

Haitian Project News

Celebrating 30 years of Louverture Cleary School!

Volume 31 · April 2018 · Issue 3

"A Louverture Cleary education can change a life, and through that life, a thousand more."

Revamping the Computer Lab

By Connor Branham
(THP In-Country Staff)

Computer labs at schools across the world have gone from luxury to necessity in an incredibly short period of time. At LCS, this is no different, as computer skills are more and more required in universities in Haiti and are critical for most of the jobs graduates are applying for when they have finished their studies.

LCS first established a computer lab in 1997, putting it ahead of the curve with technology, especially in Haiti. Unfortunately, computers are expensive and undergo substantial depreciation, even when well-protected, and must be kept up to date with the constant innovations in software and technology.

The LCS computer lab at the beginning of this year was at the end of its serviceability. With fewer computers working the number of students in many classes, computer teachers were in the uncomfortable position of teaching a computer class with no computers. This



Jeff Benoit (LCS '14), head of the LCS computer department, teaches students in the brand new computer lab, donated by the Michael and Susan Dell Family Foundation.

problem has been solved with a grant from the Dell family (see highlight on page one).

Stoked by the upswing in the computer lab, Jeff Benoit (LCS '14) and head of the computer department, has

updated the computer curriculum to include more computer programming and re-started the computer club so that students who show a lot of interest can get extra practice outside of class.

(Continued on page 2)

HIGHLIGHTS

A Generous Upgrade: In September 2017, LCS teachers faced the challenge of teaching computer class without a sufficient number of working computers. Fortunately, the Michael and Susan Dell Family Foundation generously offered a substantial donation to restock the computer lab with state-of-the-art computers. Additionally, a teaching computer was donated by the Czajkowski family. The new computer lab will continue LCS's nearly two decades of teaching students computer skills, from learning Microsoft Office to computer programming.

What is a Great Cause? Education! In November, Holy Family School in Rockford, IL hosted a Family Trivia Night to benefit Holy Family School and The Haitian Project. Some of the trivia even focused on Haiti and on LCS. At the event, THP Board Chair and Holy Family parishioner Scott LeGrand shared that LCS students once again excelled on the baccalaureate exam. The evening was a great opportunity to introduce THP to new community members, reconnect with longtime supporters, and build the relationship between the Catholic groups.

Education is the Right Mission: The press covers Haiti most – often poorly – in times of crisis. Following President Trump's reported comments, THP Board Member Patrick Brun reflects: "I have read with pride strong responses in defense of Haiti. In many, we were praised as a 'resilient' people. It is not without its downside to be known for surviving any challenge when you dream of becoming an 'unchallenged' nation. I, we want to be known for more than proven survivors." LCS graduates make us confident Haiti will soon become the great nation envisioned at its independence.

Computer Lab

(Continued from page 1)

Benoit says, "Students know how valuable learning technology can be. It can even help get them part time jobs that could support their families and their future education." Under Benoit's leadership the computer program could increase the number of alumni who go on to study computer science, a skill sorely needed in Haiti, along with improving the general skills of the students.

Students have also been very excited about computers at LCS. Ruth Stephan in NS 2 (US grade 11) said, "Before I came to LCS, I didn't know anything about computers, but I have learned a lot. Many people in Haiti cannot use computers, but at our

school we are ahead." Computer class gives them a chance to actively practice new skills and is very engaging.

Given the lack of internet access in Haiti, many students are unprepared for doing research on the internet when they go to college. Internet access will help the students to practice this while they are completing assignments in school. Stephan states, "Computers being open in study hour will help us to research for our homework. Practicing this will really help us when we are in university."

Students with substantial interests in computers think the new computers will help them be prepared for more rigorous university curriculum. LCS Philo (US 12th grade +1) student Jacques Briand Louis said, "For me the new computers are very important be-

cause I wanted to learn computer programming since 2015, but the computers at school were not great for programming because they were too slow. Now I have a better opportunity with the new computers and the new programming curriculum." He also thinks the computer lab will be important to students who will not study technology because various computer skills are important for everyone. For example, he states, "Typing is very important in Haiti and keeping the computers open during study hour will really help students to improve their typing."

The LCS computer lab is an important resource for the school and one that the students really cherish. Providing training in technology could be foundational in rebuilding Haiti, with technology as important as ever in the modern world.

