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PAMBE GHANA

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Bilingual Education in Ghana

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AUTUMN 2017

Investment in Teacher Training Energizes New School Year



La'Angum Learning Centre (LLC) opened its new academic year on September 12 by welcoming 276 students, including thirty six excited preschoolers. Most teachers had devoted three weeks over the Summer to intensive training for the 6-12 age groups, attending workshops led by AMI Montessori trainer Eric Bugri Gumah, and looked forward to using their new skills once school resumed. The teachers are committed to six more weeks of training in October 2017 through April 2018.

Ongoing teacher training is one of PAMBE Ghana's core commitments. Easy enough to commit to, harder to accomplish, due to LLC's remote location and lack of more than basic facilities. However, several grants have helped to meet this challenge this year. The generous \$10,000 Paul Milburn Gift Fund through the Oklahoma City Community Foundation helped lay the foundation by funding the intensive Montessori training led by Mr. Gumah. Oklahoma City's Bricktown Rotary funded three important projects, one of which allowed teachers to travel to the nearby town of Sirigu to learn about teaching phonics and reading skills to young learners.

Overcoming the funding and logistical challenges, two of LLC's longtime teachers recently completed a separate, long term training course in Accra and received their diplomas. Please see inside for more details.

Generosity Fuels Midtown Move for Global Goods Market

PAMBE Ghana's Global Holiday Market has moved to the first floor of the beautiful and historic Sieber Building in Midtown OKC. Thanks to the generous donation of this exceptional retail space by Sieber Holdings, LLC, PAMBE Ghana will continue to offer a wide range of fair trade goods for your holiday shopping through the Global Holiday Market in this fabulous new location.

The shop is stocked with new fair trade goods and artwork by Ghanaian students. Come shop with PAMBE Ghana. Check everything off your gift list while providing a fair wage to artisans and supporting La'Angum Learning Centre.

New goods - new spot - new energy!

DATES:

Nov. 9 - Dec. 23, 2017

DAYS & HOURS:

Sundays - noon to 4:00 p.m.

Tues., Wed., Fri., & Sat. - noon to 6:00 p.m.

Thursdays - noon to 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION:

1301 North Hudson Avenue, Oklahoma City



Teacher Milestones

Please join all of us in extending warmest congratulations to long time teachers Mary Azure and Ibrahim Buhari who passed their final exams and successfully completed Montessori 3-6 training. Mary and Ibrahim's June graduation from Faith Montessori in Accra was the capstone of their significant commitment over three years including many arduous, 12-hour trips to and from Accra.



Thank you to PAMBE Ghana's faithful supporters who funded their coursework, travel and lodging.

Thirty-One 2017 LLC Graduates Join Classmates at Unity Junior High School in Langbinsi

Thirty-one students who started LLC as preschoolers have completed their elementary studies and have joined LLC's inaugural graduates at Unity Junior High School in Langbinsi, a town 2-3 miles from LLC. These fifteen girls and sixteen boys can read and write in both English and Mampruli.

The graduates continue to face challenges, and PAMBE Ghana is committed to monitoring their progress and providing some logistical support via a scholarship fund. This school year, the scholarship fund covered uniforms, footwear, and school and hygiene supplies for the recent LLC graduates, as well as exercise books and pens for last year's graduates who are now in their second year at Unity. One challenge the scholarship fund cannot address is the lack of potable water. Unity students are required to haul water from streams to school daily – this is a challenge for LLC graduates as they walk several miles to Unity. We continue to search for ways to solve the water conundrum at LLC and the villages it serves.

Graduate Profiles



Dorcas

Dorcas began attending LLC in 2008. Her favorite part of learning is mathematics. She thinks LLC is different from other schools because it has learning materials. When she completes school she would like to be a doctor.



Ganiu

Ganiu began LLC in 2009. His favorite subject is mathematics. When he finishes school he would like to be president of Ghana and help his family.

Please visit our website for other photos and biographical information concerning recent LLC graduates.

Mother Huggers

Oklahoma City-based non-profit Mother Huggers partnered with PAMBE Ghana this Summer, providing a grant of \$8,095 to fund completion of an all purpose building at LLC. The award allowed the building to be roofed before the rainy season. PAMBE Ghana's Executive Director Alice Iddi-Gubbels intends the building to serve multiple functions.



