



# Haitian Project News

The Louverture Cleary Schools Network—Transforming Haiti through Education

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## Haitian Voices

by HPN Staff

Haiti remains in the media spotlight due to the pervasive gang violence, economic pressures, and political instability impacting the country. *Haitian Project News* staff recently interviewed members of The Haitian Project's community in Haiti to hear their thoughts.

**HPN: How has the political unrest in the past few months impacted LCS?**

**Esther P. (LCS Head of School, LCS '02):**

The situation in the country affects our community in many ways. It is very challenging to get regular items for the school, such as the weekly food purchase. We used to buy vegetables and other items each Monday, and now because the situation is always chaotic, we have to go farther from the school on the weekend. Also, there are students and staff who lost their homes, parents, etc. Some students have to be separated from their families, as each member of the family has to find somewhere to stay. The situation affects

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## Looking Forward to Graduation... in July!

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

Every year, the *Philo* (13<sup>th</sup> grade) class looks forward to graduation as they savor their last months in the LCS community and make plans for university studies, careers, and lives after LCS. This year, the anticipation is no different, except graduation will be in July instead of June due to the late start of the 2022–2023 school year.

In the fall of 2022, Haiti's Ministry of Education delayed the opening of the school year from September to November as a result of the extremely challenging economic and security situation.

Haiti has faced immense challenges



*Louverture Cleary School Class of 2023*

throughout this school year with all areas of business, education, and social life impacted by the relentless gang violence, political unrest, and economic instability. Nevertheless, thanks to an exceptional administration, faculty, and staff, and armed with their education and values, the Class of 2023 is well equipped for their next chapter.

*Read more about this year's graduating class in a special July 2023 issue of Haitian Project News!*

## THP Highlights

**Hot Off the Press:** THP is pleased to announce that the 2022 Annual Report is now available! With the theme *Be strong and take heart* (Psalm 31:24), the publication highlights the determination of the LCS community and celebrates another successful school year despite the significant challenges in the country. The report makes one thing abundantly clear: The Haitian Project's mission to educate more of Haiti's future servant-leaders is essential to building a brighter future for Haiti. The annual report is available on THP's website at [www.HaitianProject.org](http://www.HaitianProject.org), or email [development@haitianproject.org](mailto:development@haitianproject.org) to request a copy.

### Welcoming Louverturians to the Church!

Thanks to LCS's robust Campus Ministry program and dedicated religious education leaders—especially Principal Marjorie M. and Asst. Campus Minister Chrislie R.—another group of Louverturians is preparing to receive the Sacraments of Initiation into the Catholic Church. A group of 10 students have elected to begin or continue their sacraments through LCS and are looking forward to celebrating First Communion and Confirmation this summer. It is wonderful to see students not only live out LCS's Charism every day through service and community, but also choose to fully embrace the Catholic faith!

**Another Successful 401Gives:** April brought more than spring showers to the Ocean State ... it also saw the return of The Haitian Project's successful annual online fundraiser *401Gives*, powered by United Way of RI. This year, 179 donors supported THP during the four-day giving spree for RI-based nonprofits, raising over \$31,000 toward educating the future leaders of Haiti. THP even placed on the leaderboard, ranking #16 out of over 500 participants based on the total amount raised! Many thanks to all who came together to spread the word or donate. Everyone's efforts made this *401Gives* the Project's most successful one yet!

## U.S. & LCS Communities

Most Appreciated Community,

We are grateful for your awareness of the tremendous challenges in Haiti and want you to know that, despite the circumstances, we have been able to continue operations at our flagship school outside of Port-au-Prince AND advance the work being done to develop additional schools. (In fact, funding is the single largest impediment to expansion.)

There is no question that the situation is extremely difficult and complex. Our faculty, staff and students, along with their families and loved ones, are all under significant stress from the constant risks posed by pervasive gang violence, economic pressures, and political instability. Under these conditions, the tremendous talent, experience and dedication of our team, especially the remarkable leadership of our colleagues in Haiti, have been invaluable.

Things are not easy in Haiti, yet this is precisely the time to invest *more*, not less, in our mission. It is always possible that we may have to temporarily pause operations, but a pause of weeks, or even months, while incredibly difficult for our community in Haiti, is not a threat to our mission overall.

Ours is a generational commitment and vision. We are proceeding as if this mission will outlast us all and will ultimately be fully supported and run by Haitians—because that’s exactly the plan.

Right now, our work has only become more important. Our community needs the immediate stability, support and hope we are providing during this period of difficulty. And Haiti needs the servant-leaders (and more Louverture Cleary Schools!) who are ready to build a just and prosperous future out of the current situation.

That’s what the entire THP Community is working for. And that’s why it’s imperative we all seize this moment as the opportunity to step up, not back.

Thank you for your support of our work *together* for Haiti!



