

# 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."*

## Bold Plans Bring Enthusiasm to New LCS School Year

By Connor Branham  
(THP In-Country Volunteer Program Mgr.  
& Liaison to Partner Foundations)

Louverture Cleary School (LCS) heads into the 2018-19 school year with excitement. The air is electrified with the energy of the incoming *Sizyem* (US 7th grade) students, who have already shown off their singing and dancing skills in a talent show during prep week, and the *Philo* class' (US 12<sup>th</sup> grade + 1) zeal for leading the way after six years at LCS. Added to the usual kick-off buzz is the enthusiasm surrounding The Haitian Project's (THP) nine school expansion plan: The Louverture Cleary Schools Network.

Building nine more schools in Haiti is an ambitious project that could



*Members of the Philo class began their final year at LCS on September 10, ready and focused on continuing the school's tradition of success.*

truly change the fate of Haiti by producing leaders who will improve their country from within. However, this goal can only be achieved if all ten of the schools maintain the values, work ethic and academic excellence that has made the first

LCS so successful.

LCS students are focused on strengthening these values every day by accomplishing the tasks set before them. Students clean and paint the school, conduct the daily janitori- (Continued on page 2)

## HIGHLIGHTS .....

**Batting 100 on the Baccalaureate:** THP is proud to announce that once again LCS' graduating class achieved a 100 percent pass-rate on the national exam! The Baccalaureate exam, which comes at the end of secondary school, is a formalized test from the Haitian Ministry of Education that students must pass to be eligible for university. Unfortunately, on average less than 20 percent of all students in Haiti who take the exam pass. This reminds us of how valuable an LCS education is, and how much work still needs to be done to expand access to quality education throughout all of Haiti.

**Another One for the Books:** This July marked the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Madeline Parish Garage Sale in Portland, OR. Established in 2002 by Sally Kirchoff, the sale brings in hundreds of locals each summer looking to do some shopping and support a great cause. With the help of dedicated community members like Megan Callahan and former THP board member Steve Holmes, the parish fills its social center and school hallways with items and raises over \$25,000 to support THP and local parish activity. THP is grateful to be a beneficiary of this event and hopes that other regions will follow Portland's lead!

**Going the Distance:** Long-time THP community members Dean and Cathy Reineking of Memphis, TN recently completed a 588-mile bike ride around the upper half of Lake Michigan for which they raised pledges towards the Capt. Lawrence L. Beason Jr. Memorial Scholarship for LCS graduates. The former board members raised over \$2,800 towards the endowed scholarship in memory of Cathy's brother. This scholarship is one of the 10 named scholarships that were established through phase one of THP's RISE Capital Campaign for LCS alumni to attend university in Haiti. Way to go!

# New School Year

*(Continued from page 1)*

al chores and manage the trash system—this makes them trailblazers of a brighter Haiti already. They, along with the LCS alumni who went before them, lay the foundation for what The LCS Network will achieve.

Schadrac Alabre (*Rhétò*, US 12<sup>th</sup> grade) understands that The Network will change Haiti, “because this is such a good school and community. This motivates me to do the best work I can, so people will see how successful the school is.” Classmate Ruth Stephan (*Rhétò*, US 12<sup>th</sup> grade) added, “The Network will help Haiti develop because education will help the students and the country. I am very proud to be part of this project because I will be part of the change.”

Those within the Volunteer program at LCS also look forward to building

The Network and realize the integral role that Volunteers will play in achieving this reality. The plan is to have a total of 100 Volunteers at the 10 schools across Haiti who will be models of Christ’s sacrifice. The Volunteers will set the tone on the campuses through their leadership, sacrifice and work ethic.

First-year Volunteer Abigail Knapp entered the program aware of the plan to build The Network. She shared, “It is exciting seeing what is happening here in Croix-des-Bouquets and knowing it will take place on a bigger scale throughout Haiti.” THP President Deacon Moynihan agrees. “If LCS grads open Haiti in the same manner that they have opened Port-au-Prince, Haiti is going to lead the Caribbean again!”

