

Herald of Hope

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18 GRADUATE FROM HOPE TRAINING INSTITUTE



Hope Training Institute Class of 2021

The much-anticipated graduation ceremony for trainees of Hope Training Institute (HTI) took place on March 31, 2021 at the Ayawaso Campus of Village of Hope, where Hope Training Institute is located.

The majority of these precious young men and women were living on the streets up until 2017 when they came to HTI for shelter and skill training. Two of them are orphans who joined the Village of Hope family as children in our homes at Fetteh, went through formal education, and then transitioned into vocational skills training at HTI.

The pride on the faces of our graduating trainees was evident, even behind nose masks, as they made a procession and took their seats in view of invited guests, staff of HTI, leaders of Village of Hope, members of the HTI Board, continuing trainees of HTI, and, most importantly, their own relatives with whom they had been reconnected and reconciled during their time at HTI.

The event began with an exhibition of the trainees' work in sewing, leatherworks, fine art and beadwork and then the audience settled down to listen to speeches from the Managing Director of HTI and

the Chairman of the Board of HTI. The Village of Hope Leadership Team presented certificates to the trainees and then representatives of the HTI Board presented tools and equipment to each trainee based on their program of study. Three trainees who excelled in the fine art enrichment program also received gifts of art supplies.

The Managing Director of HTI, Juliet Ofori-Amoah, had these words for the trainees:

'It has been a terrific four-year-long journey, interspersed with happy moments, not-so-good ones and tensions, but as the saying goes "all is well that ends well." It feels good to see the happiness that sparkles through your eyes and the smiles that dance in the corners of your mouths as you pass out of Hope Training Institute today. We have seen you all grow, over the years, and we must say with great enthusiasm how proud we are of you all. A hearty congratulations to you all; you deserve it. We are proud to call you all graduates.

Today marks an important day in your lives, yet the start of a new journey. Just like how fully-fledged birds are able to fly and soar even higher, we send you into your various communities as qualified artisans



VILLAGE OF HOPE

Rescuing. Repairing. Preparing. Propelling.

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Instagram: [villageofhopegh](https://www.instagram.com/villageofhopegh)

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

expecting you to excel in your chosen fields and propel yourselves to greater heights, having been prepared and equipped with timeless skills and virtues. We charge you, on this day, to uphold the values and standards that have been inculcated in you over the years. As the saying goes: “tough times don’t last but tough people do.” Difficult times are bound to come but in the face of these, remember that determination, resilience and complete reliance on God will see you through.’

Mark Bekoe, Chairman of the HTI Board, spoke about saving lives and serving humanity through skill training. He reminded the trainees to be people of integrity as they ply their trade, in order to stand out from the rest. Fred Asare, Executive Director of Village of Hope, charged our 18 graduating trainees to be light, salt, water, shade and air to others like them as they go out to begin a new chapter of their lives. He also prayed for them. Before the ceremony ended, Patience Addy, a member of the graduating class, thanked everyone on behalf of her class. The event was streamed live and you can still find the video on the Village of Hope Facebook page.

On the Sunday after graduation, staff of HTI joined the trainees for a special thanksgiving service during which the campus church presented special kente stoles with each trainee’s name woven into the fabric. Special prayers were said for the 18 graduating trainees.

Whenever you say a prayer, please remember to include Kwabena Alhassan, Isaac Kawuli, Michael Tegyi, Roger Abaah, Prince Appekey, Portia Asare, Margaret Tatsi, Patience Addy, Gabriel Leyi, Collins Appiah, Isaac Norvor, Mavis Tatsi, Gladys Aklamanu, Prince Teye, Gideon Obiri, Isaac Andoh, Emmanuel Okyere, and Emmanuel Akanbul. [@](#)



Juliet Ofori-Amoah, Managing Director of Hope Training Institute, delivers a welcome address at the graduation ceremony.



Mark Bekoe, Board Chair of Hope Training Institute, speaks about saving lives and serving humanity through skill training.



Fred Asare, Executive Director of Village of Hope, charges the graduating trainees to go back into their communities to be of service to others.



Patience Addy, graduating with skills in sewing, offers a vote of thanks to God and all who have contributed to their development at Hope Training Institute.



Samuel Ahiavi, Head of Finance at Village of Hope, takes in some of the trainees’ fine artworks at the exhibition.



Gabriel Leyi receives his certificate for graduating with skills in sewing.



Gideon Obiri receives his sewing machine as part of his graduation package.



Alex Peasah-Koduah, Medical Director of Hope Christian Hospital, studies items on display at the exhibition.



Hope Training Institute’s Class of 2021 pose with staff of the institute who have all been instrumental in getting them through training to graduation.

HTI GIVES BACK

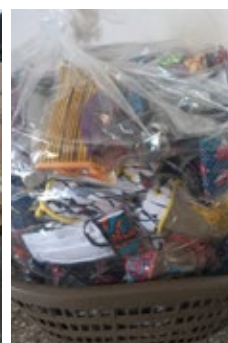
March 19, 2021 was an emotional day for members of the Hope Training Institute (HTI) family on many different levels. The goal of the day was to visit the streets of Accra and share our blessings with 300 people (children and teenagers) as part of Village of Hope celebrating 25 years of saving lives and serving humanity.

