

Haitian Project News

Celebrating 31 years of Louverture Cleary School!

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

Better Together

By Rachel Thelen (THP In-Country Volunteer Program Co-Manager)

Better together. That is what the Louverture Cleary School Santo 5 (LCS) *Philo* (US 12th grade + 1) class responds when asked what their class name "Synergy" means to them. It signifies their desire to be unified. It reflects their deep sense of community within their grade and their school. It also represents the responsibility they feel to take an active role in improving their society.

As stated by *Philo* student Sainvilus Yan-Rush, "We think if everyone was doing their job in society, we would see better days. It is what we want to show with the theme of Synergy. I respect you and you respect me. We work for the good of others in our society and community. That's the way it should have been in Haiti, and it is what we want."

Philo students have proven they know how to live and work with others



(From left) THP President Deacon Patrick Moynihan, THP Vice Chair Patrick Brun, LCS Director of Operations Esther Paul, and LCS General Director Ernst Viel present a diploma to a member of the school's 24th graduating class.

even when it is difficult. They have also learned how to treat others with the respect and dignity they deserve. The formation they have received at LCS has taught them how to share their light with others and help them to have an

equally brighter future.

The soon-to-be graduates have many bright plans for the future, including attending university, working with other Louvertureans to improve the systems in their country, and giving

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HIGHLIGHTS

Part of an Amazing World THP was featured in *Ever Widening Circles*, an up-and-coming media company intent on featuring insights and innovations that prove we still live in an amazing world. Founder and CEO of EWC Dr. Lynda Ulrich authored the article, asking "What if the concept that could change the way we all look at solving the world's most vexing problems is coming out of a nation facing the large brunt of them?"—referring to Louverture Cleary School, of course! The article detailing the possibilities and hope that LCS offers is available to read at www.haitianproject.org. As EWC says, there is a lot to be excited about!

Making Moves On and Off the Field Jeff Benoit (LCS '14), IT Director and Soccer Coach at LCS, made his first trip to the US this June for THP's Annual Meeting. During his visit, he attended THP's board meeting and retreat where he connected with the current Board of Directors, staff and administration about LCS' technology needs, alumni relations, and other topics. Not to mention, he was also able to exercise his soccer skills on a full-sized field! Benoit's visit was a great opportunity to inspire both fellowship and focus as THP looks to him as a key player in building The LCS Network.

Fantastic Number Four! This past April, St. Bernard's Catholic Church in North Kingstown, RI held their 4th Annual Garage Sale with proceeds benefiting THP as well as the parish. Throughout the three-day sale, shoppers found good deals on a variety of items, from children's toys and silly hats to exercise equipment—all while supporting a great cause. Thanks to the leadership and time given by the Overly family and many other loyal THP volunteers, the successful event raised over \$2,500. THP is thankful to St. Bernard's and excited to see the Garage Sale continue to bring more people into the THP community.

Better Together

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back to their communities. Ernst Viel, General Director of LCS, spoke highly of this *Philo* class saying, "This is a good class with exceptional students who are motivated to fulfill their responsibilities at school and in the future. They are very engaged in society and will work hard to improve education in Haiti."

Similarly, LCS Principal Marjorie Mombrun shared, "This class is unique. They are dynamic and responsible. In two words, I can say that they are great leaders. Everyday they are working hard for a better school and to be good examples for the younger students."

"Haiti needs a new story. The next generation needs a new way of living, a new education, and a better future. This responsibility is on us and everyone is waiting for us to do something. It cannot stay like it is."

—Sainvilus Yan-Rush ('18)

working hard to provide a high level of education. I will always be proud of LCS and keep all the principles I have been taught in my life, because they are precious. LCS has taught me how to live in community as brothers and sisters, to love each other, to work hard and be honest and respectful."

The past seven years at LCS has taught the *Philo* class the importance of working together to provide for the needs of others. By acting together as one, they can see that they are more effective and will be better equipped to find positive solutions for the problems Haiti faces.

Sainvilus Yan-Rush continues, "Haiti needs a new story. The next generation needs a new way of living, a new education, and a better future. This responsibility is on us and everyone is waiting for us to do something. It cannot stay like it is. Synergy is not only a word nor a goal, but a new way to see things, a new perspective, a new way of acting to have a better society based on social justice, peace and integrity."

