



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

JUNE EDITION

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

Happy June everyone. I would like to call this edition **IMPACT**. The word simply means “have a strong effect on someone or something”. Many people I encounter either for a formal interview or just a small talk in passing ask me “Do you feel you are making an impact? And without any hesitation I answer YES. But recently, I started evaluating that word, and also the answer. The question is generally asking if I feel the work B.A.S.I.C.S is doing is helping the women, children, and community we serve. And I stand on YES. But I think we should not ignore the effect it has on those that do the work.

When longtime supporters such as the Alexanders came to visit, and realized many of the children didn't look familiar; I can see the disappointment in their eyes; but just like that; they were greeted by students whom they impacted when they started coming to B.A.S.I.C.S 10 years ago. These students are now high school graduates, who are either interning at B.A.S.I.C.S or attending University. As the seasoned volunteers were not convinced; the children started singing **Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques Dormez-vous, dormez-vous?** Which simply means “are you sleeping, are you sleeping? (I just laughed) I then watched as Mrs Alexander's eyes watered up, and the young adults, shared the many things they had learned during the yearly visits the couple paid on B.A.S.I.C.S.

We also hosted two members of the Lycopodium team. Lyco, is responsible for giving us this beautiful building we occupy in Chorkor. During the visit Mike; who is Head of Construction for the Australian company; shared that he was responsible for setting up the previous office for his organization many years ago. I then showed him our furniture that still had the “lycopodium” sticker on it; and he just smiled. His smile got bigger, when I pointed to the file cabinet, room dividers, chairs, and even paper trays that were all donated when they closed that office. Obviously this had a strong effect on him (Impact).

There are many stories in this edition, which displays how one can be impacted; when they are not even expecting it- or when they simply think their role is to make an impact. B.A.S.I.C.S own Sir Nii, is a prime example of that. Each day, he comes to work (never taking off, unless I insist) and he loves what he does. It shows in the way he interacts with the children and visitors. Last year he was nominated/selected by a U.S Embassy staff member to participate in leadership training program in the USA (all expenses paid). He departed Ghana on April 18th, which happened to be one of our busiest days, as we were welcoming 38 visitors from the USA; but we sent him off with much cheer. Nii deserved this opportunity to learn, grow and explore outside of Ghana, because each day he impacts the lives of the children at B.A.S.I.C.S, as they see him as a father, uncle, and big brother. Unbeknownst to him, others have also witnessed his hard work. In this edition; he shares his experience of how this trip impacted him.

So now, when someone asks the question; do I think B.A.S.I.C.S is making an IMPACT- I will shout **YES WE ARE, and SO CAN YOU!**



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

Old friends of B.A.S.I.C.S - The Alexanders

Long time friends and donors of B.A.S.I.C.S (Aunt Elizabeth and Uncle James), paid a surprise visit to see how our children are doing. Many of the faces were new to the Alexanders, however they were pleasantly surprised when the older students (high school graduates, and university students who are currently doing internships at B.A.S.I.C.S) remembered them. They reminisced on the things Mrs Alexander taught them which included how to keep a journal, French, Crocheting, and how to play chess. Some even serenaded the Alexanders with songs they learned 10 years; John Brown's Baby and Frere Jacques.



The Alexanders were excited to learn Chess has become such a big thing for the kids at B.A.S.I.C.S. Upon learning there was an upcoming tournament, the Alexander's decided to sponsor 20 children to participate in the competition. Their generosity didn't end there; the team was treated to cake , juice and candy; which they shared with all the children at B.A.S.I.C.S. Before departing, they shared advice to the children to always play your best, play by the rules and demand what is right.

From the Down Under to Chorkor

On June 10, friends from Australia; paid a courtesy call on us. After traveling for over 25 hours; Sharon and Michael, of Lycopodium; an engineering and project delivery group. Lycopodium are long time supporters of BASICS; as they were the major sponsors of our main facility in Chorkor (established 2010). Despite busy schedules, as they were off to mining sites; the team made time to take a tour of our two facilities, walk through the community, observe our progress, and hear of our future plans.

Before departing, the team sat with with the children to discuss the environmental hazards in their community and what role each of them can play to improve it .



QUALITY EDUCATION; WHAT IS NEEDED TO PROVIDE A CHILD IN GHANA?

