



Annual Report 2008-2009

La Salle International Foundation, Inc.



The De La Salle Christian Brothers operate schools in 80 countries around the world, including this one in Meki, Ethiopia.

Highlights of the Year

- *Establishing a North American Office*
- *Investigating opportunities in Africa and Asia*
- *Supporting Solidarity with Southern Sudan*



Beginnings . . .

Desirous of developing additional sources of revenue to financially support new initiatives and ongoing operations around the world, in the fall of 2007 the De La Salle Christian Brothers sought to establish a development office in the United States. Beginning in January of 2008, Craig Franz, FSC was asked to spearhead operations which would accomplish this goal.

A survey of different sites finally resulted in the North American development office being located in Washington DC. This site affords convenient contact with many federal and government entities while also providing geographic proximity to the largest number of non-for-profit organizations in the country. Washington's central mid-Atlantic location facilitates access to a number of population centers, such as Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Miami and New York, all housing non-governmental organizations which might be supportive of the mission of the foundation.

While the foundation was pursuing a location for its headquarters, Bethlehem University also was eager to develop a North American office in the Washington DC area. When it became apparent that the Lasallian Volunteers also needed additional office space, a consortium of three Lasallian entities was born which worked together



The Hecker Center, located in northeast Washington DC, is a perfect home for La Salle International Foundation, Inc.



to realize office space meeting their collective needs.

After a series of office locations were considered, it was decided to enter into a long term (ten year) lease arrangement with the Paulist Fathers who had space available on the third floor of The Hecker Center, a facility for socially active non-for-profit agencies in the northeast quadrant of the capital city. This location is adjacent to the third floor where the Regional Conference for the De La Salle Christian Brothers is



Common office space in the Hecker Center is shared among Lasallian Volunteers, Bethlehem University and La Salle International.

located. The space needed to be “built out” during the summer of 2008 as only the external shell of the building was initially present. After several months of architectural design and construction of the new elements, the offices were ready to be occupied in October of 2008.

The facility currently has two offices for La Salle International (one of which can be subdivided if necessary to make an additional office), and a work room for duplication and storage. The offices are fully compliant with OSHA standards, air conditioned, and linked together through a network computer system utilizing state-of-the-art technology. It is located on a landscaped campus, proximate to The Catholic University of America and the offices for the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. Meeting and reception/conference capabilities are available at the North American Paulist Center.

Establishing a Legal Presence

One of the reasons for the establishment of a permanent development office in the Washington area was to work with government agencies to secure large grants in support of De La Salle Christian Brothers operations around the world, particularly in developing countries. It was originally conceived that the Washington office would target multi-million dollar grants for the international work of the De La Salle Christian Brothers. In order to become eligible for such grants, and to confer tax benefits to individual contributors, the development office was instructed to incorporate itself and to seek a 501(c)(3) designation as a tax exempt public charity making contributions deductible under section 170 of the IRS Code.



On 8 October 2008, La Salle International Foundation, Inc. was formally incorporated by the District of Columbia. As determined by the Board of Directors at their June, 2009 meeting, the mission of the organization is, among other things, to “. . . provide support for educational,

health and human services, as well as humanitarian relief, to peoples in the United States and in other countries around the world.”

Virtually all of the other fund-raising arms of the De La Salle Christian Brothers in the United States are religious charities which receive umbrella 501(c)(3) legal status through their listing in the Kennedy directory. This affords donors



the opportunity to use gifts to the not-for-profit as a charitable deduction when filing annual income taxes. Creating La Salle International as a 501(c)(3) public charity was a deliberate decision to establish a different kind of legal entity which could avail itself of funding for which religiously affiliated groups might not or could not otherwise be eligible.



SUTHERLAND

The prestigious Washington law firm, Sutherland, generously offered its services on a pro-bono basis.

In support of these efforts to legally create a public charity in support of the work of the De La Salle Christian Brothers, the prestigious Washington law firm, Sutherland, generously offered its services on a pro-bono basis. Four lawyers offered to team the project: Mr. Douglas L. Siegler, Mr. David S. Goldstein, Mr. Daniel M. Buchner, and Ms. Lisa Morgan. They have provided consistent, informed, and extremely helpful legal advice to the foundation in its formative stages.

To assist in setting up the accounting procedures in a correct fashion, Brother Charles Mrozinski fsc, a Christian Brother from the Baltimore District, and Mr. David Holmes, JD, CPA, Senior Tax Manager for Santos, Postal & Company, generously offered their services on a pro-bono basis.

The lengthy process of applying for 501(c)(3) status as a public charity commenced in the fall of 2008 and the papers requesting this status from the Internal Revenue Service were ready for filing at the mid June 2009.



Activities of the Year

Even before the offices were built, La Salle International sponsored a meeting of the Ad Hoc International Lasallian Development Network during the 28-29th of April 2008. While this allowed the Foundation to set its course in a complimentary direction with Institute goals, it also afforded the participants an opportunity to examine the physical space which was being conceptualized for use by La Salle International. Plans for the renovation were approved by the group and construction began in the summer of 2008.



To better understand the nature of De La Salle Christian Brothers operations in Africa, during the fall of 2008 La Salle International toured a number of different facilities in Africa with representatives from the Rome-based Lasallian International Solidarity and Development Secretariat. Targeted for this trip were installations which are owned and operated by the De La Salle Christian Brothers, with particular attention given to those which have difficulty in achieving or main-



Temporary refugee dwellings in Juba. The twenty-one years of civil war in the Southern Sudan resulted in 85% of the population being displaced.

