

# GATEWAY



## AKWAABA!

I hope you will all enjoy the June edition of Gateway, the official newsletter of Projects Abroad Ghana.

Our summer programs have started – our staff is getting busier as I type!

This month we enjoyed a bunch of different fun events and donations! I added the section "outreach of the month", because every time I've been on an outreach, I've wanted to write about it! Enjoy!!

Rainbow Planche – Social Manager,  
Projects Abroad Ghana



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# INSIDE OUT: GHANA IN JUNE

## Festivals in June

*It's always great to take part in at least one festival whilst you are here in Ghana! Here's a list of what goes on in June by the Ghana Tourist Board. You'll find the July festivals in the new 'Calendar' section of the Newsletter!*

### **Asafua Festival**

Celebrated by the people of Sekondi (Central Region), in purification of the divinity of Asafua.

### **Ahumkan Festival**

A celebration in which the local population of Akim-Kibi (Eastern Region) reaffirm their loyalty to their chieftains.

### **Gyenprem Festival**

Celebrated by the people of Fafo (Volta Region), marked by a durbar of thanksgiving for an abundant harvest and a year of peace.

### **Ahobaa Festival**

Celebrated by the people of Enyan-Kakraba-Saltpond (Central Region), for obtaining the benediction of their ancestors.

### **Kete Festival and Ebisa Festival**

Celebrated by the people of Sekondi (Central Region), in honour of the Kete-Kyen Fetish.

### **Kli-Adzim Festival**

Celebrated by the people of Agbozume (Eastern Region), in honour of the local divinity.

### **Ahoba Kuma Festival**

Celebrated by the people of Abura (Central Region)



### **Apiba Festival**

Celebrated by the people of Senya Beraku (Central Region)

### **Nkyidwo (Monday Night)**

Celebrated annually by the people of Essumeja (Ashanti Region) to commemorate their birth or how their ancestors emerged one Monday night from a hole in the ground dancing and drumming, allegedly followed by a dog and a lion. The gods are invoked for blessing, protection and prosperity of the people.



*The Ghana Tourist Board site has a lot of other great and easy-to-find information for great trips and new discoveries. You can visit their site - <http://www.touringghana.com>*

## FEATURE OF THE MONTH



### The Village Program

*Franka Lykke Vedel Kessing*

*The Care and Teaching Project has been going on well in Ghana. In order to make the program worthwhile, the Care and Teaching Coordinators with their volunteers often share useful ideas at our workshops. In March, April and May this year, volunteers who were placed at Good Shepherd orphanage at Kasoa (part of Accra's Care and Teaching Placements) took part in a community teaching exercise which was organized by some volunteers from a different volunteering organization. The experience was fantastic, so they suggested Projects-abroad care and teaching volunteers should continue with the program. One Wednesday evening between the hours of 4 and 6pm, I witnessed the community teaching at Bentum some few metres away from ofankor. From what I observed as a Care and Teaching Project Manager, I think it will contribute to making the programme worthwhile but will be happy to hear comments from volunteers. For an insight into the community teaching, below is a report and some pictures from a participant (volunteer) by name Franka Lykke Vedel Kessing.*

The Village Programme was started in the beginning of March 2011. It is a programme where volunteers go to different villages and teach. So far, it includes two villages, Bentum and Gadah. The plan is to expand it to three other villages and include a lot of volunteers.

None of the two villages have their own school, so the children have to attend schools in other villages, for instance the Good Shepherd School in Ofaakor. That means that the children will have to walk to and from school or the parents will have to pay for transportation. That can often be problematic both financially but also just being able to get to school during the rainy season. Therefore, Bentum are hoping to be able to build a school in the future, where volunteers could help out as well.

When I was in Ghana (March-June 2011), we went to Bentum one time every week and to Gadah two times. We stayed in the village approximately 1-1,5 hour, where we taught the children from the village.



In Bentum, there were a lot of children and we divided them into four groups/classes. Class 1 was all the youngest children, who weren't able to read or write yet. We read books to them, taught them different rhymes and sang various children's songs including the alphabet song. Class 2 was the slightly older children, with whom we practiced writing and pronouncing the letters of the alphabet correctly. Class 3 was for the children who knew how to spell and pronounce the letters of the alphabet. We did different lessons with this group including spelling of longer words, working with their pronunciation of especially 'a', 'e' and 'th-' words, teaching them the English words for colours, shapes, objects and the different body parts. Group 4 was the oldest children and we did some English grammar and a 'letter project' with them. In the 'letter project' they were taught how to write and respond to a letter.

