



Roots Activity Learning Center & Roots Public Charter School Alumni Newsletter 2008

ROOTS SCHOOL NEWS

Angela Ethridge - Editor

Rites of Passage Trip to Ghana!

The Roots Rites of Passage program traveled to Ghana, West Africa June 2-9, 2008. The ten eligible students were 2007 and 2008 initiates who sought the tremendous experience of crossover on African soil.

Hard work and answered prayers allowed Mama Bernida Thompson to fulfill her dream of Roots Rites of Passage initiates crossing over in West Africa. The trip coordinators, N'Silo and Natalege' Oure are extended Roots family members as well as fellow church members of Mama Bernida's. Due to their missionary and personal travels to Ghana and familiarity with the Roots mission, they were able to plan a trip that was educational and culturally relevant.

The group visited a village school and donated school supplies, visited I.B.S. educational complex where each student formed a relationship with a pen pal, toured the Cape Coast and Elmina slave dungeons, and toured Asankrangwa. Asankrangwa is the capital of the Western region of Ghana. Asankrangwa's Mayor and first lady took us to receive formal welcomes from a tribal chief and top elected officials. We visited Kakum national forest where we tested our endurance by crossing seven rope bridges hundreds of feet in the air. We also visited world renowned ethnobotanist Dr. Kweku Andoh's Moringa tree farm, and experienced a beautiful crossover ceremony on the beach of the coastal city Elmina where 10 African American expatriates came to bear witness to our students crossing over into young adulthood.

Kamaria Johnson (8th grade), Anjelica Manning (8th grade), Sade Redd (8th grade), Aamira Sudah (8th grade), Danielle Wright (7th Grade) and several recent Alumni: Johnwilliam Carroll, Princess Dogan-EI, Michael Lawson, Nekkakhi Rayford, and Raven Reese all represented Roots very well.



Roots students and chaperones, IBS students, Ghanaian elected officials and dignitaries.



Rites of Passage Crossover Ceremony 2008
Elmina, Ghana

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ALUMNI NEWS

2008 Roots Alumni Graduates

Ryian Abney Roots PCS c/o 2004 graduated from North-western H.S. and will attend the Art Institute.

Che' Dickerson Roots PCS c/o 2004 graduated from School Without Walls H.S. and will attend Rutgers University.

Taylor Lewis Roots PCS c/o 2004 graduated from HomeSchool and will attend Prince George's Community College.

Kiersten McGee Roots ALC c/o 2004 graduated from Eleanor Roosevelt H.S. and will attend Prince Georges community College in preparation to ultimately study dentistry.

Ted Daniels Jr. Roots ALC c/o 1998 will graduate Florida A&M University on August 8, 2008 with an MBA.

Other Stellar Accomplishments

Dr. Afriye Amerson Roots ALC c/o 1984 has made several appearances as an expert guest OB/GYN on the Montel Williams Show and The Morning Show with Mike and Juliet.

Narayana Hall Roots PCS c/o 2003 enlisted in the US Army.

Branden Jacobs-Jenkins Roots ALC

c/o 1998 volunteered as a career day mentor to a current Roots PCS Middle School student, aspiring to a career in the film industry.

Jameelah Morris Roots ALC c/o 2005, a rising Senior at Banneker H.S. spent her spring break on a six day European studies tour where she visited Spain,

Switzerland, Italy and France. She is spending the summer in the "Amigos" program, where she is engaged in six weeks of community service.

Janee Williams Roots ALC c/o 2000, a Senior at Frostburg State University is serving as an Upward Bound Mentor.

A Dream Realized

BY DR. BERNIDA THOMPSON

Hotep! I'm proud of the Roots Alumni for their college success, career success and leadership in our community. Our present students also continue to thrive in this wonderful environment of caring and competent educators. Yet, it gets harder each year to keep independent African-Centered educational institutions economically viable. We need you to make an annual financial commitment to ensure children of African heritage have another year of quality African-Centered education. If each of you pledges just \$100 per year, we will have the dollars to provide our children with an education that gives them the tools to become the leaders of tomorrow. For a donation of \$100 you will be recognized as a Roots 21st Century Club Member, and for donations of \$500 or \$1,000 respectively, you will become a member of our Roots Silver or Gold Club. Also, \$100, \$500 or \$1000 signifies your dedication to your community as a NATION BUILDER. You will be honored by our school with a plaque. We are also listed on the form for the United Way, so you can give at your job and check the box "Roots Activity Learning Center" or just send your gift to us. Along with your contribution, please send news about what you are doing, your email address, and your recent picture for our newsletter. My personal thanks to alumnus Skylar Byrd, Robert Williams of Eastern Avenue, and Cheickh Aidera for their \$100-\$500 contributions to their African-Centered Alma Mater.