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taining financial self-sustainability.

The objective of the trip was to obtain a first-hand view of operations, offer management advice, determine what development opportunities might be present, and assist in networking with supportive local, regional and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The countries included Ethiopia, Rwanda, the Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso and Southern Sudan; twenty nine (29) different sites and/or institutions were visited.

The Christian Brothers have teamed with other religious congregations in a consortium called *Solidarity with Southern Sudan (SSS)*, designed to address educational, health and pastoral needs in that war-torn country. La Salle International was asked to participate fully in the fund raising efforts of SSS and the Foundation has devoted considerable time and effort to procuring funds, establishing beneficial collaborations with other NGOs, promoting awareness campaigns, and soliciting personnel in support of *Solidarity with Southern Sudan*.



Genevieve Cassani, SSND, created a large banner listing the 82 member congregations of Solidarity with Southern Sudan.



In the United States, La Salle International has begun the process of making contact with governmental and private agencies, particularly those which might be in a position to support Sudan operations. Regular and ongoing contact has been made with the primary source of international funding for the United States, the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Although *Solidarity with Southern Sudan*



Busy hands help a young girl learn the art and skill of needlework and embroidery in a Lasallian Community Educational Services (LCES) program in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Training for both men and women is provided for approximately 250 people who have dropped out of traditional academic programs.

program was unprepared to respond to an initial grant opportunity which might have provided significant funding for its educational component, Sudan contacts have been maintained and other USAID funding for the program has been obtained through collaboration with Winrock International.

In the spring of 2009, La Salle International participated in a two day development training seminar of PARC area visitors. Realizing an opportunity to once again link up with the Lasallian International Solidarity and Development Secretariat, plans were made to view developing operations in Asia. As with the fall trip, the purpose of the Asian visit was to obtain a first-hand view of operations, offer management advice, determine what development opportunities might be present, and assist in networking with supportive local, regional and national non-governmental organizations



(NGOs). While in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and India, twenty-two (22) different sites / institutions were visited. Such visits allowed for pre-approval of educational endeavors thus shorting the time and paperwork between when monies are received by the foundation and provided to the needy institutions.

During the year, contact has been made with the following foundations and charitable organizations to solicit their assistance with the mission of La Salle International: American Schools and Hospitals Abroad, The British Embassy, Caritas Health Care, Catholic Medical Mission Board, Catholic Relief Services, Conference for the Major Superiors of Men, The Buffet Foundation, The Ford Foundation, The FSC Foundation, The Gates Foundation, Global Giving, Knights of Columbus, Leadership Council of Women Religious, Ann and Robert H. Lurie Foundation, National Gardening Association, PSI Social Marketing, Rockefeller Foundation, Tides Foundation, The United Nations, U.S. Agency for International Development, US Department of State, US Catholic Mission Association, Winrock International, and the World Bank. Many of these contacts will be maintained for possible development opportunities in the years ahead.



A grant from La Salle International will provide new laboratory equipment for studies in electricity and refrigeration by these economically disadvantaged children of fisher folk in Tuticorin, India.



As a result of its Asian trip, La Salle International partnered with the development office in Chennai to solicit funds from the Tides Foundation in support of women and children who are cared for through the services of the Saint Joseph Development Trust. This residential facility safely houses 160 Dalit girls who have escaped from the danger of gender-specific infanticide.

Other funding opportunities which resulted from this trip included a grant made by La Salle International to La Salle Secondary School in Tuticorin, India in support of the enhancement of laboratory facilities for their electricity and refrigeration program. These skills are in considerable demand by processing industries which have developed next to this fisher folk community.

During the 2008-2009 fiscal year, the La Salle Foundation also gave a small grant to Ocean Tides, Inc., of Narragansett, Rhode Island, USA. Overseen by the Christian Brothers, this is a residential-treatment facility for court referred at-risk youth.



A grant from La Salle International will help to support educational opportunities for at-risk youth in Rhode Island, USA.



Finances

As this was La Salle International's first year, considerable effort was being focused on establishing a physical, managerial, and legal infrastructure which would support operations, the procurement of funds was somewhat limited. In three instances, the lack of 501(c)(3) status made the foundation ineligible for grants. This initial time in the organization was used to develop important and extensive contacts with prospective foundations and governmental agencies.

Early in its operations, La Salle International was able to grant SECOLI a \$5,000 gift for use in its efforts to assist Christian Brothers educational operations around the world. This was the first official "flow through" gift which was handled by the fledgling organization. An additional \$4,360 was raised during the year from various individuals, generally in the form of small gifts from individuals who heard of the foundation's mission. In addition to the SECOLI gift of \$5,000, a \$100 designated gift was sent to Ocean Tides, Inc, and \$1,000 was sent to Tuticorn, India for laboratory equipment at St. La Salle Secondary School. As of June 30, 2009, \$3,260 remains to be distributed. There are no restrictions, conditions or limitations on these funds regarding their future use.

Currently, operations at La Salle International are being handled by a single individual. Start up costs for the foundation are being borne by the Christian Brothers internationally until such time as the organization become self-supporting.

In the year ahead, La Salle International will target large gifts from various US sectors in support of multi-national Christian Brother operations around the world.



La Salle International Foundation, Inc.
The Hecker Center • Suite 334
3025 Fourth Street, NE
Washington, DC 20017-1102

