

# Mawuvio's Outreach February 2014



## Mawuvio's Outreach Featured in Article



Pictured: MOP student body stand with Director Eric Kwame Agoe and Steve and Barb Farwell in December 2012

Mawuvio's Outreach Programme was recently featured in an article published on three online news sites. In the fall, board member Elena Arosemena nominated Renee Farwell and her work with M.O.P. to be featured in Talking Good. Talking Good is a website that features individuals and organizations working to improve the lives of others. Rich Polt, of Talking Good interviewed Renee Farwell and wrote the article about Mawuvio's Outreach Programme. The article was published on Talking Good's website, in the Christian Science Monitor and the Huffington Post.

Below is the article written by Rich Polt:

When asked for a favorite inspirational saying, Renee Farwell cites author/artist and fellow Iowan Brian Andreas: "There are things you do because they feel right and they may make no sense and they may make no money and it may be the real reason we are here: to love each other..." A statement like that, for many, evokes a warm smile and a nod. We relate to it because it touches that part of our brain which yearns to be carefree, spontaneous, impractical.

Perhaps we might tweet it. But it's only once you know the life path which Renee Farwell chose for herself that you can fully appreciate how profound and autobiographical that saying truly is.

I wonder what Renee's parents said when she first told them that she would be returning to Ghana, the West-African nation where she took her semester abroad while attending Chicago's Roosevelt University. Did they think her decision was misguided? Were they supportive? Perhaps better than anyone, Renee's parents recognized their daughter's propensity for doing good and foresaw the seismic impact she would have in a community halfway around the world.

A few years earlier at the University of Ghana, Renee had met a young man named Eric Kwame Agoe. Kwame, a native Ghanaian, lost his father at a young age and was forced to drop out of public school due to his inability to pay the required fees. As he grew, Kwame saw other young children in his Kissemah Village also suffer from an inability to afford schooling. After talking for a while with Renee at the copier, Kwame invited her to visit his village and help with the seven children being home schooled at Kwame's mother's house. She accepted his invitation. The experience changed her life.

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### **Happy Birthday!** Mawuvio's Outreach February & Unknown Birthdays:

#### **February 8**

Patricia Avoryi  
14 years



Morde Bedi  
Unknown



Etonom Atali  
Unknown



Komlavi  
Avoryi  
Unknown



Within a year, Kwame and Renee together established a free education and care facility in Kissemah Village. By January 2010, Mawuvio's (God's Children) outreach program became a registered non-governmental and social welfare organization in Ghana. In November 2011 Mawuvio's outreach program (MOP) became a registered 501(c)(3) organization in the United States. MOP provides educational and development services to orphans and disadvantaged sons and daughters on the streets who cannot afford the required fees to attend government schools in Ghana. Mawuvio's outreach operates under the Ghana Education Service. They provide nursery through primary six basic education. Classes offered include English, math, science, religious moral education (RME), information communication technology (ICT), citizenship education and creative arts to children free of charge.



According to MOP board member Elena Arosemena, "Renee embodies the spirit, courage, and conviction of following your heart! She is an example to the world and what can be accomplished if you stick with your dreams and goals. She has overcome cultural, language, age, gender barriers, and is providing hope, opportunity, and education to amazing children who otherwise would not have a chance."

This coming September, after a multi-year fundraising and construction effort, Renee, Kwame, and team will finally open the Mawuvio's outreach program school building (classes are currently held outside). With the new facilities in place, their student population will grow appreciably. Now, their top priority will be to secure ongoing funding to keep the new school open and operating.

What began with just seven children on the porch of Kwame's Mother's home, has grown into a major operation that provides education, opportunities, and purpose to so many people; no one more so than Renee. As she says below, "I cannot imagine any other life than the one I am currently living."

**In just one sentence, what is your purpose in life?**

To inspire youth to use education as a means to excel themselves, their families, and their communities out of the impoverished situations they come from and help them become successful, contributing members of society.

**How has this work changed you?**

Because of this work, I have found my purpose in life. Now, I cannot imagine any other life than the one I am currently living. It has made me more appreciative of everyday luxuries -- from running water to having access to education. Most importantly, I am single handedly assisting in, and witnessing, the development of the next generation of leaders in Ghana and the world at large.