## The Village Program [Continued]



In Gadah, there were fewer children, so we had three groups/classes. In Class 1 were all the youngest children who were not able to read or write yet. Their lessons were similar to the ones in Bentum. Class 2 was the juniors where we did fairly simple alphabet lessons. We went through the alphabet, taught them how to spell and pronounce simple English words like boy, girl, cat etc. Class 3 was the seniors, where we taught English grammar – especially the present tense and the past tense.

We had Moses, a local teacher from The Good Shepherd School, with us to the villages. He translated to the children when necessary. He also helped us when we had problems with the children showing up late for their lessons. He talked to the village chiefs on our behalves and arranged for children to be there on time.

The Village Programme was a very good experience. It was nice to be able to help children who didn't always have the possibility of attending school – whether it was because of the parents being unable to pay the school fees or because of the children having to help their parents working.

The people who lived in the villages were always very welcoming and the children were very friendly and eager to learn. I hope that Projects Abroad will continue sending volunteers who can help out with The Village Programme. It's an idea worth continuing and it is a wonderful experience being a part of it. And hopefully Bentum village will be able to realise their dream about building their own school sometime in the future.

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## REGIONAL UPDATES



### *Accra*

Accra continues to receive generally the highest number of volunteer placements in general medical, soccer, journalism and basketball projects. Placements in journalism, basketball, soccer and HIV/AIDS are specialized projects offered in Accra.

Accra has the highest varied sources of entertainment that suits the taste of our volunteers, and you never get bored at night if you are in Accra. However, Accra's main center, Circle, is one place most volunteers try hard to avoid due to its briskness and confusing nature which appears chaotic to the first-timer but with the least attention and effort, one sees clearer its orderliness within which everything has been arranged.

Accra's main challenge is the heavy traffic that is witnessed almost on every route within the city. Fortunately, most of our host families located on the outskirts of Accra have volunteers whose placements finish quite early allowing them leave for home before the rush-hour which usually starts after 3pm on week days.

Our new developed basketball placement, ABaCoDe-Ghana, has so far proven to be extremely worthwhile to our first three volunteers who cannot have enough of coaching and playing alongside with the kids. This placement has virtually a membership of young children from the ages of 6 years to 17 years; and the love the game of basketball. Projects Abroad recently helped sponsor a youth tournament for 5 basketball clubs drawn from Cape Coast and Accra at our placement.

The Accra Regional office has also established a new relationship with the biggest hospital in Ghana and the West African sub-region, the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital, and currently using its Fever Unit as our second HIV/AIDS placement. The three volunteers who are currently placed there are giving positive feedback about the worthwhileness of it, and we look forward maintaining a healthy long-term relationship with them.

We will continue to assure our volunteers that we are consistently looking forward to providing them the best projects that seek to give value for money in our placements.

# REGIONAL UPDATES



## *Cape Coast*

This month is fully geared for the two-week special projects.

The first group of two-weekers arrived safely, and worked at Lady Heike School in Cape Coast, repainting the old building to keep it clean and painting the new building. In the new building they are making a floor, so they will be mixing cement and plastering, painting and playing with the kids at Lady Heike School. They will also visit Children's Home of Hope to do care work and to play with the children there. So far it is going well, and we are enjoying their enthusiasm and energy!

Two more groups will arrive on the 25th and the 26th of June. The first group will work at Abura Literacy School and combine this with care work at New Life international orphanage; the second group will work at Queen Elizabeth School, along with care work at Children's Home of Hope.

The regular volunteer are all doing great. We have Care volunteers, teaching, Journalism, Rugby and medical volunteers presently as you can see in the pictures we post on Facebook!!



Keep up with Cape Coast on our Facebook page -  
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2450760029>

# REGIONAL UPDATES

## Building Update



To recap, this is a project that began last April of a building for a group of children already forming a school. For now, the group meets up in an old post office building belonging to their community of Adowso. They have rented it up until now – they have to move. Projects Abroad has decided to build them a suitable place for learning! In the future, 'Compassion for Humanity' Illiteracy School will be a placement for our teaching as well as IT volunteers, planning to start by 2012!



