

Brooklyn
College



HAITIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE ANNUAL REPORT 2024

HAITIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE AT BROOKLYN COLLEGE

An aerial photograph of the Brooklyn College campus during the golden hour of sunset. The scene is dominated by a large, multi-story brick building with a prominent white tower topped with a golden dome. The building is surrounded by lush green trees and a well-maintained lawn. In the background, other campus buildings and the city skyline are visible under a warm, orange sky.

“For over fifty years, Brooklyn has been the epicenter of Haitian culture in New York. The Haitian Studies Institute at Brooklyn College—in the heart of Little Haiti—is an indispensable participant in the life of this community. We are proud to nourish and honor the citizens of our immediate neighborhood while also providing a rigorous academic focus for Brooklyn College students to study and engage with Haitian culture and issues.”

Michelle J. Anderson
President, Brooklyn College

NUMBERS SERVED BY HSI

2,000/YR

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

210

CAREER DAY

10 YOUTH

**AYITI IN
THE CITY**

30 YOUTH

**NEXTGEN/CIVICS
PROGRAM**

12

**NYC SCHOOL
VISITS**

\$7 MILLION+

SOLICITED/ADVOCATED FOR PARTNERS & SUB-GRANTING

1.2 MILLION+

HAITIAN DIASPORA IN THE U.S.*

90,000

HAITIANS IN BROOKLYN



“These are a few highlights from the past few years at the HSI. Please enjoy reading further for personal testimonies, a statistical analysis of our impacts, and a more detailed discussion of our work. Whatever the activity, our goals remain the same: to serve as a hub for Haitian research and critical engagement while amplifying the voices of Haitians everywhere; to use the knowledge gained to impact public policy on local, national, and international levels; and above all, to strengthen our community, enabling any and every member to become a leader and an agent for change wherever they may be.”

Marie Lily Cerat, Ph.D.
Director, Haitian Studies Institute
at Brooklyn College

It is my profound honor to serve in the role of director at the CUNY Haitian Studies Institute (HSI).

The HSI is an academic unit that supports studies on Haiti and Haitians, fostering collaboration with scholars and institutions engaged in research initiatives on other Caribbean nations and the African diaspora.

I deeply appreciate working in a context where I have the opportunity to highlight the contributions of Haiti to liberation movements in the hemisphere and beyond, and to showcase its rich and unique cultural and intellectual productions. Moreover, I am grateful to work alongside dedicated staff to ensure that the three pillars of our mission—research, policy, and community— undergird our every action as it relates to the Haitian population locally, nationally, and internationally.

Often, HSI activities encompass all three pillars, as when last year we hosted a conference titled Building Resilient Infrastructures in Haiti: Prevention and Intervention in Times of Disaster. The forum engaged in deep research while also building academic fellowship between CUNY and institutions of higher education in Haiti. All of this was undertaken specifically to generate practical, policy-level reflections and actions that can help mitigate consequences of disasters for our broader community. Certainly, some of our endeavors focus on one pillar over the others, but our intention is that all we do reflects and amplifies the institute's foundational ethos.

COMMUNITY

Many threads tie us together, and we are forever seeking to expand and refine our definitions of community, whether it be by examining the identities formed in the Caribbean Basin through events with peer institutes and organizations or establishing trans-Atlantic connections through our annual Haitian Heritage Conference—which in 2023 explored the relationship between Haiti and the African continent. Simultaneous interpretation makes it possible to maintain this international outlook at all our events, ensuring not only access for Haitian immigrants who are not English-proficient, but also online participants in Haiti and around the globe.

As our institute strives to establish and foster connection and well-being for all members of our community, we recognize that the heart of that community is right here in Brooklyn. Programs like *NextGen: Transformational Leadership* and *Ayiti in the City* are two intensive, youth-oriented programs that highlight the priority we place on our immediate community and its future. Through experiential learning opportunities, youth participants are instilled with the fundamentals of civic engagement, leadership and cooperation, community service, and critical thinking while learning about the history and depth of Haitian culture and heritage. These programs and others we curate are open to anyone who shares that interest and passion.

RESEARCH

Providing language interpretation at events is only one illustration of our belief that Haitian Creole is a cultural treasure. Indeed, many of our research activities are dedicated to promoting appreciation and understanding of its historical importance for the Haitian people. In one instance, I had the opportunity to partner with Brooklyn College's Professor Jessica Siegel of the Listening Project to present the ways in which Haitian Creole oral histories are important pedagogical tools to capture the community's stories and histories. Through this project, we explored how instructors of heritage languages can use oral history to affirm language rights, language access, and language justice. In order to better honor Haitian Creole and Haiti's many other cultural gems, the HSI welcomed its first archivist, Obden Mondésir, to develop a special collections library and digital archive that will house rare books, publications, and audiovisual assets. Our dream is to become the premier site for anyone engaging in research on Haiti, Haitians, and the Haitian diaspora.



