

**REPORT OF THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
LIBERIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE; UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OCTOBER 4, 2008**

According to a December 2006 UNESCO sponsored “Situational Analysis of the Technical, Vocational Education and Training System in Liberia”:

“Poor access to and quality of education, as demonstrated by an illiteracy rate estimated by the Ministry of Education to be 75%, presents a major impediment to economic development, livelihoods, prosperity, and ultimate peace and security. Despite the government’s efforts in supporting Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET), the cost is well beyond the available resources. Financing TVET is problematic. Since the 1960’s, vocational training has been provided in selected educational institutions to empower youth and young adults between the ages of 15-35 for employment and to enable them play a meaningful role in society”

For many decades, the United Methodist Church of Liberia has addressed the need for the provision of vocational training opportunities through offering vocational classes in its junior and senior high-level schools. In today’s post war Liberia, vocational skill training programs can equip youth and young adults with both educational and professional skills that will allow them to rise above their current station as societal liabilities. Skill training in industrial, agriculture, artistic, and home arts is vital to promoting and encouraging economic growth and development in urban and rural communities. “Quick Impact” vocational skill training is essential in addressing the need to provide training opportunities to the “lost” generation of present day young adults who were unable to attend school due to the civil war as well as today’s, post war disadvantaged hard-core youths.

Idle, frustrated, young adult ex combatants and war-affected persons can lead to destabilization of the peace process in Liberia. Providing them with vocational training will offer up a skilled pool of individuals to assist in the country’s long-term efforts towards infrastructural and program revitalization. In August 2008, the United Methodist Church created a Vocational Education Department (headed by a Director) with the two-prong goal of: (1) developing EXISTING vocational skill training opportunities in its high schools; and (2) establishing ten-month hands-on skill training extension classes in selected high schools to cater to un-educated and under-educated young adults.

The Department of Vocational Education has instituted a three-year general development plan:

YEAR ONE:

1. Assessment of all senior high vocational training programs;
2. Development of a ten-month skills training extension program at Tubman Gray School in Gbarnga;
3. Search for resources and partners;
4. Evaluation.

YEAR TWO:

1. Development of existing vocational training programs;
2. Development of a ten-month skills training extension program at a site to be decided after the complete assessment;
3. Search for resources and partners;
4. Evaluation.

YEAR THREE:

1. Development of existing vocational training programs;
2. Development of a ten-month skills training extension program at a site to be

- decided;
3. Search for resources and partners;
 4. Evaluation.

ACTIVITIES FROM JULY TO SEPTEMBER, 2008:

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPT OF GENERAL EDUCATION, THE PRINCIPAL OF TUBMAN GRAY SCHOOL, THE UMC DEPT. OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES AND THE DISTRICT SUPT. OF GBARNGA DISTRICT:

1. **Creation of office space and recruitment of staff for the Vocational Education Dept. at the UMC Central Office Building in Monrovia;**
2. **Receipt (and dissemination of supplies) of two 40ft. ocean freight containers (North Carolina Conference and Holston Conference) containing a vehicle for the Voc. Ed. Dept, mattresses for the Ministry to the Aged Dept, food for volunteers (doing clean up and gardening) at Tubman Gray School as well as other vulnerable groups, educational and vocational supplies;**
3. **Renovation of warehouse space at Gbarnga Mission Station;**
4. **Renovation (and expansion) of a building to become a five bedroom guest house for teams and short term volunteers (to be completed by January 2009);**
5. **Renovation of the Gbarnga Mission Carpentry Shop (which will also provide temporary classroom space for the extension classes until the actual classroom building is constructed by a workteam from Western NC Conf. in March 2009);**
6. **Development of Agriculture Program for the academic school and extension classes (cleared three acres and planted vegetable crops and will plant moringa);**
7. **Ongoing identification of Tubman Gray School Extension Classes prospective trainees and vocational skill training instructors;**
8. **Ongoing assessment of all senior high level vocational programs of the Liberia Annual Conference;**
9. **Ongoing development of local and international partnerships for program support.**

2008/2009 WORKTEAM INFORMATION:

September 24 to Oct. 1, 2008.....An assessment team from Western North Carolina Conference (WNCC) to seek the needs of the Tubman Gray School Vocational Skill Training Extension Program.

March 1-20, 2009.....WNCC team to construct classroom space for the Tubman Gray School Voc Skill Training Extension Program

October 2009 (TENTATIVE).....Team from Newburg UMC, Evansville, IN, led by Rev. Mark Dicken and Sister Barbara Dicken to roof the girls dormitory building that will house long term volunteers and female seminarians attending Gbarnga School of Theology.

ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES IS A SUMMARY OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM HIGH SCHOOLS AS OF OCTOBER 4, 2008.

