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THE IU WRITING TUTORIAL SERVICES ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Africa, I Came to Change You, but Instead You Changed Me

By Logan Ferise and Haley Wilson



In May 2018, we travelled to Ghana for the second time together. I (Logan) had been three times before with my family's nonprofit, and Haley had joined me on my first collegiate trip in the summer of 2017. This 2018 trip was destined to be difficult for Haley and me because the volunteer group was significantly larger than those going on previous trips. Fifteen members strong and led by my mother, my sister, and me, the group travelled to three schools and ran four day camps called "Camp Rising Hope." We had recently raised the money for a preschool addition to our largest partner school.



I want to introduce you to my family's nonprofit: Precious Words Africa is a humanitarian mission that partners with the University of Indianapolis and is designed to provide educational and sustainable resources to developing communities. Our organization has taken seven trips to communities across Ghana, West Africa. We have built and stocked five libraries, funded additions to three existing schools, and seen seven classes of students through middle and

high school. My mother dreams of expanding our organization to other universities, and we hope that one day, as IU alumni who remain committed to Precious Words Africa, we will be able to help her with this goal.

During our 2018 trip, we spent the bulk of our time working with our oldest and largest partner school, Precious Kids Academy, in a suburb of the capital of Ghana. Here we worked with the newly enrolled preschool students. We sang Ghanaian and American nursery rhymes and read the children stories from the books that schools, businesses, and families from across the United States had donated to the new preschool.

The 2018 trip also included working with the camps called “Camp Rising Hope,” which we have been developing from the first year we went to Ghana without a name for our organization, without donors, and without our mission. We meet the children and their parents through our camps, and they make the mission rewarding for us and for all of the University of Indianapolis students who help on our trips. We have the opportunity to see children laugh, learn and smile.

During the 2018 trip, Haley and I practiced teamwork that we have brought home to WTS. Just as WTS tutors work together to improve our tutoring skills after each tutorial, our team of fifteen spent all day, every day working together and discussing our work with a common goal of empowerment. That is the goal of the organization, and that is how we try to operate. Precious Words Africa tries to veer away from thinking about our work as charity and instead empowers participants such as Rosemary Apam, Adzimah Ernestina, and the many others who have gone on to achieve their own greatness.

Since returning home from our second trip, Haley and I have led a working group for WTS tutors on cross-cultural writing. We used the teamwork skills learned on this trip to design

a simulation that would force tutors to write in a different culture. We created an imaginary culture that required tutors to make an argument about their favorite movies using only similes or metaphors and the conditional tense. Drawing on our experiences in Ghana, we came up with the idea that the tutors should be empowered through practice tutorials that teach them new skills. The tutors had a lot of fun following our strange rules for writing, and they enjoyed and learned from the opportunity to try tutoring each other.

“Precious Words Africa” can be found on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



WTS Implements New Online Scheduling System

Students can now schedule appointments online through the WTS website using WCOOnline, a system used by many writing centers across the country. Students simply click the “Schedule Appointment” link at the top of the WTS website and complete a brief, one-time registration. Tutees choose between two schedules: one for 100- and 200-level courses and the other for 300-level courses and above. They can then use a menu to find tutors who can help them with specific subjects and writing tasks. Students are always welcome to call WTS for help with scheduling an appointment or identifying appropriate tutors. WCOOnline has streamlined the tutoring process by keeping track of all data including appointment records, tutee records, and evaluations.

Please Support Our Fundraising Campaign for WTS and the Campus Writing Program

Thanks to the generous support of WTS tutoring alumni and friends, WTS hosted its first retreat for tutors in the spring of 2018. Tutors expressed gratitude for this meaningful experience, and we’ve recognized a real need to provide this training annually. To continue providing our tutors with professional development opportunities such as tutor retreats and travel to conferences, we are actively building our fund. Please consider supporting our efforts via the "Give Now" button on the WTS website.