



B.A.S.I.C.S international

MARCH EDITION



A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

Happy April - Spring Ahead - Chag Purim Sameach - and Happy Easter.

March was an exciting and blessed month for me- that actually started in February. I traveled to Australia to attend the beautiful wedding of long time volunteer, board member; Scott O'halloran. The trip gave me new life; my spirit was lifted, as every bit of the trip was filled with love, friendship, and new opportunities. Loved being called Aunty Pat by Scott, Marcus and others. And I loved that they felt I needed some rest and pampering.

He served as a Volunteer Coordinator for our next Australia volunteer; Jess O'Farrell who followed in his footsteps and volunteered for months in Ghana. Scott returned home and continued to support our work. Jess joined the board and became our Media Director; and designed our website, previous newsletters, and captivating videos that are used on our website and in presentations. When we received notice that, another Aussie; Laura Danby was interested in volunteering; Scott and Jess met with her to share their stories. She signed on the dotted lined and spent her summer vacation with us. Laura also returned home and continued to offer support to us; through scheduling programs, and designing outlines



When a young volunteer walks through the doors of BASICS in Ghana or in the USA, I never know what will come out of the relationship. But I always tell each person; it's what you make it. Some come and make it their home; and keep BASICS close to them for a lifetime. Scott did just that in 2007, when he volunteered for 6 months, and then returned years later and stayed another 6 months. During his first visit; he was accompanied by a friend Renee Rowe; who served a shorter time; but left a lasting impact. While home, Scott stayed involved as a volunteer, editor, fundraiser and most importantly an Ambassador.



I think this will explain the photos and the love genuine love in each of them. B.A.S.I.C.S is a family; that continues to grow and grow.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

My Melbourne, Australia family showed me so much love. After two weeks it was time to say good-bye and travel to Adelaide - where more love was being shared.



AS4AK- is one of our partners who has been with us since 2008. After attending a board meeting; where Scott and I updated them on BASICS accomplishments, challenges, and our future plans; the group went out to dinner and had a great time. Then I was off to Perth the next day; to meet with other partners - who are responsible for our beautiful building in Ghana.

During a presentation with several Australia companies doing business in Ghana; I was able to share our story, sharing a timeline of events; which included challenges, road blocks and lots of success stories. BASICS is approaching 20 years and it excites me to discuss our future, succession, growth, and essentially what's next. We have been committed to our mission; to end poverty, illiteracy and create sustainable households. Education continues to be our PARAMOUNT mission; as its the core solution.



My visit was made complete by spending time with the Caratti family; and former volunteer, Dom; who was recently married. Thank you Australia for a wonderful time. **(and YES I saw kangaroos)** Feel free to write us and tell us what you think of our newsletters; or to include someone on our mailing list. info@basicsinternational.org

Patricia Wilkins
Founder & Executive Director
B.A.S.I.C.S International

STUDENT'S COLUMN

LIFE IN CHORKOR

Chorkor is a fishing community where most fishermen go for fishing on weekdays except Tuesdays, which is said to be a sacred day for fishing. Women from Chorkor are mostly fishmongers, they smoke the fish the men bring from sea. They either have a smoke house a few meters away from the sea or have a reserved place at home, where they smoke the fish. Some women also deal in petty trading by selling at the market, the roadside or have their small shops around the community. Food is very cheap in Chorkor, which makes it possible for some families to afford to provide two square meals a day for them.

The people of Chorkor are mostly from the Ga-Adangbe tribe, they speak Ga and celebrate "Homowo" which means "shame/hooting to hunger".



Homowo recounts the migration of the Ga's and reveals their agricultural success in their new settlement. According to Ga oral tradition, a severe famine broke out among the people during their migration to present day Accra. They were inspired by the famine to embark on massive food production exercises which eventually yielded them bumper harvest. Their hunger ended and with great joy, they "hooted at hunger", this is the meaning of the word **HOMOWO**. Chorkor like most communities, hold many events throughout the week. There is a funeral or naming ceremony on almost every street on most days.

My people are very friendly, caring, and welcome people warmly as their own.

Learn more about our community; through a special video called ChorkorXTRA (I am one of the presenters)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjXT1tSQFfo&t=10s>



Written by Sandra Ofori (Beneficiary of B.A.S.I.C.S since Kindergarten and current High School graduate). Currently working as a Junior Facilitator at B.A.S.I.C.S while she awaits admission to University)

RECURRING DONATION

Consider making a donation

Recurring donations are our bread-and-butter here at B.A.S.I.C.S. It helps us plan for the future and allows us to grow faster.

Make a recurring donation to one of our projects, or simply make your donation a general donation, leaving us to chose which project is currently most in need of support.

