

2008-2009 RCEC Annual Report

Rural Communities Empowerment Center (www.rcempowerment.org)

It starts one community at a time.....

RCEC continues to empower the communities it serves. RCEC still believes strongly in working in partnership with local schools, leveraging local champions and tasking our Community Resource Centers (CRCs) managed by communities where they are established. RCEC's core programs, activities and services are effective and have a measurable impact on the communities. Mentoring programs related to reading, writing, math and science for 13 to 17 year-olds have attracted great interest within the communities where RCEC is present.

Last year RCEC welcomed a volunteer, from InterAct, a non-profit IT-based organization, based in Germany, for the Apiredre Community Resource Center to help with the Children and ICT activities. The same organization is helping with ICT training in Jumapo, RCEC's second Resource Center.

Since RCEC's inception, we are incredibly proud that clothing and handbags created by seamstresses trained through the center have been featured in major fashion magazines and press outlets such as Essence Magazine, Honey Magazine, Obaasema Magazine, Gladys Magazine, the Amsterdam News and World Bride Magazine, the Real Housewives of New York, That Morning Show LA and most recently, the 2010 March Issue of Teen Vogue, to list a few. (www.teenvogue.com/style/market/feature/2010/02/global-style).

Our Sponsors

Our current sponsors are the African Women Development Fund (AWDF), Open Society Initiatives for West Africa (OSIWA), IBM Employee Contributions, Universalgiving as well as individual donors.

RCEC Activities & Services

Libraries: We make reading materials available and provide a place to do schoolwork and receive mentoring in reading, writing, math and science. Teachers use the library resources to supplement their own teaching materials and to pursue their out-of class study needs.

ICT Programs: We train children, adults; teachers from primary grades through high school in introductory ICT classes that help break build their confidence and make them competitive in the job market.

- The Wireless Project – has made Internet access available to thousands of people and will extend to additional communities in 2010. RCEC will receive funding from OSIWA for the wireless initiative. www.wirelessghana.com

Children's Programs (3-5yrs): We provide a place for the communities' youngest members to read, explore and participate in educational and fun-filled activities. We continue to receive interactive toys from individual donors.

Women Programs: We make empowerment programs available to develop or enhance skills for economic gains through tailoring, ICT and communications skills.

Our Impact on the Communities We Serve

- RCEC continues to see community members displaying confidence and excitement over and awareness of the benefit of technology and RCEC's mentoring programs.
- Gender equality is on the rise. Women are now articulating their needs and adolescent school girls are improving their test scores.
- Interest in reading has increased sharply. Over 20,000 people have used the two Centers, mostly school aged children using the library facilities.
- Mentoring programs are provided in reading, writing, math and science for 13 to 17 year-olds. This year for the first time since the institution of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), our pilot program had 26 out of 33 adolescent girls pass all the required subjects and move on to Senior High School. In 2009 RCEC received funding from individual donors as well as the African Women Development Fund (AWDF) to further mentoring initiatives. Additionally, in 2010 RCEC will receive funding from OSIWA.

Other Initiatives

Wireless Project

The first phase of the project covering 10 communities is complete. We expect to extend the project to 10 more communities providing more access points to more high schools, small businesses and church groups.

Collaborations

RCEC continues to collaborate with UNDP to develop ICT infrastructure and capacity in the rural areas.

UniversalGiving

RCEC is registered with UniversalGiving, a web-based global charitable giving platform where individuals can contribute to exceptional organizations.

The Way Forward

We are still dedicated to the:

- Continuation of RCEC's core activities and services
- Expansion of the mentoring program to include more students
- Establishment of two additional Resource Centers

How You Can Help

Help us by providing funds to:

- Mentor adolescent girls and boys ages 13-17 in reading and writing, math and science for admissions to and success at some of the better public high schools and avoid at-risk behavior.
- Train women and adolescent girls in tailoring to enhance skills or gain skills.
- Continue the ICT training for school children and high school drop-outs and provide access fees.
- Establish additional Community Resource Centers.

Donate at www.rcempowerment.org or www.universalgiving.org, under keywords type "rural communities" and select a gift package.