



For Immediate Release

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Amherst Cinema Benefit Raises \$3,334 for Haitian Relief

Amherst, MA— Special screenings at Amherst Cinema of a new documentary about Haitian women as the pillars of the country's economy raised \$3,334 for Haitian relief.

The co-director of "Poto Mitan," Renée Bergan, spoke at the Feb 1 screenings of the film, which shows how Haitian women are not only the "poto mitan" or center post of their families and communities, but also how they bear the weight of the global economy. Ms. Bergan commented that as Haiti seeks to repair its collapsed infrastructure and heal the millions whose lives have been disrupted, the demands on the "poto mitan" of Haitian society will become all the more extreme.

"We were honored to have the filmmaker of such a compelling and expertly-made film at our theater, and to have joined with so many others in making this fundraiser a success," said Carol Johnson, Executive Director of the Amherst Cinema.

"Every cent of the ticket proceeds as well as funds collected at the event are going to Partners In Health, to help urgent medical needs, and Fonkoze, to help Haiti women rebuild Haiti through micro-financing," Johnson said.

"I'm thrilled by the amount of money we raised, the seamless cooperation of everyone involved in the event, and by the thought that from the 240 people who saw "Poto Mitan" at Amherst Cinema the ripple effect will spread outwards," said Carolyn Shread of UMass and Mount Holyoke College.

The event was co-sponsored by the Amherst Cinema and a consortium of departments and organizations from the Five Colleges, including Five Colleges Women's Studies Research Center; Amherst College Women's and Gender Studies; Hampshire College Women's Studies; Mount Holyoke College Gender Studies; Smith College Program for the Study of Women and Gender; UMASS Amherst Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies; the following UMASS Amherst organizations/departments: Everywoman's Center, Graduate Employees Organization, History Department, Political Economic Research Institute, and Women of Color Leadership Network.

For information about the documentary and to purchase DVDs: www.potomitan.net

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