

Haitians Graduate From BMET Training, Return Home



Throughout the year, AAMI has chronicled the efforts of two Haitian men as they participated in a biomedical equipment training program through MediSend International in Dallas, TX. The program prepared them to return to their earthquake-ravaged homeland to service medical equipment that may save lives. In this continuing series, AAMI provides updates on the experiences of these two men.

Three days after an emotional graduation ceremony at MediSend International, Luxon Philogene and Phanel Guerrier returned home to Haiti, equipped with critical new knowledge and skills that they'll apply at two Haitian hospitals.

Geurrier, 32, will work again at Zamni Lasante—a Partners in Health hospital—in rural Cange, and Philogene, 28, will work for the first time in International Child Care's Grace Children's Hospital in Port-Au-Prince.

To prepare for their return, the men spent six intense months learning all they could about proper maintenance and repair of medical equipment. At the conclusion of their training, they participated in an industrial internship at Baylor Health Care System in Dallas in which they learned managerial skills, customer service, and inventory management.



Luxon Philogene and **Phanel Guerrier** are filmed as they walk the halls of Baylor Health Care System in Dallas, TX, where the two Haitians interned. Their inspiring story drew the interest of local media.

Their efforts have been so inspiring that a couple of Dallas-area television stations aired segments about the trainees just prior to their graduation.

In one segment, MediSend instructor Trevor Johnson told Dallas' ABC-TV affiliate that in Haiti, "they've got rooms full of equipment that is broken, or equipment in their shop

that is still in the box because no one knows where to install them. It's important for these gentlemen to come here and be able to learn those skills necessary so they can go back and really make an impact on their healthcare system."

Guerrier and Philogene each had opportunities to speak during the TV segments as well.

"I think this training will help me and help



Luxon Philogene, left, and **Phanel Guerrier** pose with their classmates on the MediSend Campus in Dallas, TX.

my country so much," Philogene told WFAA. Said Guerrier, "When I get back to my country, I will be able to change something. I won't disappoint them."

It's remarkable that only five months before these interviews, the men were learning English through an intensive language immersion course that kicked-off their training.

In honor of their graduation, AAMI President Mary Logan sent a letter of congratulations to the graduates. "You and your families arrive at this special point in time with excitement and relief, on top of awe, inspiration, and pride for the work that you have accomplished under the care of the people who have supported you on this journey," Logan wrote. "It will be exciting and fun to continue to learn with you as you begin your next journey: returning to your homes and bringing new expertise to your work. I know your family and friends have missed you and are eager to see you again. You will no doubt make them very proud as you bring these new life-saving skills back home with you."

While there was little time for sightseeing over the past several months, Guerrier, Philogene, and their classmates from other parts of the world did manage to squeeze in a few field trips—most recently riding on Dallas' rail transit system, visiting Dealy Plaza, and the JFK Memorial. They also went shopping at a western-wear store, and were introduced to Texas barbecue.

With the men now back home and having begun the critical work of helping their hospitals care for patients, AAMI will provide further updates on their work in the months ahead. ■