



Changing lives

“When I came home after the camp, I was so happy. Everybody could see the change.”

This was **Ayorkor’s** comment following the 2016 CofA summer camp. “The training camp is such a beautiful thing. The teachers really explain and then afterwards they go over what has been taught again to ensure that we understand. I loved that. The food they gave us was so good.”



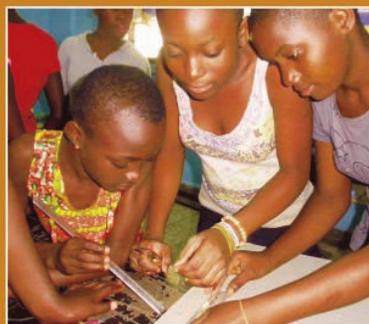
This was also **Doreen’s** first: “My first summer camp was great! I was taught why it is important that we abstain from sex. We were taught subjects like Mathematics, Creative Arts and English language. We were also taught the importance of respecting the elderly, especially our mothers.”



Another first-timer was **Felicia**, who was particularly impressed by learning about Information Technology and Creative Arts. She added: “CofA is ten years old! Wow! I pray for CofA girls during this



*Happy Christmas
Afe o afe
Afenhyia pa
Blonya fe dzogbe
nyui na wo!*



A very happy Christmas and a big thank you to all who supported us again in 2016

anniversary that God protects them.”

Augustina from Pokuase said: “The training was different from the way my normal school teaches. CofA’s training built my confidence and now I can boldly answer questions in class. I told a lot of my friends about CofA and they are now learning hard so that they



join the camp next year. I enjoyed how the teachers interacted with us. It was a lot of fun. The teachers gave me an idea of what I want to be in the future.

Tour of Accra

“Last but not the least, the Accra tour was very exciting!! As CofA celebrates its tenth anniversary, I pray that it continues to help rural girls achieve better education and break out of the cycle of poverty.” ■



Wow!
10 years old...

Now we’re 10!

College for Ama (CofA) has come a long way in ten short years. It started with an idea by our three Founding Mothers who realised how fortunate they had been to receive a good education. It has since grown into an unstoppable movement.

When in July 2016, sixty one girls arrived at the University of Ghana’s Volta Hall, they were just as excited as the first cohort of 30 girls ten years ago, and just as much looking forward to three weeks of learning, creative and sporting activities, as well as getting hands-on computer experience. They also benefited from CofA’s ten years of knowledge and experience. In this issue we share some of our happy memories ■



CofA relies on your donations. The annual summer camps cost \$25,000. On top of that, our annual staff and office cost amount to \$15,000.

Visit www.cofa-foundation.org to give generously.



Celebrity spotting

Early training camps were held at Ashesi University College, then based in central Accra. A tour of the city has been a regular fixture of the CofA programme. For many girls this would have been their first visit to the country's capital. As you can see here, the girls soon felt at home: when they spotted Kofi Annan – the former UN Secretary general – near the Nkrumah Memorial, they were quick to ask him for a 'group selfie' ■



Pictured above are: (from left) Fafali Banini (Assistant Education Officer); Erica Burggraaff, Nana Apt and Adzo Ashie (CofA Board); Jacqueline Daku Mante (Administrator, Marketing and Fundraising) and Lydia Bedwei (CofA Board).

Keeping ahead of the game

CofA Board members regularly meet to discuss progress, but also to keep an eye on the future.

Our most recent board meeting last September was a good example: on the agenda was a Memorandum of Understanding that will see CofA pooling resources with WomensTrust and Women in Social Enterprise to "create model educational, health and economic development programmes for impoverished Ghanaian women and girls".

Playing to our strength

Broadly speaking, each of the organisations will play to their strengths: CofA will develop the curricula and implement teacher training and adult literacy classes, as well as a girls' leadership programme. WomensTrust – a provider of microfinance provider in Pokuase, Greater Accra – will be responsible for administering and awarding scholarship programmes, facilitate computer classes and provide CofA with office facilities. Women in Social Enterprise works to empower impoverished women through grants, loans and mentoring, and will be responsible for funding and constructing of sanitation facilities at schools participating in the our programmes ■

Our 'Founding Mothers'

It all began when three professional women saw the need to address the apparent failure of many girls in rural primary schools to pass the secondary school entrance exam. In 2005, professor Nana Apt, Afua Eyeson, a legal practitioner, and Lydia Bedwei, a business woman, got together to do something about this. They became the Founding Mothers of 'College for Ama' (CofA) ■



From left: Lydia Bedwei, Afua Eyeson and Nana Apt.



