

Local News

FIND Takes Free Computer Training To Youth In Lofa



Mr. Roosevelt Woods, FIND Exec. Dir.

The Foundation for International Dignity (FIND) has launched its Professional Development Program in Voinjama City, Lofa County, with the provision of a tuition-free computer education program for the young people.

The FIND Professional Development Program was introduced in 2006 to provide vocational and technical training to Liberian Youth.

The program which was well attended by a cross section of youth from the various districts of the county will run from September 1 through November 31st, 2012 at which time the first graduation exercise is expected to take place.

In his welcome statement, Mr. Aaron Juaquellie, the National Program Officer of FIND, thanked the participants for the high turnout and admonished the youth to take ownership of the program and strive to build

their skills in computer technology.

"We want to encourage you to take ownership of this school because FIND will not provide support for ever," the FIND Program Officer maintained.

He however cautioned the youth to protect computers and accessories as if these materials were theirs.

In his opening statement, Mr. Roosevelt Woods, the Executive Director of FIND who officially launched the program, informed the prospective students that computer usage has become the order of modernity and as such, local people should not be denied access in any way or manner to computer education.

Mr. Woods further lamented that computer education in the past had been considered for the rich and people who can afford to pay for the study.

"Our greatest desire is to train you to compete with your counterparts at the National and International levels," Mr. Woods told the citizens of Lofa.

He stated that research has revealed that students from rural communities perform better than those in urban metropolises due to less recreational activities in rural areas, adding that their location further places them in the right

position to study and perform better than urban students.

"We will have only one person to a computer and each student will be entitled to three credit hours weekly, which is by far more than the time allocated to urban dwellers attending computer schools.

"This will place you at an added advantage to compete and even perform better than your colleagues provided if you take this opportunity very seriously," Mr. Woods pointed out to the enthusiastic youth and community residents of Lofa County.

The FIND Executive Director then asserted that though the program will be tuition-free, parents and guidance should take ownership of the initiative by contributing minimum amount for the running of the generator and sustainability of the program.

"A Board comprising a member from FIND's Executive Board, a representative from the education sector, a representative from the community, a youth representative and one person from the local authority will be constituted to provide oversight to the management team and help lobby for support for the program," Mr. Woods further noted.

According to the FIND Boss, as a means of ensuring conducive learning atmosphere for students benefiting from the program, no class will exceed 10 students, with each student to a computer.

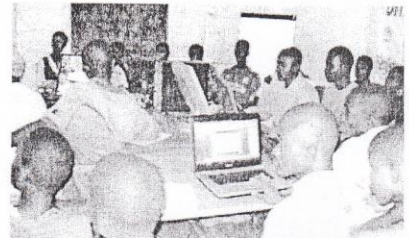
Responding to series of questions from the youth, Mr. Woods stressed that the school is for the people of Lofa County and they must decide on how to run it.

FIND will only provide initial support and ensure that the curriculum is up to standard on par with conventional computer institutions.

In his closing statement, Mr. Woods paid tribute to Mr. Eric Willise Wowoh, the Executive Director of Change Agent Network, a US based non-governmental organization that has made significant contribution in providing tuition-free computer education to Liberians in Nigeria and Liberia.

Mr. Wowoh is a son of Lofa County. He promised to bring Mr. Wowoh on board to provide help to the computer school in terms of donating additional computers to the FIND Professional Development Program.

Also speaking at the program, Mrs. Winifred Cole, an



Partial view of youths at the computer training session

Executive Board Member of FIND encouraged the youth to take the computer program very seriously because, according to her, computer has taken over every aspect of life including the communication industry.

"Lofa County is blessed to have a tuition-free computer school when others are paying high cost to acquire computer education," she stated.

For his part, the youth leader, Mr. Stephen Akoi Karnue, thanked FIND for the initiative and promised to take ownership of the program.

"We want to assure you and the management of FIND that your effort will never be in vain as we are prepared to take advantage of this opportunity to enhance our skills in computer knowledge," the youth chairman said.

