



# Haitian Project News

The Louverture Cleary Schools Network, Transforming Haiti through Education

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## Update on the Security Situation in Haiti

by Colby Bowker (THP Vice President and Chief Communications Officer)

Many people are aware of the acute challenges facing Haiti, especially the insecurity that has rapidly increased since the assassination of the country's president in July.

Amidst this unfortunate reality, The Haitian Project's and Louverture Cleary School's priorities are ensuring the safety of our community, supporting our students, staff and faculty in every way possible, and making sure that our mission can continue and expand beyond the current crisis.

We are especially grateful for the relationship that has been built with the surrounding neighborhood over the years, and to the dedication and skill of the local leadership team. Both have been invaluable in navigating the current challenges.

Still, the security situation in Haiti is

*(continued on page 6)*

## The Strength of a Good Foundation

by Jimi Grondin (THP Director of New School Construction)

Louverturians are the foundation of the ultimate success of THP's mission, but as new schools are built to create the Louverture Cleary Schools Network, Louverturians may also be the ones laying the literal foundations for a national system of schools that will ultimately graduate 600 servant-leaders each year, ready to change Haiti.

At the core of the successful construction of the LCS Network is the right partner who understands and shares The Haitian Project's vision for Haiti's future. For THP, that ally is T & C Consortium S.A., a Haitian construction company born out of a collaboration between THP's partner foundation in Haiti, Fondation Haitian Project (FHP), and Technique et Construction S.A. (T & C), a third-generation general contracting firm in Haiti.

Under the auspices of T & C, the Con-



Gilbert Hippolyte, principal, Technique & Construction S.A.

sortium is intended to grow along with the Network, specifically recruiting LCS graduates who go on to study engineering, architecture, accounting and

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## THP Highlights

**Portland Presentation:** This fall, thanks to Portland, OR area board member Dave Albertine and his pastor at The Madeleine Parish, Fr. Mike Biewend, THP had the opportunity to give a presentation to a virtual meeting of priests from the Archdiocese of Portland. The focus of the discussion was the LCS Network plan and how more parishes, schools and parishioners in the diocese can get involved through direct support, prayer, volunteering and more. As the Network expands in Haiti, the hope is to expand THP's U.S. community to include more parishes in Portland (and everywhere!) so that, *together*, we can help transform Haiti through Catholic education.

**Guidelines for Training:** The well-being and protection of everyone in the LCS community is a top priority for THP. As a Catholic community, THP has a thorough Safe Environment Policy, which articulates clear guidelines for staff and students and requires regular trainings. Reflecting on the purpose of this policy while facilitating training for LCS staff, THP Chief Program Officer Aimée Maier noted, "An LCS education is not simply an academic education, but one that forms future leaders who recognize and are committed to appropriate boundaries, conduct, and relationships that are based on the common good, respect, and transparency."

**We Did It!** THP's *Back to School* online social fundraising campaign was a success, surpassing its goal of 150 donations and raising over \$17,000! Many thanks to everyone who donated, created online fundraisers for the campaign, and shared THP's mission with their friends and family to raise support for Louverture Cleary students, as well as for earthquake relief for our neighbors in southwestern Haiti. (THP donated 20 percent of the proceeds from the campaign to our partner Chibly Cardinal Langlois of the Diocese of Les Cayes—near the epicenter of the earthquake—to use for earthquake relief and recovery.)

### A Good Foundation

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management. Those who join will be offered ownership until the company is eventually fully managed by LCS graduates.

The Consortium is backed by the best. T & C has a long history of building to exacting standards for international-level contracts, including dozens of schools. T & C Principal Gilbert Hippolyte affirms they have “built [their] reputation on strong engineering”. That engineering always begins with solid foundations; nothing stands for long without a strong base.

The earthquakes that occurred in 2010 and this past August in Haiti put a spotlight on construction techniques and building engineering. T & C is one of the few firms in the country with the capacity to adhere to international construction standards. No stone is placed, block laid, nor concrete poured without having the plans run against their stringent engineering specifications.

Once a design is completed, Gilbert is fastidious about choosing high-quality raw materials. T & C produces its own concrete using clean river sand, gravel, and structural cement. Samples from each

pour are sent to a lab for analysis to verify proper strength. In addition, concrete is reinforced with grade 60 rebar as opposed to the more common, weaker grade 40.