Our hardworking and enthusiastic volunteers have finished the foundations and walls for two classrooms. What is left is the gable in preparation of the roof, the roofing, and the rest of the plastering! We are even thinking of adding a bathroom to our project.

Usually I add pictures of the building progress on Facebook – you can follow them here - <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.120161184729907.28610.100002080791825&l=a282ff87e4>

## *The Hills*



Our old building project and now a teaching and care placement, the Wonderful Love Daycare is doing well and has reached up to 50 children and has had several volunteers this month. Volunteers have made donations to help set up the school – read about it in the Donations section!!

The Projects Abroad demonstration farm has now moved from Larteh junction to Akoko, about a minute walk from the Wonderful Love School!

The volunteers are enjoying the medical outreaches as usual!

## The Hills Update [Continued]

Our first group of two-week specials arrived this month, and they had a joint Building and Care project – they spent time with the children at Adom Day care, and will have plastering work in their building. They also did a wonderful job plastering and painting work at Saforo District Assembly School. When they left, they donated some gifts, a football of their clothes to the school they worked at. Some have promised to come back next year, and we can't wait to see them!



Keep up with The Hills on our Facebook page -  
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2355118946>

## REGIONAL UPDATES

### *Ho & Hohoe*

This month started with 12 volunteers, 4 in Hohoe doing Care and the rest in Ho doing Medical and Teaching placements.

Like any other month, June was full of activities comprising medical outreach both in schools and communities, care activities like creative paintings in Hohoe Eugemot orphanage or bye-bye parties for volunteers including senior volunteer Pernille who was here for 4 months.

Also there were some amazing donations in a form national health insurance registration for children in 48 anfield community school.

As part of our commitment in Helping and imparting on our immediate environment, medical outreaches are organised twice a week to schools and communities including the leprosy village where bad wounds were dressed and some vitamin c given out to aid the healing of the wounds. Another amazing role the volunteers play especially at the leprosy village was to stick around and interact with the cured lepers and play with their children. This is to help reduce the social stigma that comes with being a cured leper.

The recent outreach was at Sokode Ando M/A school where children were examined and treated with some anti-bacterial and anti fungal creams since most of the children were infested with skin rashes and infections. The blood pressure of teachers were taken and educated on the need to maintain a good BP, and how to avoid High BP.

Our Hohoe volunteers have done well this month! Read about their activities with the children in the 'What's Going On' section!

In general the month was peaceful and exciting and volunteers are generally feeling okay!!!!



## REGIONAL UPDATES



### *Koforidua*

This month, we had our first Care volunteer working at Akodum Orphanage, and we had two Teaching volunteers at St. Mary's as well as Voice Preparatory School.

The volunteers are happy with their placements, and this month instead of our weekly meeting doing a quiz, we had a fun game of football.

Koforidua is getting ready for the busy month of June, and has now established two medical outreaches per week – one on Tuesday and one on Thursday! Our medical volunteers are enjoying the opportunities they have working here.



Keep up with Koforidua on our Facebook page -  
[http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group\\_189429624434431](http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_189429624434431)

## REGIONAL UPDATES

*Kumasi*

As usual, the volunteers have been enjoying work as well as outreaches. Veterinary outreaches are carrying on, Thursdays and Fridays, where the volunteers have the opportunity to work with all kinds of animals. We also have separate medical outreaches which take place Thursdays and Fridays in various parts of the Ashanti Region.

Our volunteers are doing fine and working hard at their placements. Some have even undertaken a malnutrition rehabilitation project with the children at Kumasi Children's Home, bringing the malnourished children to the children's hospital weekly, to get checked and receive the ratio of food allotted to each child.

We have now added as a medical placement the Nkawie Hospital, which is in one of Kumasi's suburbs. This is the first physiotherapy placement in Kumasi, so we are proud to say we are ready to welcome volunteers!



Keep up with Kumasi on our Facebook page -  
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2330126047>

# HOST FAMILY

## Medarl Darkoa

Medarl is a middle-aged woman whose accommodation is located in a relatively residential area in Kumasi which is well-known for its serenity. She can host a maximum of five volunteers.

Medarl's husband, Joseph Boateng Snr. lives in his own accommodation elsewhere, and children, Yaw Mensah (1994), Harold Ofori Mensah (1996), Kwame Boateng (1997), Joseph Boateng Jnr (2005) and Nhyirah Boateng (2006).