The administration at LCS is also excited about the undertaking. Though they have many demanding day-to-day responsibilities, administrators always work towards the larger mission.

Now, they have the long-term vision of being the first in a national network of schools. LCS Educator Myriam Jean Baptiste is enthusiastic. “More schools mean people in Haiti will have more opportunities. It is a blessing knowing that we will make such a contribution to this country.”

The LCS Network has elements of both permanence and change—permanence in the values, goals and success of LCS, and change in the hope and progress that The Network promises for Haiti. As a new school year begins at LCS, the entire community looks forward to the work ahead and is hungry to show the world what Haiti can become.

*(In the next HPN, look for an interview on The Network with Haitian private sector leader, THP board member and head of THP’s Haitian foundations, Patrick Brun.)*

## A Bridge to the Future

By Mary Jo LeGrand  
(THP Staff)

Anyone who has visited Louverture Cleary School knows that the bridge connecting the Chapel and the large Agora classroom building is crucial to the flow of students on campus. After the 7.0 magnitude earthquake hit Haiti in January 2010, the bridge was deemed still serviceable by experts and state authorities; however, it was also included in LCS’ seismic renovation plan developed to meet the possibility of an even stronger earthquake in the future. This summer, The Haitian Project celebrates the completion of the bridge—the end of an eight-year process of seismic repairs and improvements!

The 2010 earthquake created immense challenges for Haiti. However, once again, God provided THP the right person for the right job at exactly the right time. Kurt Daviscourt is a regional manager at BELFOR, a global leader in disaster recovery and property restoration. Daviscourt, a friend of THP President Deacon Patrick Moynihan, travelled to LCS after the earthquake and analyzed the repairs and improvements necessary to keep LCS buildings and

students safe.

Daviscourt was a welcome sight, lending his expertise both on the LCS campus and at the homes of LCS’ neighbors and employees, many of whom had been sleeping outdoors for fear of their homes collapsing.

Daviscourt recalls, “When you show up in a desperate situation like that with a hard hat and a clipboard, people are very eager to hear what you have to say. It was a privilege to help dozens back into their homes and show THP how they could fix homes in need of repair.”

On campus, the plan of action developed by Daviscourt required pouring 54 shear walls. The work was carefully scheduled and prioritized based on building use and strength. Buildings were completed by 2014, leaving the bridge for last.

Deacon Moynihan expressed his gratitude, noting, “Without the assistance of Kurt Daviscourt and his professional BELFOR team, we would have spent years and a lot of money trying to



*The completed bridge, handsomely painted by the LCS Class of 2018.*

derive a plan to retrofit the campus for the new requirements created by the earthquake. Instead, we were able to get started immediately and operate safely in the interim.”

Like LCS itself, the rebuilt bridge stands because of many who responded generously with their talents: students, staff, volunteers, construction crews, architects, and THP’s friends at BELFOR. As THP plans to expand and create a network of schools in Haiti, the bridge is also a joyful reminder of the many hands that will help us get a good job done.

# Introducing St. Clare House

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

It is the start of a new school year for the staff and students of LCS and for me, too. After leaving the community as a Volunteer in 2014, I am returning now as a co-manager for the In-Country Volunteer Program with the responsibility of overseeing the health, safety and spiritual growth of our Volunteer teachers. I am a member of a three-person team which includes Connor Branham, the THP In-Country Volunteer Program Manager who is



*Volunteers and Staff in front of St. Clare House (from left): Rachel Thelen, Amanda Haluga, Daelle Edmond, Connor Branham, Abigail Knapp, Odson François and Jeff Benoit.*

starting his second year in this position, and the new THP Director of Charism and Volunteers Amanda Haluga.

We are thrilled to

announce our newest community member, Abigail Knapp, who recently discerned God's call to become a Volunteer teacher for The Haitian Project. Abigail has come to us from the University of Dallas where she majored in Business. Filled with a quiet determination, Abigail has accepted with grace all tasks that have been given to her as well as the unknowns of starting out in a new place.