IT now tops our agenda

Many of the girls had never had a chance to actually touch a computer – it is really the only way to learn! ■

We are making a difference

“CofA is ten years old. Hurray! It’s a great thing by the grace of God. We need the support globally to help CofA help our girls in the rural areas.”

These are the words of Margaret Munyuhitum, Head Mistress of the Presbyterian Basic School in Berekuso, when asked her experience with girls taking part in the CofA programme. “In 2012 we had 30 students attending the summer camp. And every time the girls came back we saw a huge difference in their academic achievements, their social skills and moral attitude. The first group of CofA girls have now entered secondary education and are reporting to be doing very well. This August, a new group attended their first summer camp and we are already seeing the difference CofA has made.”

The story of a proud mother

She is known as ‘Auntie Efua’ and in 2012 her daughter Portia took part in the CofA Summer Camp at the Volta Hall of the University of Ghana.



Portia (right) is now in secondary school. Says her mother: “CofA also encouraged us, the parents, to encourage our daughters to make the most of their time at school.” Parents also noticed how the Head Mistress and teachers at Berekuso Basic School are guiding the girls in how to prevent pregnancy, a problem that persists among young women in rural Ghana.

Auntie Efua added: “I thank God for CofA’s ten years and wish them all the best.” ■

We couldn't do it without volunteers

“Volunteers are the backbone of CofA’s annual summer camps. From teachers to university graduates, we have been blessed by many supporters who have become our friends and ambassadors.

In 2012, Kasey Furry and Mabel Wong (right) joined us from Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada. For both students,



this was their first visit to an African country. Kasey noticed the huge number of NGOs that operate in Ghana and was glad to be part of a movement to see the country make progress, while Mabel thought that Accra was not that different from Canada, perhaps with the exception of chickens and goats roaming the streets freely!

Another volunteer is Daniel Amponsah (see next article) who has been teaching Math and Science since 2014. He has since joined the CofA Board and hopes that other Ghanaians will see and share the CofA vision ■

Two success stories

In 2011 the first CofA girl entered Senior High School. Gifty was typical of many girls attending rural schools. She was one of six children from a family where the father completed primary education, while her

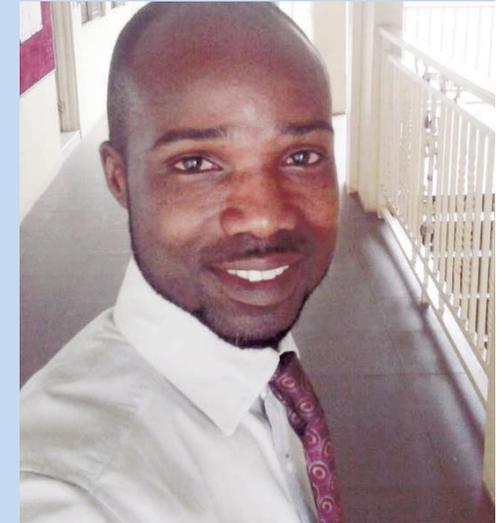
Speaking their language

Daniel Amponsah has been working with CofA as a volunteer Maths and Science teacher since 2014. He started as a volunteer teacher and then joined the CofA Board, while continuing to teach at the annual summer camps.

“Working with CofA is a privilege and I stand completely behind the vision of the ‘Founding Mothers’, so to speak. I enjoy being a part of the wonderful team of volunteers that are on board” said Daniel.

Teaching the children is fun, but also revealing in the way they show their naivety when it comes to Science. They often seem oblivious to the relevance of what they are learning and how different applications can affect their lives. Daniel became aware that the use of English in teaching Maths and Science was a major problem for most girls from poorer, rural areas. So having teachers who can speak their language is a great advantage, while at the same time working on their English comprehension.

“Volunteering has given me the opportunity to understand the educational needs of less privileged girls, so I can help them embrace Science and Mathematics,” stated Daniel.



Daniel Amponsah

It was also interesting to note the difference in teaching of Science subjects in many rural areas, where a more practical approach is used, while in the cities the emphasis is more on technology.

“Now that CofA celebrates its tenth anniversary, I hope Ghanaians, and the world at large, will see and share in its vision and support our work to continue to ensure that ‘Ama’ makes it to college”, Daniel added ■

mother has no formal schooling. Finances are always stretched and Gifty had problems with Maths and also lacked confidence. With the help of CofA teachers, she passed her entrance exam and completed her first year

successfully in 2012. Another former CofA girl, Lydia, entered tertiary education in 2016 when she was accepted at the Nursing and Midwifery Training College in Kwahu-Atibie ■