



GHANA TOGETHER

808 Addison Place • Mount Vernon, WA 98273 • USA • +1 360-848-6568 • info@GhanaTogether.org

October 2022

Dear friends,

Yes! This is the time of year when we look back and share with gratitude for all that has been accomplished, thanks to so many of you, our supporters, and our Western Heritage Home partners. This year is no exception!

But, first, there's this. The years have passed. Age has taken its toll. And Ghana has changed a lot in the 16 years we've worked there, including now having tuition-free K-12 education! We want you all to know we have decided to phase out Ghana Together as a 501c3 non-profit as of Dec 31, 2022. But, that said, we really need to ask for one more round of donations to fund this last 2022-2023 academic year for our WHH Scholars.

Now...good news! The new Axim Public Library is basically finished architecturally. Western Heritage Home is working with an oil company and local entities to fund the furnishings---shelving, tables, chairs, computer room setup, signage, etc. Some will be moved from the small existing library, but this new building provides so much more space for library, computing, and a fully-furnished community room for group gatherings. The "handing over" ceremony is planned for early December, when the new Axim Public Library will be officially owned and operated by the Ghana National Library Authority. How can we thank everyone?! What an achievement---with donations of some 16,000 children's books, 60+ up-to-date computers, mobile bookmobile, existing furnishings plus the very substantial donations to fund this outstanding new building! Thank you all!!!

AND, on top of that, most of the students we've been supporting for so many years have finished with schooling and are working at various jobs and getting on with their young adult lives. We are so proud of all of them! **But, we do still have seven WHH Scholars still working on their education.**

--Emmanuella will finish her Bachelor of Special Education at Winneba University in Oct 2023. She herself struggles with extreme vision loss, and is training to become a special education teacher for students with vision challenges. We're inspired by her tenacity, savvy use of special computer technologies, and purposefulness.

--Gifty will finish her Bachelor of Education in Social Studies at Winneba University Oct 2023.

--Ernestina will finish her degree in computer science at Takoradi Technical University in Sept 2023, specializing in computer applications in the tourism/travel business.

--Lamine winds up his training in Welding/Fabrication Engineering at Takoradi Technical University in Dec 2022. He completed an internship at Ghana Port and Harbor Authority and is now back in his final classes.

--George will finish his training in Welding/Fabrication Engineering at Takoradi Technical U in Oct 2023.

--Ben is finishing up at Manye Academy JHS in Dec 2022 and will take his qualifying exams for the Community Development/Vocational/Technical School in Axim. Ben's "little sister, Gladys, is in JHS at Manye Academy. They are our youngest "true" orphans, as Ghanaian government categorizes them. They were dropped off at the Western Heritage Home by their Grandmother as very young children because she was just too elderly to be able to feed them, get to school, etc.

--And we have 8 primary students we are supporting until they finish 6th grade in very rural schools. They live too far from tuition-free government schools to walk the distance while in primary school.

Remember, we started in 2006, when Nathan Ward came back from a business trip to Ghana and challenged us to “help James”? Barbara Gilday (who served in the Canadian version of the Peace Corp in Ghana years ago) and Maryanne Ward met with Susan Partnow, head of Global Citizen Journey, to plan a trip to Ghana. We helped Western Heritage Home, a registered Ghanaian NGO that James Kainyiah started to help children whose families had been so ravaged by HIV-AIDs, build a children’s home (thank you Boeing & Global Citizens folks for that first project!). We had such a good time that some of us decided to form another non-profit called Ghana Together (thank you Celia Chandler, for the name!), and continued to “help James”!

And in the 16 years since, thanks to all our American financial “investors” and the incredible efforts of James Kainyiah, Evans Arloo, Mercy Ackah, and others in Ghana, we have accomplished so much. For a year-by-year history of our mutual efforts, click on the “Milestones” or “News” pages at <https://ghanatogether.org>.

We have discussed our phase-out plans thoroughly with our Ghanaian associates. They say they have learned immeasurably from us (and we might add, we from them!). James himself is at the stage of life where he has the time to put even more into Western Heritage Home. He’s definitely going to continue, and has shared with us that he wants to incorporate some of our very American ideas about local support via non-profit, charitable organizations. Of course, any funds we raise over what is needed to finish the projects Ghana Together has supported we will leave with WHH to help them make the transition as a more local, Ghanaian-supported organization. We have such a long relationship, and have built so much trust in our Ghanaian partners.

But yes, we ask for your financial help just once more---we are determined to make sure our WHH scholars are able to finish their degrees. Luckily, the college costs there are nothing like ours here in the US! And the exchange rate is very much in our favor right now. **But to wrap it up right, we estimate we need to raise around \$25,000 for the tuition, room, board, supplies, final exam fees, and some “transition support” as they begin their post-graduate lives.**

We assure you that 100% of your donations go to support our projects. We are at this time, until Jan 1, 2023, a qualified US non-profit 501c3, registered in the State of Washington. Our Federal ID is EIN 26-2182965. Donations are tax-deductible, per IRS rules. If you need more info or have ideas to share, please contact us!

You can contribute with a check payable to Ghana Together via US mail, sent to our address at 808 Addison Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273. Or you may be able to use the PayPal link on our website: <https://ghanatogether.org/HTML/Donations.html>. If you are in Ghana, you can deposit funds into the Western Heritage Home account at Ghana Commercial Bank.

Our Scholars have been through a lot, but they have persevered, and we feel strongly that they deserve our support.

We are grateful! Thank you so much!

Ghana Together Directors: Maryanne Ward, Rich Ward, Louise Wilkinson, Diana Franco Ward, Nathan Ward, and our Western Heritage Home associates, especially James Kainyiah (Chair of WHH), Evans Arloo (WHH Operations Mgr), and Mercy Ackah (Ghana Library Authority Regional Director)

PS:And how much we miss Jerome Chandler who died just this past July. He served on our Board since inception and did so much for science education in the Axim District Junior Highs and Axim Girls Senior High. And we gratefully remember our other founders who have passed away: Leif Pederson, Suz Hirst, Tom Castor.

What a journey it has been!!



Western Heritage Home “Scholars” in 2008. Most are now young adults and finding their way. But many still identify as “WHH Scholars” and stay in touch with each other via a “Whatsapp Group”.



Siblings Ben in 2007 and Gladys in 2010 and together in October 2022!



New Axim Library---Community Center on bottom floor. And back of building. They like their color! Fun!



Ghana Library Authority—are you ready for the handover?! She definitely is!

Thank you all! **We’re in this TOGETHER!!!**