WELCOME!

We are so excited to have you join us for our inaugural A Reflection of Me, Inc. newsletter. What a year we’re having! We’ve made the decision, that more than ever; the time to lead is NOW!!

Individual Highlights:

- All about Us
- Reflection of Me ...in Haiti
- Society’s Reflection in 14 Days
- Haiti Rhythm of Our Heartbeat
- Fatherhood in Time of Crises
ABOUT: A REFLECTION OF ME INC.

We IGNITE THE ARTIST WITHIN! We teach, empower and use artistic images and expressions to promote social engagement and to inspire love of family, culture and community. We link the past, present and future of those who have desired knowledge of their history through the use of photography and the arts.

We are a 501c3 nonprofit organization who knows and understands that it is the combined efforts of the work we accomplish and the support of community that create legacies within our society. Through this newsletter, we will keep you informed to build a more cohesive mutual relationship. Enjoy and share it.

Isaie ZEEK Mathias is our visionary co-founder of A Reflection of Me, Inc. Zeek is a contemporary artist who has mastered the use of digital photography to instill hope, enlighten and inspire as well as expose injustice, exclusion, marginalization and dehumanization of the indigenous peoples of the world. Zeek is a native of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. His family moved to the United States when he was a young boy. Growing up in Little Haiti, Miami, FL, Zeek found that he was not far from the culture he knew too well. However, the pride for its history and world contribution appeared to be lacking. As a lover of art and history, he was always fascinated by his heritage and desired to change the narrative of the images of Haiti being depicted throughout the world. He now aims to preserve the heritage of many, just as his own. Zeek earned his bachelor's degree in psychology and master's degree in behavioral science and resides in South Florida with his family. Zeek has received numerous recognitions for his work throughout Haiti and South Florida. Zeek's Power Word: VISION, the road to enlightenment is deeper than the abyss.

Leonie Timothee is our A Reflection of Me, Inc. co-founder who makes it happen. She wears many hats; Human Resources/Training Leader, Notary Public/Wedding Officiant, Mentor and so much more. To sum her up, she leads a life of service. Leonie is from the town of Saint Louis du Nord in Haiti. She is the product of two large families. She migrated to the United States at the age of six and first returned to Haiti at 21. She observed how distance and time affect solid bonds. Her travels to Haiti reconnected her to familiar and cultural roots. Leonie believes through the connection of past, people and places we can be better.

Power Word: LOVE! Whether it's spirituality, humanity, environmental and through vocations, whatever we do and aspire to do requires LOVE for it to truly be successful. LOVE is at the forefront of worthy sacrifices. I love the goals of A Reflection of Me, Inc. I love the creativity and passion we put into all that we do. Through LOVE anything and everything is possible!

A Reflection of Me
None like I have ever seen
Not defined by the modality of my living condition nor what I am told and what I hear, but what I feel, a mirror-less reflection. So I escape, vicariously living through the reflection of images suppressed in my subconscious, to preserve my innocence. A portrait of self-love. I feel but I still need to see a reflection of me. Beauty and what one perceives as being beautiful is derived from the reflection of our lineage- our blueprint. It is merely a perception of collective beliefs that stems from our self-image. Beauty then, is the extension of our thoughts, self-esteem, and how we feel Internally, in short, the psychological makeup of our social identity. I know that I am pretty, I know that I am beautiful, because, I have seen a reflection of me.

By: Zeek Mathias
We are blessed with a team of motivated individuals. We each gift the organization with our unique talents. In good times, we are ready to excel. We transform to superhuman mode in times of challenges. Team ARM, there’s none other like us!

**POWER WORD**

My power word is Service! Behind every project, every job, every ministry is the desire to serve, to lend, to help and to show up. It is my life’s goal to serve and share the gifts and blessings God has given me with others. Service is always at the center of all I do. Adapted and as quoted by Muhammad Ali, Shirley Chisholm and Marian Wright Edelman “service is the rent we (I) pay for room on this earth.”

