



**MUSIC HEALS**  
★ INTERNATIONAL ★

*Honoring Legacies. Building Resilient Futures.*

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2021 IMPACT REPORT

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# Our Mission

*Music Heals International brings music and musicians to the children of Haiti and globally to inspire achievement, resilience and creativity.*

# Our Vision

*A world where children engage, achieve and thrive through the power of music.*



# MHI 2021 in Review



4 TO 1



Summer Music Camp  
Student-Teacher Ratio

Years of Music Education

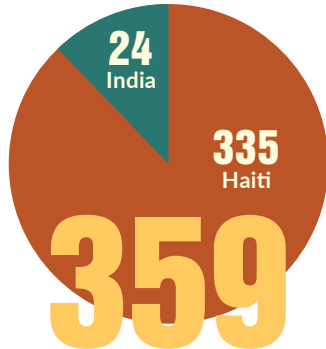
8

Haiti



2

India



Students Served

56

Students with Disabilities  
Take Inclusive Music Classes



55%



45%



Boys and Girls Enrolled



Plezi Mizik au Féminin  
All-Girl Band

**PAPJAZZ**  
*Festival*  
-HAÏTI-



## Letter from Sara

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Dear Friends,

I hope you and your families are healthy, happy and thriving through these times of change. One thing that I have learned from our eight years of work in Haiti, is that resilience is found by digging deep during tough times. We - our students, team and partners at CORE - recently experienced the sudden, heartbreaking loss of our longtime program manager, Jean Marc Didis. From the very beginning of MHI's work, Jean Marc was incredibly important. He had vision, depth and calm beyond his years and made things happen through thick and thin. Personally, he was a dear friend and I trusted him deeply to spearhead our work. **Though he can never be replaced, we are working hard to honor his legacy and keep his vision alive.**

MHI's success builds upon legacies like Jean Marc's and my father's. We launched the Rob Wasserman Memorial Fund in 2018 thanks to two of my father's musical partners and dear friends, Jackson Browne and Bobby

Weir. This fund has helped sustain and grow our programs through the pandemic, including a new partnership in India with the OSCAR Foundation, and the launch of our Bass Club and all-girl band in Haiti. MHI's work empowering girls is a direct extension of my father's belief in spotlighting and supporting female artists, and Jean Marc's commitment to helping girls build leadership skills alongside their musical talents. None of this would be possible without our incredible partners, CORE and Little Kids Rock. They have been with us every step of the way.

Together, we will continue to forge ahead through the many challenges that Haiti, our kids and our team face each day. **We know the impact that music has, and thanks to you, our amazing supporters and friends, we have an opportunity to make a difference in the world through the legacies of our students.**

*Sara Wasserman*

Sara Wasserman, Executive Director/Founder

# A Dynamic Model for Music Education

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MHI harnesses the local expertise and operations of CORE and the nationally recognized curriculum and methodology of Little Kids Rock to offer innovative and culturally relevant music education in Haiti. Our newest partner, the OSCAR Foundation, is now also adapting and implementing our approach in India. This enables us to build a proof of concept for replicating our model on a broader international stage, where our work will grow musical talent and support youth development through achievement, resilience and creativity.

## Our Model Provides

- ★ Music Education
- ★ Instruments
- ★ Safe Spaces
- ★ Inclusive Classes
- ★ Peer Leaders
- ★ Guest Artists
- ★ Summer Music Camp
- ★ Community Concerts



## Our Programs

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Our music education model is rooted in the communities we serve and helps anchor young people as they mature. Students discover a place of stability to build strength and construct dreams for the future. As their musical skills advance, we provide a platform for leadership, creativity and income generation, including opportunities to explore careers in teaching, performing and recording. These benefits multiply each year and foster a pay-it-forward mindset that builds resilient futures.

MHI and our partners have provided music education to over 1,100 students since 2014. Many of our student leaders have been part of the MHI family from the very beginning.

### *Plezi Mizik au Féminin*

In Haiti, like many places, girls don't have the same opportunities as boys. That's why we launched Plezi Mizik au Féminin in 2021, a cross-cutting initiative aimed at girls' leadership. Through our inspiring all-girl band, mentor training, and a fun and engaging summer music camp, girls take center stage. This initiative is a testament to the vision and leadership of our program manager, Jean Marc Didis, who tragically passed away in 2022.

Every girl who proudly takes the stage with Plezi Mizik au Féminin is a tribute to Jean Marc's legacy.



# A Heartfelt Tribute

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Students wrote and composed "Ou Manke Nou,"  
a song to honor the life of

*Jean Marc Didis*

In Creole or English, it speaks for us all: We Miss You.

