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**David L. Van Vactor, Ph.D.**

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Friends of Matènwa  
Attn: Christine W. Low  
Executive Director  
P.O. Box 494  
Lincoln, Ma. 01773

Dear Chris,

I am very pleased to serve as a reference for your proposal to USAID to improve reading skills in five communities on La Gonave, using the Mother Tongue Books (MTB) model that we highly believe in. In my role as Director of the Harvard scholastic outreach program Basic Science Partnership (<http://bsp.med.harvard.edu/>), I have helped to promote the Mother Tongue Books Project in the Boston area by sponsoring science-content bilingual books in local independent schools such as the Shady Hill School as well as Buckingham, Brown and Nichols (BB&N). This is a wonderful tool to build literacy and collaboration, and should be a powerful model to promote K-6 reading in Creole for Haitian children. The US/AID project proposed by Friends of Matènwa and MCLC is an initiative that will promote the vision of providing pertinent reading materials that school children will seek out and love to read in community libraries. I believe that children in Matènwa are benefitting from having MTBs in their community library. I welcome future collaboration with you.

In my capacity as Board Chairman for Universal Learning Centre (ULC), an organization dedicated to building community libraries in Haiti, I am pleased to offer our enthusiastic collaboration with you to extend the access to MTBs. Once the MTB teacher-training package for reading is designed we would like to be able to make it available to the 16 schools surrounding our existing library in Pilates, and later to the dozens of schools surrounding our new library in Ouanaminthe. It would be our hope to provide access to printers in our libraries that can produce these books on site/on demand, bringing to the library a capacity that both reduces book costs and promotes reading and writing skills of the local children and provides some economic activity of printing locally. Children throughout Haiti will benefit from our collaborative efforts.

Sincerely,

David L. Van Vactor, Ph.D.

Professor of Cell Biology; Member, Program in Neuroscience

Director, Basic Science Partnership (<http://bsp.med.harvard.edu/>)

Chairman, Board of Directors, Universal Learning Centre (<http://www.universallearningcentre.org/>)