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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



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 Partnership for Mother Tongue  
 Based Bilingual Education in Ghana

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PAMBE Ghana is a registered  
 501(c)(3) organization

# PAMBE Ghana

Partnership for Mother Tongue-based Bilingual Education in Ghana

## Teacher Education on Fast Track!

### Generous Supporters Fund Education & Training for **TEACHERS SERVING AT LA'ANGUM** Learning Center in Ghana

Paul and Ann Milburn, philanthropists and long-time supporters of PAMBE Ghana's educational initiatives, have donated significant funding to support education of the teachers who serve at La'Angum Learning Center. Ann Milburn, retired educator of Snyder Public Schools and former Teacher of the Year, believes in the work of PAMBE Ghana.

~ Please turn the page for more details. ~

### 2015 PAMBE Ghana Fest

St Paul's Cathedral in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma will host a festival on Friday, May 8, 2015, from 6-9 p.m., to support the La'Angum Learning Center and PAMBE Ghana's related educational projects in northern Ghana.

The evening will feature fabulous food, music, games, & dancing, all with an international flair. This promises to be an event not to miss. Come eat, listen, dance, and celebrate with us.

A highlight of the 2014 Fest was a wonderful raffle supported by Oklahoma City businesses. Lucky participants went home with basketball playoff tickets for the Oklahoma City Thunder, a toy basket from learning tree toys, a gift basket from Elemental Coffee Roasters, and much more. Test your luck in May 2015!



**SAVE THE DATE! May 8, 2015 - 6-9 p.m.**

## INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER:



Executive Director  
 Alice Iddi-Gubbels  
 honored as alumna of  
 the year

Teacher education  
 and training gains  
 support

Diverse executive  
 committee formed to  
 oversee La'Angum  
 Learning Center





### Investing in Teacher Training

PAMBE Ghana is committed to providing quality, bilingual, Montessori based education to the communities served by the La'Angum Learning Center in rural Northern Ghana. One challenge of meeting this goal is training teachers. PAMBE Ghana is meeting that challenge by both providing opportunities for formal teacher education and training teachers in the field.

This has been made possible by the financial support of donors Paul and Ann Milburn. Their landmark 2014 gift of \$20,000 to support teacher education will sponsor two teachers to undertake a 3-year early childhood training course at Ghana Montessori International in Accra; support 2 teachers to obtain the 3-year diploma in basic education offered by the University of Cape Coast in Ghana; and allow accomplished U.S. based Montessori teacher-trainer Patti Yonka to travel to Ghana to observe in the classroom and provide hands on support and teacher instruction at the La'Angum Learning Center.

After meeting with Alice and the Board in December, Ms. Yonka travelled to the East Mamprusi District in January 2015, and will be working there through mid-February. Below is an excerpt from her first report.

"The children are wonderful . . . and the women as they carried firewood on their heads to sell in Langbinsi greeted Alice and me warmly. After the children left, we gathered to discuss how I could work individually with teachers and the staff contributed many ideas. The school has very little water due to many reasons including climate conditions and the collection system is not working properly during the rainy season. There is not enough to complete a week of school so next Friday, will be Water Day, where everyone, parents, students, staff and communities will bring water to fill a tank. One highlight was being able to work with the women of Bongbini as they plastered the floor of a new hut. This is done with a large wooden-type pounder that has a handle to hold on to. As one woman pours water on the floor, the rest, about 12 women, pound and sing their hearts out. Alice joined them and so did I."  
~ Patti Yonka

### DID YOU KNOW?

- **\$5.00** will give one student access to basic health care for a year through Ghana's National Health Insurance
- **\$10.00** will provide writing and reading materials, and other school supplies, for one child for a school year
- **\$50.00** will provide one child a hot nutritious lunch for a school year
- **\$50.00** will educate one child for a month at La'Angum Learning Center; **\$600.00** will educate one child for a year
- **\$2,000.00** will cover a teacher's basic salary for one year
- **\$2,000.00** will provide locally-made classroom furniture for Grades 5 & 6
- **\$5,000.00** will cover course fees for one year of a 3-year continuing education program for a teacher to obtain a basic Ghanaian teaching certificate
- **\$7,000.00** will purchase a complete set of Montessori materials for Upper Elementary



Patti Yonka (R) in Ghana

"We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity."

~Maria Montessori

### Executive Director Named Distinguished Alumna

**PAMBE Ghana Executive Director, Alice Iddi-Gubbels, was honored as the 2014 distinguished alumna of the Petree School of Arts and Sciences at Oklahoma City University. At the ceremony, Mark Davies, Dean of the Petree School, said the following of Alice:**

"I am delighted to be here with Alice, who is an alumna from our Masters in Montessori Early Childhood Education. Perhaps no other alumna from the Petree College of Arts and Sciences has had the kind of **global impact** that Alice Iddi-Gubbels has. You heard me correctly - I did say global, because almost everything Alice does has both a local impact and a global significance, whether it is here in Oklahoma City where she has passionately engaged our Oklahoma City community in supporting Pambe Ghana, or whether it is in the day to day work of education that she so beautifully and effectively provides in Ghana - what Alice is doing and has been doing provides a vision for the kind of creativity and passion that are needed to address local and global challenges throughout our world."