Indeed, working together as a community to improve families, communities, and a nation proves that we are, as the *Philo* students say, "better together."

"I know how different LCS is from other schools," shares *Philo* student Edna Cajuste, speaking of her experience living at LCS. "At LCS we take care of our environment and everyone is



Daelle Edmond (right) sits with fellow Junior Staff member Marly Morland (left) and THP In-Country Volunteer Program Co-Manager Rachel Thelen (middle) at St. Clare House at Louverture Cleary School Santo 5.

Daelle's Journey Home

By THP Staff

Yolene Edmond and THP Director of Community Development Christina Moynihan did not speak the same verbal language, but they both shared the language of motherhood. Yolene had been a cook at Louverture Cleary School Santo 5 (LCS) for four years before Christina moved there with THP President Deacon Patrick Moynihan and their family. She showed Christina photos of her son, Fedner, and daughter, Daelle, and an exchange of smiles and gifts continued for a long while.

Upon returning from a summer trip, Christina was told to "come quickly" to the Edmond home because of her friend's health. Unfortunately, she was soon to see the premature death of Yolene and her unborn child. THP allotted community outreach funding to help with funeral expenses and the education of the Edmond children.

Years later, the Moynihans heard of Daelle's placement with the Salesian Sisters and a happy reunion ensued. The LCS community continued supporting her until the delightful day when Christina opened the door to a bright, smiling face—Daelle was now a teenager. "I have finished my elementary education and want to come to LCS," she stated. Since that

day, she has been an incredible asset to the LCS campus.

Daelle recently finished her university degree in Educational Sciences from Quisqueya University and is now the Liaison for Community Outreach at LCS, being responsible for the administration of *Koukouy Sen Kle* (The Fireflies of St. Clare Developmental Center) and *Ekol Ankourajman* (the after-school literacy program).

"The LCS community and the Moynihans mean a lot to me," Daelle shared. "After my parents' death, I faced a lot of difficulties and the Moynihans helped me a lot. One of the most important things that helped me was education. It's etched in my mind. I've learned in my high school that: 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world' (Nelson Mandela)."

Daelle continued, "After high school, I wanted to go to a state university, but our system is very complicated. For a private university you must be a middle-class person or have a scholarship to be able to afford it. I liked university (Quisqueya) just because it is one of the best in Haiti. Going to that school was a great opportunity for me as a poor person. I did not expect that going to that university would mean so much to me. I learned maturity, leadership, and moral values from LCS community. The Moynihans are more than friends, they are my family."

Volunteer Alum View: Tommy Cody

by HPN Staff

The Haitian Project (THP) Volunteer Alum Tommy Cody ('13-'14) knew he wanted to volunteer after graduating from Providence College but struggled to find a program with a strong charisma and authentic mission. Still searching a month before graduation, Cody attended a presentation by THP President Deacon Patrick Moynihan at Providence College about THP and Louverture Cleary School Santo 5 (LCS). Listening to Deacon Moynihan discuss THP's charism and mission was a breath of fresh air. The mission was clear and the charisma formed a strong foundation for community life. He immediately heard the call and applied to become a Volunteer.

At LCS, Cody put his English degree to the test, teaching *Twazium* (US 9th grade) English as well as religion,

computers, and sport class. Outside of the classroom, he shared his love of literature with students by proctoring an extracurricular book club. He also participated in Work Hour, and, of course, played basketball with his fellow Volunteers. Deacon Moynihan remembers, "Tom Cody not only has an amazing wingspan, he grasped the complexity of Haiti very early on in his Volunteer year. He is an excellent shooting guard and small forward as well."

As a Volunteer at LCS, Cody began writing alumni stories for THP's website and newsletter, something he continues to do today for THP and at his current job working in admissions and marketing at a Catholic elementary school outside of Boston. "I love bringing THP's mission to life for the community back in the U.S. through the stories of LCS alumni, community members, and staff," he remarked.

For Cody, THP's charism remains a guiding light and internal compass. "I always try to keep in mind what was



At right, Tommy Cody (THP Volunteer '13-'14) assists in building a walkway at LCS Santo 5.

instilled in us as Volunteers, that work is both internally and externally transformative and that my work, whether it be teaching or writing, must be done first and foremost for the benefit of others."

