



A trailer of Westfield State furniture opened and ready for distribution, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Summary: Replacing furniture from 75 apartments at Westfield State University, the Massachusetts State College Building Authority asked IRN to manage the removal and match the furnishings with charitable recipients. Through partner Food For The Poor, IRN placed the WSU furniture with orphanages and schools and an urban church in and near Port-au-Prince, Haiti, serving some of the poorest communities in the Americas.

Material Composition & Quantity: 508 items including seating, desks, dressers, mattresses, tables, stoves, and refrigerators.

Setting: Rural college campus.

Overview

The Massachusetts State College Building Authority (MSCBA) approached IRN to discuss a project at Westfield State University, replacing furnishings from about 75 on-campus apartments. Between the date of student move-out and delivery of new furniture, IRN had a window of less than a week to complete the project.

IRN offered the furnishings to longtime partner Food For The Poor. FFP accepted the shipment to assist four different organizations in Haiti: three orphanages with attached schools (COHAN-FEDDI, the Orphelinat Les Amis de Jesus, and Foyer Renmen) and an urban church/shelter, the Eglise Saint Louis Marie de Montfort.

Over two days, IRN and a professional moving crew removed and packed the WSU furnishings into three 40-foot overseas shipping containers. The containers were trucked and then shipped from the Port of Elizabeth, NJ to Port-au-Prince, Haiti. There they were remounted on chassis, pulled to their destinations, and unloaded directly into the recipient facilities.

Less than a month after they left Westfield State, the furnishings were beginning a new life supporting children and families in some of the most disadvantaged communities in the Western Hemisphere.

Composition

Item	Number	Item	Number
Desk Chairs	39	Refrigerators	24
Dining Chairs	64	Stoves	10
Side Chairs	16	Mattresses, Twin Long	77
Lounge Seating	7	Coffee Tables	41
Dormitory Desks	108	End Tables	38
Dressers	59	Kitchen Tables	25
		Grand Total	508

Cost

There were no resale opportunities for the furniture, nor was there metal that could be recycled for commodity value. WSU faced a disposal cost of approximately \$6,300 to landfill the surplus, or a somewhat higher cost (because of longer transportation) to recycle the furniture as mixed debris. IRN provided trailers for reuse at a cost to WSU of \$4,320, approximately \$2,000 or 30% less than disposal.

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Destinations

COHAN-FEDDI manages an orphanage and a school for seven hundred students. Director Ms. Maud Laurent used the FSU furniture throughout COHAN-FEDDI's campus: dressers and mattresses in the orphanage; desks in classrooms; tables and chairs in dining and common areas. She wrote, "At last, the school is getting better furniture. I can concentrate on other matters now."



WSU dorm desks used to establish a computer classroom, COHAN-FEDDI

The **Orphelinat (Orphanage) Les Amis de Jesus** cares for 20 children. Claudette Jean Francois is one of the caretakers. She told FFTP she was in tears when the school received WSU mattresses: "Thank God for Food For The Poor and the University. With their donation, the kids will no longer sleep on the cold floor. No more body aches or sleepless nights."



"New" cafeteria furniture at the Orphelinat Les Amis de Jesus, outside Port-au-Prince

The **Eglise Saint Louis Marie de Montfort** is a community church and shelter in Port-au-Prince. With the WSU inventory, FFP was able to provide the church with seating for guests and visitors, tables and chairs, and bed sets.



WSU lounge furniture in reuse, Eglise St Louis Marie de Montfort, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Foyer Renmen is an orphanage and school that has been serving homeless and needy children for 22 years. The orphanage currently cares for 45 children, and over 100 more attend classes at the school. WSU furnishings are supporting all of Foyer Renmen's programs: living areas; classrooms; dining and cafeteria; and administration. Florence Thybulle, the head of Foyer Renmen, reported to FFP, "Thanks to Food For The Poor and specially the donors that send the furniture. I am able to organize the kids' clothing and provide desks. If Foyer Renmen looks good, it is because of the favor of FFP and the University."



Dressers from Westfield State in a dormitory for infants, Foyer Renmen