



Haitian Project News

The Louverture Cleary Schools Network, Transforming Haiti through Education

Volume 36 • March 2024 • Issue 3

Update on the Situation in Haiti

by HPN Staff

Many people have heard how the situation in Haiti, already difficult, took an especially worrying turn in early March. An escalation in gang activity increased the volatility of Haiti's ongoing security and political crisis. Louverture Cleary School has not been directly impacted by these developments, but as this newsletter went to print on 3/13/24, students were asked to stay home as a precaution given the potential risks associated with traveling to campus.

As with every temporary disruption resulting from political instability over The Haitian Project's long history, THP and LCS leadership are constantly assessing the situation with the safety of the LCS community in mind and plan to resume full operations soon.

Throughout this multiyear crisis, LCS has been a lifeline to its students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding neighborhood. And as difficult as it is right now for the community, it would be much worse without the prospect of a brighter future that LCS represents.

Needless to say, supporters of The Haitian Project help keep LCS's doors open and that hope alive. The Haitian Project's mission is vital now; it will only be more so when the crisis of the moment has passed. (This issue's profile of 2018 LCS graduate Widler J. on page 4 is an excellent affirmation of this point.)

Supporters and community members are encouraged to reach out with any questions by sending an email to development@haitianproject.org.

Thank you for your support. Please continue to keep the LCS community and the country of Haiti in your prayers.

2023: A Year of Hope and Renewal at THP

by Thomas Cody
(THP Volunteer '13-'14)

For The Haitian Project and Louverture

Cleary School, 2023 was a year of renewal and hope. Despite the historic challenges Haiti has faced in recent years, there is solace in the Psalms: that, with every generation, the Holy Spirit renews the face of the earth.

THP and LCS have ambitious plans to ensure that more children in Haiti's future generations have access to LCS's transformative education. In 2023, the THP community helped the Project have



The 2023 Louverture Cleary Philo (13th grade) class

a historic fundraising year that set a strong foundation for future growth. The Project achieved five major fundraising accomplishments last year: its largest single capital campaign pledge—\$2 million; its largest grant from an institutional foundation—\$300,000 from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; its first year exceeding \$2 million in Annual Fund; its most successful online fundraising campaign—

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THP Highlights

Louverturians ... A Wise Investment: Haiti, like many other countries across the globe, has not been spared from spiraling increases in the cost of living. General inflation compounds issues caused by the insecurity in the country, affecting prices of educational materials and supplies. As a result, the cost of educating one student for one year at LCS has increased from \$2,100 to \$2,400—which includes their education, books, meals, and housing. By comparison, in the U.S. the average annual cost of educating one student at a private five-day boarding school is over \$53,000. Louverturians continue to be a wise and valuable investment in Haiti!

A Vital Addition to LCS: To continue to support the wellbeing and growth of Louverture Cleary students, the school has added a full-time counselor to its robust staff, providing a much-needed avenue of support to the students residing in the boarding school community. This new position was created in response to the increasingly complex needs of the students in the context of the modern world, as well as the difficult environment in Haiti in particular. The licensed counselor will provide both individual and group sessions to students in support of their mental health and overall wellbeing, and will also serve as a resource for staff and parents.

Supporting Haiti's Future Leaders, Each and Every Day

by Amanda Haluga (THP Director of Charism & Missionary Program)

Louverture Cleary School provides a quality education steeped in community service and academic excellence to 360 students each year. Though the school day runs from 7 am to 3:25 pm, LCS is a boarding school, and formation of its students—Louverturians—begins long before the first bell and continues long after the last.

First thing each day, before breakfast and classes, students gather for morning meeting in their student groups led by the *Rhétó* (12th grade) *Moniteurs* (monitors) and *Philo* (13th grade) *Guides* (guides). After this time together for reflection and goal setting, they attend classes, participate in Work Hour and community service, and work together in *Netwayaj* (clean-up). During Play Hour, they decompress, play, read, and visit with friends. In the evening, they do their homework and assist others with theirs before going to bed. This daily dedication to guiding and supporting one another is a hallmark of a Louverturian—but it is far from the only support they receive.

There are numerous people on campus, including many LCS alumni, who lead, mentor, and support students each day. Along with staff, Junior Staff, and teachers, a robust residential staff community

remains at school overnight to supervise students. Under the leadership of Principal Myriam J. (LCS '10) and Dean Abbigaëlle S. (LCS '17), the LCS Academic Department ensures that the curriculum is successfully accomplished, and that students have the resources and academic support they need to succeed. Co-Deans of Students Keslin A. (LCS '16) and Ludgyn J. (LCS '07) are responsible for discipline and other areas of student life. A medical doctor, medical student, and nurse, who are all LCS alumni, provide medical attention to students around the clock, and will soon have a beautiful new infirmary to work out of.

