



WHERE ARE THEY NOW ?



Dr. Jean-Claude Dutès

As it has been the case for many members of the Haitian community in Metro Detroit, Dr. Dutès relocated to sunny Florida after having called East Lansing home for more than three decades. Attending Michigan State University as a doctoral student and later becoming faculty, he retired four years ago from his position as Section Leader of the Neuropsychology/Psychology Unit in the Department of Radiology of the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Moving to Florida offered Dr. Dutès the opportunity to bring his expertise to fellow Haitians, being the only trained and practicing neuropsychologist of Haitian descent in the United States as of this writing. Since leaving Michigan, Jean-Claude has joined Florida Atlantic University's Louis and Anne's Memory and Wellness Center as a Cross-Cultural Psychologist providing neuropsychological and psychological services to persons of Haitian descents suffering with brain based conditions such as dementia. For about two year, the Children Community Wellness Center, an outpatient mental health clinic, provided mental health services under his leadership to Haitian children and their families. As the psychologist of the center, Dr. Dutes was instrumental in identifying Haitian children with learning disabilities and assisting them in getting adequate educational services and accommodations. Serving as director, he assisted US trained mental health practitioners of Haitian descents in understanding the effects of culture on mental health and assisted them in acquiring the skills and attitudes necessary for providing culturally competent services to the Haitian immigrant population. Because of changes in his vision, Dr. Dutès has had to reduce his post retirement professional activities, working one day a week since January of this year, although he continues to be highly active, lecturing and educating the Haitian community about mental health. In the last two years, he published two academic papers, one of which is based on a lecture he gave in 2002 at a HNGD event on the effects of emotions on acculturation strategies used by Haitian immigrants in adjusting to American society, and another, currently in press, that deals with the challenges facing mental health practitioners working with Haitian immigrants in the US.

As a Michigander, Jean-Claude forged friendships that withstood the test of time and which he continues to cultivate despite the distance. Although he now resides in another state, the popular French expression "Loin des yeux, loin du cœur" ("out of sight, out of mind") certainly does not apply

to him. Last January, the Haitian Network Group of Detroit was lucky to have him as a guest lecturer, and he is the editor of our newsletter, "Zanmi Detroit."

In his spare time, Dr. Dutès, a fervent patron of the arts, enjoys the theater, opera and independent films. A wanderer, or "pigeon voyageur" as some people like to call him, when not working, he is traveling within the US, visiting his son and his family in the Chicago area and his father and siblings in New York.



with son, Jean-Paul, and grand daughter, Madison



If you have difficulty reaching him via phone or email in the US, try using WhatsApp, as he might be anywhere in the world. Although for the last 18 months he has had to suspend his benevolent activities at the Faculté Des Sciences Infirmières de Leôgane, the nursing school supported by the Haiti Nursing Foundation, due to the precarious safety conditions in Haiti, he hopes to be able to resume his work

there soon. To keep fit, Jean-Claude is taking advantage of the weather in Florida, playing lawn tennis and golf, taking long walks and bike rides, and of course, dancing.

Our community's partial loss of such a talented and dedicated individual is Palm Beach County's gain. Although his departure has left a void, we wish Dr. Dutès all the best in his new home and hope that he will continue to be with us in spirit, and among us in "corps et âme," ("body and soul," whenever his dear HNGD can find a slot in his schedule. ■