LCS Alumni Spotlight: Jesula Tintin

By Amanda Haluga (THP Volunteer '14-'16)

Since her time as a Louverture Cleary School Santo 5 (LCS) student, Jesula Tintin (LCS '07) appreciated what set her school apart from others. "My favorite thing about LCS was living together in community as a family," Tintin remembers. "It taught me how to give for free what I received for free." Embracing LCS' student-chosen motto of Matthew 10:8, she chose to spend her time giving back, tutoring the children from the Santo 5 community in the after-school literacy program that is now known as *Ekol Ankourajman* (School of Encouragement).

Tintin graduated from LCS in 2007 and received a university degree in Management. Thanks to the Office of External Affairs (OEA), she had the opportunity to meet Maulik Radia, the general manager of Plastech Solutions. Plastech is a Haitian company that manufactures plastic products. Due to her work ethic and robust sense of



During a November 2018 visit to Plastech Solutions, members of THP Staff and SEAT met Jesula Tintin (LCS '07), including her former English teacher, SEAT member and Volunteer Alum Jimi Grondin (THP Volunteer '01-'02).

environmental stewardship, which she learned at LCS, Tintin was hired nearly on the spot.

A decade later, Tintin is still employed by Plastech. "The company is an enterprise with a strong focus of quali-

ty goods in plastics. We continuously adopt the latest plastic innovations and technologies," Tintin explains. "Since the day I was selected, I have been doing my best to work as part of the team and to help the company reach its goals."

Recently, the Site Evaluation and Advisory Team (SEAT) visited Plastech Solutions. SEAT Member and Volunteer Alum Jimi Grondin (Volunteer '01-'02) ran into his former student, Tintin. Grondin recalls, "Encountering Jesula at Plastech was proof positive that *Education Works*. Jesula was a bright *Katryem* (US 9th grade) student when I taught her English class. It was a joy to see her at work using the skills LCS refined in her. Having the members of SEAT present to see firsthand the success of an LCS education provided even more motivation to build the Network."

As she reflects on her goals and impact, it is clear that Tintin is driven by LCS' mission of creating a brighter future for her country. "I hope that I can make a difference in Haiti. In a country where many women are mistreated, I especially want to help girls and women be strong."

My Reflection

By Ivan Vukusic (THP IT Coordinator)

While working at The Haitian Project, I learned that the word for chaos in Kreyòl is *dezòd*. I can't deny that was what I felt when I first arrived in Haiti, but many people share this feeling when they experience something new. I tried not to have any expectations when I went to visit Louverture Cleary School Santo 5 (LCS) in May, but if I did, they would have been surpassed.

I visited LCS to review the curriculum of the computer science courses and to inspect the reliability of the school's internet infrastructure. When I observed classes, it impressed me that the students were at the same level that I was when I was studying computer science at their age. As for the school's internet infrastructure, it was up to par. The only issues that arose came from the local internet provider, which is still expanding to meet the needs of a developing Haiti. There were some hiccups in service, but this was more of a nuisance than a barrier. I'm glad to report that even those issues

will be fixed in the upcoming months.

Besides the office work, I was able to participate in all other kinds of activities! I helped a class find literary themes within the play *Twelve Angry Men*, played basketball with students, taught them some English idioms, and spent a lot of time explaining how to pro-



Ivan Vukusic (left) draws with a Philo student after school, creating posters for the Scholastic Bowl.

nounce my Croatian last name (Vukusic).

There was never a dull moment. Walking through the school, I would hear the music students playing on their recorders, and I was always greeted by a radiant smile from students, staff, or the

neighbors that I saw on my walks back to St. Francis House where I stayed.

I learned some Krèyol as well! One of the staff members would jokingly call me *fèb*, which means weak, as I sweated puddles doing *Netwayaj* (clean-up). I would shout at him *ale* (go) if he was ever behind me as we carted our wheelbarrows of gravel to the construction site of the new Science Building.

I could go on and on about my experiences while in Haiti. In some ways it was *dezòd* but turned up-side down. There is a great deal of important work being done every single day.

Many would say that Haiti is not perfect and that much work needs to be done. Well, few things are perfect, and nothing worth doing is ever easy. The people I met in Haiti are strong in spirit and make the job easier. They are moving mountains every day, piece by piece. The harmony I saw at LCS gave me faith and

hope, and I hope that our US Staff is able to communicate that sentiment to THP supporters back home. I am nothing less than grateful and humbled by the things I witnessed and for the friends I made while in Haiti.