The most moving part of that day's visits to the streets was seeing three teens who had the opportunity for an improvement in their lives at HTI but chose to leave because the "call of the streets" was too strong and the structure at HTI was, in their opinion, too much to handle. One of them, a girl who already had one child when she was first admitted to HTI to learn hairdressing, now has her second child at the age of 17. One of the two boys, after running away from HTI, had lied to his friends on the streets that he had completed his training at HTI. He tried all he could to run away from the area when the Village of Hope van arrived. The third boy, who could have been graduating with the Class of 2021, was looking wretched and unwell. It was disheartening to see these teenagers and think about what could have been.

From 3 PM when we left the Ayawaso campus, we visited the National Theatre area, the Airport City area, the Ghana Standards Board area, Dzorwulu Junction, Mallam Atta market and Kaneshie market, all hotspots for those living the street life in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. The number of boys and girls who came out to collect packs of food, biscuits, drinks, nose masks and sanitizers was overwhelming and the team had to do a lot of crowd control in order to distribute items fairly. Some had wounds that needed dressing and those were immediately taken care of by the team. Others were high on drugs and, in that moment, nothing could be done about it.

It was immediately obvious that there was a tremendous difference between those who had left the streets and those who were living on the streets but this did not stop the trainees of HTI from reaching out to their brothers and sisters and sharing what they brought with them. By the time we were back on campus, it was already midnight. If we could, we would have brought everyone back with us to the HTI campus at Ayawaso just to have a bath and a conversation about the future.

We have limited space and funding and can only shelter, train, counsel, and provide healthcare for 50 trainees at any given time. It is our hope that support from our donors will lead to an expansion of our facilities to be able to help more of our children. [🔗](#)



Items to be sent to the streets of Accra:
A packed meal; drinks and water; cookies; and cloth masks sewn by the Sewing Class at HTI.



HTI team loads up pickup for the trip to the streets of Accra.



Trainees of HTI hit the streets to find their brothers and sisters.



Trainees of HTI reconnect with their brothers and sister who chose to leave the program at the Institute to go back to the streets.



Staff of Hope Training Institute give advice, dress wounds, and share information during their visit to the streets of Accra.



A crowd of street girls gathers to receive their packages.



A pack of food makes a difference.



Former street boys, about to graduate from HTI, reconnect with one of their brothers still living on the street and attempt to recreate a photo taken in 2017 with their social worker.



A HAVEN FOR COSMOS

Cruelty against children is evil and unacceptable. When such evil is perpetrated by a family member, it is often very traumatizing and destructive to children because the people closest to them who should offer them love and protection become the very people abusing them. That is exactly what happened to Cosmos (not his real name so as to protect his identity).

Cosmos was born out of wedlock by a teenage mother. From the very beginning of life, therefore, he faced rejection not only by the community into which he was born but also by his own family as they felt that the circumstances surrounding his mother's pregnancy and his birth had brought shame to the family. His teenage mother, feeling the brunt of the shame and rejection of her family and community, regretted having given birth to him and so did not show much interest in him and did not pay much attention to him. As if that was not enough, a few years following his birth, his mother moved out of their community and traveled to a big city very far away. She left Cosmos behind and so he came under the custody of his uncle.

One day, his uncle's money got missing; an amount of ten Ghanaian cedis (equivalent to one American dollar and seventy cents). His uncle suspected that Cosmos had stolen the money. Even though, after several interrogations with severe beatings, Cosmos denied having stolen the money, his uncle insisted that Cosmos was the one who stole the money. To "punish him for stealing," the uncle cut off one of Cosmos' fingers. Imagine the pain, shock and deep trauma Cosmos went through – losing his finger over less than two dollars for a crime he did not commit.

When the police heard about what he had done to Cosmos, they arrested his uncle and prosecuted him in court. The case is currently ongoing in court. To ensure his safety and wellbeing, the court ordered that Cosmos be temporarily taken care of in a place where he would be safe. That is how Village of Hope - Bongo, the churches of Christ's children home at Bongo, became a haven for Cosmos. [📖](#)



Cosmos at Village of Hope - Bongo

Other Children of Village of Hope - Bongo



UPDATE FROM BONGO

As was reported in the November 2020 edition of the newsletter, Village of Hope is now responsible of the care of orphaned, needy and destitute children at the churches of Christ's children's home in Bongo. Renovations on all the buildings are now complete and a small group of key staff is in place to ensure the day-to-day operations of Village of Hope - Bongo.