Abigail and Evelyn Nkansah (2000) also now lives with the family along with Medarl's father.

The house is located in the Kwadoso area of Kumasi, which is relatively quiet and serene. Volunteers will really find this accommodation interesting.

Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti region, is the second largest city in Ghana, after Accra. It is famous for the enterprising and hard-working spirit of its citizens, for its gigantic market, for being the birthplace of Ghana's former president, J.A. Kufuor, and generally for the particularly rich and vibrant Ashanti tradition, smoothly blending with the increasing signs of modernity.

All volunteers in Ghana live with a local family and hence gain a rich and varied experience of Ghanaian life. Respecting the family's rules and customs and explaining your own culture are key to a happy home.

You will share your room with other volunteers. Your room is equipped with a fan, beds with comfortable mattresses, and a light. Volunteers will also have their own private bathroom. Please try to keep your room and bathroom reasonably clean and tidy.

Medarl will cook a mixture of western and local dishes. She will cook food on request and is very keen to introduce volunteers to local dishes. She will, however, take into consideration that some people have particular taste and preferences.

The family understands that volunteers like to socialise in the evenings, and as long as you do not come home too late and you do not disturb the family upon your return, they are happy for you to go out. The area they live in is safe.



### People You will Meet ...

Medarl Darkoa  
Yaw Mensah (1994)  
Harold Ofori Mensah (1996)  
Kwame Boateng (1997)  
Joseph Boateng, Jr. (2005)  
Nhyirah Boateng (2006)  
Abigail and Evelyn  
Nkansah (2000)  
Medarl's father

*You will get the contact information about your host family once your project is confirmed!*

# DONATIONS

## Akodum Christian Village

*Some donations were brought to our care and teaching placement just outside of Koforidua!*



The happy faces at Akodum Christian Village received several goods and materials this month: frying oil, milk powder, tomato sauce, a big bag of rice and some washing soap!

They were donated by Juliana Giraldo and her family. Thanks a bunch!!

## Donations to Wonderful Love Daycare

*The Wonderful Love Daycare and school is now a growing and successful school, with more and more children to take care of! It is now a teaching placement receiving two exciting donations this*



The first donation is by Carolien Nieuwpoort, who gave the school uniforms! The model was decided, and there is enough material for 8-9 uniforms. This was very exciting for the establishment of the school and the children cannot wait to wear them!

## Spreading Health Care in Volta

*There were some amazing donations in the form of National Health Insurance registration at 48 Anfield Community School! Our regional coordinator for the Volta Region, Kwasi, shares with us what it was like to watch the registration!*

The 48 Anfield Community school took delivery of the first consignment of National Health Insurance cards around mid-June. The children and teachers were so excited when they saw the outreach team. About 120 children were able to be registered!

We then had a talk explaining what it means to be on health insurance, and opportunities were given to them to ask questions. Their faces were full of smiles and hope. Everyone was extremely happy that they would be able to access basic health despite any financial problems they might be facing.

They all sang songs and said a big THANK YOU to Donors and facilitators!



Another donation was made by Chardala Simons, a Teaching and Care volunteer at Wonderful Love. She gathered enough funds to give the school a bell, a globe, whiteboard marker, pencils, a box of erasers, 400 exercise books for 4 different learning levels, letter and math practise books, writing and reading workbooks, math books, and picture reading books.

Thank you both, the school will remember you for a long time!

# PROJECT UPDATE

## Projects Abroad Human Rights Office (PAHRO)

*We haven't updated about PAHRO in a while, and in the meantime we have had exciting new staff additions and great volunteers who have made meaningful contributions to all of our programs! Here is an update by our Human Rights Coordinator, Anna McCarthy.*



Projects Abroad Human Rights Organisation circles its work around three main intentions; to raise awareness, to monitor vulnerable areas and to resolve human rights abuses. The importance of these objectives is immeasurable and week after week our volunteers work extremely hard to empower and protect the people of Ghana at a grassroots level. The projects PAHO develop are run completely by volunteers and cover both social justice and legal matters.