Fr. Robert Randall: A Priest for All Seasons

By Mary Jo LeGrand
(THP Staff)

Fr. Robert Randall, a retired priest of the Diocese of Providence, RI has been a cornerstone of support for THP for over two decades. His introduction to the mission of education in Haiti came via parishioners from THP's founding parish, St. Joseph (Providence) and the Moynihan family members themselves. Fr. Randall recalls meeting two Moynihan families while serving as pastor at St. Sebastian Parish in 1997. He humorously remembers, "I would see Patrick's brother, Brian, more often than Patrick. It seemed like Patrick and his family were always traveling at that time, but I would hear about him. All of a sudden, there was this great, new relationship."

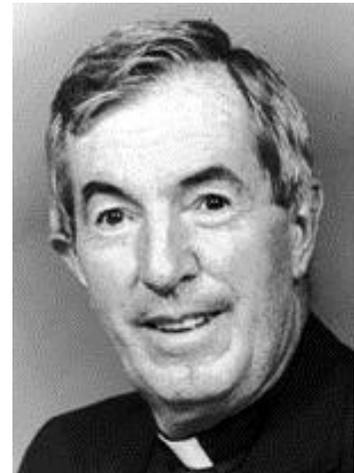
Now, twenty-three years later, Fr. Randall remains a loyal donor and friend of THP. Retired and in his nineties, he is actively living his vocation as priest, spending time at parish communities in both Rhode Island and Florida. He celebrates Mass at least six times a week, spreading his time between three different parishes. He leads a book club for retired professionals and greatly enjoys the chance to connect with people and listen to their stories. Fr. Randall

is light hearted about his age – perhaps a gift he acquired from his father, who lived to be 101. He jokes, "Just about every month I have a part break down. So, I have to plan things in between doctor appointments."

When he has a quiet moment, Fr. Randall composes liturgical music. Earlier on in life, he was blessed to receive four years of music lessons from a friend of his, who was a classically trained musician. Recognizing that this gift of free instruction was meant to be shared, he ventured into the world of music composition and writes and sells his original works to churches.

Fr. Randall is known for his intelligence, creativity, and dedication to his vocation. THP 2nd Associate Director of Parish and School Development Christina Moynihan is grateful to Fr. Randall for his example of being "a priest who truly loves being a priest." She explains, "His love for God and the Church has given him the energy and enthusiasm to be an extraordinary witness. He is amazing."

Likewise, it is Fr. Randall's admiration for the Moynihan family and their personal example of life lived in mission that has solidified his dedication to THP. He has a great amount of respect for both THP President Deacon Patrick



Fr. Robert Randall has supported The Haitian Project for 23 years.

Moynihan and his brother Brian Moynihan, who is one of THP's earliest and strongest advocates. When asked about his longtime dedication, he replies, "The Moynihans are builders. They are great people. I would like to see this project proceed far into the future."

Fr. Randall recently took the time to write down events of his life. In the process, he commented to friends that he is like a "cat with nine lives. If Fr. Randall does indeed have nine lives, THP is grateful that at least one has been spent in friendship with the Moynihan family and THP.

Volunteer Alumni View

By Stacey Collins Ditlevson (Former THP Volunteer)

Ever since I was creating my own classroom in the basement at five years old, I have known that I wanted to be a teacher. My volunteer year at LCS taught me why.

I volunteered at LCS in 2013-2014. I taught *senkyem*, *sizyem* and *sekond* English (US grades 7, 8, and 11), as well as Gym and Technology. After class, I was in charge of the Dance Club and the Italian Language Club.

My favorite job, however, was running the incinerator. Being “in charge” of LCS’s incinerator taught me so much about life. Engineering fires taught me to appreciate and trust the process. Crawling in the incinerator to clean out every little object taught me to value a clean and organized space. Trying to burn buckets of liquid cow guts taught me the virtue of patience.

In my conversations with LCS students, I always marveled at their ability to articulate why Mt. 10:8 is so important. In my home city of Baltimore, just as in Haiti, people feel frustrated by the lack of support our schools and communities receive from our government. When students asked me why I was leaving LCS, I explained that just as they will set out to give back to their own communities in Haiti, I needed to give back to mine. I needed to give to others the quality education that I received for free.



Stacey Ditlevson instructs the Dance Club at LCS during the 2013-2014 school year.

I’ve spent the last four years since my volunteer year teaching middle school English in Baltimore City Public Schools. I currently work in an all-girls charter school that opened three years ago. It has been the most emotionally draining time in my life, especially in helping to start a new school, but I envision that one day a place like LCS will be available to students in Baltimore City. I see a place that teaches young people about appreciating and trusting the process, valuing a clean and organized space, being patient, and giving away what you’ve received for free. I know we have a long way to go, but without my experience at LCS, I wouldn’t know where to start.