The Volunteer community is excited about the opening of the new residence for female Volunteers: St. Clare of Assisi House. St. Clare will be home to Abigail, two female Haitian staff members and myself. Connor will continue to live next door in the men's residence, St. Francis House, with his Haitian

roommates.

In the house communities, there is a feeling of anticipation for the school year to start. We are excited to find out what classes we will be teaching, what extra-curricular activities we should offer, and how we will best serve the community. Our desires for this year include diving into a deeper understanding and application of our specific Charism.

Through our service to one another this year, we will grow as individuals and as a community linked together by a common mission and belief: that education works. Thank you for all the support we receive from the THP community and please remember us in your prayers as we begin another fruitful year at LCS.

## An Instrument of Community: Jimi Grondin

By Amanda Haluga  
(THP Director of Charism &  
Volunteers)

Jimi Grondin (Volunteer '01-'02) is a major rock in the foundation of The Haitian Project (THP) community. He has not only played an instrumental role in the physical development of Louverture Cleary School (LCS); he continually contributes to the spiritual strength as well!

A Buckeye from Medina, OH and a 1997 graduate of Hiram College, Grondin served as an agriculture Peace Corps volunteer in West Africa for two years. Drawn to share ideas, language and love of God, he next became a Volunteer at LCS from 2001 to 2002, where he taught English and worked with the school's maintenance department.

LCS Head of Maintenance Ketty Douce remembers, "Grondin worked very hard. He was very interested in whatever he was doing, like electrical work, and never tires of it. He is a great person to work with."

Today, Grondin lives in Rhode Island and is a carpenter by trade. THP is still an important part of his life. Married to THP Chief Financial Officer Reese Grondin (Volunteer '01-'02), they have two daughters, Marguerite and Gabriella. Reese reflects, "Our common experience as Volunteers is the foundation of our ongoing involvement in the THP community. Jimi's dedication to THP's mission and his unwavering support of my commitment are what make it possible for us to truly participate as a family."

Grondin is now playing an integral role in preparations for the LCS Network. Working with a team that helped make the LCS campus what it is today, Grondin is



*Jimi Grondin (left) hangs a bulletin board in the Office of Institutional Advancement with assistance from his daughters.*

developing a model school plan which will be adaptable to each school in each department of Haiti. This model will assess prices and architecture to create a realistic vision of what each of the nine additional schools will be.

Grondin's involvement in THP's mission encapsulates the Project's motto of Matthew 10:8, "What you receive for free, you must

give for free." THP President Deacon Patrick Moynihan says, "From Jimi's first interview day, when he installed the light fixture over our sink at our house in Rockford, he has generously shared his time, skills and love with the community. He has been instrumental in a number of the school's physical plant improvements and is integral to the spiritual strength and well-being of the community."



# A Family Tradition of Serving Hearts and Serving Hands

By HPN Staff

Colleen and Jim Crow met while serving in the Peace Corps and inspired their daughter, Christina, to serve as well. They were not at all surprised when Christina told them that she had accepted the opportunity to serve with THP just after completing two and a half years with the Peace Corps as a Volunteer in the Dominican Republic.

Colleen and Jim benefited from scholarships along with GI benefits for their college educations. Their interest in supporting THP is a reflection of the appreciation they have for the education they received and its positive impact. They continue to support THP because they value education, believe THP uses donated funds effectively, and are impressed with THP's results. And, they report being continually inspired by stories of how students and graduates use their education to help their community and families.

**THP: What were your thoughts when Christina said she was going back to the "field" to work in Haiti after she had completed her Peace Corps work in the Dominican Republic?**

JC: When Christina returned from her Peace Corps assignment, she was accepted at the University of Columbia in South Carolina to pursue an MBA. When she decided to go work in Haiti instead, my feeling was that she was making a decision she felt was best for her at the time.