According to Patrick B., head of FHP, one major change stemming from the 2010 earthquake is that soil analyses are now required. Holes are dug across a work site to visually identify soil types, then core samples are sent to a lab for chemical analysis. These findings are the basis for the foundations. When plugged into the calculation for building loads, the engineers are able to determine the appropriate size and depth of footings and foundation walls. The soil analysis process at the Plateau Central site was completed in August.

Those familiar with Haiti know that state-level institutions are quite limited or non-existent, therefore enforcement of building codes is often lax. In T & C, THP has found a strong partner devoted to building strong, durable structures. All plans require approval by the engineering team as appropriate to design. All materials and practices are of the highest quality, ensuring that the foundation of the Model Campus will fully support a campus as safe as it is impressive.

Furthermore, the Consortium is poised to train the next generation of engineers and construction managers. As the LCS Network grows, additional people will be needed to manage and execute future school projects, actively combatting the “brain drain” that often occurs in Haiti.

As Gilbert explains, “Haiti exports people. These people send money home so that families can buy imported goods. The money then ends up going back to where it originated—the U.S.” He further explains that what the LCS Network is doing is building “wealth in the community”.

At the end of the day, THP’s work with the Consortium and T & C is about building more than just buildings. It is about building a brighter future for Haiti. Together.

*LCS 2/Model Campus construction update: To date, a perimeter wall has been erected around the entire 9.5-acre site and the foundations are in place for the two residences which will eventually house THP Missionaries and LCS residential staff. Visit [HaitianProject.org](http://HaitianProject.org) to keep up-to-date on construction news.*

### Come, Let us Adore Him: An Advent Reflection

by Mary Jo LeGrand (THP Volunteer '00-'01)

Come to where my Spirit came upon my mother and yours. Come, meet your mother in the little house of Nazareth. In the womb she gave me, my heart beats for you. Come away with me to this quiet place and stay with us for a while. There is room for you in the stillness. You, too, will be filled with good things and not sent away empty; for my mercy is from age to age.

*Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Make your journey to Bethlehem, the House of Bread. In the manger they gave me, I wait for you. For whom do you labor and what has taken from you your rest? Lay down your burdens as gifts to me. Give me your gold—your status, your title, your very well-formed perspective, your platform, and your problems. I will be your king. Give me your frankincense—all that you love so dearly, for I love them too, and I know that they are very good. I will be your God. Give me your myrrh—your sin, your shame, and all that you fear. Give it all to me and I will give you life. Here, in this place*

where animals live, take me as your king, your God, and your savior. *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

Come to Jerusalem. Follow me. Be my disciple. Meet me at the cross they gave me. Walk with me to the tomb they prepared for me. It will not hold us, you or me. *Do not be afraid. The tomb is not our home.*

*All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come, receive grain and eat; come without paying and without cost. Come to me, abide in me. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart. Like a womb receives a child, receive me. Like a bride receives her groom, receive me. At the altar, receive me. I am the baby, the Son, and the Lamb. Come to the womb, the manger, the cross. Come, come to the feast! It has all been prepared for you. Eat, and be satisfied. Come, let us adore Him!*



## THP Welcomes Its First Chief Program Officer

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

For over thirty years, The Haitian Project and Louverture Cleary School have grown to meet the evolving needs of its students and inspire change in Haiti. From the physical growth of the first school, to becoming an Association of the Lay Faithful, to embarking on the LCS Network plan, THP has succeeded in large part because of the clarity of its mission and the strength of its Charism. These elements formed the foundation of THP's and LCS's past achievements, and they will be critical for the LCS Network's future success.

To make certain students and staff at each Network school have the same opportunity to partake in the transformative power of the Project's mission, THP has created a new role: Chief Program Officer (CPO). The CPO will oversee THP's program activity, including Charism, the Missionary program, and the compliance of programs administered by THP's partner foundations in Haiti. THP is excited that board member and Volunteer alumna Aimée Maier (THP Volunteer '98-'99) will be its first CPO.

Aimée has been an integral part of THP's success over the past twenty years. She first discovered THP and LCS through an ad THP President Emeritus Deacon Patrick Moynihan placed in the *Peace Corps Hotline*. After volunteering with the Peace Corps in the Caribbean, she wanted to continue to serve and was immediately drawn to the Project's

belief in education as a game changer. Most importantly, though, Aimée "felt a very strong pull to be part of this community bound by faith." And that hold is still strong.