**What do you get from giving?**

Seeing my students make steps in their education, making sense of letters and numbers -- putting them into words, sentences, math problems and being able to understand what they have just learned -- is a huge reward for me. Listening to students, who once had no dreams or purpose, as they talk about becoming a doctor, a teacher, president gives me hope for the future -- both for these children and the children Mawuvio's outreach program has yet to reach out to.

**What is your favorite inspirational saying?**

"There are things you do because they feel right and they may make no sense and they may make no money and it may be the real reason we are here: to love each other." ~Brian Andreas

**Tell us something you rarely share in public**

My father recently suddenly passed away. I was in Ghana when it happened and had to quickly travel home to the states. A lot of family and friends felt very bad that I was so far away at such a difficult time however I feel differently. The community I work in in Ghana has become a second family to me, they have met both my parents and care for me in the same way I am cared for by the family that raised me. I am blessed to have had the opportunity to grieve with both of my families during such a difficult time in my life.

**What advice do you have for others who aspire to be citizen philanthropists?**

Follow your instincts and do not over-think things. Everyone has a purpose in this life and if you are patient and open to things, your purpose will find you.



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Saturday morning football training for MOP students  
5:00am – 7:30 am

Ongoing bead sales on etsy.com and local representatives

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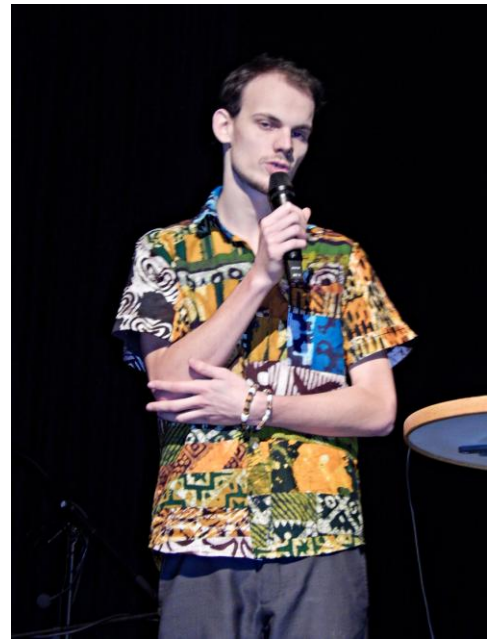
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## MOP Presentation Given in Austria

On January 18 Mawuvio's Outreach volunteer and newly appointed board member, Florian Bernhart gave a presentation to a group of approximately fifty people in his hometown of Frastanz, Austria. He spoke about the mission and vision of Mawuvio's Outreach and his experience as a volunteer in the organization. Bernhart has volunteered at Mawuvio's twice. First in 2012 and again last year; spending a total of six months in Ghana.

While in his home country of Austria, Bernhart has worked tirelessly raising money, collecting donations and most importantly spreading the word of the work Mawuvio's Outreach is doing to improve the lives of orphaned and



disadvantaged youth in Ghana.

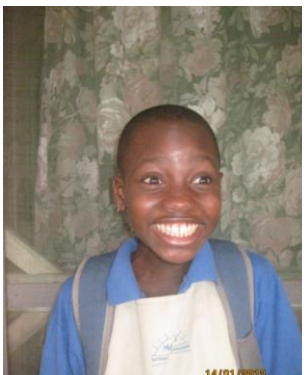


At the end of his presentation Bernhart sold the recycled glass Krobo beaded bracelets, earrings and necklaces made by the students and staff at MOP. From the presentation alone Bernhart sold over \$700 worth of jewelry.

Shortly after the presentation a store in Schruns, Austria partnered with Bernhart to being selling MOP jewelry in their fair trade shop. Bracelets are being sold for 8€ , earrings for 4€ , and necklaces for 13€.

There are approximately 200 fair trade shops around Bernhart's hometown and he hopes to put MOP jewelry in more in

## Student Spotlight



Name: Princilla Mensah  
Age: 10  
Class: Class 3  
Best Game: Ampe  
Best Food: Fried Rice

What do you want to be when you grow up?  
Nurse



Name: Paul Addah  
Age: 10  
Class: Primary 3  
Best Game: Football  
Best Food: Jollof Rice

What do you want to be when you grow up?  
Pilot