LCS Alumni View: Dolph-Froid Payoute

By Brendan Kelly
(THP Volunteer)

If you walk around the campus of Louverture Cleary, you will inevitably run into Dolph-Froid Payoute, clipboard in hand, overseeing students with his characteristic focus. As a Louverturian, Payoute was an exemplary leader. Today, as one of several junior staff members who help LCS operate smoothly, Payoute is responsible for monitoring *Silence Room*, LCS’s equivalent of detention. Payoute is one of Louverture Cleary’s best and brightest alumni: After graduating in 2015, Payoute took the national Baccalaureate exam and scored in the top 10 percent in the country. He then applied and was accepted to Groupe Olivier et Collaborateur, a university in Port-au-Prince, to study civil engineering. He excelled in math and physics while attending Louverture Cleary; three years into his five-year university program, Payoute continues to study these subjects.



Dolph-Froid Payoute (LCS ’15) pauses a moment while preparing LCS students for work hour as part of his role at LCS.

Like his fellow Louverturians, Payoute is passionate about using his education to create solutions for his country. Since he enjoys applying his math skills to engineering and construction, he hopes to improve Haiti’s infrastructure by developing roads and build-

ings for the government after university. Payoute says, “I like to see the before and after change when I complete something. It shows that what I am doing is making an effect. Making an effect, especially with constructing roads is very important in Haiti. Haiti needs roads desperately.”

Payoute has been working as a junior staff member at Louverture Cleary for the past two years and has just recently entered his third year. He loves the opportunity to return to LCS and give back to the school where he learned so much and he appreciates everything that Louverture Cleary and The Haitian Project has done for him. Payoute says that his formation at Louverture Cleary has helped him greatly in college. Payoute attests, “Students at LCS are motivated more than most in the country. Teachers and students motivate each other. In University, you need to already have good work and study habits. I have many new friends and they are struggling because their schools weren’t as motivating as LCS.”

An Easter Message from THP President Deacon Moynihan

Dear THP Community,

Years are no longer numbered discreetly in my mind. Each one seems full enough to be a lifetime, short enough to have gone by in a flash.

I find the seasonality of our Church year contains a similar paradox. One Sunday seems the same as another until it is not — it's Easter.

However, in reality, we live in a continual Easter. The only end to this Easter is our own resurrection which will bring on eternal life with our triune God and the Communion of Saints.

It seems especially easy to have this optimistic view while sitting at Louverture Cleary watching the vivacious sixième students who, now seven months into their first year, have gained a bit of confidence and some discipline, but lost none of their energy. They are, like Easter, a replenishment.

Pax,

Deacon Patrick Moynihan

Planned Giving Corner: *Furthering THP's Mission through Estate Planning*

The act of giving personal property or money to an individual or organization by means of a will or estate plan is called a bequest. For many donors, a bequest is an attractive option because it may help a donor meet their current financial goals while at the same time providing an opportunity for future giving. THP donors who make a bequest are committed to seeing that many more students throughout the country of Haiti receive a Louverture Cleary education. Specifically, bequests given through the **RISE Capital Campaign to the General Endowment of The Haitian Project** ensure the efficient and effective operation of Louverture Cleary School far into the future — an important step to complete before building more schools throughout Haiti.

If you have not yet made estate plans, or, if it has been some time since you reviewed your estate plans, please consider leaving a gift to THP to be used beyond your lifetime. Since we know the need for education never grows old, so too will your bequest always be needed and effective. *The following is a quick explanation of bequests for those making one for the first time.*

Q: Who should make a bequest?

A: Anyone can make a bequest during an estate planning process. It is a way

for people of all income levels to make a positive impact beyond their earthly giving. A bequest does not need to be a large sum of money. Donors who make a bequest to THP understand the importance of Louverture Cleary education for the future of Haiti.

Q: What should I know before making a bequest?

A: There are a few different types of bequests that a donor can discuss with their estate attorney, who can help a donor choose which type of bequest is most in line with his or her goals:

General Bequest — This is a very common type of bequest. Typically it is a dollar amount like \$5,000 or it can also be a **Specific Bequest** of a particular piece of property, real estate, or stock. One advantage is that it is a fixed and known amount for both donor and beneficiary that is not contingent upon anything else. *Example: With gratitude for all that God has given me, I give, devise, and bequeath to The Haitian Project Inc., a Providence, Rhode Island 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, the sum of \$_____ (or description of specific property.)"*

Residuary or Percentage Bequest — This type of bequest gives all or a specific percentage of assets remaining in the estate after debts, taxes, expenses and

other bequests have been paid. An advantage of this type of bequest is that inflation will not reduce its value. *Example: With gratitude for all that God has given me, I give, devise and bequeath to The Haitian Project Inc., a Providence Rhode Island 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, ten percent (10%) of the remainder of my estate after all debts, taxes, expenses and family bequests have been paid.*

Contingent Bequest: This bequest takes effect if those you have remembered in your will are no longer living when you pass away. *Example: If upon the death of the survivor of my spouse and I, or at any time thereafter but prior to complete distribution of my estate, there is no living descendant of mine, any property of my estate not vested or effectively appointed shall be distributed to The Haitian Project, Inc., a Providence Rhode Island 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization."*

Q: Should I contact THP if I am thinking about making a bequest?