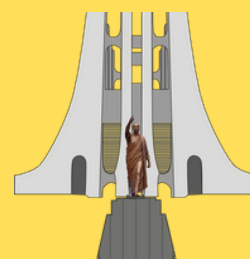
Any amount is appreciated, no matter how small.

You can make your donation via PayPal, Cheque, Credit Card authorization form.

If you'd like to chat to us first, please get in touch!

DID YOU KNOW?

The Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum, the resting place of Nkrumah's mortal remains was the exact location he gained independence.



STUDENT'S COLUMN

MY ACADEMIC LIFE

Tell us about yourself.

I love to sing, read and dance, my favorite activity at B.A.S.I.C.S is dancing. I entered B.A.S.I.C.S at age 7, and was enrolled in kindergarten with no prior education. I am 13 years old, a pupil of Great Kwame Nkrumah Memorial School (SHALOM SHALOM), am in grade 5, I live in Chorkor and a student of B.A.S.I.C.S.

What has changed since switching schools?

First of all, moving from South 3 (public school) to Kwame Nkrumah Memorial - Shalom (private) has been a dream come true. I have always admired my colleagues from Shalom when I was in South 3. I finally moved to Shalom last term September 2018. Initially, I found it challenging academically but socially felt good because I'm naturally an outgoing person and easily makes new friends. However, I realised I was not as good as I thought I was academically. There were very brilliant students in my class who challenge me to do better.

What are your most improved subjects and most challenging subjects so far?

My most improved subjects are Science, Citizenship and Creative Arts. The most challenging subjects are French and Ga. With french, it has to do with the pronunciation of words which makes the subject very confusing, while with Ga, it's the spelling of words that frustrates me.

How are you overcoming this?

First of all, I missed out on some topics in my old school (mostly not taught because we had few teachers). To help me get ahead of my class, I usually revise my notes, seek help from my facilitators at B.A.S.I.C.S and school. I also make time to revise my spelling words alone and sometimes my friends at school help me revise as they also learn new words.

How has B.A.S.I.C.S helped you?

Through the help of B.A.S.I.C.S, I can now read and write well, learnt new words which helps with spelling and building new vocabulary. The end of term mock exams at B.A.S.I.C.S serves as revision for me, since often times most of the questions get featured in our exams in school. In addition, the weekly Maths mental, Computer lessons and Creative Arts have all impacted in my academic growth. B.A.S.I.C.S helps me go further academically and makes me a responsible person. The team at B.A.S.I.C.S inspires and encourages me to do better and improve my performance each day.

Christabel
Amoah



CHESS TOURNAMENT

When you love what you do!

Chess is one of the favorite activities of students at B.A.S.I.C.S. Apart from the many travelling experiences it offers, it also brings them joy and the bragging rights among their peers. Last weekend, a few selected chess players took part in the Inter Schools Chess Tournament, organised by the Mentors Chess Academy at the Roman Ridge School. This was an initiative to bring chess players from various schools to be mentored and tutored. There was a tournament to test the skills they had learnt and encourage them to be more tactical players. It's not always easy competing against kids who are skilled and experienced in Chess; but, at end of the tournament, three (3) of our players won bronze medals. This is just the beginning of great and marvelous things to happen to chess players at B.A.S.I.C.S.

GOOD JOB GUYS!



VISITORS' CORNER

Howard University Visits B.A.S.I.C.S

On March 14th & 15th 2019, 20 participants from Howard University ASB Program, joined us at our facility in Chorkor to spend time with the kids and embarked on various activities such as Poetry, Creative Arts, Theatre/Skits, Step and Dance, Affirmation workshop and Indoor Sports. On arrival, our Operations Manager; Nii Ayitey Buxton, took them on a tour to see our facilities.

ASB Volunteers assisted the kids in doing their homeworks given to them from school. This was a great opportunity for both parties to exchange pleasantries, get to know each other and establish some connections. This was followed by Harambe (meaning Let's Come together) which was extremely exciting as we sang and danced while learning some new calls and responses from our volunteers. Then, students were divided into 3 teams with a team leader from ASB for each team, who ushered them into various activities such as Step Dance, Drama, Musical Chairs and Indoor Sports. The groups were rotated / inter-changed / taken in turns interchangeably so each team gets to participate in all the activities.

During the Affirmation workshop on the courtyard, students were encouraged to love themselves, believe in themselves and only affirm positive things as they awake up each day.

After having so much fun and learning new dance moves and theatre skills, few students from the flute group made their presence felt with a heart warming performance to the admiration of all gathered.

After spending two days with us, our volunteers had to say goodbye. Some shared hugs, while others found themselves shedding tears as they bid the kids goodbye. And to show our appreciation to the team from ASB, Sir Nii, presented a certificate of participation and appreciation to the team for their hard work and support.





International Women's Day

Better the balance, better the world.