THP Participating in Propagation of the Faith in RI

The Haitian Project (THP) received a very exciting invitation last year which is coming into fruition this summer. Every year, each parish in the Diocese of Providence invites a mission to speak to its community. This initiative is driven by the Pontifical Mission Society of the Propagation of the Faith (POF), which promotes a universal missionary spirit of prayer and sacrifice among Catholics and supports the work of missionaries within the Church.

The Diocese invited THP to be on its list of designated missions from which parishes can choose—a tremendous opportunity for presence and support in parishes. The first of four POF events in which THP will participate took place on the weekend of June 1st & 2nd at St. Ann's Church in Providence, RI. Below are the upcoming dates and parishes where THP President Deacon Moynihan will preach and THP Community will be present to bear witness to authentic Catholic mission work. *Please join us!*

June 29th & 30th

Blessed Sacrament Parish

239 Regent Avenue

Providence, RI

Saturday Vigil: 4:00 pm

Sunday: 8:30 am, 10:30 am

July 13th & 14th

St. Francis of Assisi Parish

114 High Street

Wakefield, RI

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 pm

Sunday: 8:00 am, 10:00 am,
12:00 noon

July 20th & 21st

St. Raymond Parish

1240 North Main Street

Providence, RI

Saturday Vigil: 4:00 pm

Sunday: 8:00 am, 10:00 am

PHILO STUDENT VIEWPOINTS

Mike Thompson Louis

I am from Shada and I am living with my mom, dad and brother. I heard about LCS from my father. He talked to me about it since I was eight years old. I thought the school was a paradise and everything was easy, but I realized that stuff was harder than I thought. When I came here for my first day, looking at the office, the buildings, I was a little bit surprised and happy to be here.

I am the *Super Guide*, the lead *Philo* (US 12th grade + 1) student of my class. Something that challenges me as the *Super Guide* is to always see everything that is going on wrong and try to be the first to see it. To change it. It's not easy because I don't have my eyes everywhere. If the job is not well done, then I am the one who is responsible. My favorite thing about my class is how we do everything together. We are better together.

My favorite subjects at LCS are philosophy and religion because they have common points. In religion, I like to hear about Fr. Knight's story, especially when he was in Africa. I like philosophy because of the brainstorming and logic. Philosophy helps you be freer, more relatable. It helps you understand everything and gives you an insight into many things.

After graduating, I plan to study law, to be a famous lawyer. After studying law, I want to study politics. And I want to know a little bit about business. Not for a specific reason but just to know it.

Education really means a lot at school. It means a lot for everyone here. With education you will see change, you will see development, and you will see good generations after. We see a better life. We are the generation to change Haiti, in a good way.

Kerly Jennifer Milien

My name is Kerly Jennifer Milien. I am from Village Renaissance and I am in *Philo*.

At LCS, I did not enter right at *Sizyem* (US 7th grade) but in *Twasyem* (US 10th grade). People told me that LCS was a good school where the students speak four languages, that they respect the teachers and fellow students. When I entered, the other students did not know me. I was new, but one particular student helped me to meet new friends and learn the languages.

After graduation, my plan is to go to a public university and to have my degree in medicine. I want to get a job to help my family and to have a beautiful house where my family can all live together. For my work, I want to have my own clinic. Specifically, to help those who don't have enough money to go to a hospital.

One of my favorite things about LCS is working the incinerator. I think it's so funny to shake the crib! Work hour is a good thing at LCS, it helps you not to be afraid of work when you go outside the school. I will always remember that when I graduate. I have particularly worked in the kitchen these past few years. I have learned so much from the "mommies" (LCS cooks). They have taught me their skills.

I love being involved in theater and the "Celebrate Women" day. This year, I was one of the main characters in the theater. Acting has helped me to not be afraid when I am in front of a group of people. For "Celebrate Women" day, it is a beautiful day between girls. We play, we learn, we dance, and just be together.

Romer Rincher Geordiny

My name is Romer Rincher Geordiny. I am a *Philo* student from Cité Soleil. I am living with my mother, father, two older sisters, and a younger brother. I was about 11 when my mom heard about LCS. I came with my cousin and I passed all the exams. The first year was a little bit difficult. I had difficulties adapting myself. After, I tried to know the school and now I think it's a great place to live.



