

RELIEF: Stouffville mission on island

# Disabilities to Haitians 'overwhelm'

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Haitians require wound care and physiotherapy, according to a Whitchurch-Stouffville mission.

"A whole second wave of amputation is our fear if we don't get proper wound care," said Beth Jost-Reimer, director of communications for CBM Canada. "If they don't get proper physiotherapy, they won't recover from those injuries" sustained in the earthquake and will not be able to use the prosthetics available to them and keep their muscles strong.

In Port-au-Prince alone, which is where most of the damage occurred on Jan. 12 when a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck and where about two million people lived, 1.3 million people are displaced.

There are 300,000 people injured and 4,000 with amputations, according to Ms Jost-Reimer.

"As we visited hospitals in Haiti, I was overwhelmed by the sheer number of people with disabilities," said Ed Epp, executive director for CBM Canada. "It was a stark reminder of how many people are now living with amputations."

Prior to the earthquake, 10 per cent of Haiti's population was disabled, according to CBM Canada.

CBM Canada sent another team to Haiti last week, which included an occupational therapist and physiotherapist.

"Without CBM's physiotherapists, lives would be lost," Mr. Epp said. "Follow-up to surgery is critical to survival."

Also going to Port-



**KELLY WILKINSON:** Stouffville resident in Haiti has worked for CBM for 10 years.

au-Prince was Stouffville resident Kelly Wilkinson, who will serve as finance manager.

"We're going to be establishing an office in Haiti because it's obvious we're going to be there long-term," Ms Wilkinson said, noting part of her job will be to train a Haitian bookkeeper already associated with CBM Canada.

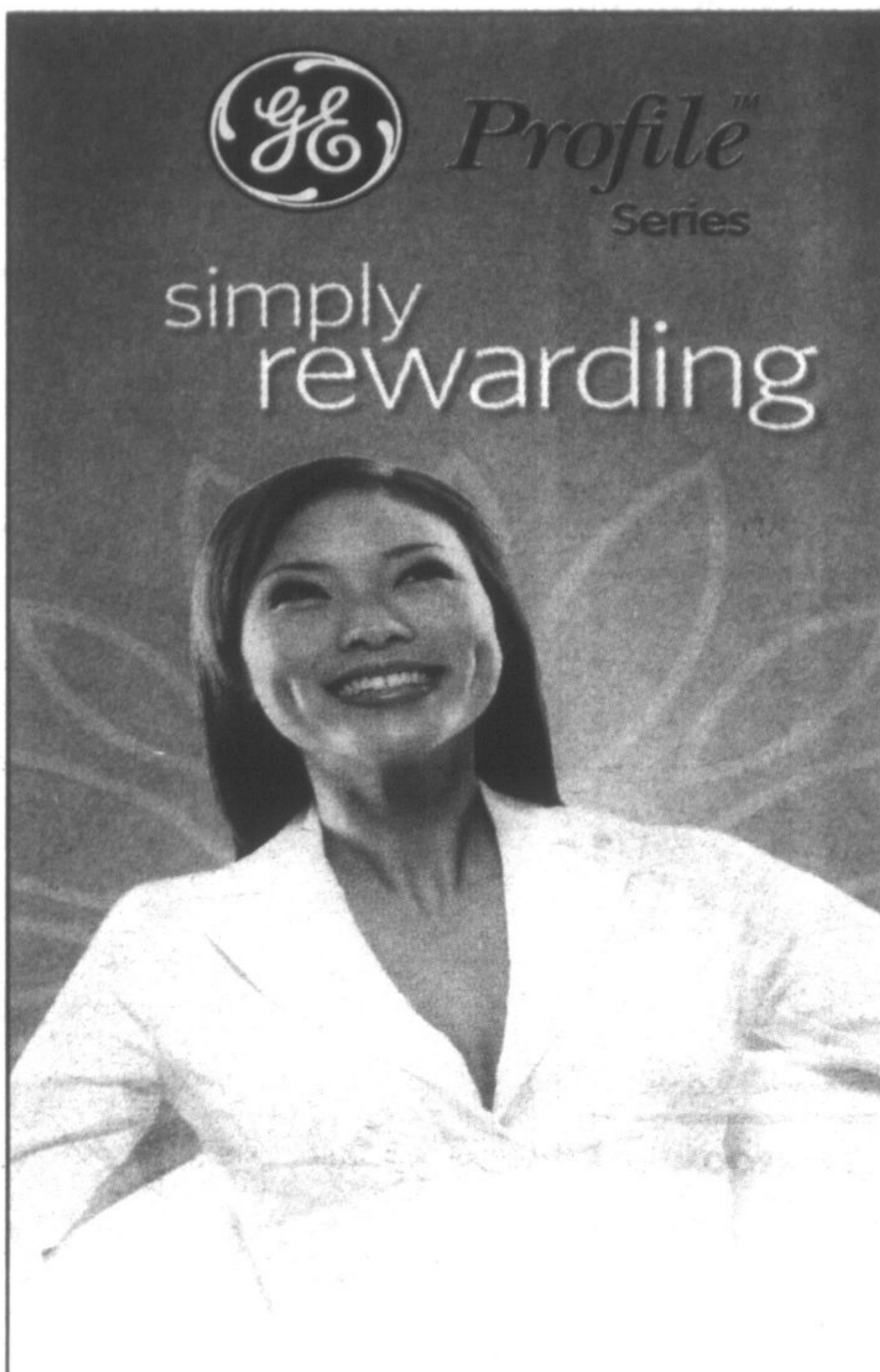
Ms Wilkinson was CBM Canada's director of finance from 2000 to 2008 and then director of organizational services before quitting to move out west this year. But she didn't move and jumped at the chance to take the new CBM position.