POLICY

Language accessibility is often at the heart of our policy work, as well. Having access to important information (e.g., health, immigration, education) in a language that one understands can be lifesaving. For instance, as a former member of the New York City Mayor’s Office of Civic Engagement’s Language Access Advisory Committee, I advocated for representation at voting sites, among other initiatives.

Working with the Mayor’s Office has also made it possible to solicit funds for community-based organizations working with the most recent wave of Haitian migrants arriving to the United States via the Texas-Mexico border. In the fall of 2021, the need was so great that we also implemented our own temporary legal project, bringing in a Haitian Creole-speaking immigration lawyer to consult and to help respond to the urgent legal needs of the asylum-seekers coming to the New York area. In addition, the HSI has worked alongside various legal and community-based organizations to help immigrants and community members better navigate the intricacies of the system.

Last year, we developed a bilingual English and Haitian Creole glossary of immigration terms. The publication not only serves as a resource for immigration service providers but also helps the Haitian immigrants seeking services to self-advocate through access to the language used in the immigration system. The HSI continues to partner with universities and organizations in Haiti, providing insights into curricular and infrastructural development. Through advocacy, we seek to democratize higher education in Brooklyn and in Haiti—to contribute to the development, preparedness, and resilience of our shared communities.

Respè,

Marie L. Cerat



OUR PROGRAMMING



UPLIFT

youth by providing experiences that highlight pathways to higher education and professional development.



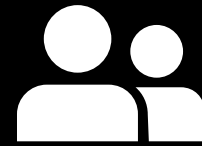
PARTNER

with other programs for health care studies with a focus on issues that affect Haitian Americans in the borough, such as maternal health, cancer care, and the effects of hypertension.



COLLABORATE

with the regional public university system in Haiti to develop certificate and associate degree programs to support economic and civic progress.



EXPAND

understanding of Caribbean community and identity by engaging in conversations on issues in the region such as colorism, class, linguistic diversity, intraethnic discrimination, and marginalization.



ADVOCATE

for resources to respond to the social and legal needs of the migrants at the border in Texas, and to better welcome those who arrive in New York.



ADVOCATE

for language access and rights for the Haitian Creole-speaking community, as well as multicultural education rights for children in New York City public schools.



COLLABORATE

with local government to provide civics workshops in the Haitian language about voting rights and the importance of voter participation.

The Brooklyn Newkirk Avenue subway stop was recently, officially given the honorific “Little Haiti.” Few signs could be more indicative of a community’s cultural impact than joining other renowned cultural epicenters such as Chinatown or Little Italy on the MTA New York City transit maps; but, the City University of New York (CUNY) creating a cultural institute in a community’s honor might come close.

Established in 2016 at Brooklyn College, the Haitian Studies Institute is the youngest such ethnic entity inside CUNY, with the main mission of supporting studies on Haitians, Haiti, and its diaspora. Located less than a mile from the newly renamed Little Haiti subway stop, it is a vital center for studying, celebrating, and strengthening one of our borough’s most vibrant communities.

The HSI strives for interconnectedness while acknowledging where the institute can make the most impact. Thus, our central commitment is to become better students and stewards of Haiti’s past, present, and future. This means we undertake research initiatives and present academic and cultural programming with the understanding that to better continue honoring our history and culture we must ensure a healthy and stable cultural future. At the same time as we are uplifting local Haitian youth through professional development workshops and experiences, we are studying and advocating for ways and means to impact public policy in New York, in the United States more broadly, and in Haiti.

WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO & WHY

- 1. Stand as a leading international research institute for Haitian studies**
- 2. Support scholars and connect institutions pursuing scholarship on Haiti, Haitians, and people of Haitian origin**
- 3. Augment capacity for collaboration between CUNY and higher education institutions in Haiti and those involved in research on Haiti and the community**
- 4. Examine achievements of Haitians and Haitian Americans on the world stage**
- 5. Connect researchers through outreach that deepens understanding about policies that affect the lives of Haitians in the diaspora and Haiti**



COMMUNITY: CELEBRATING & ENGAGING THE PRESENT

Community is the fulcrum upon which the Haitian Studies Institute's identity rests. Comprising nearly one-fifth of the total U.S. population of Haitians, Brooklyn is unquestionably the center of the Haitian/Haitian American community in the New York City region (second only to Florida in terms of total Haitian representation).