As human rights are surrounded by an enormous structure of legal and social frameworks so too are our projects. They are varied, cover a diverse range of issues and of course are ever changing. Over the month of May our volunteers have had the opportunity to work with issues such as intestacy and property rights, domestic violence, child trafficking, police accountability, the rights of suspects and the rights of mining communities. Alongside these social justice projects our team have been assisting our in-house lawyer Mr. Emmanuel Hans in managing the legal service provided by PAHO.

I would first and foremost like to address an important and special achievement accomplished by PAHO this month. Mr. Pat had been referred to us by DVVSU (Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit of the Police). Wrongfully he had been accused of defilement (the rape of a minor). Before he came to us he had been in custody for 5 months waiting for his hearing in appalling conditions. After two months it was clear the evidence was inconsistent and often simply not there so Mr. Hans and his team of volunteers made a plea of no submission. Mr. Pat was initially charged on foot of a medical report which the charging officer admittedly did not understand, furthermore the said report showed no sign of interference with the 'victim'. The case was acquitted and before returning home to his daughters Mr Pat visited the team at PAHO to personally thank them for their efforts on his case. It was an extremely emotional union which certainly highlighted the importance of our work and the overwhelming difference we can make to the life of even one man. I would like to thank everyone who worked so diligently on Mr Pat's case.



Unfortunately, intestacy and property rights are extremely underdeveloped areas of human rights in Ghana. Over the month of May our volunteers visited affected communities across the outskirts of Accra leading group discussions and advocating on these topics. Furthering attempts to tackle this abusive trend, PAHO provides legal services to individuals who have suffered such an injustice and who may seek compensation.

*'Intestacy Rights: a project where we visit small communities and talk about their experiences. We presented on intestacy and the importance of writing a will. After the presentation PAHO's lawyer held a legal clinic giving the inhabitants a chance to hear the legal implications and aspects of their individual cases. I really felt the community welcomed and benefited from the newfound information.'* Katrine Michaelson, current volunteer with PAHO.

Since our establishment, PAHO has actively promoted and protected the rights of the child, working with and on behalf of children from various backgrounds. Recently PAHO has begun to challenge the invasive issues surrounding labour and child trafficking. As a consequence of poverty it has been estimated that 24,000 children are trafficked annually in Ghana. 90% of this trafficking occurs between Ghanaian regions for the purpose of labour.

In May we conducted initial fact-finding missions in two fishing villages which have been targeted by trafficking practices; Old Ningo and Anwhiam. The most evident problem was the lack of rehabilitation or re-integration support for victims of trafficking and their families. From our findings we intend to proceed with sensitising the communities on Child Trafficking and Labour and to set up an educational and social program for victims with the help of the local community. Our volunteers are currently working hard to



create this program and have also spent time in Old Ningo and Anwhiam, providing advocacy and education to parents, teachers and children.

In 2009, PAHO first entered the mining community of Obuasi where we stumbled upon great and imposing abuses of human rights. Over the past two years, our team of volunteers has advocated and represented this community to eradicate the violating issues surrounding them as a result of the local industry. Some of our concerns involved water and sanitation, access to health care, lack of livelihoods, lack of compensation and general exploitation by a company who shows little to no social responsibility. In May our team of volunteers travelled to the Ashanti region to monitor development in the area and investigate water and sanitation issues. This trip was a four-day mission where volunteers held forums in two communities.

Although access to health care has certainly improved in Obuasi as a result of lobbying carried out by PAHO and our partners, our team still found some discouraging scenes. Due to the mining industry, streams and water sources are heavily contaminated creating problems for everyday life, particularly in farming homes where crops and live-stock live a short and unproductive existence. Promises to construct extra boreholes and provide sufficient access to safe water have not been fulfilled.

Having investigated the scenes PAHO held a meeting with the stakeholders involved in bringing change to these communities. In attendance were members of PAHO, our partners WACAM, representatives from both communities and representatives from AGA (Anglo Gold Ashanti- Mining Company). We continue to work on behalf of communities such as Fenaso and look forward to seeing substantial change for its residents.

Amnesty International celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May. As a partner, PAHO attended and presented a message of solidarity addressing the rights of the child and the death penalty. It was a very solemn occasion where activists and defenders joined together to unite in the protection and promotion of human rights, not just in Ghana but internationally. I would like to thank all the volunteers, past and present for their passion and dedication. I hope you feel the worthwhile difference you are certainly making to the lives of so many.



