of Haiti before this experience.

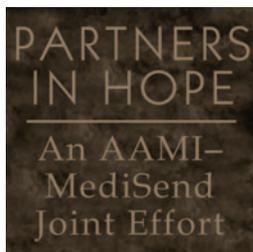
MediSend houses them and its other trainees in apartments just off the MediSend campus in Dallas. The apartments are outfitted with modern conveniences—some of which the men had never seen before.

In fact, Luxon didn't know how to use his washer and dryer, and had to call on MediSend's manager of student services, Belinda Minyard, for help. The trainees affectionately call her "Mama BJ."

Mama BJ serves a special role for the trainees. She is the first person all trainees meet when they first arrive in Dallas. She welcomes them, helps them settle into their apartments, and is available to help with any ques-



Phanel Guerrier, left, and Luxon Philogene work in MediSend's training lab to repair medical equipment to help their native country Haiti.



tions or problems. She even helped Luxon and Phanel find a church to attend. Her presence gives the men a sense of security in a foreign environment.

Once a week, they go shopping for food and necessities. The supermarket, where everything is available all in one place, is something entirely new to them. And Wal-Mart is completely overwhelming to them.

Having completed an intensive English immersion course at the beginning of their training, the trainees are getting more comfortable with the language, and they practice their English with new acquaintances at every opportunity. All of the training they receive at MediSend is in English, so their English skills are crucial.

Luxon and Phanel will return to Haiti this summer. Luxon will work in International Child Care's Grace Children's Hospital in Port-Au-Prince, while Phanel will return to his hospital in rural Cange, called Zamni Lasante—a Partners in Health Hospital.

Both are inspired by the great need for trained biomedical technicians in their country, and both are passionate about making a real difference in the level of healthcare in their Haitian communities. ■

*Next month in AAMI News, we'll discuss the trainees' first experience with the American news media, and their further exploration of medical technology.*

Updated to include ST79:2010 and TIR12:2010

## AAMI Standards on CD— Sterilization Collection

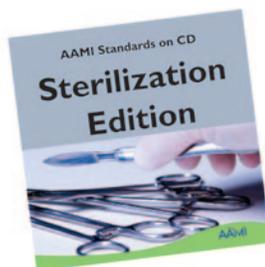
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