A 10-minute walk from the Little Haiti subway stop, Brooklyn College is ideally situated to serve this burgeoning and vibrant community. Our mission is to serve, honor, and preserve the culture in the here and now. To achieve this, our archivist, Obden Mondésir, endeavors to treat our present community with historical care. The video recordings of our Drum Rhythms Preservation Project are one example of this, as is our collaboration with La Troupe Makandal for a traditional Haitian drumming workshop. Both help ensure that these cultural treasures have a vital life into the future. Similarly, we look to the future, to policy, and to advocacy, to make our community stronger, whether through offering civic engagement programs in Haitian Creole or conducting research studies in areas of need in the community.

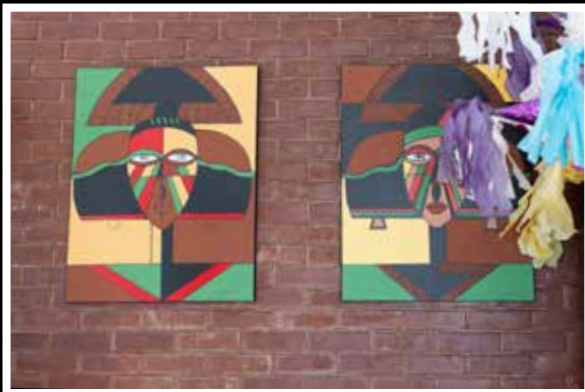
An Ever-Evolving Definition of Community

The question of who is a part of our community is never-ending. *Is it just Haitians and the Haitian Americans? Or does it extend to other Caribbean diasporas—or even immigrants and post-colonial diasporas of all varieties?* Exploring this question is ceaselessly rewarding, since it has the power to reveal new lines of allegiance and solidarity. For this reason, the HSI is honored to have collaborated with the Caribbean Research Center at Medgar Evers College on events like The Caribbean Mosaic: Identity Issues in the Colonized Caribbean. Director Cerat participated in this roundtable discussion, which dealt with the complexities of a colonized region characterized by miscegenation, racialization, and cultural hybridization. This rousing talk engaged deeply with how the complex identities that arise in the Caribbean and its diasporas factor into structural and social inequalities. From this event we witnessed the power of sharing knowledge on how to improve the outlook of the people of the Caribbean Basin and their far-reaching diasporas.

The Haitian Heritage Conference and Jèn Ti Fi

Our second major annual Haitian heritage conference, Haiti and Africa: Unearthing and Exploring the Roots, Connections, and Possibilities, once again expanded our understanding of community, bringing into relief connections, parallels, and intersections between Haiti and the rest of the world—particularly the Global South. The programming was as ambitious as the theme suggests. Day one began with an interrogation of foodways, from the cultivation of sugar to the interrelation of Haitian and African cuisine. The following day was focused in part on revolution and liberation, with discussions on the parallels between various African nations, whether it be Liberia or Somalia. There were presentations on myths, histories, folklores, and other narrative inheritances, as well as on contemporary creative expression. For the keynote, noted sociocultural anthropologist Jemima Pierre spoke on “Neocolonialism and African Sovereignty: Haiti, the United Nations, and Global Governance.” Each night concluded with a celebratory drum performance that highlighted shared musicological pasts.

But as important as it is to explore the broad limits of what “community” might mean, we acknowledge that it is equally important to center the narratives of members of our community who are not always its focus. The conference Jèn Ti Fi: Haitian Girlhood in a Global Frame is an example of this endeavor. Examining representations of how Haitian girls are seen and heard in film, photography, and fiction, we were able to interrogate the broader implications for our culture.



The Haitian Studies Institute & Haitian Creole

The well-being of our community remains at the heart of all our activities, and our emphasis on language accessibility is a natural result of this. Although the institute exists in New York, its languages of operation are English, Haitian Creole, and French, and we strive to offer simultaneous interpretation at events to ensure language access. For the HSI's event coordinator, Pharlante Gaspard Zamor, who is a lecturer in French and Haitian Creole at both Medgar Evers College and Brooklyn College, this is a particular passion. Through her hard work, our efforts to provide interpretation has attracted a local, national, and global audience.

Many of HSI's events are retransmitted by our ally organization, the Haitian American Foundation for Educational and Cultural Exchange, on its internet-based Haitiana radio and television broadcasts. This enables us to reach community members who cannot attend our events physically. In addition, the institute generates programming to honor and study Haitian Creole in greater depth, such as the conference designed with digital database Espas Kreyòl, titled Creole as Medium of Instruction in Haiti: Overcoming Visible Barriers.