Mother Huggers is a grass roots, members-based, not for profit organization focused on supporting women empowerment and child enrichment programs globally and locally. It was founded by PAMBE Ghana friend and former Board member Beth Jansen. Thanks, Mother Huggers! Please see <http://motherhuggers.us> for more information.

Library Launch!

LLC's first lending library has opened after a true collaboration on both sides of the globe. Local Oklahoma City students and the Oklahoma City Public Library donated 1,750 new and gently used books, handing the baton to a volunteer team headed by Suzanne Parker who sorted, catalogued and boxed the collection. Oklahoma's Bricktown Rotary Club funded the cost of shipping the books and paid local carpenters in northern Ghana to build shelving while the books sailed across the Atlantic. Meanwhile, local seamstresses made book bags from flour sacks. The boat was met by Alice's cousin Sulle, who delivered the multiple boxes to a bus which travelled the over 450 miles north to LLC. LLC students may now check out books — a significant development as most homes lack reading materials.



Collaboration with CAMFED



PAMBE Ghana is delighted to report on its recent partnership with the Campaign for Female Education ("CAMFED"), a United Kingdom based organization. CAMFED's in kind donation of goods valued at approximately \$3,000 provided school bags, footwear and other crucial items for both elementary LLC students and graduates who have moved on to Unity Junior High School.

See <https://camfed.org/our-impact/ghana/>

Supporter Spotlight

Stalwart supporters Karen and Joe Leonard believe in education.

The Leonards support PAMBE Ghana's educational projects in honor of the dedication of the teachers who have impacted their lives, as represented by Susan Topping of St. Louis, Missouri, and Nancy Reynan of Edmond, Oklahoma. Most recently, the Leonards helped to fund the scholarships which assisted the recent LLC graduates' transition to Unity, by providing uniforms, school supplies and hygiene items.

It Has Been Ten Years!

Where did we start? Where have we gone? How do you know if you can make a difference?

Northern rural Ghana remains far less developed than the south and has very few resources for education. What few schools exist have low enrollment and a high dropout rate. Children, especially girls, are quite often kept at home to help with household work.

Most children in rural northern Ghana speak only their mother tongue. However, little or no local language learning materials exist for kindergarten through grade 3, and most teachers have not been trained to teach in the local language. As a consequence, children are taught and tested primarily in English, a language they do not understand. Most children struggle to learn just enough English in these early years to get through the testing, often without any real comprehension. The low literacy rates that result from these circumstances are especially dire among the Mamprusi ethnic group, who have a literacy rate below 10% in the Mampruli language and less than 30% in English. There are few primary schools available, and very few of those children with access to primary education proceed to high school, and those who do are often unable to complete it.

In 2007 PAMBE Ghana launched its model of a quality basic education methodology on a plot of raw land donated by the local communities, with a commitment to providing accessible and culturally relevant elementary education to underserved local communities in the Mamprusi district, focusing on key components: 1) mother tongue as the initial language of instruction, with English added; 2) Montessori-based principles and child-centered learning methods and approach; and 3) community involvement and cultural relevance.

Our students are thriving. They are impacting their families and communities...

The project has been a resounding success! La'Angum Learning Centre opened in October 2008 with 40 children in one pre-kindergarten class. With the addition of a new grade in each succeeding year, LLC now boasts a campus hosting 276 students from pre-kindergarten through Grade 6, and has sent two graduating classes on to junior high school. Our campus includes school rooms for pre-K through sixth grade, a computer lab, library, latrine, offices and a soon-to-be-completed multipurpose building. Our students are thriving. They are impacting their families and communities by gaining literacy and committing to further education. If you have supported PAMBE Ghana and La'Angum Learning Centre, you have created positive changes in the lives of LLC students and their communities. Education has ceased to be a dream, and has become an integral part of daily life in these villages.

What do we face in the next ten years?

- Ensure stability through planned management transition
- Continue teacher training
- Raise teacher salaries to retain staff
- Grow savings to create an endowment fund
- Establish a reliable water resource

Please consider continuing to partner with us as we move into our second decade.

Did You Know?

PAMBE Ghana is committed to the highest standards of financial stewardship and transparency. Our Form 990 tax returns are posted on the website: pambeghana.org.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



**The 2017-18 school year begins at
La'Angum Learning Centre!**

INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER

- Look What's Happened in 10 Years
- Teacher Training
- Global Market finds new home

IMPORTANT DATES

Global Market Opens!

November 9.

DETAILS INSIDE