## Chorus

In our hearts you will always stay  
Even when in our eyes, the tears still flow  
You remain incarnate in our minds  
A mark that will never fade  
We will miss your habits  
Your advice will be missed  
We'll only see you in pictures  
Which sincerely afflicts  
We had so many great plans  
And then suddenly this  
In our hearts you will always stay  
Even when in our eyes, the tears still flow  
You remain incarnate in our minds  
A mark that will never fade





## Teach 2 Reach: Esther's Story

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With so many talented youth growing up engaged in our programs, we launched Teach 2 Reach to train advanced students in the Little Kids Rock methodology. Fourteen young leaders have become certified music instructors and are gaining experience teaching neighborhood children while earning a stipend. Teach 2 Reach creates opportunities for youth while building a pipeline of future music teachers for our programs.



Sixteen year-old Esther plays keyboards and is in her fifth year of music education. She is a member of the Plezi Mizik au Féminin all-girl band and serves as a Teach 2 Reach peer mentor. At first, Esther was unsure if she could rise to the task of teaching younger students. "I could not fathom that someone as young as me could be a mentor to other kids," she said. But she quickly grew into her role, organizing fun competitions and teaching essential chords. "I want to be a role model for the kids," she said. "I want them to look at me and say: I want to be just like Esther." Through this program, Esther has also reflected on the importance of hard work and perseverance. "What I've learned is whether you are gifted or not, you can do great things."

## Music for Good in India

Despite immense obstacles posed by the pandemic, our partnership with the OSCAR Foundation launched in 2020 successfully began providing music education to 24 children from vulnerable households in Mumbai.





# Looking Forward

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When I stepped into MHI's annual benefit concert in 2019, I attended it for the music, but came away with so much more. I learned about the mission and impact of MHI's work and it immediately resonated with me. In 2020 while interviewing Sara Wasserman for a feature article in *Mill Valley Living* magazine, I had the privilege to dig deep into the organization's history, the children it serves, and the undertaking required to make it all succeed. When Sara later asked me to join the Board, I was thrilled at the prospect of contributing to MHI's growth.

As an active supporter, I see the full arc of MHI's programs through which music students learn, perform, train as peer mentors, and then take on the leadership mantle as teachers. This approach helps students create opportunities and build resilience for the future, while enhancing the sustainability of MHI's work. *It is my aspiration to help strengthen the organization and explore how to expand the reach of this truly international endeavor.* We have the will and, with the generous support of partners like you, we have the people to fortify our current programs, broaden our brand and make this a reality. I look forward to that journey!

Dennis D Strazulo

Dennis Strazulo  
President, Board of Directors



# Our Financials

Summary in USD



INCOME

\$160,585

57% Grants  
\$92,250

31% Events/Other  
\$48,924

12% Individual/Business Donors  
\$19,411



EXPENSES

\$153,758

90% Programs  
\$139,178

6% Fundraising  
\$8,497

4% Administrative  
\$6,083

End-of-Year Net Assets:  
Includes the Rob Wasserman Memorial Fund

\$119,899



# 2021 Leadership

## Board of Directors

Dennis Strazulo – President

Melissa Pegus – Treasurer

Stephanie Clarke – Secretary

Paul Beaubrun

Pete Fisher

Ashley Orton

Merl Saunders, Jr.

Tony Sauza

Sara Wasserman

## Programs and Operations

Sara Wasserman - Executive Director/Founder

Jean Marc Didis - Program Manager

Emmanuel Piervil - Program Officer

James Joseph Donatin - Field Agent

Tyler McBrien - Communications

Ashley Orton - Strategy and Impact

Jeny Wegbreit - Advisor

## Impact Report

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## Advisory Board

Owsley Brown

Isabelle Fox

Richard Habib

Shannon O'Leary Joy

Larry "The Hat" Lautzker

Gloriana Mejia-Gund

Lukas Nelson

Gardly Philoctete

Douglas Rosenberg

Art Smith

Clare Wasserman

Natascha & Bob Weir

Dave Wish

## In Memoriam

Dan Hicks

Lou Reed

Rob Wasserman

# Implementing Partners



# Supporting Partners

Owsley Brown III  
PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATION

George Gund & Gloriana Mejia-Gund

Douglas Rosenberg

EarthSense Foundation

Matthew Kelly Family Foundation



Dennis & Pam Fisco

Chris & Lesley Fisher

William Hobi

Sandro Sangiacomo

Brad Swaback

Ben Weisshaut

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## *Join Music Heals International*

*Inspire children to engage, achieve and thrive through the power of music.*

*We are deeply grateful for your support.*

MHI is a registered U.S. 501(c)(3) public charity: EIN 46-4627905

- \$10,000** Sponsor a year of music at a partner school.
- \$5,000** Give to the Rob Wasserman Memorial Fund.
- \$1,000** Put our all-girl band center stage at Haiti's International Jazz Festival.
- \$500** Send five children to our summer music camp.
- \$100** Provide young musicians with in-class instruments.