There are many things that are needed to ensure children receive a quality education;

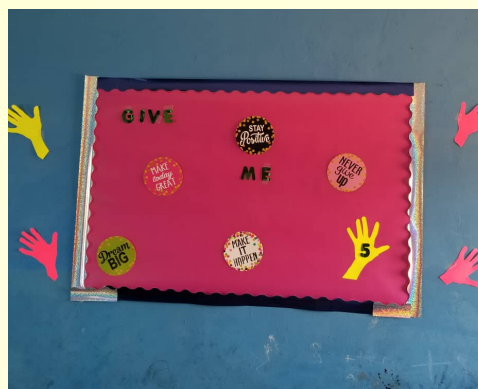
A quality education is one that focuses on the whole child—the social, emotional, mental, physical, and cognitive development of each student regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or geographic location. It prepares the child for life, not just for testing.



During the course of the training, teams were created to further discuss and share ideas on how to empower children in and out of the classroom. Day one ended with each participant learning how to provide emotional and instrumental support to children, as well as understanding their needs with the help of an eco map.

An two day workshop for staff of Great Kwame Nkrumah Memorial School(Shalom Shalom) and Facilitators of BASICS International was organized by California State University- Stanislaus. The workshop was led by Dr. Sevaughn Banks(assistant professor), and Denae J. Davis(a masters student) in Social Work, The theme for the workshop was “ How do we envision an ecological classroom for our children”.

Day two saw us working in teams in the classrooms of Shalom. Each team was tasked with making the classrooms beautiful by creating bulletin boards, word designs, etc, as beautiful classroom inspires creativity in children. Team met at the end of the day to share their experience, from working together to help put smiles on the faces of their students.



Role of education in Community Development

On June 12, we were visited by graduates and undergraduate students from New York University for a round table discussion on the Role of Education in Community Development. After a video introduction about B.A.S.I.C.S, to give our visitors an idea of who we are and what we do, there was an introduction by both teams. Pat Wilkins, founder and Executive Director shared the story of how B.A.S.I.C.S was founded, how children are admitted, funding and support, volunteers, advocacy, etc.



Further discussion on the Ghanaian educational system continued, with recent Senior High School graduate sharing their opinions and experiences. Beneficiaries also shared how their journey into B.A.S.I.C.S began, and what future plans they have now that they are out of school.



The team had the chance to interact with some children, (a very interesting session) where children shared their passions and aspirations, they also engaged the guests by asking them questions about their nationalities, cultures, and languages. We had a very insightful and exciting round table discussion with a team passionate about international education and advocacy work.



DID YOU KNOW?

Tamale is the fastest growing city in West Africa.

Tamale is the capital town of the Northern Region of Ghana. Tamale is Ghana's third-largest city. It has a 2013 projected population of 950,124 according to the 2010 census and is the fastest-growing city in West Africa



20 students from B.A.S.I.C.S compete in the National Youth Championship Chess Tournament

On June 8th, 2019, twenty children (ranging in age 10-18 years old) from B.A.S.I.C.S International was chosen to compete in the National Youth Championship Chess Tournament, which was held at DPS International School. After weeks of training, and anticipation, children were chosen based on their ranking within our organization. The tournament featured approximately 100 players in 7 different age categories: Under 10, 12, 14, 16, 18 and the new under 8 and girls only category.; predominantly coming from elite private schools in Ghana.

The excitement and relief, to be part of the team was nothing compared to the joy of competing with people outside their community.



It's quite amazing to realise that all these kids have been playing chess for less than two years, but have shown so much maturity and experience with each competition they attend. Good job to all medalist, and better luck to all who did not win medals, but won their game.

Jeremiah's unique experience : I was hopeful of winning the trophy for under 12, I got very emotional after I won my first game, and was close to tears. I won four games and was close to a gold medal, but there was a tie so we had to play with three others with the same points. I made a mistake, and I lost my chance to win a gold medal. However, I fought hard and finished third and won a bronze medal.



At the end of round one, we already had most of our children winning their games and aiming for medals. This happened to be the first competition for most of our children in a very unfamiliar yet intimidating environment, however, the courage and zeal with which they played, we had no doubt in our minds that, they were already winners. We came home with four medals and a trophy, with Jeffrey Neequaye emerging as the under 12 National Champion. John Allotey, former National under 16 Champion came in 2nd place, and won a silver medal. Jeremiah Adjetye and Vincent Yartey each won a bronze medal in the under 12 category.



