

Herald of Hope

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Rescued by Love & Lifted by Hope



John Arthur at the Main Entrance to Webster University Ghana Campus

I was 8 years old when I was sent from my parents to work on Lake Volta. When my parents' marriage ended up in divorce, their children were split between the two of them. Some went to live with our mother who immediately traveled with them to Cote d'Ivoire, the country to the west of Ghana. The rest of us stayed with our father. I was the youngest of the siblings who stayed with our father. My problems began when our father remarried. Our step mother didn't like us. Since my other siblings were much older, they were more independent and she could not control them. I was a little boy at home and she vented all her frustrations on me. She constantly maltreated me. My father had no use of me as I was just loitering around the house all the time so when a fisherman came looking for boys to work for him, my father handed me over to him. They

agreed that he would send money monthly to my father for the services I would render to him. We left at night for the Volta Lake. I think it was because the fisherman didn't want anyone to see him taking me away. I think he also didn't want the police to see that he was traveling with me to the lake. I was not noticeable among the passengers in the bus. It was a long, dark night.

When we arrived at the lake the next day, it was the beginning of my five-year stay of misery and pain. I met other children there. We worked around the clock with very little rest. Most of the time, we left the village for the lake at about 1am to set the nets to catch fish. We were told that the best time to set the net to catch fish was when it was completely dark. We would set the nets between 1am and 3am, leave the nets in the



VILLAGE OF HOPE

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LOCAL OVERSIGHT

The Elders of
Vertical Centre Church of Christ,
Community Six, Tema, Ghana.

SUPPORT

VOH-Ghana,
A 501(c)(3) Non-profit.

MINISTRIES

Hope Children's Village
Hope Training Institute
Hope Christian Academy
Hope Christian Hospital
Church of Christ School
Hope College
Agriculture
Church of Christ at Village of Hope
Campus Church of Christ - Ayawaso
Evangelism
Church Planting and Strengthening

water and return to the village. We would return later in the evening to retrieve the nets and whatever fish had been caught.

Returning from the lake at dawn was the beginning of a long day of hard work. My master's wife sold "polo." It is a flour meal that is fried in vegetable oil. It comes out of the oil with a crispy dark brown exterior and is eaten as a snack. She woke up at dawn to fry the "polo" and so by 5am, it would be ready for sale. I was the seller. I would set off at about 5am carrying a pan full of "polo" on my head and walk from the village to the big city of Kete-Krachi to sell the "polo." I would walk all over the city selling "polo" from morning to late afternoon when I had to return to retrieve the nets and fish caught from the water. I walked in the hot sun hawking the snacks from place to place.

One day, I went to the hospital to sell the "polo." As I was sitting down by the hospital and waiting to see if some patients, hospital workers and passers-by would buy some of the "polo," I fell asleep. I was completely exhausted from so much walking as well as having had very little sleep from the previous night and from so many other previous nights. The next thing I knew, a woman was waking me up from my sleep and my "polo" was nowhere to be found. I started crying and wailing that my "polo" was lost. The woman tried to persuade me to go home but I told her that I could not return home without the "polo." After failing to persuade

me, she took me to the police station. The police also tried to persuade me to return home but I refused. I told them that without the "polo" my life had ended but they could not understand me. They didn't understand what would happen to me if I returned to my master without the "polo" his wife had given to me to sell. I knew that I would be beaten mercilessly. After a long time, I met a man at the police station. He told me that he was a teacher and showed me his house. He told me that if I had any problems when I returned home, I could come to him for help. One police man accompanied me to the village to meet my master and his wife. He pleaded on my behalf and begged for mercy for me. After he left, my master called me and gave me some lashes at my back and warned me to be more careful next time I went to sell. That was when I got to know that my master had visited the hospital that day and when he saw me asleep, he quietly took the pan of "polo" away from me without waking me up and without anyone noticing him. He returned home with the pan of "polo."