"Not only does Aimée have a deep, first-hand understanding of our core values and mission, she also has a tremendous amount of valuable professional experience to contribute from her position as director at the Rescue Mission of Trenton," said THP President Reese Grondin. "She completes a team that is ready to do big things."

Aimée's connection with THP's mission and Charism is perfect for her new role, as she will ensure that the Project's new initiatives align with both. She is quick to point out that, although the Project is entering an exciting new phase, the core of THP's mission remains the same. "On one hand, THP and LCS continue to do what they have always done: educate and form young men and women who are committed to giving back what they have received for free, to be leaders for Haiti. This is a constant." She also stresses that, on the other hand, "operations and processes have become increasingly sophisticated... it is critical that the Project has the necessary staff in place in the U.S. and Haiti, with the accompanying systems, processes and methods of evaluation to secure success."

Growth is exciting, and it can be easy to miss the institutional infrastructure needed to ensure that it comes to fruition. Aimée will monitor and maintain those critical components of the Network's infrastructure. "Having a



THP Chief Program Officer Aimée Maier

member of the team who is specifically tasked with supporting consistency in processes at future schools is incredibly important," she said. "These processes demonstrate the mission and Charism in practice—from how we admit and form students, to how we embody the Charism through service and community life. Ensuring these practices at future schools protects the perpetuity of the mission and Charism."

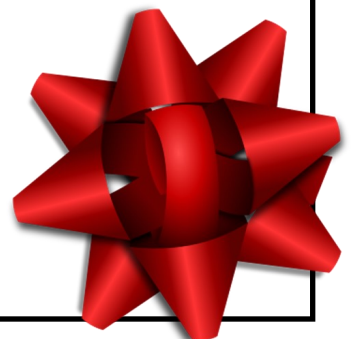
As THP kick-starts this new journey, the Project benefits immensely from having such an experienced and dedicated community member join its staff. For Aimée, her role is much more than a new job. "In a way, joining THP's administration is akin to 'coming home,'" she said.

"Even though I've been involved for quite some time, it is really exciting to be able to serve in this new capacity and consider the future with a network of schools." The entire THP community will benefit from Aimée's excitement, focus and commitment to the Project's Charism and mission!

### Did you know there are many ways to support The Haitian Project this holiday season?

- Give the **Gift of Education** in honor of a loved one and THP will send a holiday card
- **Donate online** at [HaitianProject.org](http://HaitianProject.org) where it is easy (and very helpful) to set up a **recurring donation**
- Make a legacy contribution through **Planned Giving**
- Participate in your employer's **Corporate Matching Gifts Program**
- Give the gift of **Stock** or **Mutual Funds**
- Donate **Retirement Assets**, including IRAs, 401(k)s and 403(b)s
- Shop and give through **AmazonSmile**
- **Donations can also be mailed** to The Haitian Project at PO Box 6891, Providence, RI 02940

Contact [development@haitianproject.org](mailto:development@haitianproject.org) or visit [www.haitianproject.org](http://www.haitianproject.org) for more info!



### LCS Student Views

#### Sadrac E., *Katryèm* student (U.S. 9th grade)

My name is Sadrac and I am 14 years old. I am in *Katryèm* (U.S. 9th grade). I am from a family of six people: my mother, my father, my three brothers, and me.

For me, the education at LCS is even more than what people think. LCS, by having good teachers to teach me, has helped me to be inclusive, to have a better relationship with others, and to be engaged in my country's future. My favorite thing about LCS is the fact that we are learning and practicing four languages (Kreyòl, French, English, and Spanish) every week.

I have a favorite class and it is English class. I really like English, I really enjoy speaking it. I also enjoy some other activities, like the soccer tournament and the *Génie* ("genius") competition where I am compiling knowledge.

This year, I am involved in the Language Program. I am helping the new students in *Sizyèm* (U.S. 7th grade) and *Senkyèm* (U.S. 8th grade) to practice languages at school. This year, as I am in 9th grade, it means I will have to undergo the state exam, and my goal is to succeed with brilliance.

For the future, I would like to be a good doctor and I will work hard for this. My hope is to have a better country

where there will be security, where students will be free to go to school, to eat, to live decently. It's not only a hope, but it's a goal for me because my LCS education is preparing me for this, to rebuild my lovely Haiti.



