

## Eloquent Student Speech Delivered at the 2011 Graduation

By Pam Mann, Missionary Bible and Art Teacher in Institution Univers

Noëlla Cadet was one of the students who fled Port-au-Prince following the earthquake of January 12, 2010. She and her family came to Ouanaminthe, and she was one of the 350 new students received in February 2010. Proving to be an excellent student, she emerged first in her 13<sup>th</sup> grade class from the early stages of her brief stay with us. As a result, she was invited to give the student address at the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual commencement ceremonies on June 26, 2011. Following are some excerpts from her speech.

*After the sad event of January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010, I was welcomed to Collège Univers in Ouanaminthe to complete my high school studies. Not hiding anything from you, I was traumatized by the image of the catastrophe of my country. But, Univers gave me hope – a hope that gives life, since the loss of human life and property permitted us to re-enforce our determination to think about the future of poor and disenfranchised children. I was saved from further difficulty thanks to this school.*

*Collège Univers assures to its dear students the fulfillment of their internal faculties. It exposes them to higher consideration of greater principles. It places around them the love of wisdom and order. It works for the benefit of our country.... It is with a renewed joy that I share with you the words of our dear Henry Christophe: "A man without instruction is half useful to his country."*

*One year and six months here seem on one hand short, but what I have been able to acquire in this short period of time is extraordinary, thanks to the all the staff of this grand institution.*

*I have become more determined and firmer in my decisions. Should I cry out from the rooftops? Should I borrow the language of the angels to tell you how proud I am to have trod the ground of this grand Univers. This great school has given me the opportunity to be someone who will be useful to my country in the days to come. Words fail me to bear witness to the benefits of this school. Who would have said that I would be here, to give this speech? No one knew. I want to share a Haitian proverb which you know well: "What God reserves for you, the floodwaters will not carry away." Yes! God gave me this great gift to be a student of Collège Univers.*

*And I believe that I bear the sentiments of all my classmates. They asked me to transmit to you this message. Opt for the best for your children; choose what is best for them. And in the present situation, be proud of what they have become. We congratulate you – parents, friends, those who have supported this great school.*