Six months after the incident of the missing "polo," something else happened. This time, I lost part of the money from the sale of the "polo." I had sold all the "polo" but couldn't account for all the money. I don't know what happened. Part of the money might have been stolen by a pick-pocket. I really have no idea what happened to part of my sales for that day. I will never forget what happened after returning to my master's house with the report of



John Arthur – on the day he first arrived at Village of Hope



John Arthur (front row, 4th from the left) in a group picture with other children in the home of Roland & Gladys Bulley a few days after arriving at the Village of Hope



John Arthur's first day at school – pictured with other rescued children & Matilda Adu-Poku, their first teacher



John Arthur (back row, 4th from right) in 12th Grade at Hope College – pictured with other Village of Hope children in 12th Grade at Hope College

the missing money. First, all my clothing was taken off me, except my underwear. Next, I was tied to a tree in front of my master's house. Then I was beaten to a pulp! They knew that if they hadn't tied me to that tree, I would have run away. I was completely helpless. I had cuts all over my body and blood was oozing out of many parts of my body from the many cuts on my skin. A long while after the beatings stopped, I was untied. I just lay in the dirt under the tree. I was too weak to walk, let alone run away. I was given some food which I ate because I was very hungry too. That night, I remembered the teacher who had showed me his house the day the "polo" got missing and had told me that if I had any problems upon returning to my master's house, I could come to him for help. That was when I decided to run away from my master. At about 10pm when my master and his wife and children had gone to bed, I run away.

I walked from the village to the city. It was dark and I had no light. I could only make my way because I had walked that way countless times before, with a pan of "polo" for sale. Whenever I saw any flash light or heard any voices approaching me, I run off the path and hid in the bushes till the person or people had passed and I could no longer see the light nor hear their voices. I walked in the dark for more than an hour until I got to the city and located the teacher's house. I sat behind the house and began to cry. One of the sons of the teacher heard me, came out to see what was happening and took me into the house to his father. It was about midnight. The family was shocked to see cuts and blood all over my body. They gave me food to eat and a place to sleep.

Early the next morning, the teacher brought in a photographer to take pictures of the cuts and blood on my body. By this time, the blood had formed clots on my skin. He said he wanted the evidence so that my master could not deny what he had done to me. After the photographer finished taking the pictures, the teacher took me to the police station. All the police officers remembered me from the missing "polo" incident six months earlier. Some police men were immediately dispatched to go to the village and arrest my master. By the time the police arrived, the entire village was empty. Somehow, they had gotten wind that the police were on their way there and all the residents in the small village had run away into hiding. The police therefore entrusted me into the care of the teacher until they could

locate my father. That was when I got to know that the teacher's name was Mr. George Achibra.

All efforts by the police to contact my father proved futile. Eventually, they were able to locate my uncle and so I was sent to live with my uncle in a village called Aboasi, near the port city of Takoradi in the Western Region of Ghana. Two days after I arrived at my uncle's home, my father showed up. A week later, my mother also showed up at my uncle's house. My mother decided to take me along to live with her. So, from Aboasi, my mother and I traveled to another village called Ahobre, near Axim, also in the Western Region of Ghana. That was where my mother settled when she returned from her sojourn in Cote d'Ivoire. I lived with my mother for about three months.

One day, Mr. Achibra showed up with news that he had come to take me to a new life at a place called Village of Hope. New life it was! A life full of hope!!! I was a little over 13 years old when I arrived at the Village of Hope. It was around the Christmas time and there were so many festivities around that time. I couldn't believe that there was so much food to eat, so much soda to drink, so much laughter and joy and so much freedom. Life was so much better and brighter. I had never bathed under a shower before but at the Village of Hope, I bathed under a shower for the first time in my life. I slept on a mattress for the first time at the Village of Hope. I was able to wear a school uniform and go to school for the first time at the Village of Hope. Love saved me from slavery on the Volta Lake; and at the Village of Hope, hope lifted me up out of hopelessness into a bright and hopeful future. I had my elementary school education at Hope Christian Academy and my high school education at Hope College, both at the Village of Hope campus at Fetteh in the Central Region of Ghana. Today, I am a freshman at the Ghana Campus of Webster University, one of the most prestigious universities in the world with its home campus in Saint Louis, Missouri, USA.

I want to thank all of you who have made it possible not only for me but for so many other children to have hope and a bright future at the Village of Hope. Thank you very much for your love, for your care, for your support and for your sponsorship. Thank you very much for all that you have done for us. God bless you very much. 🙏



George Achibra



John Arthur in the Halls of the Webster University Ghana Campus



Some High School Students of Hope Children's Village

When Village of Hope officially began in 1996, there were only eight children to be cared for. The entire staff was four people – an executive director, a married couple as house parents and one security man; and there was only one cottage for the care of children. That small beginning was like a small mustard seed planted in the soil of Ghana. Over the years, it has grown into a huge tree with widely-spread branches, bearing much fruit to feed and provide shelter, comfort and hope for thousands of people – children and adults alike – daily. The lives being impacted daily is a testimony to the goodness of God, expressed through the kindness of His children in serving humanity to the praise and glory of God.