Here is a photo of the staff and of what the campus at Bongo now looks like after renovations were completed. There is a lot of work ahead of us to provide for these children adequately and we are counting on your support to continue saving lives and serving humanity. [📞](#)



Administrator, House mother, Social worker (also House father), cook, and security man at Village of Hope - Bongo



Main entrance of Village of Hope - Bongo



House One



House Two



House Three



Side view of House One, House Two, House Three, Storage Building and Shed



Office Building attached to Meeting Hall (left), Back of House Two (middle) and Kitchen Building (right)

HOPE COLLEGE STUDENT RECEIVES WEST AFRICAN AWARD

The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) is an international organization responsible for various academic examinations across Anglophone West Africa. The five member countries of the council are The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Every year, one of the member countries hosts a five-day conference called the Annual Council Meeting. This meeting is the most important activity in the diary of the West African Examinations Council where all accredited representatives of WAEC's principal stakeholders from the five member countries are present. At the opening ceremony which is a public event, the council honors three examination candidates with outstanding performance in the West African Senior High School Certificate Examination (which is written by 12th graders) with the International Excellence Award.

The 69th Annual Council Meeting was hosted virtually in Ghana this year. At the meeting it was announced that a total of 2,264,707 examination candidates from the five countries wrote the West African Senior High School Certificate Examination in 2020. Of this number, 465 were considered for the International Excellence Award on the basis of making straight A's on the exam without any examination malpractice. The actual scores on the tests were then used to choose the top three performers. All three recipients of the International Excellence Award were from Ghana and the one who came second was Godfred Aseda Obeng of the Hope College Class of 2020.

Godfred Aseda Obeng was admitted to Hope College in 2017 and began to show early promise of academic improvement. He exhibited a serious attitude toward academic work, his responsibilities as a student and life in general. Though quiet and unassuming, his assiduousness towards his studies resulted in academic excellence which earned him a place to represent Hope College in the National Science and Math Quiz competition where Hope College was narrowly eliminated in the Central Regional preliminary contest. Godfred's academic

excellence was as exemplary as his moral character. While a student at Hope College, he was a person of integrity and humility. He was very respectful in his speech and conduct. He also had an altruistic personality that endeared him to the entire Hope College community. He went out of his way to offer help to others. His achievements are an abiding motivation and testimony to all students that hard work, diligence, perseverance, integrity, humility and selflessness pay lasting dividends to those who pursue excellence anchored on a virtuous character.

The entire Village of Hope family is so proud of Godfred's achievements and we hope and pray that other students of Hope College would emulate him in all areas and continue to strive for excellence. 📖



Godfred Aseda Obeng receives International Excellence Award

SAMUEL AND DALIEL GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE



This year, two of our sons have graduated from college. Samuel Gyesei had an in-person graduation ceremony at Heritage Christian College. The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology had a virtual graduation ceremony at which Dalziel Yaare graduated. Samuel now holds a BSc. in Administration (Accounting) and Dalziel has a BSc. in Agriculture. As usual, members of the Village of Hope family attended Samuel's graduation. 📖

Left: Members of VOH family join Samuel Gyesei at his graduation ceremony.

Right: Dalziel Yaare in his university's graduation regalia



VISION 2020

PROGRESS UPDATE

Management of Hope Christian School cannot hide our joy to see the resumption of construction work on the preschool building. The project, which started three years ago, came to a standstill as a result of financial challenges.

Our dream of ending the ugly sight of holding classes on a corridor for 9th graders was revived when the the Executive Director of Village of Hope and other leaders from the Fetteh campus visited the project site in mid-February of 2021 to see the current status of the abandoned project.

Shortly after the the team's visit, a contractor was sent to Nkwatia to assess the building and subsequently give an estimate of what would be needed to ensure the continuity and completion of construction work.

Thanks to the support of Heartbeat for Hope, Management of Village of Hope was able to release funds for the procurement of construction materials and work is currently ongoing.

Management of Hope Christian School will forever be grateful to all our donors whose contributions seek to benefit countless learners who would sit in these classrooms to receive a firm foundation in their lifelong education. [🔗](#)

- RICHMOND TWUM (Managing Director of Hope Christian School)



Construction in progress at Hope Christian School, Nkwatia

The pictures below show ongoing renovations to the Barnett Houses, now part of Hope Christian Hospital.



Joy and Marita Barnett Houses undergo renovation which includes changing of old and damaged fascia boards.



Painter puts finishing touches on Carolyn Barnett House.



Freshly painted Carolyn Barnett House

VISION OF HOPE - 2020: TOWARDS OPERATIONAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY

I. HOPE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE (ORPHANAGE)

Renovation of first 5 Children's Homes/Cottages

	\$
1. George & Mary Chisholm House	10,000
2. Douglas & Margaret Boateng House	10,000
3. Traverse City Church of Christ House	10,000
4. Prestoncrest Church of Christ House A	10,000
5. Prestoncrest Church of Christ House B	10,000

Sub-Total **50,000**

II. HOPE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL (PRE-K THROUGH 9TH GRADE)

	\$
1. Renovation of Primary and Junior High School Buildings	12,000
2. Furniture for Classrooms	8,000

Sub-Total **20,000**

GRAND TOTAL: \$70,000.00

