

# A HOLE IN THE ROOF FOUNDATION

July 15, 2010

Dear Friends—Mitch Albom here--

**We're going back to Haiti!**

Last April, a crew of eight men and I flew to Port-au-Prince, Haiti to begin the repair and rebuilding of the

Caring and Sharing Mission and Orphanage, funded by more than the \$70,000 raised in 19 days from online donations made by people like you.

They got to calling themselves the Detroit Muscle Crew: a master plumber and electrician and his son; a carpenter and welder-turned-pastor; a recent college grad; a high school senior who'd broken his hand just days before the trip but refused to stay home; a construction area worker who also became a pastor; a landscaper; and a photographer returning to the mission to chronicle the repair.

[\(You can watch their video diaries from Haiti here\).](#)

In just five days we installed the first flush toilets (instead of holes in the ground they called the bathrooms) and real showers instead of buckets with soapy water. We built a kitchen roof and enclosure to keep the heat and bugs at bay, a new platform for the water reservoir to keep out the dirt and sewage runoff, and a new enclosure for the generator, moving the noise and dangerous fumes away from where the kids sleep. They seem like small projects, but the improvements made in such a short amount of time have helped turn a crumbled orphanage into a home they never had before.

But we're not done. On July 29<sup>th</sup> (to August 1<sup>st</sup>), we're heading back. we're heading back—the **whole** crew, as well as some more volunteers. We just couldn't turn our backs on them after one trip—those sweet, hopeful faces and the needs of a ravaged country compel us to return. We'll finish the tiling in all of the rooms, repair the holes in the ceiling of the dormitories. We're also going to build them a new school on the grounds. The current building needs new support beams (the ones now are made of weak concrete and stone) before the structure can be properly rebuilt and turned into a learning center.

We're also working to install a new electrical system and back up battery. Electricity throughout the day is sporadic and weak, and their backup generator requires expensive diesel. If we can get this

new system with backup battery power installed, it will mean reliable power and a functioning refrigerator for the first time.

Roger Penske and his Penske Automotive Group is generously providing the plane that will take us down there. Your contributions can help turn our goals for the orphanage into reality.

More than six months after the earthquake, most of Haiti is in just as bad a shape as it was in February. They don't have enough bulldozers to remove the debris, and most still sleep in tent cities, some afraid to go indoors but most without another option. The already crippled medical system is struggling to tend to the millions without basic care while addressing the earthquake's consequences—malnutrition, infections and diseases caused by contaminated water supplies and the flood season. Sometimes it felt like cutting through the red tape would be harder than the actual repairs. Our cement mixer was confiscated by customs, and it took precious time needed for repairs to find another. Disaster shifted quickly into dysfunction, and continues to.

[A Hole in the Roof](#) is a foundation committed to helping faith groups of every denomination who care for the homeless repair the spaces in which they carry out their work and offer their services. The mission of our project that will continue this summer--*The Campaign for Haiti's Tomorrow*-- is to give these seventy children the basics every child deserves: clean water, food, a roof over their head. You can help us continue our work through [your generous support and prayers](#).

Please keep checking in at [MitchAlbom.com](#), [facebook.com/mitchalbom](#), and [twitter.com/mitchalbom](#) to follow the progress of repairs, and thank you as always for all that you have done to support this mission.

Last April, a crew of eight men and I flew to Port-au-Prince, Haiti to begin the repair and rebuilding of the Caring and Sharing Mission and Orphanage, funded by more than the \$70,000 raised in 19 days from online donations made by people like you.

They got to calling themselves the Detroit Muscle Crew: a master plumber and electrician and his son; a carpenter and welder-turned-pastor; a recent college grad; a high school senior who'd broken his hand just days before the trip but refused to stay home; a construction area worker who also became a pastor; a landscaper; and a photographer returning to the mission to chronicle the repair. ([You can watch their video diaries from Haiti here](#)).

In just five days we installed the first flush toilets (instead of holes in the ground they called the bathrooms) and real showers instead of buckets with soapy water. We built a kitchen roof and enclosure to keep the heat and bugs at bay, a new platform for the water reservoir to keep out the dirt and sewage runoff, and a new enclosure for the generator, moving the noise and dangerous fumes away from where the kids sleep. They seem like small projects, but the improvements made in such a short amount of time have helped turn a crumbled orphanage into a home they never had before.

But we're not done. On July 29<sup>th</sup> (to August 1<sup>st</sup>), we're heading back. we're heading back—the **whole** crew, as well as some more volunteers. We just couldn't turn our backs on them after one trip—those sweet, hopeful faces and the needs of a ravaged country compel us to return. We'll finish the tiling in all of the rooms, repair the holes in the ceiling of the dormitories. We're also going to build them a new school on the grounds. The current building needs new support beams (the ones now are made of weak concrete and stone) before the structure can be properly rebuilt and turned into a learning center.

We're also working to install a new electrical system and back up battery. Electricity throughout the day is sporadic and weak, and their backup generator requires expensive diesel. If we can get this new system with backup battery power installed, it will mean reliable power and a functioning refrigerator for the first time.

Roger Penske and his Penske Automtoive Group is generously providing the plane that will take us down there. Your contributions can help turn our goals for the orphanage into reality.

More than six months after the earthquake, most of Haiti is in just as bad a shape as it was in February. They don't have enough bulldozers to remove the debris, and most still sleep in tent cities, some afraid to go indoors but most without another option. The already crippled medical system is struggling to tend to the millions without basic care while addressing the earthquake's consequences—malnutrition, infections and diseases caused by contaminated water supplies and the flood season. Sometimes it felt like cutting through the red tape would be harder than the actual repairs. Our cement mixer was confiscated by customs, and it took precious time needed for repairs to find another. Disaster shifted quickly into dysfunction, and continues to.

[A Hole in the Roof](#) is a foundation committed to helping faith groups of every denomination who

care for the homeless repair the spaces in which they carry out their work and offer their services. The mission of our project that will continue this summer-- *The Campaign for Haiti's Tomorrow*— is to give these seventy children the basics every child deserves: clean water, food, a roof over their head. You can help us continue our work through [your generous support and prayers](#).

Please keep checking in at [MitchAlbom.com](http://MitchAlbom.com), [facebook.com/mitchalbom](https://facebook.com/mitchalbom), and [twitter.com/mitchalbom](https://twitter.com/mitchalbom) to follow the progress of repairs, and thank you as always for all that you have done to support this mission.

#### LEARN MORE

[The Caring and Sharing Mission and Orphanage](#) has worked in Port-au-Prince, Haiti since 1983. The Mission provides on-site schooling for children in grades K-5, tuition for private schools for children in grades 6-12, two meals a day, a safe home, and a place for Christian worship. The orphanage is home to more than 70 children.

\*\*\*

DETROIT FREE PRESS | May 16, 2010 | [Haiti Grabs Hold of Detroiters](#)

#### A Hole in the Roof Foundation

The mission of [A Hole in the Roof Foundation](#) is to help faith groups of every denomination who care for the homeless to repair the spaces in which they carry out their work and offer their services.

#### **DONATE ONLINE NOW**

Call 1 (313) 993-4700, ext 4718 or 4710

or send a contribution to

A Hole in The Roof Foundation  
c/o Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries  
150 Stimson St.  
Detroit, MI 48201