Hope Children's Village currently cares for **207** children as follows:

- Elementary School = 99
- Vocational School = 11
- High School = 52
- High School Graduates = 12
- College = 33

Hope Training Institute is training **40** children – 24 boys and 16 girls – daily.

Hope Christian Hospital provides medical care to an average of **80** patients daily.

Hope Christian Academy impacts the lives of **542** students from Pre-Kindergarten to 9th Grade each day.

Church of Christ School has a current enrolment of **272** students from Pre-Kindergarten to 9th Grade.

Hope College educates **430** students daily.

This means that currently, Village of Hope is impacting more than **1,571** lives daily to the glory of God.

Soon, Hope Haven will open its doors to receive and give loving care to babies in dying need of care and compassion. It will be a residential babies' home for an initial 20 babies and afterwards grow gradually to help more babies. [📄](#)



Some College Students of Hope Children's Village



Family Meal Prep Time at Hope Children's Village



Leatherworks Training Class at Hope Training Institute



Game Time at Hope Christian Academy



Entrance to Hope Christian Hospital Out Patients Department



Class in Session at Church of Christ School



Students of Hope College in Becky Holloway Courtyard



Children of Prestoncrest Church of Christ House A
Insert: Juliet & Rexford Asumeng (House Parents)



Children of Prestoncrest Church of Christ House B
Insert: Irene & Ebenezer Ayisi (House Parents)



Children of George & Mary Chisholm House
Insert: Cynthia & George Arthur (House Parents)



Children of Douglas & Margaret Boateng House
Insert: Helina Mensah & Samuel Okyere (House Parents)



Children of Traverse City Church of Christ House
Insert: Victor & Victoria Agbeko (House Parents)



Children of CDH House
Insert: Felix & Regina Nimako (House Parents)



Children of Linary Church of Christ House
Insert: Betty & Samuel Afriyie (House Parents)



Cecilia Tandoh (Caregiver), Christina Tackie & Cecilia's Daughter Vida Egyir

Where “Our Children” Now Serve

Even though we may refer to them as “our children,” many who once lived at the Village of Hope as children are no longer children but grown-up adults. When they first arrived in the homes at Village of Hope, they were children – hungry, malnourished, abused, abandoned, scared and vulnerable little children. At the Village of Hope, they received loving care, education, healthcare, spiritual care and nurturing. Over the years, they attended elementary school, high school and college. Some learnt vocational skills in various professions. Some started their own businesses while others went to work for employers in varied sectors of the economy.

How time flies! Now, they are independent adults, responsible and productive members of society, starting their own families and caring for their own children. They are serving in numerous fields of human endeavor. Let us share with you, just a few of the various areas where “our children” now serve – medicine, law, education, military, agriculture, immigration, hospitality, accounting, banking, social work, and building construction. [📌](#)



Bright Kwaku Takyi (Military)



Frank Tetteh (Immigration)



Fortune Bulley (Agriculture)



Francis-Xavier Sosu (Law)



Solomon Obiri-Yeboah (Medicine)



Faithful Servants - Sappah Yahaya, Julliet Ofori-Amoah, Asuo Mensah & Dawun Taphambah

These independent children of Village of Hope have returned and are currently serving in four different ministries of Village of Hope.

Sappah is the Accounts Manager of Hope Christian Academy, the elementary school at Fetteh.

Julliet is the Accounts Manager of Hope Training Institute, the vocational/trade school for street children.

Asuo is the Administrative Manager of Hope College, the high school.

Dawun is the Accounts Manager of Hope Children's Village, which is the orphanage/children's home.



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Hope Christian Hospital Needs Beds to Serve In-Patients

With the addition of three houses to the facilities of Hope Christian Hospital, the hospital now has the capacity to serve many more sick people. To be able to do this, the hospital needs to expand its bed capacity for patients who are admitted, for nursing mothers soon after delivery and for those recovering after surgery. The hospital has space for 40 additional beds.



Will you please consider buying **one bed** to serve the sick? A bed costs \$370.

You may send a check earmarked "Hospital Beds" to:

Village of Hope
P. O. Box 670394
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or contact us at info@thevillageofhope.com or on **(682) 302-1939**.