

Schoerke Foundation

Changing lives through education in Ghana and the US.

December, 2010

Dear Friends:

Season's greetings to you and your family! It has been another amazing year for us and our students in Ghana; and we are particularly thankful to you for making so many things--big and small--possible. We also thank our family, board members, and volunteers for pushing us forward everyday. We extend a very special thank you to Daniel & Gunilla Kester for making it possible for us to build fourteen new classrooms as we prepare to expand Heritage Academy to include a secondary school in the fall of 2011.

Here are some highlights from 2010:

- ❖ The fourth graduating class from Essiam and the second from Ochiso both scored 100% pass on the national exams. We are still ranked #1 in the district.
- ❖ We have almost doubled the number of scholarships for secondary school this year. Consequently, over 90% of our graduates are enrolled in secondary school; including 100% of the Ochiso graduates from 2009.
- ❖ With special thanks to Marc Dear, Vicki Shelter, Megan Rose, the third graders of Westtown School, David & Lynnette Belej, Jeff & Kathy Campbell, DeAnn Scherer, the Metzker family, and all who volunteered, we shipped a 40ft container to Ghana last spring: 850 boxes including 15, 000 books and 45 computers.
- ❖ Over 200 scholarship students attended summer school 2010, and were taught by 22 American volunteers working alongside 18 Heritage Academy graduates who returned as teaching assistants.
- ❖ We awarded grants to four American high school and college students who participated in the 2010 summer program in Ghana. One of them, Bella, is returning to teach at Essiam Heritage Academy in 2011.
- ❖ In early August, all Heritage teachers participated in a week long workshop lead by a master teacher, Cyd Dieckmann, on how to teach reading to students who are not yet fluent in English.
- ❖ With very special thanks to the Kesters, we completed phase one of an 8-classroom block. Construction of a six classroom block for the secondary school is under way.
- ❖ We set up four computer classrooms at four schools early this fall. Over 3000 students in our area now have access to computers. They are not yet connected to the internet.
- ❖ Through the efforts of Rosene Compaine & Stephanie Stoltzfus, Barnes & Noble at Exton is holding a book fair and gift wrapping event to benefit the Schoerke Foundation. Students from Conestoga High School have volunteered to help out later this month.

Schoerke Foundation

Changing lives through education in Ghana and the US.

- ❖ With special thanks to Megan Rose, Peter Cokonis, Ron & Joanne Rose, Nancy Hoffman and Melissa, we have doubled the number of alternative gift sale events this holiday season.

To all of you who lead fundraising events, pen-pal clubs, book drives and/or volunteered in Ghana, we thank you now and always. We also thank you, friends, who are planning to make a donation this holiday season. We have come so far in such a short time because so many of you have contributed in so many ways; and we look forward to working with you to achieve bigger goals in 2011!

Best wishes to you and your family for a joyful holiday season.

Warmly,

Melissa & Kwesi Koomson

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2011

McAlister is a brilliant student in 9th grade at Essiam Heritage Academy. Four years ago he almost dropped out of school because his parents couldn't afford their contribution of \$12.00 towards his tuition. Having passed the scholarship exam, the Koenig family endowed a scholarship which yields \$75.00/yr to pay for McAlister's full tuition, lunch, and supplies. Two weeks ago, Headmaster DeGraft registered McAlister, who is currently living on campus with his classmates preparing for the national exams in April, 2011. Please donate to the general scholarship fund so that we can continue to support students like McAlister.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

As of September, 2010, Roy Ortman is the new chairperson of the Schoerke Foundation Board. Kwesi will continue to advise the board on projects in Ghana.

Grant applications for summer 2011 are due on January 30th. See: www.schoerkefoundation.org

Heritage Academy will expand to include a secondary school (grades 10 to 13) in October, 2011.

Roy Ortman, John Koenig, and Laura Craig are working with Dan Grebb to create a new website to be launched in March, 2011. Please stay tuned

Please **email us at schoerkefoundation@yahoo.com** so that you can receive electronic updates throughout the year.