News Updates

On March 8th, we celebrated women who have stood the test of time, women who have been a source of joy and inspiration to others, women who dared to dream and pursue their goals in life. Today we celebrate you, a woman, a mother, a sister and a wife.

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

Today we celebrate our own; Aunty Pat (Patricia Wilkins); the Founder and Executive Director of B.A.S.I.C.S International. Aunty Pat is committed to empowering other women; through providing sponsorship to children of households of women and grandmothers left to be the sole caretaker of children. She works with a team where 70% of them are women. Two years ago, she launched Hedzole; a social impact program (sewing and needlework) which provides skills and incomes to young women in the community. The program is managed by former female students of B.A.S.I.C.S (graduates) and targets women who have dropped out of school; young mothers, unskilled and unemployed. Women are empowered as they earn income to support themselves and their families through each item they produce and sell.



"there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women".

Kofi Annan

Happy International Women's Day.



Ghana's 62nd Independence Celebration

Theme: "Celebrating Peace and Unity"

Yen ara asaase ni !

"This is our motherland, our independence mean a lot to us; we are free from colonisation and we are free to have quality education, freedom of speech, free to dream big and have a future" - a few thoughts shared by some students ahead of the celebrations.

Hurray! Ghana is 62 years.

Independence Day is an official state holiday celebrated by the Ghanaian people and the Ghanaian diaspora, which is celebrated on March 6. Independence Day marks the declaration of independence from the United Kingdom by Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah on 6 March 1957. Ghana became the first sub-Saharan African country to achieve independence from the UK. The people of Chorkor, like most communities celebrate this day, by going to the Independence Square to watch school children, military, market women, etc. parade and listen to a speech by our sitting President (His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo). This year however, the venue was moved from Accra to Tamale, the Capital of the Northern Region of Ghana. This is the first time the venue has been changed and will be observed outside the Capital.

Lets unite and celebrate peace and unity - Happy Independence day to you all!



International School Meal Day

"who makes my meal?"

News Updates

What's your favorite meal?

Waakye, Pasta and Jollof are the top three dishes loved by students at B.A.S.I.C.S.
Who cooks our meal? It's none other than Aunty Vida - our matron and master chef who ensures we have a hot meal after school each day. This is a day for us to also show our gratitude and say a "Big Thank You" to our mother who caters for our nutritional needs, Aunty Vida. She ensures we get the required nutrients needed for our health and growth. Here at B.A.S.I.C.S, we mostly enjoy local dishes, made with our local produce. We #eat Ghana daily.

The theme for 2019 International School Meal Day is 'Who makes my meal?', encouraging young people to think about their favourite food; where it comes from and who provides it. This is a yearly event that brings children and people from various schools and communities to share experiences and stories. Ghana for the first time will mark this day with a nationwide campaign that brings students, teachers, policy makers, health nutritionist and many more together to talk about the importance of school meals and its impact on well being and education.

B.A.S.I.C.S has served over 300,000 meals to children in Ghana since inception. B.A.S.I.C.S also feeds over 200 senior citizens yearly at Christmas time.



PRODUCTS

Bed Spreads, Pillow Cases, Table Runner and Bed Runners

Hedzole (pronounced Hey Jo Leh) Meaning "Freedom" in the language of the Ga people. Is a social enterprise under the umbrella of B.A.S.I.C.S. B.A.S.I.C.S International empowers women through providing economic independence, which results in social inclusion. Purchasing an item made by the women of HEDZOLE- empowers women, community and a nation.



Items are available in our Ghana office (333 Ama Twitwegu Street, Chorkor) or New York Office and Showroom (162-04 Tuskegee Airmen Way, Jamaica New York) To order items or visit one of our showrooms call: 0277 512671 or 718-454-1273 or email us at Hedzole@basicsinternational.org



SPONSOR A CHILD

Consider making a donation.

An investment of \$1,000.00 per child/per year ensures students receive quality education, uniforms, books, supplies, lunch, health insurance, supplemental tutoring, extra curricular activities, psychological support and a hot dinner- every school day (including long vacations).

Follow link below:
<http://basicsinternational.org/take-action/findyourchild/>

SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMMES

Consider making a donation.

Programs like #IAM Hedzole, Rerun Thrift and Break the Cycle directly benefit our social intervention programs. By patronizing, donating and spreading the word, you are helping us to keep our purpose alive.

To find out more ways to give:
Email:
info@basicsinternational.org

VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

Consider making a donation.

Whether it's for 1 day, 1 month or 1 year, volunteering is a great way to give back to B.A.S.I.C.S. You can volunteer in Ghana or U.S.A

If you are interested in volunteer-ing, send us an email at volunteer@basicsinternational.org

Contact details: Ghana

Project location

4 Kojo Armah Road

Chorkor, Accra, Ghana

Located on the road behind Chorkor Police Station.

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