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Alumni of Roots Schools Can Contribute in Many Ways

BY ANGELA ETHRIDGE c/o 1996

As you already know, attending Roots was a very unique experience. We had the opportunity to learn in a safe environment where our teachers were often as nurturing as blood relatives. We were taught academics, but more importantly, the necessity of acknowledging Africa's true history and social responsibility. Once we graduated Roots, we were armored with an understanding of our history and subsequent self-love that protected us from the harsh realities of mainstream society.

As an alumna of Roots, I am honored to be back home working at Roots PCS. I was hired in August 2007 as the Assistant Teacher in the Primary classroom. I initially accepted the position because it was a good opportunity for hands-on experience while I study School Psychology at Howard University.

As soon as I began my first day with the children, I felt like I had been away from home for a long time, and was finally back. Though I was a teacher this go round, I still felt as nurtured, special, and valued as I did as a student. And just as being at Roots made me more motivated

to learn and achieve as a student, I was more motivated to achieve and learn as a member of the staff. Before coming back to Roots to teach, I would always tell myself "I should go visit Roots," but would always put it off until later. It is a regret of mine that this attitude is partly why I had no idea that Baba Kamau was so sick before his transition. Well, no one can keep me away from Roots now!

My experience this year has led me to realize that alumni are valuable and have so much to offer. Though many of us are established in our careers, many more of us are still in school or the early stages of our paths. Therefore, we cannot all make large financial contributions. But our schools still need us. As a private school and a public charter school, community resources are our bread and butter. I want to see our schools flourish to their potential, so many more generations of beautiful African children can succeed!

I look forward to seeing and hearing from many more Alumni in the coming school year! Remember: The school's legacy is in our hands.

The following are ways in which I've observed potential for Alumni to play a role in our schools:

- Local high school students can complete their community service requirement at the Roots Aftercare Program.
- Local college education majors can get practicum/student teaching hours in the Infant Center-Middle School classrooms.
- Career Month: We always need people to volunteer as a career mentor for a middle school student to shadow for a day or come to the school as a guest speaker.
- Bring your family to the Annual Masquerade Disco October 31, 2008 and our Annual Family Love Skate Party Sunday February 15, 2009.
*Come by either school to purchase tickets.
- Lend your expertise and or life experience to the current Rites of Passage initiatives one Saturday.
- For those of us who are blessed: make a financial contribution.

Keep In Touch!

We Love to Hear About the Great Things our Alumni are Doing!

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OUR MISSION

- To Promote and Secure the connection of Mother Africa within our children
- To prepare students to break the chains of psychological conditioning that attempt to keep them powerless in all phases of society
- To provide students with a strong African-Centered learning environment
- To guide students toward academic excellence, exemplary character, and social responsibility
- To encourage success leading to self-reliance, economic, social, and political contributions to society

Support Roots

We encourage all alumni, family and friends to recall and renew your Roots ties by making annual gifts. Gifts to the schools strengthen Roots' ability to serve students through teaching innovations, classroom supplies, and extracurricular activities. Roots worked hard to educate and mold you into the successful leaders of today; now it's your turn to help the leaders of tomorrow.

"He who does not cultivate his field will die of hunger" -Guinea




Method of Payment:

- Check
- www.rootsactivitylc.org via PayPal
- United Way

Pledge Amount

- Gift of \$1000
- Gift of \$500
- Gift of \$250
- Gift of \$100
- Other \$ _____

Different Ways to Give:

-  Check or Money Order Made payable to Roots PCS or Roots ALC (Baba Kamau Memorial Fund in the Memo section.)
-  Go to the www.rootsactivitylc.org or www.rootspcs.org homepage and click the Donate Icon.
-  We are listed on the United Way, so you can donate through your job. Check the box marked Roots Activity Learning Center.

Name _____

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