Reese Grondin,  
President, The Haitian Project

## Haitian Voices

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them a lot and has a negative impact on their emotions at the school.

Despite all these challenges, we keep operating as usual. The school has been running from the date we reopened until now. We keep functioning because we have community members who are full of good spirit, good will, and who have faith in a better Haiti through education. We are striving to eradicate the current situation so the new generation will not have to deal with all of those struggles.

**HPN: As an LCS alumna studying abroad in Ireland, what do people ask you about the current situation in Haiti?**

**Jothsaïna P. (Lawyer/Graduate Student, International Peace Studies at Trinity College Dublin, LCS '14):**

One of the questions I am asked is, “What do I think is the solution to the problems in Haiti?” My answer is that there is not just one solution, but obviously we do need for everyone to have the greatest sense of humanity for each other. Everything begins with having the sense of humanity so you know that doing no harm to your peers is some-

thing natural. Also, reestablishing an emergency response strategy for education and employment is mandatory for young people to see hope and believe in the outcome of education. To finish, having a restructuring of the government and having a real policy of accountability and the sense of love for your country can help settle identity, belonging, respect, harmony, and well-guided decisions.

**HPN: How is the current unrest affecting the business sector and the economy? Patrick B. (Haitian Private Sector Leader/Head of Fondation Haitian Project, THP’s partner foundation in Haiti):**

We are in a state of precarity, focused in Port-au-Prince. The level of commerce is virtually zero. Businesses are closing because of shortages of fuel, electricity, and workers. Due to complications in the exchange rate, petrol importers have only been ordering half the quantity Haiti needs. Some of the fuel that comes in is distributed to gas stations and some of it is diverted to the black market where it is sold for many times the official rate. Lack of fuel is one reason why Haiti’s national power service hadn’t produced any electricity for over two months. Recently, for the first time after two or three months, they gave us 2 1/2 minutes of electricity!

Law clerks, teachers, doctors, public transportation drivers—all have stopped working at some point for lack of pay or to protest the exorbitant cost of living. The general insecurity in the streets also keeps people from commuting to their jobs. All these factors create pressure on the economy. This pressure creates insecurity. And people resort to acts of desperation in order to survive—youths join gangs (just one more reason THP’s work is so critical), families embark on perilous journeys to leave Haiti, and now we see citizens rising up against the gangs in the violent *Bwa Kale* movement.

First and foremost, Haiti needs security. There will be no elections and no economic progress until people can begin living their everyday lives again. The Haitian National Police have made recent progress on this front, but they will need much more support from the Haitian state and international allies. For Haiti to reverse the downward spiral in which it finds itself, major investments will have to be made in sustainable education, energy, and agriculture. THP has shown that this model works. The LCS campus is powered by the sun and is producing Haiti’s future leaders—Louverturians for life who are committed to rebuilding Haiti.

## LCS Student Views

**Holdy C.**

**Philo (13<sup>th</sup> grade)**

I am Holdy C. I am eighteen years old, and I am a *Philo* student. I live with my parents, my brother, and my three sisters.

I have learned many things about being a Louverturian. The LCS education means a lot of things to me. It helps me to be a better person in society, be stronger than ever, grow up socially, and have many other plans.

At school, I have many [role] models, but the first one is my English teacher. He is my model because of the way he inspires me with his behavior and leadership. I have had a favorite class at school for a long time, it is information technology, but there are many other classes that I like.

My favorite things at LCS are the cultural activities of which the purpose is to learn more and have fun together. This year is my second being part of the Kitchen Committee, the student committee that works with the cooks and staff to organize student workers and ensures that mealtimes are orderly, and I think that working on the committee is a great experience for me as it helps me to have more maturity than before. For the end of this year, I am really excited and impatient to graduate and finish my career at school.

In the future, I would like to study information technology or administrative science. I would like to help my family have a better life. I would like to be a light for those who are in the darkness, to be a

guide for them and help them shine, and I hope that the Almighty God will help me achieve those goals.

**Rosetande J.**  
**Philo**  
**(13<sup>th</sup> grade)**

My name is Rosetande J., and I am 18 years old. I am a *Philo* student, which

means this is my last year at this community that has brought much value and changes in my life. I am part of a wide family and the youngest of six children.

Seven years ago, no one could imagine that I would be at this place. My elder brother heard about the school from a friend alumnus, which led me to apply to the school.

LCS didn't only show me how to be a good student, it also showed me things bigger than that. The education that I receive at LCS is a light projecting all the good values which make me different as a Louverturian. Education for me is like a compass pointing me the right way to reach my goals and to be a better citizen for my country.

My favorite thing about LCS is the chance that we have as students from a young age to deal with obstacles, and how they can help us to be the better version of us.