**Congratulations Alice!**



Alice Iddi-Gubbels

### What is "mother-tongue" based education?

As a child growing up in the East Mamprusi District of Northern Ghana, Alice's formal education was conducted wholly in the English language. Since most students in that rural area began school knowing only their local, tribal language, this "English only" method was a significant barrier to the retention and success of students from the region. One tenet of PAMBE Ghana's educational projects is that children learn first in their local, tribal language, while English is introduced later, generally in the second grade. Students at the La'Angum Learning Center speak Mampruli at home, and their primary education begins in that language. This "mother-tongue" based education for early learners both provides a better foundation for learning, and helps to ensure that the children's first language will be preserved for future generations.

## La'Angum Learning Center School Management Committee Formed

Just as the La'Angum Learning Center has been integral to the communities it serves, these communities have been important to the school. In 2007-08, when the school was founded, locals helped clear the land and build the initial structures, and in fact chose the name for the school – the phrase 'La'angum ka toom' meaning *teamwork*, or *many hands make light work*. As the school has grown to its present size of 208 students, 13 teachers, and 3 administrators, the local communities have continued to assist in many ways, including by forming work committees to build and maintain the physical structures. As a result, the collaborative model in support of education continues to flourish. The local communities have decided that La'Angum Learning Center was too good to keep to themselves, and have begun to invite other communities to send children to the school. Also in 2014, a local School Management Committee ("SMC") was formed to provide oversight and make recommendations concerning long-term planning, in accordance with the governance practices of the Ghanaian Education Service ("GES"). In addition to Alice Iddi-Gubbels, this diverse committee is composed of the PTA chair, the head teacher, the local assembly person, and a representative from the GES, as well as representatives designated by the local chief, the Imam, and the local Christian bodies. The SMC includes both male and female members. The creation of the SMC reflects the maturation of the school from a seed planted by Alice into a dynamic institution whose roots have taken hold.



**“The tree landed on the land and burst into bloom. A lady looked out of a window in the house and said ‘What a nice place to live.’” ~ Adam F., Student at La'Angum Learning Center**

**Take Note:** PAMBE Ghana may be able to have Alice Iddi-Gubbels return to Oklahoma during the month of May. More details to come!!

**Visit Ghana:** The PAMBE Ghana Education Tour is presently scheduled for July 6-20, 2015. Participants will visit the La'angum Learning Center, as well as tour other parts of Ghana. For details, contact Board member Bill Parker, at (405) 850-0195 or [bparker1251963@gmail.com](mailto:bparker1251963@gmail.com)



## Formation of Dorothe Schneebeli Fund Announced

Executive Director Alice Iddi-Gubbels, and her husband, Peter, worked and lived with Christian and Dorothe Schneebeli in Walewale, Ghana in 1980 – 1982, and had the privilege to later visit the Schneebelis in their home country of Switzerland. Their stay in Ghana created a strong bond between the two couples, and they visited one another every two or three years. Most recently, in December 2013, Christian and Dorothe visited La'Angum Learning Center and the local community. Dorothe in particular was impressed by the educational projects, and returned to Switzerland with a determination to support the school in some way.

The local community was also impressed by the remarkable Dorothe – the teachers called her “the Laughing Woman.”

Thus it was a shock to all to learn that Dorothe had passed away suddenly and unexpectedly, just weeks after she and Christian returned to Switzerland from Ghana.

Dorothe had a wonderfully embracing personality which deeply touched all who had the good privilege to know her.

In her memory, friends and family donated over \$18,000 to PAMBE Ghana to start an endowment fund. It is with profound gratefulness that PAMBE Ghana announces that the **Dorothe Schneebeli Fund** has now been established through a board-designated fund with Fidelity Investments.

### Global Market Update:

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of PAMBE Ghana's most wonderful volunteers, the 2014 Holiday Global Market earned \$40,000! Thank you volunteers!! We couldn't have accomplished this without you. Special thanks to the tireless and talented Linda Temple and Emmy Ezzell. And many thanks as well to all of you who shopped at the Market in 2014!

The next market will be held at the PASEO Arts Festival on Memorial Day weekend (May 23-25). PAMBE Ghana's Global Market will be located at Rainbow Fleet, 3024 Paseo, Oklahoma City, OK.

### To donate to the Dorothe Schneebeli Fund, please:

Click the PayPal link at

[www.pambeghana.org](http://www.pambeghana.org)

Or

By mail

In the U.S.A.:

P.O. Box 18813, Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma 73154

In Ghana:

P.O. Box 47, Gambaga, N. Region,  
Ghana