

Haitian Project News

Special Report

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Building Stronger to Serve Better

by Tim Scordato

If there was ever a time to read the writing on the wall, *now* is the time. And it reads: “Nou pare pou rabati Ayiti, e ou?” *We are ready to rebuild Haiti, and you?*

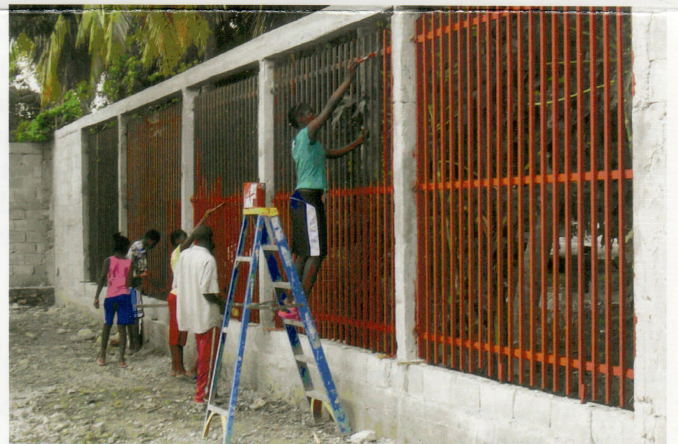
For years this saying has been painted on LCS’s front wall, but little did we know that the words would one day have such a literal meaning for us. Since the earthquake in January, this mantra has gone from motto to battle cry; it has morphed from abstract to concrete.

Always placing the needs of others first, the THP/LCS community, here and in Haiti, went right to work in January to find medical attention for the injured, to feed those in need of emergency food and to clear debris from our neighborhood and helping our friends do the same in their areas. Noting the critical need for housing and the stability it would create, THP/LCS early on turned its relief focus toward building **permanent** housing for those whose homes were destroyed or helping to repair those which were damaged.

Without ignoring the call to serve, our focus must now turn to our own structures which provide housing and education for 350 students—Haiti’s future leaders. “Of course it’s important that our students are safe for their own good, but we also want them to be in a strong position to serve those who will continue to be vulnerable,” THP President Patrick Moynihan said.

With a commitment to building stronger, THP’s Board of Directors approved a \$250,000 “Building Stronger to Serve Better” Renovation Fund Campaign. This fund will serve to finance the repair and upgrade of LCS’s buildings while also enhancing the school’s service to the surrounding community. Improving the school’s water quality and supply will enable LCS to provide more potable water to the neighborhood. Increasing solar power will serve the dual purpose of supporting the water system and further ameliorating the school’s electrical power allowing us to provide more security lighting at night.

Four of LCS’s structures were significantly damaged in the earthquake, and two of those buildings are currently offline and unsafe for daily use. Mike Smith, Structural Engineer for Pacific Engineering Technologies, Inc., said, “The JJ Dessalines Building [which held six classrooms and dorm space for 60 boys] took most of the damage,” but overall, “the buildings took the earthquake very well. I could tell they had lots of engineering behind them.” *(continued on back ...)*



Students, Staff and hired construction workers were able to rebuild the playground’s perimeter wall in three weeks thanks to funding from All God’s Children adoption and relief agency. We thank Kate (McDermott) McDodson (Volunteer ’03 - ’04) for her connection.



All labor from THP's housing projects was hired locally. Wilguens "Pyram" Dorcy, 23, is one of these workers. He had the amazing opportunity to help rebuild a home for his 11 family members, ages 2 to 56, who now live in the permanent house pictured above.

"Doing that provided me a chance to do something to help my family and show them my love for them," he said. "In the past, I was not doing anything. No school! No job! I now earn some money every week that helps me to support myself and my people."

(... continued)

Smith, along with Kurt Daviscourt and Brian Jones from Belfor Property Restoration, spent a week at LCS examining the buildings and outlining repairs. Their years of expertise in seismic related restorations have been key in designing stronger structures to withstand future disasters.

Building stronger to serve better means THP will also continue rebuilding homes in the neighborhood. Four housing projects have already been completed thanks to early relief donors. As always, we will go beyond the necessary repairs for ourselves to invest in projects beneficial to our neighbors as well.



New 2010-2011 Volunteers with Elissa Kergosien, Elizabeth O'Connell, & Deacon Patrick Moynihan. Look for more on the Volunteers in the September newsletter.

More Volunteers, More Programs, More Service

by Elissa Kergosien (LCS Staff)

In July, The Haitian Project's new group of year-long Volunteers traveled from all over the U.S. to participate in Volunteer Orientation in Clemson, South Carolina, where THP's growing support community generously provided housing for the Moynihans and the Volunteers. Orientation was filled with lots of questions from our incoming group and a healthy dose of community service.

The group of nine new Volunteers worked well together. In between meetings and meals, we helped the Moynihans with their garage sale as they transition from SC to Miami. We also spent a day doing yard work for a handicapped couple in the area. I was excited to see that the Volunteers were eager and enthusiastic to get their hands dirty and put in some hard work in the South Carolina heat! The orientation closed with a commissioning mass.

In addition to the nine incoming to the program, we also have five returning from last year's group. Two of us will return as support staff at LCS, and three others have committed to another year as Volunteers. Both the veterans and the novices will help continue and enhance key programs at LCS, including the sports program, the Timoun program, extracurricular clubs, Academic classes & responsibilities, and as always, they will serve as adult role models of Matthew 10:8, giving of ourselves freely.

Returning Volunteer John DiTillo will serve as the Lead Volunteer, drawing on his year and a half experience at LCS to head up the new group. Corey Paulino will continue to expand our neighborhood and National Road cleanup programs and Kristen Zeiler will run our growing Timoun Program. "I'm very excited to have returning veterans to help us in such important areas of growth at LCS," said Patrick Moynihan, THP President, "including the Timoun Program and other community outreach."

After the earthquake, the Timoun Program grew from a simple hot lunch project to a full day program complete with education, art, play, and music components. Kristen Zeiler said, "I'm excited to return this year and continue my work with the neighborhood children. This year we will be formalizing the program and including registration and attendance expectations."

After spending a week with this incredible group, I was encouraged and rejuvenated for this upcoming year in Haiti. Last year I served as Lead Volunteer and I am returning this year as the In-Country Coordinator of Community Development to help with Volunteer-related responsibilities, host short-term mission groups, and coordinate our student volunteer activities. I am thrilled to be working with such a great team of Volunteers and I'm confident that this next year will be full of growth as they bring their talents and hearts of service to LCS.