RESEARCH: LEARNING FROM & HONORING THE PAST

The Haitian Studies Institute is founded on a mandate to contribute to the corpus of knowledge about Haiti and Haitians, to advance the intellectual field of Haitian studies in various disciplines. We seek to design resources, tools, and informational infrastructures to make this effort possible.

The growth of our nascent archive is one such example; the development of a series of bilingual Haitian Creole glossaries is another. In addition, the HSI has prepared a research-needs assessment survey, titled Through the Looking Glass: A Window Into the New York Haitian Community. This will collect firsthand information about the on-the-ground realities of the Haitian immigrant life in New York from leaders of community-based organizations. Our approach to research places great value on the lives of everyday Haitians and Haitian migrants while celebrating our cultural treasures, heroes, and leaders.

A View of the Burgeoning Haitian Studies Institute Archive

A home for digital collections, rare books, publications, and audiovisual archives, the establishment and growth of the Haitian Studies Institute Archive has been a thrilling endeavor. As one of the largest hubs for the Haitian diaspora, the city holds unique records that speak to the storied past of this community. Under the leadership of recently hired archivist Obden Mondésir, the collection's development policy focuses on the New York Haitian diaspora and seeks to validate all community members as historical figures whose lives are deserving of consideration and preservation. This entails not only sifting through history, but keeping a finger on the pulse in order to collect from contemporary entities such as radio programs, activists, politicians, social service organizations, churches, and other communities in Brooklyn and the other boroughs.

Mondésir's experience as the associate director of special collections at Barnard provided him insight into archives dealing in political engagement—through his work with the Coalition of Women Prisoners Collection (which was organized to document and protest the distinct challenges faced by women entangled in the prison industrial complex).

Considering his passion for activist-oriented collections, Mondésir is particularly eager to present the papers of the intellectual, activist, and archivist Daniel Simidor (aka André Elizée). Born in St. Louis du Nord, Haiti, Jan. 30, 1955, Elizée immigrated to the United States in the 1970s. Elizée was part of the organizing movement against the Duvalier dictatorship in Haiti until Jean Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier was toppled in 1986. A fervent and radical activist, Elizée played a key role in protests of the U.S.-organized coup against former Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide in the 1990s. In the words of writer and activist Mitchel Cohen, Elizée “was the preeminent force in mobilizing support for the independent movements in Haiti.” As an archivist, Elizée provided 26 years of service to the Schomburg Center, where he processed collections related to Black American and Caribbean history, helping to curate major exhibitions such as The French Revolution in the Americas, and Dechoukaj! Contemporary Social and Political Developments in Haiti, 1986–1988.

There are a great many other entities (i.e., individuals, families, and community-based organizations) interested in donating important social, political, historical, and cultural realia of the Haitian experience to the HSI archives for preservation and study. This requires designing an archival space dedicated to the institute’s nascent collection while also accommodating future holdings. A top priority is to prepare these collections to be as accessible as possible to researchers and to the public.

In June 2023, the Haitian Studies Institute received a donation of 30 Haitian art pieces (paintings and metalwork) from the estate of Yvette Feldman, who lived in Haiti for many years and retired as a professor of Francophone literature from Columbia University after nearly 60 years. Paintings from The Feldman Collection of the Haitian Studies Institute Archives are featured throughout this publication.



The Drum Rhythm Preservation Project

The Drum Rhythm Preservation Project is a salient example of Mondésir and the HSI's effort to treat the contemporary as historical. This thrilling communal undertaking seeks to document and preserve traditional and sacred Haitian rhythms through events presented for public enjoyment and education. For the initial collection, 12 Haitian master drummers and one Rasin group in the Haitian diaspora were interviewed and recorded. Discussing their life journey through drumming and the culture that produced these rhythms, they demonstrated various Haitian rhythms and intricate drum patterns—some of which had been in danger of disappearing previous to these recordings. The project culminated in a public concert.

We are proud to say these rhythms will be made available for ongoing research, educational purposes, and public enjoyment long into the future. Mondésir's experiences as an oral historian at the Weeksville Heritage Center make him uniquely suited to cataloging, preserving, and honoring the work of these drummers. At the center, he developed public programming and conducted several community-based oral history projects focused on education, Black joy, and Black-owned restaurants in central Brooklyn.