"It was a great opportunity to combine my experience and work in a regional office," she said.

The contract is for one month, but "if things go well, it'll be another six months," Ms Wilkinson said.

"If we build this correctly, it will be a wonderful thing for the Haitians," she said.

For more information, go to [www.cbmcanada.org](http://www.cbmcanada.org)



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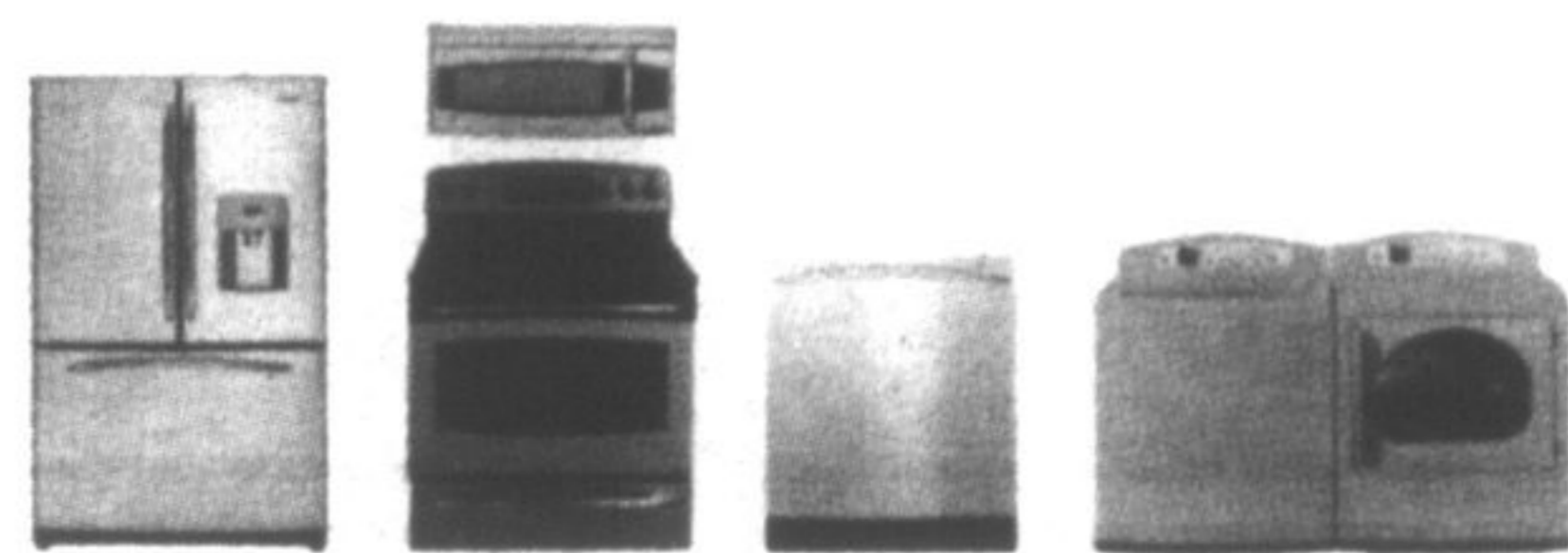
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