Louverture Cleary *Katryèm* (U.S. 9th grade) student Sadrac E., left, and *Senkyèm* (U.S. 8th grade) student Edeline C., right.

#### Edeline C., *Senkyèm* student (U.S. 8th grade)

My name is Edeline, I am thirteen years old, and I am a *Senkyèm* (U.S. 8th grade) student. This is my first year at LCS. I have a really large family with five siblings, but I am living with my father, my stepmother, and my little brother.

An LCS education is not just about school knowledge, but it is a whole package. It helps you adapt to any community. When you enter LCS, you become this new whole person. You think not just for yourself but for millions of other people out there. You try to live a moral life and learn to give without waiting for anything

in return. An LCS education is a life-changing opportunity.

My favorite things about LCS are the life at LCS, the love that we share together, and how every student or member of this community cares for each other. It makes us a family. We have that bond that no one can break.

My favorite class is physics class. I have always been attracted to this class and I always understand it. I am part of the girls' soccer club and an English book club at LCS. I want to succeed this year with an excellent average and keep on doing the same for years to come.

I want to be an accountant in the future. It has always been a dream that I have cherished my whole life.

## Another One Hundred Percent Year at LCS

After Louverture Cleary School has continued the tradition of excellence it is known for in Haiti with another 100 percent pass rate for the *Katryèm* (U.S. 9th grade) and *Philo* (U.S. 12th grade + 1) state exams—a particularly great achievement during this period of ongoing difficulty in Haiti.

These exams are necessary for *Katryèm* students to move on to the *Secondaire* (high school level) curriculum, and for *Philo* to be eligible for university acceptance.

Stéphanie B., executive director of Fondation Haitian Project, The Haitian Project's partner foundation in Haiti, stated, "This is absolutely remarkable, and we could not be more proud of the students and staff for successfully ending the year and for being able to rise above all the difficulties that

stood in the way."

"The students and staff faced a rotating schedule last year due to COVID-19," Stéphanie continued. "COVID, along with political turmoil and rampant insecurity have had a negative impact overall in Haiti but even more so on education. I am amazed to continue to see the impact of the LCS model, which provides a safe learning environment that allows students to stay focused on their studies. This is one of the biggest strengths of our school, and it makes all the difference. Year after year, LCS students remain a force, and we look forward to seeing the impact the graduates will have in the country and their communities."

## LCS Leadership Series: LCS Director of Operations

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

*The Haitian Project is proud to introduce some of the amazing Haitian faculty and staff who work every day to ensure that Louverture Cleary School is one of the very best secondary education programs in Haiti. The second in this series features LCS Director of Operations Esther P. (LCS '02).*

Esther's family learned about LCS when a neighbor who had been in one of the school's first classes inspired them to apply. Esther's older sister and younger brother enrolled, and she entered LCS as a *Rhétò* (U.S. 12th grade) student in 2000, graduating in 2002.

After receiving a degree in accounting at university in 2006, Esther joined the accounting staff at LCS in September 2007. Her responsibilities grew until she became the director of operations, the position she holds today.

***HPN: How did your LCS education prepare you for your current leadership role at LCS?***

EP: LCS taught me integrity, to do what is right; accountability, to be responsible for my community; and empathy, to focus on developing others. Those values prepared me for my current leadership at LCS.

In general, Haitians believe in education—you see that when diaspora send money to their families in Haiti, the families use it for food and to send their children to school. At LCS, we teach the students all the normal subjects, but we also teach them to care about others. We give the students an education that says the priority is not just you personally, the priority is the people around you. This education is about loving your neighbor and helping those who are less fortunate.

It is also an experience that reveals how important education is. Take me, for example. I come from a very poor family but now, because of my education, I can take care of my mother and my nieces and nephews. An LCS



Louverture Cleary School Director of Operations Esther P.

education is all about that—using one's education to help others.

***HPN: What is the most important thing you believe LCS does to encourage leadership skills in its female students, and why?***

EP: Having women in leadership positions provides a good example for our students and for all women. It is not about “man” or “woman,” it is about education and how it makes a difference in everyone's life. It was my mother who, though she did not go to school, always believed in education. She always said, “My children have to go to school so that they don't have to have the same hard life that I've had.”