M.C.V. SALOTUE

POLICY: LOOKING TOWARD A HEALTHY, THRIVING FUTURE

The HSI has a stake in collaborating with and supporting organizations and individuals in our community, whether they be politicians, nonprofits, or local businesses. Many of our community events and much of our research is dedicated to furthering our grasp on capacity-building strategies and policy design. These inquiries and the advocacy that results are broad reaching, including disaster relief and prevention, legal aid and immigrant rights, and equitable political and social representation.

Policy and Service

In her capacity as director, Cerat has worked alongside the New York City Mayor's Office in various capacities to advocate for Haitian welfare and immigrant rights. In the fall of 2021, when over 3,000 Haitian migrants arrived in New York in need of assistance, the HSI helped garner over \$1.5 million, which was distributed by the city's Immigrant Affairs office to community-based organizations to provide aid to these new arrivals. On occasions such as these, we have also felt the urgent need to meet immediate crises. To this end, the HSI engaged in a short-term legal project to assist in navigating removal proceedings conducted by the Department of Homeland Security. The HSI was among the first Haitian entities to intervene and assist to protect these migrants' dignity and human rights while also moving quickly to make public statements regarding the inhumane treatment of the people who amassed at the Texas border.

Legal Aid and Language Advocacy

In addition to organizing conferences and workshops on Haitian Creole and providing simultaneous translations at events, we seek to uplift Haitian Creole. This means working closely with legal service providers to accurately translate legal-information posts and forms intended for the Haitian community. To this end, we have held three meetings with our legal consultant to prepare and craft a series of informational legal sessions providing support and assistance with immigration services around Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

Of the two notable TPS events we co-sponsored, one was also co-sponsored by the Haitian American Lawyers Association of New York, providing immediate aid to immigrants. We also participated in the TPS information sessions, sponsored by various entities including the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and CUNY Citizenship Now, where we provided Haitian Creole interpretation assistance.

Similarly, the HSI partnered with Haitian Americans United for Progress to provide pro-bono linguistically and culturally responsive removal consultations to undocumented, newly arrived Haitian migrants from Del Rio, Texas. Through those consultations, we were able to serve dozens of undocumented individuals during a two-month period. We identified individuals who were eligible for administrative closure, TPS, asylum, and special juvenile immigrant status, making referrals to qualified organizations for further assistance.



Building Resilient Infrastructures in Haiti

Yet another instance of the harmony between the HSI's three pillars—research, policy, and community—was our 2022 conference Building Resilient Infrastructure: Prevention & Intervention in Times of Disaster, which probed the urgent need for preparedness in the wake of devastating earthquakes in Haiti.

Coming together as a community of scholars and thinkers, the conference was oriented toward practical and policy-level solutions to prevention and intervention in times of disaster. There were speakers from Haiti and the U.S. Haitian diaspora, and the forum provided an opportunity to deepen research and academic connections between CUNY and Haiti's higher educational institutions, which became a priority for the diaspora following the earthquake of 2010.

The conference also provided a forum for collaboration on how higher education can function to provide humanitarian relief. An outcome of the program was the renewal of CUNY's engagement in Haiti. Working with regional public universities in the area that suffered most from the earthquake on August 14, 2021, the HSI is helping to develop and implement certificate and associate degree programs. These programs may advance and help further democratize higher education in Haiti, opening possibilities for students and families from less privileged social classes as they contribute to the long-term preparedness and resilience of the country.





Whether our programs bring us together to think, talk, listen, eat, sing, or move together, education is at the heart of everything we do. Our goal is to facilitate a community of collaboration with emerging scholars and learners of all ages. This includes public intellectuals, university professors and students, schoolteachers, and educational institutions concerned with research or service to Haiti and the Haitian community.

Naturally, our greatest ally and collaborator regarding our educational endeavors has been our CUNY network, and the Brooklyn College faculty and staff, specifically. Through our mutual efforts, the HSI is proud to highlight two of its intensive pedagogical programs: the NextGen Transformational Leadership Program and Ayiti in the City. Both programs are oriented toward providing inspiring, experiential learning that will leave participants with a strong sense of Haitian identity and communal responsibility. In addition, we have been researching and crafting tools for classroom use, such as the bidirectional Haitian Creole–English Glossary of Math Terms (K–8).



Haitian Studies Institute
at Brooklyn College
Welcomes Arkansas
Mayor Jaylen Smith

NextGen: Institute on Civic Engagement and Leadership Development

For any community to thrive, its citizens must be deeply engaged and active members. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for civic engagement and advocacy work for citizens, whose voices may be marginalized, has only grown. Yet the problem of youth engagement remains a significant issue nationally, especially among youngsters from marginalized communities, due to socioeconomic circumstances, linguistic accessibility, and immigrant status. NextGen seeks to remedy this in Brooklyn and in the Haitian community, particularly.