(From left) *Philo* Students (US 12th grade + 1) Mike Thompson Louis, Kerly Milien, and Romer Geordiney.

It's a community, and we all learn how to know each other. We are living together, taking punishment together, eating together, playing together.

One thing about LCS is that the clean-up here is different. At other schools, they hire people. Here, we do it ourselves. We have more responsibility. We want to keep the school clean because we know that we will bring this to Haiti after.

One of my favorite activities is theater. I was a main character this year. I can say that it is great to present for the whole school. The feeling of performing, to enter into your character—I love it. In the future, I would like to go to university and study entrepreneurship. But it would be my dream to be an actor. I want to be involved in a new kind of action movie. I want to bring some great theater skills like this to Haitian theater.

Education is the best way to be a truly complete human being. At my old school, they told me "a job can free a man, but education can make him a prince." What I like about my class is that we are all united to achieve one goal: to rebuild Haiti. We are all a family. And it will be like this after school.

Seattle Offers Home Run Opportunities

By Mary Jo LeGrand (Associate Director of Parish & School Development)

This spring, The Haitian Project (THP) President Deacon Patrick Moynihan and THP Director of Community Development Christina Moynihan ventured westward to Seattle, WA with members of THP Staff to spend time with supporters, cultivate new relationships, recruit volunteers, and catch a Mariner's game in the process.

THP's robust support in the Seattle region spans over a decade. After Haiti's 2010 earthquake struck, Kurt Davis court of Lynnwood, WA travelled to Louverture Cleary School Santo 5 (LCS) to analyze the repairs and improvements necessary to keep the students and buildings safe. As regional manager at BELFOR, a global leader in disaster recovery and property restoration, Davis court proved to be the right person at the right time. His team developed a seismic improvement plan that has been implemented at LCS for the following eight years.

Today, Davis court is helping spread THP's mission locally in Seattle. Through his assistance, BELFOR donated its corporate suite at T-Mobile Park for a game this spring for the second year in a row. In a match-up of east vs. west, the Moynihans and staff from THP's North Kingstown, RI headquarters shared the excitement of The LCS Network plan with local supporters and new friends at a Boston Red Sox vs. Seattle Mariners opening series game. Guests in the BELFOR suite each represented an opportunity to mobilize strong ambassadors in the Seattle area capable of creating pathways for THP at various levels—from parish communities to big philanthropy.

One exciting opportunity for THP is the prospect of adding two Seattleites to THP's Board of Directors: Collin Davis court (son of Kurt and wife Kimberly Davis court) and Kristin Cordova (daughter of two long-time THP supporters Mike and Lynn Cordova).

Deacon Moynihan is hopeful about "the next generation" of Cordovas and Davis courts stepping up. He explains, "Collin is alive with energy and is a strong advocate for our work, and Kristin brings experience and

sharp analysis to the table. I look forward to making a lot of positive noise for our mission in Seattle. It is a good place to raise awareness for *Education Works!*"

Another important development for THP in the area is a growing relationship with Seattle University. Deacon Moynihan, THP Director of Institutional Advancement Angela Mascena, and Timothy Moynihan met with the dean of the Business College and heads of the Accounting and Economics Departments. Timothy Moynihan is a graduate of LCS, former THP employee, and recently received his MBA from Providence College. The meeting centered on THP's Volunteer program and how graduates of Seattle University can lend their skills and energy to the mission at LCS—and future schools built under The LCS Network.

Amanda Haluga, THP's Director of Charism and Volunteers, plans to return to Seattle University with Deacon Moynihan in the fall for a second visit to meet with potential candidates for THP's year-long Volunteer program at LCS. They plan to reach out to students in the oft-overlooked fields of accounting and business because of their tremendous potential to share knowledge with like-minded students at LCS.

Understanding the value of partnering with Catholic universities, Haluga comments, "THP's presence is a natural fit on campus because of a mutual commitment to education. THP offers an opportunity for serious individuals to wholeheartedly share their talents through service, while Catholic universities offer an opportunity for THP to impress upon the minds and hearts of future philanthropists that *education* is key to sustainable change and the emergence of nations from poverty."

While this upcoming visit to the Seattle area is one of many to come from THP staff and administration, all eagerly anticipate the opportunities to come from this special merging of mission, community, and—occasionally—baseball.



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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.

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