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*Make sure to keep up with PAHRO on Facebook -  
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=113609401994015>*

## OUTREACH OF THE MONTH



*If you're planning on coming and you want to help towards these medical outreaches, somethings which will help are toothbrushes, toothpaste, and maybe even a song about brushing teeth!*

### “This is the Way I Brush My Teeth”

*This month, the Koforidua group was able to go to a small school in Akwadum called D/A Primary School.*

The shy and excited children first welcome the group of volunteers, and it's always nice to see how ready they are to learn!

The volunteers teach a series of things: what you need to brush your teeth, when do you brush your teeth, what happens when you brush your teeth, and what can happen if you don't! The medical coordinator, Gifty, translates for the children who do not speak English. We even sang a song together to teach them the hand motions of brushing up and down, and back and forth.

We then had one of our volunteers show them how to correctly brush their teeth, which made the children very happy! Four children were called on to see if they had learned how to brush their teeth correctly, which was also cheered on by the rest of the class.

After that, we were able to give each child in the class a toothbrush and a bit of toothpaste, to encourage them to keep this a daily habit.



## WHAT'S GOING ON

### Painting at Eugemont Orphanage

*Our Hohoe volunteers have done well this month! As part of the numerous activities they undertake with the children at Eugemont Orphanage, the volunteers led the children to an exciting afternoon of painting ... creativity at its best!*



Volunteers Neillie, Thilde, and Laken initiated the afternoon with the children from the Orphanage. Samuel, Prosper, Luke, Prince, Bless, Angela, Melody and Michael all took part in this and they were so excited! The children were so enthusiastic with the paint that it would often decorate their faces, creating even more excitement! The volunteers were so happy to have unlocked such joy in the kids with these activities.



# VOLUNTEER CORNER

## Back to the Roots ...

*By John Hooper*

Two volunteers from the UK, Russell Lamptey and John Hooper are in Ghana to help at a school for Underprivileged Children's Center in Teshie Camp 2, Accra and have made a donation to the school of Mathematics, literacy and art materials. The school aims to raise the standard in the basic subjects, which starts at a low base, so that the children can enter the government schools at their appropriate age level. However, the school has only two teachers, the founders of the project, and relies heavily on volunteers to teach small groups and to give individual tuition.

The short visit to Ghana had another important purpose. Russell's grandfather was Ghanaian by birth and emigrated to the UK about 60 years ago. The surname Lamptey has strong Ghanaian links. All contact with his family had been lost and there was very little information to go on. By good chance, the volunteers were accommodated by Projects Abroad with a former President's widow, Mrs Afrifa, who had contacts in government and the legal service, one of whom was a tribal chief in the part of Accra where his grandfather lived. These contacts provided a useful start in the search. Because a Ghanaian name is not chosen randomly but has a link to a person's family and location, the Russell was able to follow this trail which led to a wonderful outcome. Russell met his long lost relatives; a brother of his grandfather and other cousins. A large family reunion is planned before the volunteer leaves Ghana. When he returns to the UK, Russell will be changing his name to Odartei Nii Lamptey to show his tribal allegiance within the family.

## Jai's Experience

*By Jai Mistry*

I was currently on my gap year, so I decided to sign up to Projects Abroad to do the physiotherapy placement in Ghana for 4 months. My accommodation and placement were based in Koforidua, the capital of the Eastern Region, and I was the first volunteer to be part of the Koforidua group as it was being formed when I arrived.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, I made my way to Heathrow airport and felt a bit nervous as I was flying by myself. I went to my departure gate and as soon as I sat down, everyone was Ghanaian apart from me. A Ghanaian that I spoke to taught me the word 'Obruni', meaning foreigner, and that I would be expecting to hear this word everywhere I went in Ghana. As I arrived in Accra, I could feel the heat as I made my first few steps outside the plane. I was met by Nyame, one of the Projects Abroad Ghana staff members, who picked me up and took me to the Projects Abroad head office to sleep there.