In the summer of 2023, we invited 14 local young people (ages 17–22) to learn the fundamentals of leadership, civic engagement, and critical thinking, emphasizing the importance of public health advocacy, immigration policies, and shifts in international relations. During this three-week program, participants learned of community issues and opportunities that foster well-being in their community, while getting hands-on experience to sharpen their decision-making abilities and communication skills. In addition, they met boots-on-the-ground activists and community leaders from Brooklyn, as well as two mayors of U.S. cities: Alix Desulme of North Miami, Florida, and Jaylen Smith of Earle, Arkansas. Only 18 years old, Smith is one of the youngest mayors in American history.

Having the opportunity to dialogue with and hear from an ambitious young Black person their same age was particularly inspiring to these leaders of the future. We look forward to continuing to develop this exciting program and to witnessing and supporting the work and dreams of our youth participants in the years to come.

Ayiti in the City: A Haitian Education at Home

Through the CUNY Black, Race, and Ethnic Studies Initiative (BRESI), a Mellon Foundation-funded endeavor, we developed Ayiti in the City, a month-long program to promote exploration and experiential understanding of Haitian culture at home in Brooklyn. The overarching goal of the BRESI initiative is to cultivate an awareness of, and connection to, local Black ethnic enclaves through culturally immersive learning. In the case of Ayiti in the City, this includes a mutually beneficial paid professional-development component, in which students work directly with and for Haitian-owned or operated businesses and organizations.

The program incorporates historical lectures, cultural workshops, culinary explorations of Haitian cuisine, film screenings, and local excursions and tours, while providing students with a vivid and holistic insight into Haitian history, culture, language, and customs. The HSI strives to place participants in contexts that align with their academic, personal, or long-term professional goals. In addition to these experiences, students receive a collection of books on Haitians and the Haitian immigrant experience and a \$1,500 stipend.

AYITI IN THE CITY LEARNING OUTCOMES

OUR HISTORY: A DEEP DIVE, FROM PRE-COLUMBIAN TO TODAY

A GLOBALIZED HAITI:

CAUSES & EFFECTS OF DIASPORIC FORMATION

CREATION & EXPRESSION: FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCES OF HOW HAITIANS PAINT, WRITE, MAKE MUSIC & TELL THEIR STORIES

OUT ON THE TOWN IN LITTLE HAITI:

