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Blue Ribbon Report
The Newsletter for Blue Ribbon Mentor-Advocate
Volume 6, Ghana Service Project Special Issue
Summer 2007

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YLI Ghana Trip Participants

Congratulations to the student-leaders for making a difference with their participation.

| | | |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Saarah Abdul-Rauf | Kyree Garrett | Ashley Meyer |
| Amber Bivins | Jamaal Hawkins | Christi Ogu |
| Kierra Cheek | Landon Hawkins | Anneca Raines |
| David Cunningham | Cole Horton | Nicholas Speaker |
| Moriah Cureton | Alisha Lee | Kierra Vilines |



And special thanks to the adults who helped guide the student-leaders and shared in their adventures:

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Mike Cureton | Graig Meyer |
| Kimberly Manning | Lorie Clark |

Making a Difference Abroad Through Service

Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) students were able to make a global contribution to African communities by completing three challenging service projects in Ghana. The service-learning projects included assisting and cleaning at an HIV and AIDS clinic, building a library, and constructing desks to donate to a school.



At the West African Aids Foundation and Clinic,

students cleaned out a room full of medical equipment and washed materials that were going to be sent to a clinic in the northern part of the country. The room was going to serve as a place where HIV and AIDS patients can meet with their family while they are receiving treatment.

"At first I thought the supplies were stuff that was going to be thrown away because it was old and not as updated as American medical supplies," said Anneca Raines, a sophomore at Chapel Hill High School.

The staff, including some who were HIV positive, provided students with a tour of the facility, brief facts about HIV and AIDS, and personal life stories.

"I think that we, as a group, did a great job working together and working with the staff to learn about and get a better understanding of the HIV and AIDS disease," said Raines.

In the small village of Pantang, students worked on the foundation for a library, completing all of the arduous work by hand. Students had to fetch water and mix it with dirt, rocks and cement to create concrete for the project. Kierra Villines, a senior at Chapel Hill High School, said, "It was very hard work mixing concrete and then transporting it a few feet."

continued on page 3



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Youth Leadership Institute Students Volunteer in Ghana

Students of the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) are used to doing all types of service projects all across the United States. This time, they went a step further: all the way to Ghana, Africa.

Fifteen students traveled to Ghana and had the opportunity to make a difference on the other side of the world. They not only participated in service activities, but they had the opportunity to learn and explore the traditions and historical aspects of the country.

One of the tours included a visit to slave dungeons that had been used during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. It proved to be a deeply emotional experience.



YLI participants joined students from the Winneba Secondary School (seen wearing green) for a day of service and teenage fun.

stories about life in each other's homeland. They listened to, learned from, and embraced each other's cultural differences. Before parting, they worked together to plant trees at the school.

"I knew that I would be doing service for others, but I will be getting more from them than they will be getting from me," said David Cunningham, a student at East Chapel Hill High School.

Cunningham and his classmates were selected based on their involvement in YLI service projects as well as their leadership skills.

Kierra Cheek, an East Chapel Hill High School student, was in awe when she discovered how bad the living conditions of her ancestors were. "They really have inspired me to be the utmost person I can be, and to do the best that I can, and all that I can," Cheek said.

The students also had the chance to meet with Ghanaian high school students. They interacted with each other over lunch, and exchanged



Thank You

We would like to offer our thanks for the generous support we have received from our donors to BRMA's Youth Leadership Institute Ghana Service Project.

Your generosity allowed these servant-leaders to broaden their experience, discover new talents, and prepare for international leadership roles.

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Making a Difference

continued from page 4

In Hohoe, a rural town with mountains and a forest that leads up to the tallest waterfall in Ghana, students participated in a service project for the local school.



"The objective of the work was to build 10 school desks that seat 3 children each," said David Cunningham, a senior at East Chapel Hill High School.

Many of the African children interacted with BRMA students as they worked,



developing a close relationship. "Because of our bond with them, many of the infants started calling us mommy and daddy, which made some of the females emotional," said Cunningham.



With extensive support from community donors, YLI's first international trip

was a success. It gave students the opportunity to explore cultural and historical aspects of the country and impact the lives of Ghana citizens through service.

"The word fun does not adequately describe the time that we had," said Cunningham.



Learn more about the Ghana Trip Online!

Student Audio Diaries from our official media sponsor WCHL 1360 AM:
<http://www.wch1360.com/details.html?id=4205>

A slideshow from the trip:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_xOphqRGaE

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