Our chess team is in need of your support; to the cost in attending more competitions, purchase chess materials (books, clocks and more boards) and hiring a chess teacher (as of date, our teachers have been on a voluntary basis). If you would like to make a donation, please send mobile money to 0277512671 or send through paypal : www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1347773



Greetings from abroad: Volunteerism and Civic Action

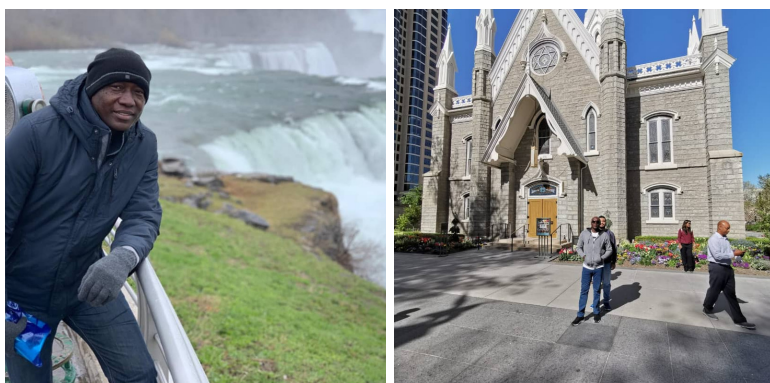
B.A.S.I.C.S International Programme Manager visits USA for the first time

In the words of the famous French novelist Gustave Flaubert; "Travel makes one modest, you see what a tiny place you occupy in this world"

These words have resonated with me after my short visit to the United States. I was part of a privileged group nominated to participate in the International Visitors Leadership Program to learn about Volunteerism and Civic Action. Prior to this visit, all I knew about the United State was mostly hearsay or fictional from movies.

My journey started in Washington DC, where I was opportuned to meet with other amazing participants of the program from 18 different countries (each with a unique set of skills) not forgetting our ever reliable liaisons. The bond we struck from the first day is the reason I can proudly call each of the participant and liaison my family.

My experience in the United State however short it was, can be summarized as life changing. I found most of the perceptions and stereotypes prior to my visit debunked.



The various cities visited offered something unique and different from the next, it was interesting to find how volunteerism has been ingrained in the American society. I get the feeling it comes natural to the people because they have learnt to think more of the greater good than of self gratification. Other cities and institutions visited includes;

Buffalo New York: (Beds for Buffalo), this is a project that mobilizes community volunteers to construct twin beds for children in need in Buffalo



Service Collaborative of Western New York, This is another institution dedicated to connecting people with service opportunities in the field of education and economic opportunity.

Chicago Illinois; (One Good Deed), this is an organisation that believes everyone has something to offer that can help improve Chicago whether it is spending time mentoring students, cleaning up a park or sharing a skill set
Chicago Cares: mobilize volunteers to build a stronger more unified Chicago. Here, I learnt the importance of volunteerism.

Salt Lake City Utah: Catholic Community Service, this is an institution that has been providing hot meals to people who are hungry in the community since 1967. On average CCS serves 1000 meals a day.

All of the institutions visited in each city had a great impact on me, however the most impactful was during my first home visit to the home of Anne and Leonard Szezesny in Buffalo NEW YORK, I had the pleasure of interacting with an elderly man of about seventy years called Joe who had worked as a journalist his whole life.

Joe made a conscious effort to pick rubbish on his street every morning, and like every person who is trying to make a difference in his community, he was constantly laughed at and mocked by others who did not see the change he was trying to effect. However, this did not deter him from doing the right thing, and as time went by he started seeing a ripple effect as more and more people saw the good in what he did and joined him every morning to clean up rubbish.

B.A.S.I.C.S International Programme Manager visits USA for the first time



I quite remember the look of bemusement on my face while he spoke, when he was done I could not help but ask what motivated him to pick up rubbish... and with a broad smile on his face he said “ I felt something needed to be done and I did it”. His words brought to mind one of my favorite quotes from Howard Zinn “ Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world”

I must say, I was also impressed and inspired by the Food Bank of Western New York and the Meals on Wheels concept. The Food Bank is an organisation working to end hunger one day at a time by procuring and distributing meals to children, families, aged and veterans. They also receive donated food from grocery stores, and other individuals.



My initial thought obviously was, why don't we have this great concept in my country? I believe there are about ten or more “five star hotels” as well as restaurants and food market all over Ghana that can help kick start this initiative at no cost at all. I could not help but wonder what happens to the dairy products, drinks and food that have a year or less before their expiration dates? Is there a way we can channel these food to the needy in our communities and schools so it does not go to waste.