The Campus Ministry department also plays a crucial role in supporting the school community. Campus Minister Chrislie R. (LCS '14) and her colleagues lead liturgical activities, religious education, and sacrament preparation. In response to increased student needs, they also minister to the mental well-being of students through one-on-one meetings and a weekly Less Stress Club co-led virtually by THP Chief Program Officer Aimée Maier, LCSW.

Building on this strong foundation of pastoral attention, the LCS leadership recently identified the need for a licensed counselor to further care for the mental

health of students and to make referrals as necessary. New LCS Counselor Frantzdy V.'s background in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy has already proven to be helpful through one-on-one meetings, and he plans to implement group sessions soon.

With all these resources working together for student well-being, Louverturians have access to a level of care and support that will no doubt stay with them long after graduating from LCS.

In the words of Aimée, "Beyond the knowledge gained in the classroom, opportunities on campus for social, physical, and spiritual growth are equally important to support students in realizing their full potential in an increasingly volatile world. It is crucial to have caring and competent guides in these areas to support the health and growth of students."

With dedication and care for students both inside and outside of the classroom, LCS supports Louverturians' well-being today, and equips them for life after LCS—at university, in professional careers, within their families and communities, and in leadership roles in Haiti—helping to form the well-rounded, peace and justice-oriented individuals their nation greatly needs.

Building Not Just a School, But a Community

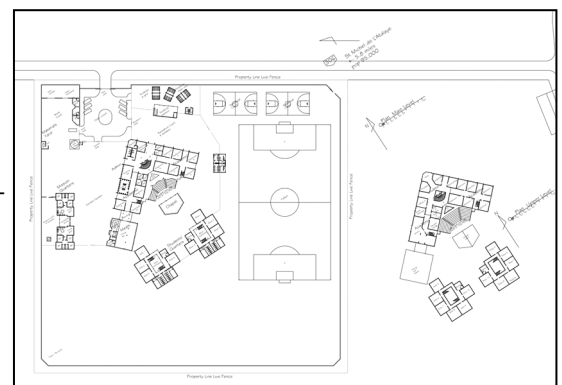
by Jimi Grondin (THP Director of New School Construction)

While it is true that education happens everywhere—cooking meals at home, searching for bargains at the market, acquiring new skills at work, observing nature on a walk in the woods—education at scale is most effective in formalized settings. And while it is also true that formalized settings can range from the shade of a tree to the grandest mega-school in a suburb near you, what THP is doing with Louverture Cleary Schools is truly unique.

A Louverture Cleary School is not just a school, but a community. As a co-educational boarding school for academically-gifted and disadvantaged youth, the physical plant hosts 360 middle and high school students for five days and nights every week. The school also employs over 140 people—administrators, teachers,

cooks, maintenance workers, and community outreach personnel—many of whom are on campus 24/7. Not only does the school require space for things like desks and chalkboards, it must also provide an environment that facilitates the "joyful celebration of community" spelled out in The Haitian Project's values.

To that end, long-time THP community member and architect Scott Hill designed the Model Campus for new LCS schools as a physical embodiment of community life. The main building welcomes people into its heart with wide internal corridors that open directly to the exterior, thus providing community interaction and cooling transverse ventilation. The two wings embrace



Site plan of the Model Campus (LCS 2)

a chapel and auditorium where Mass and daily student body assemblies will occur. Surrounding this heart of the campus are the dormitories, dining hall, community housing, maintenance yard, and preschool

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Providence College Welcomes THP for MLK Jr. Day of Service

by HPN Staff

The Haitian Project and Providence College have a longstanding, mutually beneficial relationship built around their shared Catholic identities and Providence, Rhode Island, roots. For well over a decade, PC has been a place for “Friars”—PC students and alumni—to serve with and support THP, whether as board members, office volunteers or donors, or as one of the six PC alumni who gave a collective 11 years of service as missionary teachers at Louverture Cleary School in Haiti. As a reflection of the deep connection the two communities have shared, in 2012 PC awarded THP President Emeritus Patrick Moynihan (PC ’99G) with an Honorary Doctorate of Humanitarian Service.

THP is a consistent presence at the college’s Chirico Career Center and its biannual Career Expo, and periodically in the classroom and at events. In the past, PC students and staff have visited LCS through Campus Ministry service-learning immersion trips. But even as the insecurity in Haiti prevents sending missionary teachers or immersion groups to the school, the mutually beneficial connection between PC and THP has opened the door for a new and exciting collaboration.