— Eurica “Betsy” Ketant

One word to describe me based on what other people call me is a Perfectionist. Coincidentally my first colleague I worked with for 4 1/2 years used this to describe me and so did my new boss both recently. So I decided to use this to describe me. I was advised If I am committed to something I will surely see it through with excellence because I take a lot of pride in the work and what is expected of me. I was told I’m far from a slacker and that I work first, then once it’s all completed, I play later.

— Nahashley Marc

My Power word is Strength! I’m a wife, mother of five, elementary school teacher, and an entrepreneur. God has blessed me with the strength to work hard and be the best in each of these roles in my life. I am proud to contribute the same tenacity and strength as a member of the A Reflection of Me Team.

— Natasha Mathias

My power word is Authenticity! Having the courage to be your true self is liberating. However, how can you know your true self if you don’t know where you come from, your history. As a member of A Reflection of Me, Inc., I love that we find passion in creating our true narratives with the use of art and images.

— Vanessa N. Calixte

My power word is Resilient! Just as my ancestors before me, my family continues to push through all challenges of life. I too power on with my resilience so that I can continue to move forward to receive all God’s divine blessings that are in store for me. I strongly believe that your action becomes your outcome. Putting in the work and staying resilient will get you results! #NeverGiveUp

— Angie Norelus
My power word is Collaboration! I seek to be an instrument of progress and impact on people's lives through networking with others and connecting the right people together. I enjoy interactive collaborations that promote amazing experiences. There is more power in connecting with others and collectively collaborating than in working alone.
— Anasthaisa Grand Pierre

My power word is Commitment! When I say yes to do a task or to accomplish a goal, I will go above and beyond to make it happen. I will use my knowledge, my passion, my energy, or whatever God put in me to make it successful. I am committed to my walk with God, to my work, to my family, to my friends, and to my values.
“Commitment is the foundation of great accomplishments.” Heidi Reeder

My power word is Legacy! The deaths of my parents and not knowing who they were have made me really think about what I want to leave behind for my future children. I want to be remembered by my children and Legacy powers me to continue to achieve my goals. It ignites a fire within me to be the woman that God has created me. Leaving behind a spiritual legacy will benefit them more than tangible things. Legacy of faith may be a better word than legacy. My faith in God has gotten me through life and continues to empower me.
— Immacula Joseph

My power word is Ethereal! I believe sometimes all it takes is delicate touch to create waves of change in our world today. Sometimes things just fall into its place so perfectly that they exceed expectations.
— Hakeem Vilamar

My power word is LOVE! Love gives strength. Anything you do that comes from a place of love is Devine. Love is my life purpose.”
— Adly Norelus

I am Renaud Timothee from Haiti. I believe in only one super power, the one who created the universe and everything that's included. I am patient, reserved, and liberal....
— Renaud T.

My Power Word is Self! Self is Everything!
— Loon

My Power Word is Communication! Communication is key!
— Rose Philippe Coriolan
Our organization began as a project which stemmed from our love for Haiti. We wanted to do our part in the transformation of Haiti, as we envisioned it could be a first class nation. We had several things to consider, there were tons of NGOs and organizations already in Haiti. Secondly, what was a need that we could fulfill? Finally, how can we ensure that what we do will create interdependency and not dependency? Zeek began travelling to Haiti at a greater frequency once he allowed his gift of photography to take a life of its own. He discovered and captured the hidden and visible gems throughout the country. The more he visited the more beautiful images he captured. His engaging work was shared with the world on Haiti Too Rich To Be Poor. Zeek has exhibited his work of Haiti throughout South Florida. But he had a nagging thought. What can he do to help his country of birth and its people?