I believe if we can find a way of conveying these food items to the needy by tapping into the corporate social responsibility of these organisations rather than investing in beauty pageant and musical awards, we will not only create an avenue to promote volunteerism but also feed the needy.

OTHER FEATURED NEWS

My visit to the United State has indirectly informed my way of thinking, interacting with a variety of people from different walks of life have made me realize the importance of socio-economic development in a country. It must take a collective effort from various governments, faith based institutions, corporations and individuals to ensure we achieve this goal.



In my little way, I intend on keeping the spirit of volunteerism alive in my community by involving the youth, faith based organisations as well as various institutions. I strongly believe the youth hold the key to unlocking the enthusiasm in volunteerism in Ghana.

Can you imagine a Ghana where the youth, faith based organisations and other institutions are enthusiastic about volunteering, the ripple effect that it will have on our economy and various communities.

The joy and satisfaction that will be derived as an individual to know you are helping effect a change in the lives of people will be unquantifiable.

In the words of martin luther king Jr. “ Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?”



By: Nii Ayitey Buxton
Programme Manager

OTHER FEATURED NEWS

Our Ocean, our pride

Making EVERYDAY a #worldoceanday.

World Ocean Day is celebrated on June 8 each year, to help honor, protect and conserve the ocean. The ocean provides us with many resources and services including oxygen, climate regulation, food sources, medicine, and more. World Oceans Day also provides an opportunity to take personal and community action to conserve the ocean and its resources.

As members of the Chorkor community with fishing as the main occupation of most people, it's our duty to ensure the children understand the need to help protect the ocean, which has become a dump site and place of convenience for most residents. We took them on a tour of their beach to fully understand the harm plastics has on the sea and how it affects them as well.



After the tour, we had a round table discussion with the children on how to help save the beach. When asked if they are affected by the state of the chorkor beach, most said yes as it affect the amount of fish their fathers are able to catch on each trip. Most often, some fishermen go for fishing but end up with just a handful because their nets are filled with plastic waste instead of fish.

Teams of 4 were created to further discuss action plans to help solve this menace. Teams reconvened to share their actions points with the other teams. Ideas presented by most teams included; organizing weekly general cleaning, beach clean up, educating the public, using a taskforce to help enforce rules governing dumping at the beaches, planting at the beaches by converting the dumpsite to small gardens, desilting choked gutters and most importantly being role models in the community.



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



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 choose 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!

ONE – TIME DONATION

Donate Now!

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

You can make your donation via PayPal, Cheque or Credit Card authorisation form. If you'd like to chat to us first, please get in touch!

Find link to donate;

<http://basicsinternational.org/take-action/donate/#donate>

B.A.S.I.C.S
international
Brothers and Sisters in Christ Serving

Join us in the 20 give \$20.00 in 2020 CAMPAIGN



B.A.S.I.C.S International is turning 20 very soon, and we are kicking off the celebration with a fundraiser to ensure we are around for the next 20 years.

We invite you to donate \$20.00 and then find 19 friends to donate \$20.00.

How? simply ask for a pledge sheet to be sent to you, and then start asking 20 friends (oops 19 friends, because you will make the first donation). Friends can either make the donation online, or give it to you directly; and then you send it to us. You write their name on your pledge sheet- and BOOM you are done- you completed your 2020 campaign.

Are you ready for 2020? Come on the countdown starts now

Email us at 2020@basicsinternational.org

or call 718-454 -1273 (USA)

0277 512671 (GHANA)

Or DONATE NOW through Paypal : www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1347773



SPONSOR A CHILD

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.

Follow this link:
www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1347773

VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME/ VOLUNTEERISM

Whether it's for 1 day, 1 month or 1 year, volunteering doesn't mean you can't have fun, see Ghana and serve.

Let us help you.

Contact details: Ghana

Project location
4 Kojo Armah Road
Chorkor, Accra, Ghana

Located on the road behind Chorkor Police Station.

BASICS International
P.O.Box CT 3727, Cantonments Accra
Ghana, West Africa.
(+233) (0) 277 320 925
(+233) (0) 277 512671

Contact details: USA

Mail all correspondences and donations to:
BASICS International
c/o 112 23 196th Street
St Albans, New York 11412
Ph: (718) 454 1273

Visit our satellite office at: (by appt only)
Thomas White Jr Foundation Building
162-04 South Road (Tuskegee Airmen Way)
Jamaica New York



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