

Fall 2009  
Volume 2

# FUEL Youth News

Visit us on the web at [www.fuelyouthliberia.org](http://www.fuelyouthliberia.org)

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## What's New With FUEL Youth

Our co-founder and inspiration, Edward Fahnbulleh, was recently appointed as the chairman of the Education Committee for the National Association of Cape Mountianians (NACA) in the US. NACA is a US-based group of Liberians who hail from the same county, Grand Cape Mount. FUEL Youth was grateful to make this connection, as we believe that lasting peace and development in Liberia requires participation from



all Liberians, at home and abroad. And from non-Liberians too!

NACA is putting a big emphasis on education this year, as they realize, like FUEL Youth, that educating our youth is a pillar of sustainable development and key to ensuring that Liberia's

youth can go on to become the doctors, teachers, and productive citizens they want to be.

Thanks for checking out our newsletter, and look inside to see what projects FUEL Youth is up to at home in the US and with our brothers and sisters in Liberia.

## Getting Books Into the Hands of Liberia's Youth

Imagine a school with no schoolbooks, no library and no workbooks for students to take home and practice in. This is the school setting that our students in Liberia are facing. Our students are absolutely wrenching for books and yearning to learn, but without the right tools our students are at a loss.

FUEL Youth has turned to the Ministry of Education in Liberia, but the bad news is that even the Ministry has no books to issue. They are simply out

and we do not know when their government-issued schoolbooks will ever be in stock

This Fall, FUEL Youth is running a book drive to supply our students with the books they need to succeed. Here's how you can help:

- **Talk to your local school about donating used sets of math, language arts, science, and social studies books**

- **Collect other books suitable for a school**

**library**

- **Raise money or make a donation to help with shipping costs**

**FUEL Youth plans to collect books and coordinate shipping around the time of our Fall fundraiser. Check our website for more details.**

Email us a [books@fuelyouthliberia.org](mailto:books@fuelyouthliberia.org)



Radio is a vital line of communication across Liberia, from Monrovia to the rural counties. Our friends at STAR Radio broadcast over the Internet too. Tune in at <http://www.starradio.org.lr/>

## An Education Crisis in Liberia

High school seniors across West Africa all must take a high school exit exam, administered by the West African Examination Council, and passing the exam is a vital step in attending university. Without a pass, students are barred from registering at many of Liberia's institutions of higher learning.

In Grand Cape Mount, one of Liberia's 15 counties, seven students passed the exam last year, all from the Episcopal High School in Robertsport, the county capital. Sounds horrible? Well, it was actually a great accomplishment; no student had passed the exam in Cape Mount since 1990, before the civil war that tore Liberia apart.

The year's results were less promising, with only 4 students across the entire county passing. When students do

not pass, they lack opportunity and are at risk. FUEL Youth considers this a crisis. What do the students of Cape Mount, and across Liberia, need:

**\*Qualified and dedicated teachers (*read the next article for more on this*)**

**\*Text books and other tools (technology, lab facilities, etc.)**

**\*Economic opportunities (there is a trade school in Cape Mount, but attendance is low as students do not see benefits from attending)**

*Below: A Ghanaian fishing boat works the waters of Lake Piso, the picturesque lake that empties to the ocean at Robertsport*



## Where Are the Teachers?

FUEL Youth is considering the ways in which we can help the dire situation of the lack of teachers in Liberia. Across Cape Mount, and other counties, schools are empty because there are no teachers to fill them. Where are the teachers and why can't Liberia get them into schools?

To obtain teacher training and qualification, students head to the capital, Monrovia, to enroll in the University of Liberia and other institutions. But once trained, these teachers aren't returning

to their home counties to teach. There is no one reason for this, but it boils down to these teachers not seeing incentive to return to the rural counties--this perception, mostly grounded in reality, is that there are not reliable jobs to be had and decent salaries to be made.

Liberia's rural schools need teachers. What can FUEL Youth do to help? We encourage service to the community by entering the teaching profession and are working with the Ministry of Education and county

education officers to address the problems. FUEL Youth has started a scholarship program that requires students to serve their community during and after university studies. We're exploring how we can use this same model of scholarship for service to help with the problem of missing teachers in Liberia.

*Below: Students at FUEL Youth-supported UCA work with maps donated from National Geographic*



## Update from Messima School

In January 2009, FUEL Youth broke ground on a school in Messima, in Tewar district of Grand Cape Mount. FUEL-Youth co-founder Edward Fahnbulleh funded the construction of a well for clean and safe drinking water in Messima in 2006. Since then, the village has seen a huge reduction in the early childhood deaths due to water-borne illnesses.

FUEL Youth has a special place in our heart for Messima village and its growing youth population. The FUEL Youth school in

this village will serve surrounding villages too. The rainy season slowed efforts for construction, but things are drying out and construction will resume in December.

FUEL Youth is raising funds to purchase the cement needed to finish the school building project. And while construction is going on, we're planning on getting books in the hands of all Messima's youth, working with the government to recruit dedicated teachers, and maybe get a few new soccer balls for the local youth league too!

In the meantime, students are in school in Messima with dedicated citizens from the village leading lessons.



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*Children of Messima are greatly anticipating the construction of their new school.*

## FUEL Youth Superstars – Kula

FUEL Youth only works in Liberia with the help of our dedicated and trusted volunteers on the ground. Kula Fofana is one such person, and a rising star in her own rite. Kula is studying mass communications and sociology at the African Methodist Episcopal University in Monrovia. While studying at the University she also co-hosts a radio show for youth broadcast around the country--Let's Talk About Sex--which brings youth issues to the

surface and encourages Liberia's youth to get knowledgeable about sexual issues and protect themselves against HIV/AIDS and unwanted teen pregnancy.

FUEL Youth is a huge fan of Ms. Fofana, and her dedication to our cause and her work inspires us. Her assistance with our programs and projects on the ground is also invaluable. Thanks to Kula Fofana!



## FUEL Youth

**“Dedicated to  
Supporting Education  
for All Liberia”**

Visit us at:  
[www.fuelyouthliberia.org](http://www.fuelyouthliberia.org)

### About Us

Friends United for the Education of Liberia's Youth (FUEL Youth) is a 501c3 organization dedicated to supporting education in Liberia to stimulate sustainable community development and enable Liberian youth to move themselves out of the poverty cycle.

Specifically, FUEL Youth is firmly committed to providing educational opportunities for the thousands of children who have been denied the right to school in Liberia. The schools and programs we provide will encourage youth to become informed local, national, and global citizens; to embrace their own futures and livelihoods; and to develop the skills that will aid them in realizing their full potential.



*The students of United Christian Academy ring in 2009 with a party thrown by FUEL Youth.*