



TWINNING

LASALLIANS OF NORTH AMERICA & AFRICA

Walking Together in Solidarity

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENTS IN THE LASALLIAN REGION OF NORTH AMERICA AND THE LWANGA DISTRICT



ABOUT TWINNING

The twinning program connects schools in United States and Toronto with 13 ministries in four countries in the Lwanga District of Africa: Kenya, Nigeria, Eritrea and Ethiopia. The now Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN) created the school-to-school twinning program in 1995 in response to a call from the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools to financially support Districts in need. The type of African ministries that participate in the twinning program varies, including traditional secondary schools, skills training centers, and centers that serve homeless and at-risk youth by providing housing and education. Schools in the United States and Toronto are twinned with ministries in the Lwanga District, not only to support them financially, but also to build relationships as brothers and sisters in the Lasallian family.

Students in the Lwanga District face many challenges, including the fact that the majority of young people are from very financially poor families and cannot afford education. Some of the children are orphans and lived on the streets before being taken in by a Lasallian ministry. Additionally, they often do not have access to basic needs, such as water, electricity, adequate housing and health care. Access to the internet through the school is often unreliable, if available at all. Lasallian schools in the Lwanga District prepare young people to face challenges in life and shape them professionally and morally to contribute to society. The schools give them hope and help them to not be discouraged by the challenges they face.



FUNDRAISING

In 2017, schools in the RELAN contributed more than \$217,000 to their twinned schools, which is an increase of more than \$15,400 over 2016. Some examples of fundraisers and education opportunities include: dress-down days, bread and soup lunches, sharing facts while collecting donations, presentations and videos, essay writing contests to encourage potential donors, and penny wars. Schools in RELAN have worked on building their connections with their twinned schools by emailing, writing letters, connecting over Skype, and even visiting their twinned schools. Twinned schools in the Lwanga District use donations to fund scholarships for students in need, purchase books and other supplies, buy food and water, finance renovations, buy fuel for generators, and fulfill many other needs.

Students at twinned ministries in the Lwanga District often think about and pray for students in twinned schools in RELAN. They feel a connection as Lasallians, and view Lasallian education as an opportunity to change their lives. "It helps a learner to be hardworking, engage God in each and every activity, and emphasizes on unity," said Samuel Kariuki Maina, a student at Rongai Agricultural and Technical Secondary School in Rongai, Kenya. "Lasallian education helps to keep me focused and determined for my future endeavor."



Students at Child Discovery Centre in Nakuru, Kenya, live at the children's home and attend local schools.



MAKING CONNECTIONS

In recent years, excitement around twinning relationships has been building as more schools connect. Some schools in RELAN have traveled to the Lwanga District to visit their twinned schools and are planning future trips. Schools are more regularly in contact over email and, while not possible for all Lwanga ministries, more and more schools are connecting with RELAN schools over Skype. These video calls made it possible for students to connect and pray together, talk about daily life, and ask and answer questions. They help students connect as brothers and sisters in the Lasallian mission.

“We are happy to know that people think about us. The Lasallian family is indeed a family to belong to,” Udubbu Hezekiah and Uuma Patricia, students at Mount La Salle College in Naka, Nigeria, commented after a group Skype with all five RELAN schools twinned with Mount La Salle.

“Interacting with the students from our twinning school over a Skype call was incredible,” said Aly Hartman, a senior at La Salle High School in Pasadena, California, who participated in a February 2017 Skype with Mount La Salle where students spent more than an hour in conversation. “It made my donation worth much more in my eyes. Putting a face to where the money is going made it real. I know that I’m making an impact.”



Students at St. John’s College High School in Chevy Chase, DC, and Child Discovery Centre in Nakuru, Kenya, introduce themselves over Skype.



Holy Family Catholic High School in Victoria, Minnesota, has hosted four summer trips to visit twinned ministries.



Students from Mount La Salle and La Salle High School in Pasadena spend more than an hour asking and answering questions during a Skype call.



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More information and resources:

www.lasallian.info/lasallian-family/twinning