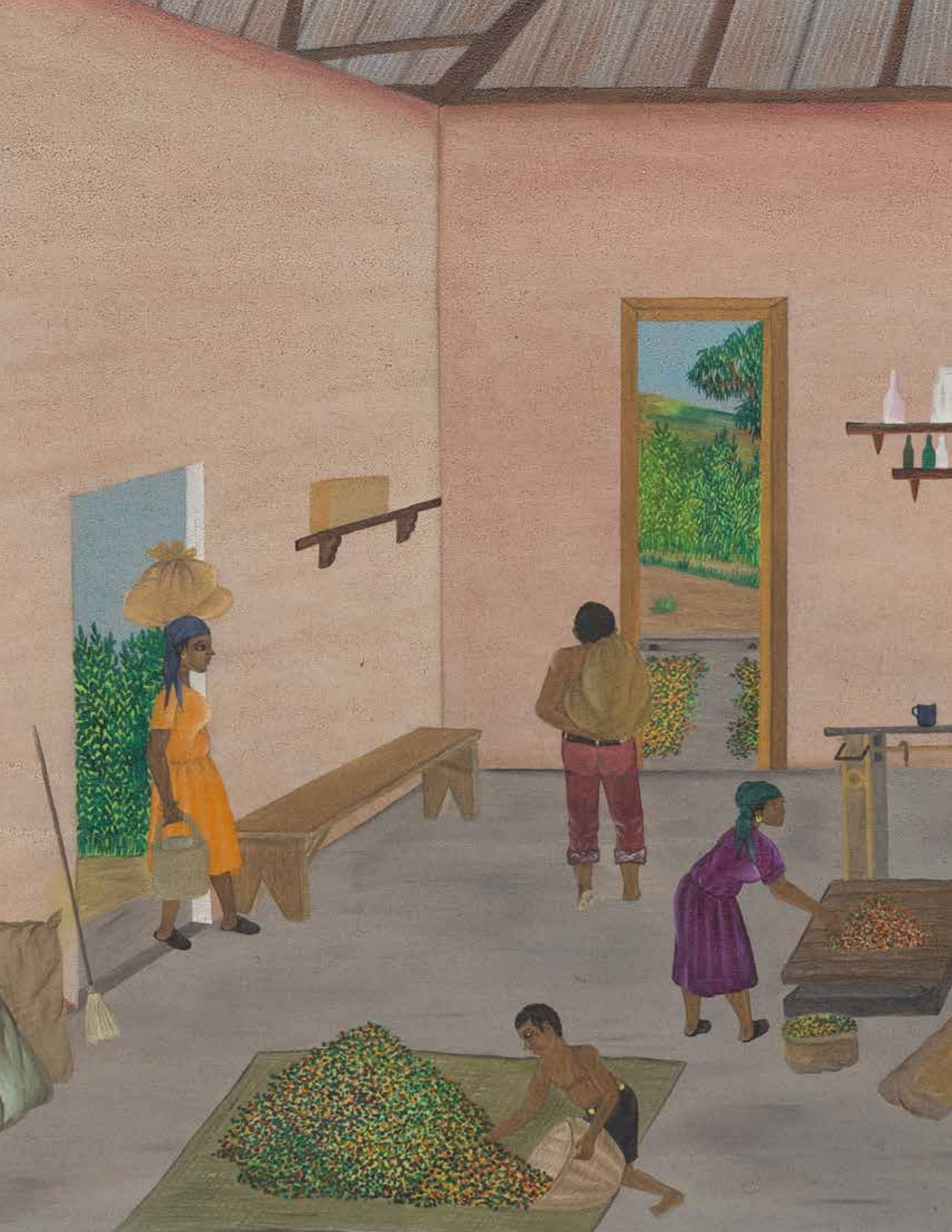
VISITING LANDMARKS & ENJOYING A HAITIAN TEA HOUR

A TASTE OF HAITI:

SAMPLING HAITIAN CUISINE & LEARNING ABOUT ITS HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY & DIVERSE CULTURAL INFLUENCES

LET'S DANCE: LEARNING HAITIAN RHYTHMS & DANCE STEPS

FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS: LEARNING THE STRATEGIES & ACHIEVEMENTS OF HAITIAN ADVOCACY GROUPS



PARTNERSHIPS, ALLIES & COLLABORATORS

We view as allies and collaborators other CUNY institutes, such as the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College, the Dominican Studies Institute (CUNY DSI) at City College, and the Caribbean Research Center at Medgar Evers College, among others.

In fact, Professor Sarah Aponte of CUNY DSI played a major role in helping the HSI to conceptualize its archive and hire its first archivist. In addition to modeling our institute on these long-standing CUNY entities, we have sought the wisdom of various scholars and technical experts from organizations such as the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and the New York Public Library. Faculty and staff at Brooklyn College remain our closest collaborators, providing insight, advice, and resources. Colleen Bradley-Sanders, the college's lead archivist, was the chair of the search committee as we looked to hire our own archivist, and she remains a close adviser in the design and growth of our collections.

Similarly, the HSI continually seeks opportunities to work with elected officials and political actors across the spectrum. We were honored, for instance, to help organize and co-sponsor the unveiling ceremony of the Little Haiti subway station alongside local elected officials and the organization Little Haiti BK. Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn, and Councilmembers Farah N. Louis and Mercedes Narcisse were instrumental in shaping our Ayiti in the City program. Through this program, and with their help, we were able to support and partner with local businesses and organizations such as the Haitian American Caucus, Haitian American Business Network, Haitian Americans United for Progress, Haitian American Alliance of New York, and *The Haitian Times* to serve as placement sites for our participants.

New York City Mayor's Office

Foremost among our efforts to work with elected officials are the ongoing projects with the New York City Mayor's Office. As mentioned in greater depth in the Policy section, in her capacity as director, Cerat has advocated for Haitian welfare and immigrant rights through the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. She was invited to join the Haitian Response Initiative (HRI), helping to secure legal and financial resources to assist the Haitian migrants arriving at the Texas-Mexico border. Also through her advocacy, Immigrant Affairs granted over \$1.5 million to seven community-based organizations and Catholic Charities, with a promise of a total of \$4 million in funds in the following year.

In addition to her ongoing work with the HRI, Cerat served three years on the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement's Language Access Advisory Committee. This entity advocates for language access and representation at voting sites. Haitian Creole is one of the top five languages for which language assistance is required at certain voting sites in the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens. To encourage maximum voter participation, the HSI partnered with the Mayor's Office to host civic engagement programs in the Flatbush and East Flatbush neighborhoods, raising awareness about voting rights and the importance of voter participation in the electoral process.