All students at LCS, boys or girls, receive the same quality of education. This gives them self-confidence and makes them believe it is not about male or female, but about a human being who can achieve whatever he or she wants with a good education.

***HPN: What role do you believe LCS and the LCS Network have to play in Haiti's future, especially given recent events?***

EP: Continuing [the mission of LCS in Haiti]

produces better leaders through education. We will have ten times the graduates who are prepared to be productive, patriotic Haitian citizens and who will be examples in their families, neighborhoods, churches. Everywhere they go, they will share what they learned at LCS and spread the good work we do here. Even just one person like me can have an impact on 100 or 200 people, and now we will have 3,600 people spreading the influence of LCS to 100 people, 200 people, and so on.

The biggest impact will be producing good leaders for Haiti. At LCS, we have our own leadership program where the older students learn to lead small groups of fellow students. Each student in the *Philo* (U.S. 12th grade +1) and *Rhétò* classes is responsible for a group of younger students in the dorms. The student leaders also supervise groups during Work Hour and in the cafeteria. The training of the student leaders starts in their first year. After leaving LCS, graduates can use the same methods to lead larger groups of people. That is what Haiti needs to stand up.

# The Power of Louverture Cleary School

by Angela Mascena (THP Director of Institutional Advancement)

What are the essential elements that keep Louverture Cleary School running at its best? Surely among them are the faculty, staff and administration, student leaders and junior staff, and of course, support from The Haitian Project community. What might not come to mind but is integral to almost everything that happens at LCS is the solar-powered energy system.

Not all schools in Haiti have access to consistent electricity. Solar was first installed at LCS in 2005 because power from the Haitian electric grid is unreliable and 24-hour use of generators was deemed both environmentally and financially unsustainable. The current fuel shortage and disruption to the supply chain in Haiti has made solar energy even more vital.

The LCS solar energy system provides electricity to all major buildings on campus and, crucially, also powers the school's well pumps, which supply clean water to the campus as well as to families in the school's neighborhood. This is why when long-time THP community member Kent Gilges and the Rotary Club of Canandaigua, NY heard that essential upgrades needed to be made to the system, they stepped in to help. As part of their senior capstone project, two talented students from McQuaid Jesuit Preparatory School in Rochester, NY helped Kent develop a presentation and raise funds from individuals, businesses and Rotary clubs in their district.

The group produced two grants totaling over \$25,000, which supported the purchase of new inverters that help power the school's well pumps and new batteries for the part of the system that supplies power to vital areas including the cafeteria, chapel, library and dormitories. The equipment was sourced from a local Haitian company, ECentral, which was founded by LCS alumnus Salomon A. (LCS '98) and installed with the help of then LCS Facilities Manager Odson F. Now, this section can store multiple days' worth of backup electricity to ensure that even during the rainy season, storms and peri-

ods of cloudy weather, electricity is available 24/7 without diesel generators.

Thanking those who contributed to the project, Kent said, "Haiti has been in the news recently for a series of calamities; however, within dark places, a few small lights working together can light the dark place. Our project to help LCS develop a solar electric system with sufficient back-up storage and to help ensure clean, running water is available for the school and the community around it, is one of those small lights."

This upgrade supported by the Canandaigua Rotary Club is a tremendous benefit to LCS's environment and quality of life. THP looks forward to collaborating with more community members in 2022 to upgrade the remaining parts of the system—and to installing solar at the future schools of the LCS Network!

*If you or someone you know might be interested in supporting solar at LCS, please contact [development@haitianproject.org](mailto:development@haitianproject.org).*

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## Security Situation

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extremely concerning. The quality of life has deteriorated for everyone as, aside from the uncertainty and violence, gangs have disrupted the supply of gasoline, aid, and other essentials.

The Haitian Project does not currently have any U.S. staff or Missionary Volunteers based in Haiti due to the increased risk it would pose to our community at LCS, as well as to themselves.

Every possible precaution is being taken to ensure the safety of faculty, students and staff, and THP is monitoring the situation constantly. We will continue to do all we can to ensure LCS can provide stability to our students, faculty and staff now and into the future. Please pray for everyone's continued safety and for relief to come soon to all of Haiti.

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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

[www.haitianproject.org](http://www.haitianproject.org), Venmo at @TheHaitianProject, or mail checks payable to The Haitian Project.

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