**Analysis of Vocational Education & Training Assessment
Liberia Annual Conference, United Methodist Church**

No.	Name of School	Address	Vocational Courses Offered Presently	Year Voc. Courses Formed	Classes Taking Vocational Courses	Basic Needs
1.	J.J.Roberts UMS	12 th Street, Monrovia	Computer Edu.	2001	7 th -12 th	Home economics supplies/materials, good, up to date, used computers
			Home Economic	2005	7 th -9 th	
2.	St.Matthew UMS	Logan Town, Monrovia	Typing	2000	4 th -6 th	manual typewriters (purchased locally for \$250.00 USD), manual sewing machines (purchased locally for 175.00 USD) and good, up to date, used computers.
			Sewing	2000	7 th -9 th	
			Business Edu.	2003	10 th -12 th	
			Computer Edu.	2007	10 th -12	
3	Henri W.Dennis	Topoe Village, Gardnersville, Monrovia	Agriculture	1996	4 th -12 th	Stipends for 3 vocational instructors (@ appx. 80.00 USD per instructor), agricultural tools, good, up to date, used computers
			Accounting	1996	10 th -12 th	
			Computer Edu.	2007	4 th -12 th	
4.	J.L.Morris UMS	Duport Road, Paynesville	Home Econ	1996	4 th -11 th	Manual sewing machines, crocheting thread, knitting thread, cloth, and general sewing supplies, agricultural tools.
			Agriculture	1996	4 th -11 th	
5.	Tappita UMS	Tappita, Nimba Co.	Agriculture	2000	5 th -12 th	Home economic materials; manual sewing machines, agricultural tools
			Home Economics	2000	5 th -12 th	

No.	Name of School	Address	Vocational Courses Offered Presently	Year Voc. Courses Formed	Classes Taking Vocational Courses	Basic Needs
6.	College Of West Africa	Ashmun Street, Monrovia	Home Economics	1978	10 th -12 th	Electric Stove (@ 350.00 locally); Baking Utensils; Fabrics; manual sewing machines; music, drafting, accounting and bookkeeping textbooks
			Drafting	1978	10 th -12 th	
			Bookkeeping and Accounting	1978	10 th -12 th	
			Music	1978	10 th -12 th	
7.	Tubman Gray Academic Program	Gbarnga, Bong Co.	Accounting	2006	10 th -12 th	Financial support for vocational teachers (@ 80.00 per teacher); baking supplies (measuring cups/spoons, pans) and sewing supplies (fabric and general sewing supplies such as thread, needles, zippers, shears, buttons, etc.
			Home Economics (Sewing and Baking)	2000	4 th -11 th	
			Agriculture	2000	4 th -11 th	
			Computer	2006	7 th -12 th	
			Soap Making	2007	4 th -11 th	
	Tubman Gray Extension Vocational Skills Program	Gbarnga Bong Co.	Agriculture, Bldg. Construction, Cabinet Making, Cosmetology, Home Economics	AS OF JAN. 2009:	10 MONTH HANDS-ON SKILLS TRAINING CLASSES FOR ADULTS WHO HAVE NO OR LIMITED EDUCATION	Carpentry Hand Tools; Masonry Hand Tools; Manual Sewing Machines; General Sewing Supplies (thread, needles, zippers, fabric, crocheting and knitting threads, etc); agriculture tools (hoes, boots, shovels, rakes, machetes
8.	Brumskine UMS	Buchanan, Grand Bassa Co.	Tye dying		7 th -12 th	Basic Vocational and materials for the vocational courses are needed. Financial assistance is also needed for instructors
			Soap Making		7 th -12 th	
			Tailoring		7 th -12 th	
			Typing		7 th -12 th	
			Pastry		7 th -12 th	

No.	Name of School	Address	Vocational Courses Offered Presently	Year Voc. Courses Formed	Classes Taking Vocational Courses	Basic Needs
9.	Ganta UMS	Ganta, Nimba Co.	Computer Edu., Arts and Crafts, Typing, Building Trade, Home Economics, Agriculture	1970's and computer course established in early 2000's	NOTE: Home Economics, Agriculture, Computer Education, Typing Classes are offered to grades 9-12 (with agriculture also offered to 4-12 th grades) AND Arts and Crafts and Building Trade Classes are offered to Junior High Students	AGRICULTURE: Cutlasses (machetes), shovels, hoes, axes, diggers, rain boots and coats; HOME ECONOMICS: Manual Sewing Machines; 10 kva generator (can be purchased locally for \$2,500.00 US); scissors; cloth dyes; needles; thread; general baking supplies (pans, measuring cups, spoons); basic carpentry tools (saws, screw drivers, hammers, tape level/rule/line, hand planes, etc.; good, up to date, used computers; flash drives, computer text books; manual typewriters;
10.	Arthur F. Kulah	Virginia,	NONE			
11.	J.S.Patt	Pleebo, Maryland Co.	NONE			

SUBMITTED BY:

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 UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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We are using the following Advance Special Project listing:

Swords Turned Into Plowshares, #14488A

An alternative, productive lifestyle and livelihood for young ex-combatants.

TO SUPPORT THIS ADVANCE SPECIAL PROJECT, DONATIONS CAN BE SENT THROUGH THE GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES. MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO "ADVANCE GCFA". ON THE NOTATION SECTION OF YOUR CHECK, WRITE "SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES # 14488A". SEND THE CHECK TO: ADVANCE GCFA; P.O. BOX 9068 GPO; NEW YORK, NY 10087-9068. PLEASE INCLUDE A SHORT COVER LETTER INDICATING "THE FUNDS ARE FOR THE SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES PROGRAM TO THE ATTENTION OF HERBERT ZIGBUO". FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES' SUPPORTED ADVANCE SPECIAL PROGRAM, INCLUDING OPTIONS FOR DONATING ONLINE, PLEASE GO TO THE FOLLOWING WEBSITE :

<http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/advance>.