He thought of an innovative way to use his art to provide what he noticed was lacking in many of the homes he entered throughout the rural areas of Haiti. He entered homes with bare walls. He wondered where are the family portraits? This question persisted after the devastating earthquake in Haiti. Some were unable to produce images of their missing family members. Zeek shared his desire to become a change agent in Haiti with Leonie. She had a similar desire, as her love for Haiti continued to grow while traveling to her homeland to visit her grandparents. During one of her visits, she travelled with a video camera with the intention of interviewing her paternal grandparents. She was pleased to have the opportunity to capture the brief conversation with them, but she continued to feel nostalgic about a maternal great grandfather who died a year after she migrated to the United States. She had no image of him and had no recollection of how he looked. So, once Zeek mentioned to her of his interest in giving back to this nation through his art of photography, and specifically, through family photos, she was excited to help him make this project a reality. They began to research, converse with people in Haiti to gauge how their project will be received. They were fortunate enough to find Anide Deus, who enthusiastically believed in the possibilities of this project. Zeek, Leonie and a small team of supporters have taken several trips to fulfill the project. Now living in the US, Anide has provided a wonderful group of individuals on the ground that has assisted us. We are now a nonprofit with initiatives both internationally and in the United States, specifically, in South Florida.
We needed your support! After our first trip to Haiti, we began to share our initiatives with others and found many people who wanted to help support our work. Facebook groups have a saying, “give more than you take”. We believe in this wholeheartedly. We held our first fundraising event; A Reflection of Me: 7,500 sq ft Art Exhibition. Our attendees definitely received a fantastic show for their support to our initiative.

Do you see the image on the bottom right of this page? Yes, that is Eric Yutzy of Local 10 News in South Florida showing us his moves. Eric joined us as the master of ceremony for the evening. His easy going and humorous personality enthralled the crowd and maintained their attention. Eric is truly an amazing person. We were fortunate to have him host our inaugural fundraising event. We look forward to spending time with Eric again. Commissioner Jean Monestime delivered a heartfelt and personal message. Commissioner Monestime has been a great supporter. He is an honorary member of A Reflection of Me.

Due to the generosity of sponsors and those who attended this event, our team was able to return to Haiti to provide photo albums, family photos and cameras to approximately 200 families in Haiti and to those who attended our photography workshop. We had to share this memory with those new to our organization and bring back this wonderful memory to those who were present.

The music, food, and of course the art delighted the senses of those in attendance. 7,500 sq ft of empty space, The Mindwarehouse in Downtown Miami was transformed to accommodate a world class arts exhibition for the cause of helping those an ocean away. There was singing, drumming, dancing and so much more. This event reflects the beginning of an organization created for us to reflect on our past to shape our present for a better future. This was the beginning of an organization working to ignite the artist within each one of us.

A Reflection of Me, Inc is now a South Florida based registered non profit who works with the youth to elderly to connect our past with our present, to connect us to ourselves, families and communities through the use of art. We would love you to visit our website to learn more about what we do. We want you to volunteer with us, become a sponsor and share our stories. We are living through some exciting times! Hop on for the ride with A Reflection of Me, Inc.
SOCIETY’S REFLECTION IN 14 DAYS
A Conversation about Social Distancing

A Society’s Reflection in 14 days, Reflection
As I look back at the event that took place on April 19, it was clear that intuition was guiding the process. At the time, we couldn’t have known that we would still be in the depths of this pandemic six months later. We didn’t know that so many souls would lose their lives and their ability to be here now. We used words like “social distancing” and “new norm”, loosely not knowing just how much of a part of our daily language these words would become. However, even though we couldn’t have known on a conscious level how our lives would be in six months; on a deeper level, we felt a seismic shift in our collective lives. Somehow, we also knew that we needed to come together to prepare for whatever was to come. A Society’s Reflection in 14 Days was the expression of that deeper knowing.

I was fortunate enough to contribute to the event as a mental health professional. My task was to speak about the ways that people could cope with isolation caused by the shut-down orders throughout the country. I looked through a prism of art therapy to identify specific tools that individuals could utilize to cope and overcome feelings of loneliness and fear. This one-page document is on the resource list for the program if you are curious to see what they are. As I look back at this list, I realize that it is a collection of strategies that use “you” as the primary tool for coping and overcoming negative feelings. I realized that we have the power to heal ourselves, whether it’s through using our imagination or using our breath. We are created to survive and thrive. We have been endowed by our creator with instincts for knowing and healing.