**THP: Christina returned to help The Haitian Project shortly after the earthquake. What were your thoughts then?**

JC: Based on her experience, I thought she would be a valuable in-country asset post-earthquake. (Deacon Moynihan confirms. "Christina was indeed an amazing help! Provided a lot of stability in a chaotic time.") I envisioned a lot of resources converging on a Haiti whose infrastructure to absorb and coordinate



*The Crow and Cruz families (left to right): Alfredo, Sienna, Jim, Christina with Alessandro, and Colleen.*

those resources was stretched thin. I thought perhaps she could, with others from LCS, help in some way to enable the flow of the incoming aid to places and people where it was most needed.

**THP: You have had your own direct involvement with the business skill development program involving LCS graduates. Can you tell us about that?**

JC: I became interested to help sponsor a student to Washington Business Week after hearing Christina talk about LCS and how well its students compete on a national level. Washington Business Week is a week-long business-focused camp held in Washington State. We had three students from LCS, one each year for three years, attend. All three students that attended were a great asset to the program and, I believe, had an enjoyable and beneficial time.

I would like to relate a single incident that sold me on the character strength of LCS students. The first student, Minel L'Oficial, stayed a second week. The University of Idaho has a food processing research and production center located near where I live, and they ar-

ranged for Minel to spend a week since he had a small peanut butter manufacturing business in Haiti. They were so impressed with Minel that they offered him a full ride to study for a master's. I was really surprised and proud that Minel politely declined because he wanted to return to Haiti and work for his family and country.

**THP: Why have you continued to support The Haitian Project for over 10 years?**

JC: Based on our direct experience with LCS students and especially what we have learned from Christina about the school, we continue to support LCS because we have a great deal of admiration for the students. We have confidence that the vast majority of the funds we donate directly benefit LCS students and graduates. We recognize a capable, dedicated LCS management team that wants to ensure the school remains a success and the program continues to grow. Finally, we believe that global education—for all children, not just the economically privileged—is a major factor in the development and maintenance of a healthy society.

# A Virtuous Cycle: Louverturians Treating Louverturians

By Dr. Nicholas Carter  
(THP Volunteer '11-'12)

In February 2018, medical student and junior staff member Jean Lochard Laguerre (LCS '14) fell ill with perforated appendicitis. Fortunately, he was able to receive excellent care from another LCS alumnus, Dr. Jean-Came-Emile Poulard (LCS '06). They tell their stories here:

## Lochard Laguerre:

"Djim Guerrier (LCS junior staff) was with me at St. Camille hospital where I first went. The doctors at St. Camille told me that I needed surgery and gave me choices of hospitals for my operation. They told me Bernard Mevs (Medishare), Mirebalais and the General



Lochard Laguerre (LCS '14), teaching medical club in the LCS chapel after a full recovery.

Hospital. Djim told me that there was a Louverturian working on the surgical service at the General Hospital. Once I heard that, I trusted him even though I did not know him yet. That was the reason I chose to be sent to the General Hospital.

When I got to the General Hospital I met Dr. Poulard and he took care of me. He came to visit to see how things were going and then talked to his co-residents to make a plan for me. He told me that he was working on getting the operation done and that it would be done as soon as possible. The next morning, we had a discussion about how the operation would be and what the risks were. Then he returned personally to put the nasogastric tube in me. He was patient with me because it was a really bad feeling. He tried four or five times and they ended up getting in place after I was asleep in the operating room.

After the operation, even though Dr. Poulard was really busy he would visit my room to check with me to make sure everything was okay."

## Dr. Poulard:

"I received a call from an LCS staff member who told me that they had a problem—we have a person who is very close to the school community who is at another hospital and he needs to be transferred to you. At the time I did not know the name of the patient. After a few hours, they called me from the emergency room and I found Lochard with abdominal pain. The next day, it was clear that it was necessary to operate. We found appendicitis with perforation. After a few days he was feeling better and he was able to be discharged. I don't know exactly how to



Dr. Poulard (LCS '06), Resident in Surgery at HUEH.

describe the feeling of taking care of another LCS graduate. It was not only me—there were two other residents working with me. We called the faculty surgeon and he told us to go ahead and that he was available if there were any issues. Everything went very well without complications. I thank God. It is a big family at LCS and it is very emotional when we can help each other."