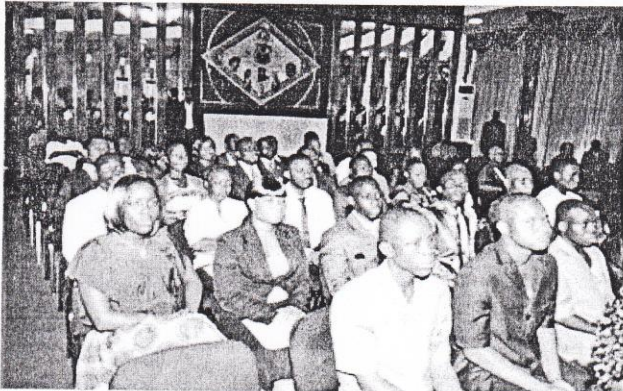
He further called on all well meaning Liberians and th international community t provide support in whatever ways to the youth of Voinjama District, adding that the youth i in dire need of assistance in th form of scholarship an economic empowerment.

Meanwhile, following th launching ceremony, there wa an overwhelming turned out fo registration.

Lofa is the second county apar from Montserrado that i benefiting from the FIN[Professional Development Program.

The organization intends to establish additional two school: in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County (South Eastern Liberia and Gbarnga, Bong County where its National Headquarte is situated.

Ellen Challenges Liberian Scholars



Meets New Doctors For JFK

proud of your accomplishments."

For the young graduates that have already been placed in government parastatals, President Sirleaf expressed our deepest and warmest appreciation for the extremely hard and munificent work done since your induction to office." Ms. Kilby, a graduate of the University of Ab-delaic, in Morocco, said.

The Liberian leader cautioned those students expected to depart shortly to observe the laws of the host country. "For those that are going, please observe the rules and regulations of the country in which you are studying," she appealed, pointing out that she has received numerous reports, through the country's diplomatic missions, about the misbehavior of certain students.

Speaking on behalf of the returning graduates earlier, Ms. Rhoda Kilby applauded the Liberian President for her direct intervention in prioritizing

challenges as they continue to strive for generational change.

"Madam President, our debts to you are immeasurable and, as such, words are inadequate to express our deepest and warmest appreciation for the extremely hard and munificent work done since your induction to office."

She praised the work of the Inter-Ministerial Scholarship Committee and the role it continues to play in meeting the needs of international scholars, including placing returning graduates in government institutions so they can contribute their quota to the country's reconstruction and development.

Introducing the students, Mr. George Werner, head of the Inter-Ministerial Scholarship Committee, said they represented the resiliency of Liberia's educational system. "They are among the best of our brightest minds and they have proven it by the way they have prepared themselves to represent Liberia on the international stage," he said. He reiterated that not only did the Inter-Ministerial Scholarship

recommended to their bilatera partners, they all performed excellently.

Also on Thursday, President Sirleaf met with five Liberians who have returned home after pursuing post-graduate studies in the People's Republic of China, India and the United States of America.

Messrs. Francis Grant and Saye Vah both obtained Master's of Law in International Relations from the China Foreign Affairs University in Beijing; and Mr. Vallai Dorley obtained a Master's of Science Degree in Public Policy from Peking University in Beijing.

Mr. Augustus Panton obtained a Master's of Commerce (Finance) from the Osmania University in India; while James Andrews obtained a Master's in Global Business Administration from South New Hampshire University in the United States.

Speaking separately, they all praised President's Sirleaf's leadership and reiterated their desire to join in the reconstruction and development efforts of the country since they had returned with additional knowledge and expertise that Liberia badly needs.

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has expressed admiration for returning graduates and visiting international students for prioritizing education and for the manner in which they competed and were able to succeed in their international exams.

"Today, we are proud of you, particularly because you have prioritized education to prepare for the leadership role that you will play in the country, for the manner in which you competed; and for those who had taken the international exams, with all the competition and to have excelled

these scholarships, again to your big credit," President Sirleaf noted.

According to an Executive Mansion release, President Sirleaf made the statement at the C. Cecil Dennis, Jr. Auditorium when returning graduates, visiting students and students expected to depart the country shortly paid her a courtesy call on Thursday, August 16.

Through bilateral scholarship arrangements, 10 students pursued undergraduate studies at universities in the Kingdom of

at universities in the People's Republic of China.

Eighteen students are expected to depart Liberia for China on August 20, to study disciplines in Engineering and other sciences; a second group of 12 students will depart for Australia in January 2013 to pursue disciplines in Public Policy, and Financial and Human Resource Management.

President Sirleaf thanked those students who have completed their studies and have returned to make their contribution to the reconstruction and development