A: Yes, letting THP know about your planned giving choices will help THP plan for the future as well. THP staff can also be of assistance in providing additional language to ensure your gift will be used as planned.

Following God's Call

By Rachel Thelen (THP Staff)

When I left Louverture Cleary School in 2014, I didn't know if God would ever open the door for me to return. This fall I received a call from THP President Deacon Moynihan, who offered me a staff position starting in August of 2018. The position would involve returning to LCS and managing a house for Volunteers and junior staff members. I felt a wave of excitement at the prospect.

One of the steps to saying yes was returning to LCS before August to find female Haitian staff who would live in the female community house. That opportunity came in January. Having long wanted to return to LCS, I jumped at the chance to go back.

Arriving at LCS, I was struck by how much the campus had stayed the same. It was still beautiful, with trees growing lush and green, gardens flourishing and all the walkways kept clean – a luxury given the streets we drove through to reach the school – but was also quiet because the students had not yet returned from their weekend spent with their families.

I excitedly greeted the staff members who gave me hugs and kisses

on the cheek. They quickly asked me how my family and I were doing and how long I planned on staying. Even though I only had a few days to spend with them, I told them I was discerning if it was in God's plan for me to return to LCS for a longer period of time.

When the students returned to campus the ones who were too young to know me shyly returned my smile while the students I had taught came up to me to say hello. It was remarkable and heartwarming how each one of them remembered my name; I think it is a testament to the emphasis placed on education in Haiti that my experience with these students had been memorable for them as well as for me.

The expectations for the students at LCS have not changed; students still participate in *Netwayaj* (clean-up) and work hour, teach in *Ekol Ankourajman* (after-school mentoring), and maintain a rigorous academic course load. In fact, the school has even added a class period to each day.

While I was at LCS this time I found myself waiting for directions, such as "go check on the incinerator" or "lets crush these rocks." I also felt strange being there and not teaching. As a Volunteer, we are expected to always be on deck, ready to respond with a willing and joyful "yes" to any task given to us. I



Rachel Thelen works with Rheto student Romain Maurice in January 2018.

realized one of the reasons I didn't need to jump in and start doing something is because the Haitian staff was already leading each task. The Haitian staff has become even more active in their leadership roles and meeting the needs of the school: When I was a Volunteer, I became in charge of work hour, but now this role is filled by a junior staff member. This shows willingness by the staff to be active leaders in their community.

At the same time, the staff was open to the prospect of my future return to LCS and helped me open my heart wider to God's call. Their encouragement, along with the joy that I felt while at LCS, has given me the courage to respond with a confident yes to returning in August.

Student View: Romain Maurice

I am Romain Maurice from Haiti. I live with my family and I am a Louverturnian. I have passed five years at LCS, so I am a *Monitor*. Along with the *Philo Guides*, I lead a special group of students made up of students that have passed less than five years at the school.

I am in Secondary III (Rheto, US Grade 12). In that level, we learn a lot. Among all the subjects that I have, physics is my favorite one. During free time, like play hour, I do a lot of things. The most common thing is to work on academic things and extra important things.

I don't play sports in the free time. I give much more importance to didactic things. As a *Monitor*, as I said before, I have more responsibilities than when I was younger. Being a *Monitor* means having a leadership spirit in every kind of work that has to be done at LCS. Also, taking care of others is an ability that a monitor should have. Working together as a group is very interesting. We can take as an example the clean-up of the school. My group has to clean a special place in the school campus and we all have to work together while having the same idea, which is to make the place beautiful. I, the monitor, and the guides, lead the group to make the place look wonderful. There are not a

lot of challenges in this task, mostly correcting the imperfections of the group, like to make sure that everyone is in attendance, working, and following directions. In general, the monitor's task is an interesting kind of work.

After LCS, I want to study mechanical engineering. This is a subject I love and I think I can do much better by studying mechanical engineering as a major. As every person wants to succeed in life, I also want to do so. I plan to reach success by doing better at every step. I am from Haiti and out of all of my dreams, one of them is to make my country better. As it is one of Louverturnians' goals to rebuild Haiti, I will do so in my way, with the capacity that I have.

