



# Mawuvio's Outreach Programme

April 2014

## Lessons from Abroad at Iowa State University



*Our very own Renee Farwell.*

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Co-founder and Co-director of Mawuvio's Outreach Programme (M.O.P.), Renee Farwell, was a panelist for Iowa State University's "Lessons from Abroad" conference on April 4th. The conference aimed to equip current Iowa State students with the tools they need to both study and work abroad. Since Farwell's work at M.O.P. began during a semester at the University of Ghana, students and professionals had a wealth of questions about how such a progression occurred. Farwell was featured as a panelist during the "Evolution of the Study Abroad Experience" break-out session, where she discussed her own experiences studying and, ultimately, developing a career in Ghana. From cultural adjustments to finding life-fulfilling work, the questions Farwell answered were widely varied. "I explained that M.O.P. was not planned—that I met Kwame and saw a clear need for

free education in the Kissema community," says Farwell.

Students were impressed and inspired by what Farwell and her M.O.P. partners and supporters have accomplished. Many wondered how all of her work and travel were financially possible. Farwell says, "I explained the basic development of M.O.P. in the first few months and first year. I explained the ground-level fundraising I did in Iowa, going door to door collecting money and publishing newspaper articles—basically, letting people in the Eastern Iowa community know what was going on at M.O.P. As for how am I able to return to Ghana, I explained that M.O.P. is my career and life; I initially worked in the States to save up money to go back. I did that 4-5 times until we had gained enough donors that agreed M.O.P. would support my trips."

Farwell was also asked why staying connected to the people and places encountered during a study-abroad experience was important. "I told them that it's important to stay connected because if we don't, it's just like a vacation that you went on and eventually turns into just pictures. The same way we are alumni of our local high schools and colleges, we are alumni at the colleges we study at abroad. Study abroad is much more

than just going to college somewhere else for a semester. It's an experience that affects you in many ways, and it's crucial to remain connected in whatever way you can so you don't lose that part of your life."

Clearly, Farwell's semester abroad—or, what was intended initially to be just a semester—was a catalyst for something much larger. The opportunities that can pop up during a semester abroad, however, are sometimes overlooked. Farwell did not forget to remind the "Lessons from Abroad" attendees that an open mind can make all the difference. "I told them that if you are open to opportunities, as I was, that you may find your purpose in life, as I did."

*The pioneer room on Iowa State University's campus, where "Lessons from Abroad" was held.*



M.O.P. News

## Student Birthdays:



Saviour Ametonu: April 11th



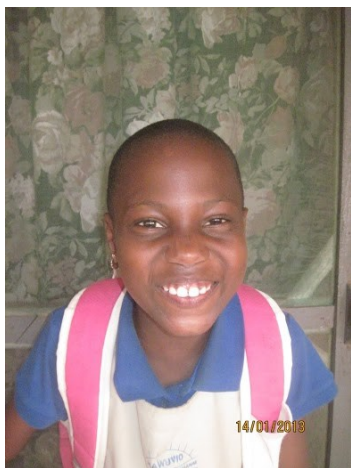
**Saviour turned 6 this month!**

Komlavi Ivory: Birthday unknown.



**Komlavi is 17 this year!**

Morde Bedi: Birthday unknown.



**Morde is 11 this year!**

## Austrian Pastor Makes Donation to M.O.P.

Long-time volunteer teacher and supporter for Mawuvio's Outreach Programme, Florian Bernhart, will soon be accepting a sizable donation on behalf of M.O.P. in his hometown, Frastanz, Austria. Pastor of Frastanz's local church, Herbert Spieler (pictured), heard about M.O.P. from retired pastor and friend, Rudi Seigl—Bernhart's uncle. "Herbert [Spieler] is going to retire very soon—in some few months time—so he wanted to support one last project before he will go and a new pastor will come," says Bernhart. While Bernhart's uncle introduced Spieler to M.O.P. as an organization, Bernhart arranged a meeting with Spieler so that he could personally describe the school and its needs.

"I told him exactly what we are doing and about our projects. I told him that our school is currently still outside and that, sometimes, during intense heat or heavy rain we can't run classes, but that we are building a new and proper school and will move in by September."

Right now, Bernhart is working out details so that he can ship donated desks, computers, bedding, clothing, and more to M.O.P., which will be used in the new school building in Ayikuma. It is likely that part of Spieler's donation will be allocated to pay for the shipping of



**Pastor Herbert Spieler.**

the large amount of goods Bernhart has collected.

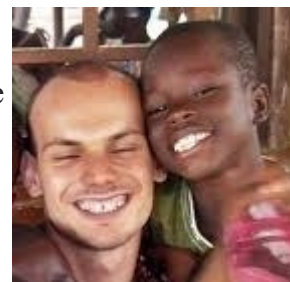
In addition, Bernhart has been the backbone behind M.O.P.'s sustainable farming program (also at M.O.P.'s Ayikuma campus). During his meeting with Spieler, Bernhart says, "I mentioned that we have a big piece of land to plant our own vegetables and fruits so we won't spend too much money on buying foodstuffs at the market."

"Flo [Bernhart] is putting the rest of us to shame," says another M.O.P. volunteer, Sarah Karner, who served with Bernhart during his first stay in Ghana in 2012. "He's the ideal volunteer, taking his passion for the kids home with him and spreading the word about M.O.P. and how people can help."



**Current vegetable beds at Ayikuma.**

Bernhart will be back in Ghana, for the third time, to work with and for the students of M.O.P. this coming September.



**Volunteer Florian Bernhart (left).**



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



**Mark Danyo**

Age: 7

Class: KG

Favorite game: Football

Favorite food: Banku

What do you want to be when you grow up?

Driver



**Natashia Donu**

Age: 11

Class: 4

Favorite game: Ampe

Favorite food: Fried rice

What do you want to be when you grow up?

Nurse or Teacher

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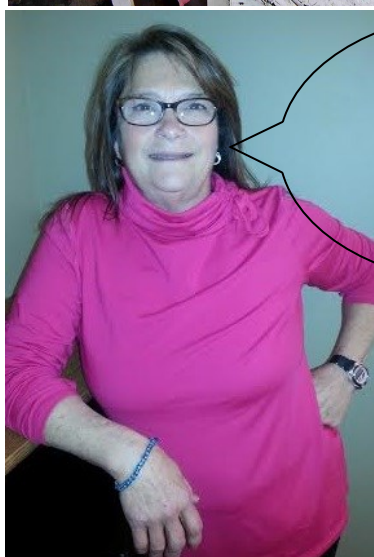
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