The next day, I was woken up by one of the staff at 4:30 in the morning!! I felt so tired as I didn't get much sleep. Mike, who works at the office, told me there was a health walk event that day, which comprised of walking to an orphanage and spending the day there. I made my

way outside and it was full of Projects Abroad volunteers. The health walk started at 6:30, led by a brass band consisting of trumpets and drums. The walk lasted an hour and a half which was tiring, and the weather didn't help as it was too hot. At the orphanage I was able to engage and interact with the children. I played football as well and found the Ghanaians too skillful. When we finished at the orphanage, I was taken to Koforidua by the Projects Abroad staff in a 'tro-tro', which turned out to be a second-hand 18-seater bus with a battered engine. It was so cramped inside and the seats were uncomfortable. That was my first experience in Ghanaian transportation. I thought the driving was crazy as the drivers go too fast on small roads. Once I arrived in Koforidua, I was taken to my host family's house as that was where I would be staying. My host mother gave me a welcoming hug. She had a son living with her called Kwabena. The house was big, and I had my own building. There were 3 Dutch volunteers staying at the same place as me who had already been in Ghana for 1 and a half months. March 6<sup>th</sup> was Independence Day so I was taken to the ceremony by a neighbour of the host family's.

My introduction to Koforidua was done by Prince and Micky, the staff based in Koforidua, and involved going to the Eastern Regional Hospital, as this is where I would be working. I was joined by a volunteer called Sam, who was doing the same placement as me. After going to my placement, I was shown where the post office, forex bureau, ATM, etc. were, and it seemed pretty straightforward.

I started my first day at the hospital in which I had to register at the Human Resources before I could officially start my placement. I was introduced to the staff at the hospital and they



seemed very friendly. I found the first month difficult at the hospital as I was based in the gym, whilst Sam was on the wards. There weren't any patients to treat and my involvement and input was limited as the patients already knew what to do and didn't really need any assistance. I discussed the situation with Prince, the Regional Coordinator, and said that I wanted to change the duration of my project from 4 to 3 months, so that I would have 1 month of traveling time. After 1 month working at the hospital flew by so quickly, I moved to the wards as Sam moved to the surgery department. I was able to learn and do more and even had the responsibility of treating a large

number of patients myself. The equipment in the wards was so different compared to the UK. I was able to do some massages on patients, using the trabert, short wave and MED treatment, electrical stimulation as well as ultrasound. I also went on ward rounds, and some of the cases I saw were unpleasant. I got on well with the staff in the Physiotherapy Department and enjoyed my time working at the hospital, and it was sad to leave.

Apart from working at the hospital I was involved in medical outreaches, which happened every Thursday. This was led by Gifty, who was the Medical Coordinator for Koforidua and the Akuapem Hills. We would attend a school or an orphanage and give a talk to the children about diseases such as cholera or HIV. Myself and the other Medical Volunteers would explain the causes, symptoms etc. in English whilst Gifty would translate in the local language of Twi. After giving the talk, we would clean and dress the wounds of the children who needed treatment. I thoroughly enjoyed the Medical Outreaches as it was good fun, and I will miss it so much.

The social life in Ghana is so cool as well. Every Wednesday was the Projects Abroad Quiz Night, which is good fun – we got free drinks and food. Watching football in Ghana is crazy as the Ghanaians are very passionate about the game. It was special to watch the England vs. Ghana game as the Ghanaians were confident they could beat England. They all went crazy when Asomah Gyan equalized? And I will never forget that moment. Everyone in Ghana was dancing and celebrating.

I took part in National Volunteer Week, which involved Projects Abroad doing outreaches in each of its 6 regions. My group in Koforidua went to clean and tidy an orphanage with the

children. I was so shocked to see the condition of the beds the children were sleeping in and it was sad to see. It made me think how lucky I am and how I should appreciate what I have back at home. After we finished tidying up, we played a football match; Projects Abroad vs. Hour of Grace Orphanage. Unfortunately Projects Abroad lost, but it was a fun day out to see the children.

When I was not travelling on weekends I would go and watch football with Prince at a local bar, which was awesome as I got to make new friends. On other weekends I would travel with other volunteers. Most of my time was spent with my roommate Nick, who was from Denmark and who I got on well with. We saw the Wi Waterfalls in the Volta region as well as other places. I thought going to Busua Beach was amazing, as I went surfing in the Atlantic Ocean which was pretty awesome.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Ghana. I found the weather was too hot, but it was part of the experience: being in a country I had never visited before and adjusting to the climate and lifestyle. I would recommend people to join Projects Abroad as you would have the adventure of your life. My supervisors Prince and Gifty were excellent and did an excellent job for me during my time in Ghana, and I will miss them very much. I hope to visit Ghana in the near future as it was an amazing country.



