

LONG TRAIL SCHOOL

founded 1975

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“ONE STUDENT AT A TIME”---KICK-OFF EVENT FOR LONG TRAIL SCHOOL’S COMMUNITY SERVICE

Dorset---“One student, one teacher, one school at a time is the way you can change the world.” Nathalie Gensac, Founder and President of Connecting Youth Around the Globe (CYAG), brought her message to the Long Trail School community last week. In a morning presentation, Gensac expressed her gratitude to LTS for its commitment to CYAG. Over the past year, Long Trail’s Student Council determined that it would be the first American school to partner with several others around the world to build a community center in Bennetland, a ghetto neighborhood in Kingston, Jamaica.



Students in the current CYAG class pose with Gensac.

Nathalie shared her enthusiasm for global activism and education with the assembly. “Education is the foundation of every society; it’s what makes us better.” She continued, “This is a program for children, to empower them---we must give them their tools as a platform to success.” Gensac considers computers, photography, videography and the internet to be integral to youth’s means of communication.



Nathalie Gensac presents to the Long Trail community.

After sharing two videos about CYAG projects, Nathalie announced that construction of the Bennetland community center has begun. Life on Lens, the parent organization of CYAG, frontloaded the project in order to maximize the contact time between Jamaican students and others around the world. 14 students in the LTS Upper School enrolled in the elective E-class this fall to begin the fundraising and educational efforts.



Nathalie Gensac presents to the Long Trail community.

Accountability is a major aspect of this two-year commitment. 100% of student fundraising goes directly to the projects; corporations and foundations fund the program support itself. It is very rare to have complete transfer, dollar for dollar, from student to student. Through the use of film, students can see that they get what was promised. Gensac feels this is vital to the comfort and continued commitment of donors. She says, “The immediacy of film and photography is powerful and transcends words; even the illiterate can understand these workings.” When dealing with countries with low literacy rates, images are critical.

There are some incentives for the schools who fundraise as well. Professionals who support CYAG will provide opportunities for LTS students to learn skills. For each \$2,000 raised, LTS will be offered workshops and artist visits by representatives from Architects for Aid, Getty photographers and filmmakers, and Martin Bellamy. There is also a global film competition; the student film crew who makes the best movie to show the process of connecting with the other communities in a project will win an all-expense paid trip to visit the project they helped to complete.

For more information about this program at LTS, please contact Peter Ahlfeld at 802.867.5717 x107.

* Photos courtesy of Gary Baker.