This pandemic and the time it has afforded us to reflect has made many things clear, one of which is that life is precious and it can end without much warning. For all of the souls who have died and lost their ability to be on this earth, we honor you. You have transitioned and in doing so, you have taught us to make the most of the time that we have on this earth. For those reading this during the pandemic, I urge you to follow the precautions and guidelines to keep yourselves safe and to remember you have a built-in survival system meant to help you survive and thrive. When we choose to trust our instincts and support each other; we are able to make it through the challenges that come into our lives.

Paul Altine M.A. MFT
Juicing With Art and A Reflection of Me, Inc joined forces to bring Haitians and non-Haitians alike from various parts of the world to virtually come together to celebrate the Haitian culture. Participants were provided with the opportunity to experience Haiti’s majestic beauty, mouthwatering cuisine, history, and brilliant artists. In honor of Haitian Flag day, which is globally celebrated on May 18, the virtual celebration was held on May 17, 2020. The love for Haiti was evident in the number of participants, the smiles that exuded on the faces of the participants, as well as their comments on the zoom chat. Several dignitaries from South Florida were also present such as Florida’s State Representative, Dotie Joseph, Miami Dade County Commissioners Jean Monestime and Daniella Levine Cava, and the Mayor of the City of Miramar, Wayne Messam.

Participants learned from Claude Louissaint, Haiti’s contribution to the Americas, detailing Haiti’s rich history and complicated relationship with the Americas. Famed and award-winning author, Edwidge Danticat also imparted the group with a special message of dignity for our heritage. The highlight of the event, Isaie “Zeek” Mathias, one of the founders of A Reflection of Me, Inc., showcased an exhibition of several of his pieces and showed a short film, Sound the Tanbou, sending audience back and reminding them who they are as a people. In his words, “We are here as contributors and not as visitors. It is up to us to write our narratives.” The event was bursting forth with diverse genres and modes of artistic expression. People were exposed to drumming from Paul Altine to the colorful and folkloric dance of the NSL Danse ensemble to soothing jazz music provided by celebrated bass player Dony Felix and singer LaVie. With warmth and depth, Zeal showcased his soul stirring voice and brought a tinge of Haitian R&B to the mix. The assortment of artistry showcased Haiti’s rich and diverse people as well as their creative forms of expressions. Sight and sounds were some of the senses that were regaled with the entertainments, but the palates were treated to skillful home cooking with the delicious taste of fine Haitian cuisine. Participants were tasked with creating their favorite Haitian meal and from the images that were displayed, people went above and beyond to make their meals visually appealing and delightfully tasteful. A demonstration of how to make Epis, which is the Creole word for seasoning, was demonstrated by Zazou, a plant based culinary artist. The night could not end without a cocktail and Naama provided participants with the recipe to Sunset in Haiti. DJ Zoe Crazy wrapped up this amazing event with a diverse musical selection; we danced until we were kicked out!
A Reflection of Me, Inc. celebrated Father’s Day on the 21st of June this year with a virtual discussion on fatherhood during these challenging times. Considering everything that is transpiring in our country, “Fatherhood In Time of Crises: Empowering the Mind”, provided a positive platform for individuals, especially fathers to engage in dialogue about their journey during these trying times. We discussed if and how their roles have transformed during multiple crises such as COVID-19 and racial biases that are now being addressed globally. How can fathers maintain their roles as protectors and providers in a time like this?

Our very own co-founder Zeek Mathias moderated this invigorating event that was program packed with special guest speakers. State Representative Dotie Joseph and Commissioner Daniella Levine Cava shared the importance of our vote in our community, expressing how our participation in the election is crucial to making big changes in our nation policies. We also had “Big Brother, Big Sister” of Miami President and CEO Gale Nelson speak about the importance of mentorship and leadership for not just the youth, but for adults too.

As our organization is about igniting the artist within, the event also included live musical performances by LEEVI and Antonio as well as included exercises for attendees to participate in and feature some of their artistic skills. Attendees were able to share stories during the open forum and a breakout room brainstorming session to artistically display some of the ways and activities being utilized to get through this current time. A few attendees were awarded raffle prizes such as exclusive merchandise from our affiliate company 'Juicing with Art'.

Catch “Fatherhood In Time of Crises: Empowering the Mind” on our Facebook page.
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