Each year, PC holds Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation Week, featuring a keynote speaker, an awards luncheon, and a service event. In PC’s words, “Each January, Providence College honors Dr. King and his efforts to create a Beloved Community at

the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation, a special event featuring guest speakers whose work reflects Dr. King’s legacy.” THP’s social justice-centered dedication to providing education as the solution to ending poverty in Haiti resonated with PC Campus Minister and Director of Service and Justice Eileen Invention as a way of carrying out Dr. King’s legacy. She invited THP to be the featured organization and beneficiary of the third and final convocation week event, the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.

On Thursday, February 1st, THP Director of Charism & Missionary Program Amanda Haluga (PC ’14) represented THP at the Day of Service event, which was attended by students and staff from all around campus. While attendees enjoyed traditional Haitian food, Amanda presented on THP’s mission and vision for the future, as well as daily life in the LCS community. Two PC students, Ezter Lindor and Donald Simpreus, then spoke, sharing their life experiences that brought them from Haiti to PC.

Following the talks, attendees packed school supplies into backpacks for the students of LCS.

Reflecting on the successful event, Eileen said, “What a joy to welcome a program as close to PC as THP. This was one of the most student-engaged evenings



MLK Jr. Day of Service attendees pack school supplies into backpacks for the students of LCS. (photo courtesy of Providence College)

of the MLK series, as we learned of the mission and success of Louverture Cleary Schools and came together to fill 100 bags of school supplies with handwritten notes of encouragement and prayer. We couldn’t be prouder of how we came together to continue supporting such a wonderful mission and organization.”

His experience at the event led Ezter to observe, “Getting the opportunity to work with The Haitian Project was an honor. As a Haitian immigrant, seeing a U.S. organization like The Haitian Project work so hard to help the children of Haiti gives me hope that despite all the hardships the people of Haiti have endured over the past decades, our people won’t be forgotten.”

Many thanks to Eileen, Ezter and Donald, and the entire PC community for their support of THP’s mission and LCS students!

Would your college or university be a good connection for THP? Contact THP at development@haitianproject.org!

Building a Community

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facilities. External to the campus core are the recreational fields and auxiliary yard.

Scott’s goal in all of his work is to marry, in his words, “the nature of the site and the nature of its occupants.” With the Model Campus, we see this marriage between a professional workspace dedicated to education and a social space dedicated to fostering community.

Because LCS is community-based, the

design of the campus must take the entire socio-economic apron of the project into account. The campus needs to provide education and living space in a sustainable format that will also be welcoming to the outside community.

The Model Campus will accomplish this in several ways, by:

- providing clean water, not just for the school, but up to 1000 gallons per day for the surrounding community,
- making use of gardens and live fencing to produce food and other resources, and

- providing a safe learning environment, not just for the LCS students, but also for the preschoolers and adults from the community who come to campus for literacy classes.

The integration of the physical plant with both the internal school community and the broader external community requires an approach that is multi-dimensional and cross-disciplinary. Education is the big picture, but fields like the environment, energy, employment, agriculture, health, and recreation all sharpen the image into a cohesive composition.

LCS Alumni Spotlight

Widler J. (LCS '18)

Widler J. (LCS '18) teaches computer science at Louverture Cleary School. Before studying computer science at INUKA University in Port-au-Prince, he was part of the Junior Staff work-study program, through which LCS graduates attend university on scholarships from LCS's Dulcich Center for Career Advancement while working at the school.

HPN: How did you find out about LCS?

WJ: LCS was located in the same area as me. When I was a child, I used to hear the students on the campus speaking English and Spanish fluently, and as someone who has always had a passion for English, it sparked my interest. My dream was to work hard and become part of the LCS student body. My mother encouraged and supported me to pursue my dream. With her guidance, I prepared for and successfully passed the exam to become a Louverturian.

HPN: What is your role at LCS now as a staff member?

WJ: I am primarily a computer science teacher at the fundamental level, responsible for teaching *Sizyèm, Senkyèm, and Katryèm* (grades 7, 8, and 9). In addition to teaching, I also serve as the computer lab monitor. I actively assist students with their research and homework in the computer lab, help them master research software, and ensure they have the necessary resources and support on time. I also assist with data entry for new enrollees at LCS, manage network configurations, and assist the academic administration in entering grades. Additionally, I take on the responsibility of welcoming students at the entrance every Sunday afternoon, fostering a safe, warm, and inclusive environment for their arrival.

HPN: What is a lesson you learned as a student at LCS that you continue to use?