Your tax refund can be our future! It's tax season and the majority of U.S. Americans can look forward to a tax refund of \$2,000 or more. Certainly, there are many good uses for the additional cash. But, if you are in a position to do so, consider donating all or a portion of your refund to THP's General Endowment. Doing so quite literally turns this year's refund into the stability that will allow THP to continue its mission for many years to come. Thank you!

Lessons Learned, Lessons Taught

By Angela Mascena
(THP Staff)

Christina Moynihan, veteran teacher and community leader at LCS, has officially returned to The Haitian Project—though many would say that in heart and mind, she never really left. Christina joins THP's United States Office in the role of Second Associate Director of Parish and School Development, where she helps to establish and strengthen THP's relationships with churches and schools across the country.

As part of her new position, Christina gives presentations at parishes and schools to educate people about Haiti, LCS and THP. At the core of her presentation is a pictorial history of the Moynihan's two decade life in the community of Santo 5. No matter the topic, she never fails to transfer her great love for the people of our community—inspiring others to become involved.

THP Associate Director of Parish and School Development Mary Jo LeGrand is delighted to have Christina join the team. She remarked recently, "Christina is a tremendous asset to parish and school development. Her experience of having lived and breathed THP's mission for over 20 years now makes her an exceptionally authentic witness as she speaks to others about the importance of education in Haiti. She is a natural teacher — both in subject matter and, ultimately, in conveying a message of God's unconditional love. After having raised her own children and nurtured the children from the neighborhood of Santo 5, it is quite amazing to think of God bringing her to a time and place where she can reach out to young people in the U.S. Her ability to travel and physically be present to schools and parishes is a huge boost to our ability to grow and sustain the mission."

In addition to her work with parishes and schools in the US, THP was also fortunate to have Christina return to LCS this past January to teach the *Twazyem* (US 10th grade) religion class her Theology of the Body curriculum. Also known as "The Sanctity of Sexuality," the seminar is to educate students about God's intention for their bodies, the basics of their sexual re-



Christina Moynihan teaches her Sanctity of Sexuality course, based on Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body, to LCS' Nouveau Secondaire I (US 10th grade) in January 2018.

productive systems and the consequences of being sexually active.

Christina first started writing lessons for a class about the sanctity of sexuality when she was working at a pregnancy resource center in Rockford, IL over 15 years ago. She recounts that while she was participating in a purity retreat with the young women there, she learned about the social pressures on adolescents to become sexually active, and about the epidemic of sexually transmitted disease that was surging through the younger population. It was then that she made a commitment to teach teens the Truth about their bodies and sexuality.

Since then, Christina has taught the Theology of the Body curriculum to hundreds of students in both the U.S. and in Haiti. It is an integral part of the Catholic education students receive at LCS, and Christina does a phenomenal job educating students about what she calls "a topic that no one likes to talk about." Deacon Moynihan explains, "Belief and personal practice are both exceptionally important in teaching any moral path. Christina is an honest, wise and compassionate Witness. The Class she teaches on human dignity, God's plan and human sexuality helps people make excellent decisions and achieve objectives in their lives in a way that no other part of the education we provide can."

The Haitian Project, Inc.

Corporate Officers

Dcn. Patrick Moynihan, *President*
Colby Bowker, *Vice President*
Marisa (Reese) Grondin, *Vice President & Treasurer*
Adam Osielski, *Secretary*

Board of Directors

Dr. Scott LeGrand, *Chair*
Patrick Brun, *1st Vice Chair*
Smith Vioselin, *2nd Vice Chair*

Marco Barbesta
Alan Bosworth
Betsy Bowman
Jerry Brauneis
Rebecca Fernandes
Aimée Maier
Dcn. Patrick Moynihan
Patricia Newell
Adam Osielski
Dean B. Reineking, Sr.
James E. Reulbach
Brian Rhodes
Scott Thompson

The Haitian Project News is published quarterly. Send editorial correspondence to:

Haitian Project News
P.O. Box 6891
Providence RI 02940

Editor-in-Chief: Dcn. Patrick Moynihan
Managing Editor: Tara Kingsley
Production Manager: Amanda Haluga
Layout: Drew Williams

Phone: (401) 351-3624
Email: operations@haitianproject.org
www.haitianproject.org
[@THPSpeaks](https://www.facebook.com/THPSpeaks)

Support to THP, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, means helping more than 350 students (who are dedicated to serving their country) receive a top-notch Catholic, tuition-free education. Visit our website or make checks out to The Haitian Project to donate.

HPN printed by Minuteman Press



Snap this QR Code®
To learn more about
The Haitian Project, Inc.