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*If you want to make an alumni contribution to the newsletter – what your time was like, what it meant to you or what you are up to now, just send it on to [rainbowplanche@projects-abroad.org](mailto:rainbowplanche@projects-abroad.org) !*

# ABOUT YOUR STAFF

## Some Faces from the Accra Office ...

*These are some of the people working behind the scenes on your trip, finances and records so that your experience with us goes smoothly!!*

### **Rebecca Abuaku - Accounts and Administration Manager**

Rebecca is based in our Head Office in Accra. She is responsible for all the accounts and administrative work generated by our Ghana programme. She grew up in Accra and holds a degree Accounting and Management from a local university in Cape Coast. She used to work with an NGO as Human Resource Manager before joining Projects Abroad in January 2007.



### **Richard K. O. Atiemo - Assistant Accounts and Administrative Manager**

Richard assists with the accounts and administrative work in Ghana. He holds a Higher National Diploma in Accounting from Sunyani Polytechnic in Brong Ahafo region. He has been working with Projects Abroad since June 2009.

### **Bridget A. Gamli - Records Officer**

Bridget worked with Ghana Commercial Bank in Accra before joining Projects Abroad in November 2007. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Economics. She is responsible for preparing all the placements and accommodation spreadsheets, scanning de-briefing forms and updating the staff and volunteers' records in the Head Office in Accra.



### **Paul Adu-Peasah - Assistant Records Officer**

Paul joined Projects Abroad in December 2010. Paul was born in Ghana and graduated from the University of Cape Coast with a Bachelor of Commerce degree in 2005. He works as our Assistant Records Officer and helps to monitor volunteers on their placements. Paul's hobbies include traveling, reading and helping people to solve their problems.

*If you want to 'meet' the rest of our Ghana staff, just go to*  
<http://www.projects-abroad.org/about-us/overseas-staff/#ghana> !!

# MISCELLANEOUS

## Language Lessons!

*Here is some basic vocabulary in two of the languages you will probably use – Fante if you go to Cape Coast in the Central Region, and basic Twi is spoken in most places in Ghana. If you're going to Accra or Volta Region, look out for next month's edition in which you can learn Ga and Ewe!*

<b>Twi</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Fante</b>
Wo ho te sɛn? / ɛte sɛn? Me ho ye. / ɛye. Mepa wo kwɛw Meda ase Yɛ frɛwo sɛn? / Wo din de sɛn? Yɛ frɛ me ... / Me din de ... Aane Daabi Me pɛ ... ɛye sɛn? Yooooo Nanti yie	<b>How are you?</b> <b>I'm fine.</b> <b>Please</b> <b>Thank you</b> <b>What is your name?</b> <b>My name is ...</b> <b>Yes</b> <b>No</b> <b>I would like ...</b> <b>How much?</b> <b>OK</b> <b>Goodbye</b>	Wo ho te dɛn? / ɛte dɛn? Me ho ye. / ɛye. Mepa wo kwɛw Meda woa ase Wo frɛwo dɛn? Wo frɛ me ... Eyone Dabe Me pɛ deɛ ... Wo ye ahyene? Yooooo De yea / ekyere



## SOCIAL MEDIA

*Here's just a recap of the social networking we do so that you can be best updated!!*

Hills: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2355118946>



Kumasi: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2330126047>

Koforidua:

[http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group\\_189429624434431](http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_189429624434431)

Ho: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=24364808701>

Cape Coast: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2450760029>

Accra: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2581495079>

*Upcoming Human Rights volunteers, please check out what's up on the PAHRO link:*

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=113609401994015>

*We've started tweeting from Ghana ! Follow the latest news and events at:*

[http://twitter.com/Proj\\_AbroadGH/](http://twitter.com/Proj_AbroadGH/)



We also have a lot of fun articles on our Projects Abroad blogging site! Everyone is free to contribute, and it's a great way to get a little taste of what you'll experience in Ghana, or in any other Projects Abroad Destination! Catch up and contribute your thoughts at :

<http://www.mytripblog.org/pg/groups/2915/Ghana>

*If you would like one of the pictures from our newsletter, blog or facebook in full resolution just email the request to [rainbowplanche@projects-abroad.org](mailto:rainbowplanche@projects-abroad.org)!*