WJ: I learned the importance of perseverance and resilience in the face of challenges. LCS taught me that setbacks are not failures, but rather opportunities for growth and learning. This mindset has helped me navigate various obstacles in my personal and professional life, allowing me to overcome adversity and achieve my goals. Additionally, LCS instilled in me the value of discipline. I learned that with discipline, you can accomplish a lot of things correctly.

HPN: What do you enjoy most about your responsibilities at LCS?

WJ: I enjoy the opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of students. Being able to contribute to their growth, both academically and personally, brings me immense satisfaction. Additionally, I appreciate the collaborative environment at LCS, where I can work alongside dedicated colleagues who share a passion for education. It's fulfilling to see students thrive and succeed under our guidance, knowing that I've played a part in their journey toward a brighter future.

HPN: What are your plans for the future?

WJ: I aim to take on more leadership roles and contribute meaningfully to my organization's goals and initiatives. Overall, my goal is to continue learning, growing, and making a positive impact in both my professional and personal life.

HPN: What are your hopes for the future of Haiti?

WJ: My hopes for Haiti's future revolve around stability, prosperity, and progress. I envision a Haiti where its people have access to quality education, healthcare,



LCS Faculty Member Widler J. (LCS '18)

"My hopes for Haiti's future revolve around stability, prosperity, and progress. I envision a Haiti where its people have access to quality education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, fostering sustainable economic development and inclusive growth."—Widler J. (LCS '18)

and employment opportunities, fostering sustainable economic development and inclusive growth. I aspire to see robust infrastructure, effective governance, and institutions that support the well-being and advancement of all citizens. Additionally, I hope for unity, reconciliation, and peace among all Haitians, fostering a sense of national pride and solidarity. As Louverturians, owing to the quality education we received at LCS, we can position Haiti for a better future. With the increasing number of Louverturian alumni each year, I believe we can significantly contribute to Haiti's rebuilding, as our motto states: "*L'union fait la force*" ("Unity creates strength").

We are an Easter People and Alleluia is our song!—John Paul II

In the words of Saint John Paul II, we search for "a joy that comes from faith, that grows through unselfish love, that respects the 'fundamental duty of love of neighbor...'" We at The Haitian Project thank you for your support of our students and community at Louverture Cleary School, the LCS Network, and a totally new day for Haiti. Let the promise of being an Easter People embolden and inspire our work together. *Happy Easter!*

LCS Student Views

Macksony D. Sizyèm (7th grade)

My name is Macksony D., I am a student of LCS in *Sizyèm* (7th grade). I am eleven years old.

According to the education LCS gives, it makes me realize if I really want something, I should work hard for it. As I look at this education, I see that it already represents a lot of things in my future.

My favorite thing at LCS is mealtime, because the meals are so delicious. The mommies (the cooks) have a way to prepare the food, and it is excellent. My other favorite thing is the soccer competitions between classes.

Personally, what I'm working for is to succeed and to be in the first ten of my class academically, and also to spend the whole year with the one hundred discipline points that the school gave me at the beginning of the year. This way I can prove myself in front of every single student at school.

My future is something that can be beautiful. I'm passionate about soccer and I would like to be a soccer player, it is my goal since I was a little kid. I want to complete it by being a doctor so that I can

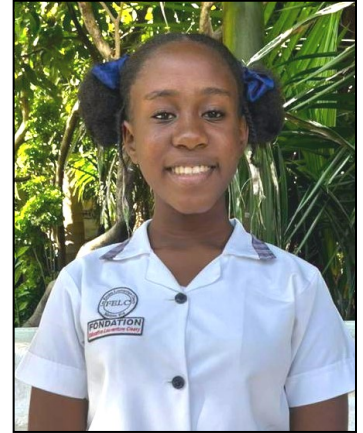
help my community because I can't stand to see when people are suffering.

Melissa Saïka H. Segond (11th grade)

My name is Melissa Saïka H., I am a student of LCS in *Segond* (11th grade) and I am fifteen years old. I knew of LCS thanks to a cousin who himself was a student of LCS when I was seven years old. I am living with my parents and my older brother.

Joining LCS was one of the best things that happened to me. LCS taught me a lot of things both educationally and socially. LCS taught me to better interact with others, improve my behavior towards others, and to be much more disciplined. I really like the fact that LCS not only cares about me, a student, but also about children [in the neighborhood] around the school who do not have the same chance as me to attend the school.