LCS Philo (13<sup>th</sup> grade) students Holdy C. (left) and Rosetande J. (right)

I have always loved medicine, so my favorite class is biology, and all my classmates and my teammates know about it. I'm also fond of math.

This year I'm part of the Health Club, Stress Relief Club, and a member of the Debate Club. I'm also part of the Independent Women Club, *Lekòl Ankourajman* (Encouragement School, an afterschool literacy program for children and adults in the LCS neighborhood), and the Journal (Newspaper) Club.

As it is my last year, I'm looking forward to leaving my legacy for the youngest students by leaving the school as the older students did for me. I just want to share a part of my light to the others.

My plan is to become a great doctor so that I can help those in need. It is my way to participate in the construction of my country. I hope on having a better country to live in.

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

- **Donate online** at [HaitianProject.org](http://HaitianProject.org) where it is easy (and very helpful!) to set up a recurring donation
- Give through an **IRA** with a **tax-free Qualified Charitable Distribution**
- Make a legacy contribution through **Planned Giving**
- Give the gift of **Stock** or **Mutual Funds**
- Give the **Gift of Education** in honor or in memory of a loved one
- Participate in your employer's **Corporate Matching Gifts Program** (THP can help you check if your company has a Matching Gifts Program)
- **Donations can also be mailed** to The Haitian Project at PO Box 6891, Providence, RI 02940

Visit [www.haitianproject.org/donate](http://www.haitianproject.org/donate) for more information on these various options.

# Spreading the News at LCS

By HPN Staff

Louverture Cleary School offers a variety of extracurricular activities for students. Offerings such as soccer and basketball, ultimate frisbee, volleyball, theater, Book Club, Music Club, Craft Club, Debate Club, Computer Club, and even Knitting Club

often depend on the strengths and interests of the staff, junior staff, and Missionary Volunteer teachers on campus, with the contagious enthusiasm of the facilitator “caught” and shared by the students.

When LCS Economics Department Head Djim G. (LCS '14) was a student and saw his fellow Louverturians participating in a newspaper club that shared news of the school and the world from the student perspective, he knew he wanted to be involved. Now, as a staff member and teacher, he is bringing this opportunity to a new generation of Louverturians.

“The purpose of the club this year was to provide the community with information on what is going on in the various clubs and extracurricular activities so that everyone is aware of what others are doing at school,” explained Djim. “As time went on, the project expanded to include national and international news on aspects such as politics, economy, and sports. The members of the club are very dynamic and collaborative, and they learn quickly.”

In keeping with the school’s dedication to stewardship of resources and using tools that are available, the school newspaper is



LCS students reading the school newspaper, posted on a wall near the school’s cafeteria.

not printed in quantities and handed out. Instead, one copy is printed and posted on a wall near the cafeteria for students to read and reflect on as they pass and glance at the news of the week. Some even wait by the wall to be the first to read the club’s latest work each Friday.

“I am the one who makes everyone laugh,” says *Philo* (13<sup>th</sup> grade) student Jonathan F., “and I am in charge of the humor section called ‘As Soon as You Laugh You Lose.’ The purpose of the newspaper club is to inform everyone about some internal activities and information at the national and international levels like politics, soccer, society, economy and technology, with the aim of keeping the Louverturian community in a happy and informative atmosphere.”

*Rhétio* (12<sup>th</sup> grade) student Annie F. reflects, “I am very open-minded and I like to read and learn. I present the column of economy and politics, and I supervise some columns such as sports, ‘Je Partage [meaning ‘I Share’] and more. My goal this year is to continue to inform and entertain every Louverturian. I like when others see our work. It makes me proud.”

## THP’s Mission this Summer

The Haitian Project often notes that a mission is only as strong as the community that sends it. Thanks to the Diocese of Providence and the parishes that will welcome THP this summer, the Project will have the opportunity to share its authentic Catholic mission work to a new audience through the diocese’s Mission Cooperative Program.

THP President Reese Grondin will speak at Masses in four parishes in Cranston, RI, during the months of July and August.

If you are in the Ocean State this summer, please join us!

**July 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**HOLY APOSTLES PARISH**  
800 Pippin Orchard Rd.  
Cranston, RI  
Saturday vigil—5pm  
Sunday—8:30am, 11am

**August 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**ST. MARY PARISH**  
1525 Cranston Street  
Cranston, RI  
Saturday vigil—4pm  
Sunday—8am, 9:30am, 11am

**July 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**ST. PAUL PARISH**  
30 Warwick Avenue  
Cranston, RI  
Saturday vigil—4:30pm  
Sunday—8am, 9:30am, 11:30am

**August 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**ST. MATTHEW PARISH**  
1299 Elmwood Avenue  
Cranston, RI  
Saturday vigil—4pm  
Sunday—7:30am, 9:30am

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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 @HaitianProject, or mail checks payable to The Haitian Project.

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The Haitian Project

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