"It is not only a proud moment, but a significant affirmation that the mission of THP/LCS is on target," responded THP President Deacon Patrick Moynihan to the news of Dr. Poulard having been the surgeon for Laguerre. "From the very beginning the mission has been to create a working society with the necessary human capital and social institutions for Haiti to succeed as a nation. This was a great Haitian success!"

## Help THP **Finish** the RISE Capital Campaign for Good!

You can help THP complete the RISE Capital Campaign! Thanks to THP's loyal supporters, the first two phases of the RISE Campaign have been successfully completed. Now there is only one portion left to finish:

the endowment for THP's Office of External Affairs (OEA) in Haiti. The OEA administers university scholarships and career services to LCS grads so they secure professional careers in Haiti.

To support this campaign, you can make a one-time gift or pledge for the coming years. For more information or to make your pledge, please contact THP at (401) 351-3624 or [development@haitianproject.org](mailto:development@haitianproject.org).

# The Premiere of Education Works

By Colby Bowker  
(THP Vice President & Chief Communications Officer)

Following The Haitian Project's (THP) Annual Meeting this past June, members of the board of directors joined a small group of historic supporters at Brown University. There, thanks to the hospitality and support of the Jonathan M. Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship, the group was treated to the premiere of *Education Works*—THP's new national campaign video produced by renowned political strategist and message-maker Tad Devine.

*Education Works* celebrates Louverture Cleary School's (LCS) three decades of success and its exciting future as the flagship school in a national network of 10 schools in Haiti—The Louverture Cleary Schools Network. Once at capacity, The LCS Network will have a school in each of the 10 departments of Haiti, educate 3,600 students and provide university scholarships to 1,200 alumni each year, kick-starting Haiti's institutional and economic growth in the process.

While The Network will mean greater access to education and professional opportunities for young Haitians and a more civic-minded population for Haiti, it is also THP's answer to an unfortunate reality. THP President Deacon Patrick Moynihan explains, "We are going to have to move education higher on the list of things people choose to fund when helping developing countries. Currently, the split is about 80 percent for immediate services and relief—the majority of which are health-related—and less than 20 percent for education and social institution-building. That mixture has proven ineffective at creating systemic long-term change. If we can increase the amount going to education, we can be of better assistance."

It was only fitting to premiere *Education Works* at Brown because in some ways, that is where the Network vision began. Having seen the incredible impact of its single school in Port-au-Prince, THP's leadership has long envisioned creating a national network



*Education Works*, THP's new national campaign video produced by Tad Devine, premiered in June at the Jonathan M. Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship.

of schools in Haiti; however, it was a conversation that Deacon Moynihan had in 2016 with his former classmate and current Executive Director of the Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship, Danny Warshay, that spurred the development of the plan to actually build The Network.

Warshay encouraged Deacon Moynihan, who was grappling with the difficulty of securing the funding to build a second school, to think big and pitch "the forest, not simply a tree." Warshay paired THP with Daniel Breyer, one of the Center's Peer Entrepreneurs in Residence, who helped THP hone their initial strategy and pitch.

The completion of *Education Works* is the most recent milestone in The Network journey. Following the premiere of the short film, Deacon Moynihan joined Devine on stage to answer questions about the plan to create the Network and the national campaign to increase support for education as a key tool in development. Devine expressed his enthusiasm for the Network, calling it a "demonstration project" that could have a far-reaching impact on how philanthropy interacts with developing countries around the world.

This fall, THP will use the video to help launch the national campaign to galvanize broad support around the Network. THP will be inviting people to support, join and rejoice in this bold new direction—not just for THP, but for Haiti.

As Danny Warshay said, "It has been an honor to contribute to THP's phenomenal work. The fact that THP was able to attract someone of the caliber of Tad Devine speaks volumes about how much bigger the Project is now thinking, and the impact it can have."

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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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