I like the fact that LCS places a lot of



LCS *Sizyèm* (7th grade) student Macksony D. (left) and LCS *Segond* (11th grade) student Melissa Saïka H. (right)

importance on discipline. I also like the extracurricular activities that are organized every year. I am on a student committee which aims to help new students to integrate better and make their experience at LCS even better. I am also in a program which aims to help other children who are not part of the school. I share what I have received from LCS.

This year, I would really like to learn new things and have new experiences, on an educational and also a social level. I would like to push my limits and accomplish new things that can help the community.

Gathering as a Community of Faith

by Sandy Whewell (THP Director of Media)

At the heart of Louverture Cleary School is the Catholic faith. As a community of faith, LCS gathers throughout the year for all-school Masses to commemorate certain holy days and school milestones.

Mass is facilitated by Campus Minister Chrislie R. (LCS '14) and the student leaders in the LCS Spiritual Club. Students contribute by singing in the choir, reading, and participating in the liturgy. Students also present liturgical dance as part of the Mass (pictured right). The children in the *Koukouy Sen Klè* (Fireflies of Saint Clare) early childhood development program join as well, following the

example set by the older students.

A key part of The Haitian Project's Charism, or spiritual identity, LCS's faith formation fosters servant-leaders, encouraging them to live out the school's motto of Matthew 10:8, "What you receive for free, you must give for free." With this formation, Louverturians graduate with the desire and the motivation to remain in Haiti and to work not only for self-improvement, but



In January, LCS gathered for Mass celebrated by Fr. Rubens Silvain of the local Scalabrini community, to mark the reopening of school after Christmas break.

for the betterment of all Haitians and their country.

2023: A Year of Renewal

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\$84,000; and its largest matching donation—\$200,000. These awesome figures are not a finale, but rather the beginning of an exciting time at The Haitian Project, where there are both new and familiar faces continuing to drive the mission forward.

THP's watershed year began with its annual Back to School online campaign, which raised \$84,000—almost triple its goal of \$30,000. The success continued and the year really ended with a bang. While the organization works year-round toward achieving its Annual Fund goals, an astounding 60 percent of the 2023 Annual Fund was raised in December.

"There is seasonality in every giving cycle, but this year more so than ever," said THP President Emeritus Patrick Moynihan, who returned to THP as head of the Project's advancement team. Facing a \$300,000 funding gap at year's end, Patrick turned to a long-time sustaining donor who has helped spearhead many of the Project's initiatives. The donor made a galvanizing gesture, pledging \$150,000 if the THP community could match his offer. He later upped his match to \$200,000, and the THP community rallied.

By December 31st, THP had not only met, but exceeded its end-of-year goal. "Our community really responded," Patrick said. "Every donor's contribution was meaningful and significant toward helping us get there. The same donors who made the Back to School campaign such a success responded again to the match."

Funding will not only help the Project maintain its existing initiatives but will also provide a foundation for future growth in the expansion of the LCS Network. A \$300,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation

is helping ensure this continued growth. The grant provided support to the flagship LCS campus outside of Port-au-Prince to train and develop the essential staff who will go on to open the Model Campus (LCS 2) and future schools. This partnership was more than a year in the making, with initial discussions occurring in 2022. After numerous conversations with the Kellogg Foundation and their partners in Haiti as well, THP was asked to submit a Letter of Inquiry and was subsequently invited to apply for a grant.

"The application was a project-wide effort during which we have been very fortunate to get to know and work with Alix Cantave, the lead program officer for Haiti," said THP Vice President Colby Bowker. "Alix and the Kellogg Foundation team's commitment to bringing more resources to Haiti and supporting the collaboration of those on the ground working to move the needle is exceptional." Additionally, the grant opens the door for THP to continue to grow and expand its collaboration with other Kellogg Foundation partners working to advance the cause of education in the country.

As construction on the Model Campus progresses and LCS continues its tradition of success, THP must ensure funding keeps pace with its goals. Patrick put the Project's 2023 success in perspective: "Back in 1996, the Project was raising around \$100,000 for our Annual Fund," he remembered. "In 30 years, THP has multiplied that number twentyfold. And the fact is, we will need to continue that trend to sustain our growth."

While that may sound daunting, THP has the vision and strategic plan to make it a reality. Patrick continued, "It will be a challenge, but it is what is needed. This year's stellar giving has set the bar high, and we are now focused on that next big benchmark."

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Mission Statement

The Haitian Project through its support of Louverture Cleary Schools, a national network of tuition-free, Catholic, co-educational secondary boarding schools in Haiti, provides for the education of academically-talented and motivated students from Haitian families who cannot afford the cost of their children's education in order to maximize their potential and enable them to work toward building a Haiti where justice and peace thrive.

To donate, visit

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