

# Liberia Education Update

July/August 2019

*Offloading Holston Conference container, July 28, 2019.*



*Rev. Anna Kpaan, director of Ministry to the Aging, receives supplies for the senior citizens' home.*



## **Container from Holston Conference Arrives**

Every year people all over Liberia look forward to the arrival of a 40-foot container filled with school supplies, back packs, food buckets, cleaning supplies, and hygiene kits from the congregations of the Holston Conference in Tennessee and Virginia in the United States. This year the container arrived on July 27<sup>th</sup> and my office at the Department of General Education & Ministry has been flooded with requests for the supplies. The staff members and volunteers at the Liberia Annual Conference (LAC) Central Office, the District Superintendents, 5 orphanages, the LAC Ministry to the Aging, Ganta Hospital, and 4 United Methodist Schools have received supplies. We still need to deliver supplies to 3 of our schools when the muddy roads are drier. On behalf of all the recipients, thank you Holston Conference!

## **United Methodist School Principals Annual Retreat**

Another annual happening is the United Methodist Schools Principal Association retreat. This year the retreat was held from August 12-18 at our Ganta United Methodist School. The principal or vice principal from 25 schools participated in the retreat which included school reports and discussions on school policies.

The textbooks that we use to prepare students for the National Exam are from Ghana and Nigeria. Mr. Saah Alphonso Taylor, an experienced science teacher, wrote a science textbook for high school teachers and students using the Liberian context. During the retreat, Mr. Taylor showed the principals how to use local materials for science experiments and shared tips for practicalizing science lessons.

*Saah Alphonso Taylor engaged United Methodist School principals in using science lab equipment and materials during the principals' retreat in Ganta.*



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Methodist School

*Dr. Victoria Brown and Abbey Roin-Thigpen facilitate training for teachers of the deaf at the LAC's Hope for the Deaf school.*



## Hope for the Deaf Teacher Training

There are several private schools for the Deaf in Liberia, but no training program for the teachers, most of whom are deaf. Hope for the Deaf, a ministry of the LAC, plans to establish the National Training Institute for the Deaf. Dr. Victoria Brown, a former professor at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, has been very helpful in the planning process. In August, Victoria made her third trip to Liberia. This time she came with Abbey Roin-Thigpen, a teacher at the Maryland School for the Deaf. Abbey planned and conducted an excellent 6-day training on how to teach reading and writing to deaf students. Teachers from Hope for the Deaf's school in Monrovia and 6 other schools for the deaf participated in the training from August 19- 26. There were 17 teachers in all. Deaf students came to the training so the teachers could practice teaching techniques with the children. The last day of the training focused on using math manipulatives to teach place value. David Worlobah (Hope for the Deaf Director) and I will visit classrooms to see how teachers are implementing the newly introduced techniques.

*Teachers of the deaf at August training.*



## WASSCE Results and Graduations

*Graduation ceremony of J. J. Roberts United Methodist School, July 22, 2019 at Stephen Trowen Nagbe UMC, Monrovia.*



*Thank you for your prayers, material, and financial support.*

*I wish you the love, joy, and peace of Jesus Christ.*

*Helen Roberts-Evans*

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High schools in Liberia are not allowed to graduate 12<sup>th</sup> grade students until the release of the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Last year, due to poor performance by most of the candidates, the Ministry of Education, allowed all 12<sup>th</sup> graders who passed in their high schools, to graduate even if they did not pass any of the 9 subject tests on the WASSCE. This year, when the WASSCE results were released via internet on July 24, the Ministry of Education required students to pass at least one of the WASSCE subject tests to participate in their high school's graduation ceremony. The Ministry of Education decided that to graduate from high school in 2020, 12<sup>th</sup> graders must pass at least 3 of the WASSCE subject tests, including English or Math. This year students in 14 of our 27 high schools passed at least 3 of the subjects. We hope that with more books, more qualified teachers, and improved science labs, more students will meet the 2020 expectations.