

Schoerke Foundation

Changing lives through education in Ghana and the US.

December, 2009

Dear friends:

Season's greetings to you and your family! It has been a year of blessings for us and our students in Ghana. We are very thankful for your support, and hopeful that you are happy with our accomplishments this year on both sides of the Atlantic. As we reflect on the year during this season of thanksgiving, we are particularly grateful to our board members, family, and friends like you for keeping us moving forward everyday. We extend special thanks to Bonnie Dalzell for once again creating a fabulous quilt, and to our friends at St. John's for hosting the quilt raffle in February 2010. Finally, a big thank you goes to Megan Rose for her incredible energy and persistence in creating amazing opportunities for our students; and to Laura & Ben Craig for their kindness and extraordinary support this year.

Here are some highlights from 2009:

- ❖ At the sports festival this fall, the boys' team from Essiam Heritage Academy won the championship in volleyball and placed third in soccer. The girls placed 2nd in volleyball, Netball, and Soccer.
- ❖ The third class from Essiam and the first from Ochiso, both scored 100% pass on the national exams with the best grades we've seen yet. We are ranked #1 in the Ajumako-Essiam-Enyan district.
- ❖ We have doubled the number of scholarship students in secondary school to 20. Consequently, over 90% of our graduates this year are currently enrolled in secondary school.
- ❖ Over 150 scholarship students attended summer school this year. Of the 26 teachers and teaching assistants present, 24 of them were Heritage Academy graduates.
- ❖ In early August, teachers from three private schools joined the Heritage teachers in a week long conference and workshops about the 3R's for the 21st Century.
- ❖ We celebrated the 5th year anniversary of Heritage Academy at the end of July with the Queen Mother of Essiam traditional area as the guest of honor.

On this side of the Atlantic:

- ❖ Marc Dear, Vicki Shelter and the third graders at Westtown School are leading *Change for Heritage* to raise money for a container to ship over 6000 books and school supplies to Ghana. Most of those books were collected by previous third graders. In the middle school, Megan Rose and the 8th graders are leading a

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micro-financing project, supporting *Change for Heritage* and exchanging letters with Heritage students. In the upper school, Katie Metzker is leading an alternative gift project for the holidays.

- ❖ Swarthmore Presbyterian Church has invited us to be a part of their Alternative Gift Shop for the holidays. Customers can "purchase" a seat on the not-so-new school bus to help pay down bus expenses from last year.
- ❖ Kavita Chaudhry, Ben Bean, and the honor students at Penn State Brandywine dedicated their community service project this year to Heritage Academy and raised funds for 5 full scholarships.
- ❖ Through the efforts of Rosene Compaine, the Barnes & Noble store at Exton held a book fair in November to benefit the Schoerke Foundation. Students from Conestoga High School have volunteered to help with a gift wrapping project at the same store in December.
- ❖ Kwesi and Melissa were recipients of the Chester County Literacy Hero Award in April. A million thanks to Carol Metzker for nominating us.
- ❖ Bonnie Dalzell and St. Johns Episcopal Church in Huntingdon Valley, PA are hosting the 2nd Annual Quilt Raffle and fund-raising brunch on February 7th, 2010. Tickets are a dollar each and you can buy a ticket by sending a check to Melissa at our address below. Also, please see January email update for details about the raffle; and if you don't receive our emails, then please add your name to the list by sending a quick email to: **schoerkefoundation@yahoo.com**

In addition to the examples in this letter of friends leading various fundraising projects, many of you have made or planning to make individual donations and that is why we have come so far and done so much in such a short time. It truly takes a village to provide the kind of life-changing education Heritage Academy tries to model, and we are happy, appreciative, and thankful that you are standing side by side with us in our efforts; because we really couldn't have done any of it without the care and support from all of you. Thank you!

Best wishes to you and your family for a joyful holiday season. With your help and continuing support, we look forward to achieving bigger goals in 2010!

Warmly,
Melissa & Kwesi Koomson