Espas Kreyòl

One of our most consistent partnerships has been with Espas Kreyòl. For the past three years, we have contracted Espas Kreyòl to plan the delivery of the annual symposium on Haitian Creole, one of our major deliverables. They continuously assist with interpretation services at our events. They also conduct training for translation and interpretation and help in translating various legal, educational, and organizational materials.



We have worked with Espas Kreyòl to develop four bilingual glossaries:

- **Bilingual English and Haitian Creole Glossary of Immigration Terms**
- **Bilingual Haitian Creole and English Glossary of Math Terms**
- **Bilingual Haitian Creole and English Glossary of Science Terms: K–8**
- **Bidirectional Haitian Creole and English Plain Language Medical Glossary**

These bidirectional glossaries cover a variety of important topics, including terms concerning immigration, medicine, science, and math. The immigration glossary, for instance, serves as a language access resource to immigration community organizations, law offices, translators, and interpreters. It provides in-court and out-of-court services or support to limited English proficient Haitian Creole speakers dealing with immigration issues in the United States. It is also a self-advocacy tool for Haitians seeking asylum in the United States. Similarly, the bidirectional Plain Language Medical Glossary bridges the communication barrier between health care professionals and Haitian patients unable to understand, read, or write fluently in English. Meanwhile, the mathematics and science glossaries serve as educational tools for students from pre-K to eighth grade. These resources will be useful to school administrators and regular classroom, remedial, and resource room teachers providing math instruction to limited English proficient Haitian Creole students.

Partnerships in Haiti

HSI continues to work with regional public universities in Haiti to develop and implement certificate and associate degree programs in environmental science, geography, geology, agronomy, and other areas. This will have the dual effect of democratizing higher education in Haiti while enabling individuals from less privileged social classes to contribute to the development, preparedness, and resilience of the country.





COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn
New York State Assembly District 42

Assemblymember Phara Souffrant Forrest
New York State Assembly District 57

Assemblymember Clyde Vanel
New York State Assembly District 33

Councilmember Rita Joseph
New York City Council District 40

Councilmember Farah N. Louis
New York City Council District 45

Councilmember Mercedes Narcisse
New York City Council District 46

Caribbean Women's Health Association

CUNY Citizenship Now

Diaspora Community Services

Espas Kreyòl

Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project

Haiti Cultural Exchange

Haitian Americans United for Progress, Inc.

Haitian Centers Council (HCC)

Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees

Little Haiti BK



CAP HAÏTIEN

ENTREE



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & STAFF

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Margarett S. Alexandre

Associate Professor and Academic Coordinator, Department of Nursing, York College

Dale Byam

Associate Professor, Department of Africana Studies, Brooklyn College

Lynda Day

Professor, Africana Studies, Brooklyn College

Roger Dorsinville

Professor and Chair, Department of Electrical Engineering, CUNY Graduate Center and The City College of New York

Kenneth A. Gould

Professor, Department of Sociology, Brooklyn College

Frantz-Antoine Leconte

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The Haitian Studies Institute Team



FINANCIALS

Program Expense

Conferences	\$58,500
Service Contracts	\$253,500
Young Scholars Institute on Civic Engagement	\$100,000
Community Collaboration / Support	\$15,000
CUNY HSI Support for Regional Public Universities	\$125,774
Ayiti in the City	\$24,913

Revenue/Funding

New York City Council	\$1,000,000
Carry Over	\$315,594
CUNY Black, Race, and Ethnic Studies Initiative (BRESI)	\$24,913

General & Administrative Expense

Salaries & Payroll	\$569,221
Equipment and Construction	\$74,000
Indirect Costs at 10%	\$119,599

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$1,340,507**

TOTAL REVENUE **\$1,340,507**

*Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2024.
Unaudited. Cost allocation method.

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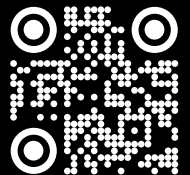
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Cover Image:

The cover art was created by Judith Dolce for the 2023 Ayiti in the City marketing materials. It includes New York City's Statue of Liberty, long a symbol of welcoming immigrants to the United States, overlaid with an image of *Le Marron Inconnu*—also commonly referred to as *Neg Marron*. *Neg Marron* is a bronze statue of a runaway slave blowing on a conch shell—symbolizing a clarion call for freedom and uprising for justice. Standing in the center of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, the statue, by Haitian architect Albert Mangonès, is regarded as a symbol of black liberation.

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