



STELLA'S SCHOOL SCHEME



Fighting poverty through education

Charity no 1130256



NEWSLETTER 2020



News from Heather

What a strange year it has been! The Gambia also experienced lock down and schools and colleges were closed. Sadly we had not long paid all the fees for the year ahead when they all closed. Needless to say there were no refunds forthcoming!

Most of the children that we sponsor do not have access to laptops or even electricity, let alone Wi-Fi so for many of them it was a matter of going home and helping with the chores.

The College and University students fared better because they were able to continue learning on-line and we are delighted to say that they are doing really well.

Most of the students are studying agriculture, but we have a wide range of subjects as you will see from some of the letters that follow.

Many of our students are involved in conservation and tree planting projects in their spare time and it was lovely to see them involved in beach and environmental cleaning and also tree planting projects during lockdown. Through your sponsorship, they are becoming responsible global citizens which is so good to see.

Thank you all for your continued support which is very much appreciated by the young people that you sponsor. You really are making a big difference, not only to them, but through them, the world is becoming a better place.

We do have a long list of students seeking support, so please pass on this newsletter to anyone you feel may be interested in contributing to education. It is so rewarding to play a small part in watching them grow and develop into global citizens that we can all be proud of.

We wish you a peaceful and healthy Christmas.

Stay safe,

"If you contribute to other people's happiness, you will find the true meaning of life."

The Dalai Lama

Heather



Fatou Mbye



Stella Mbye loves poetry.



Muhammed wants to be a vet



Kumba Bah hopes to be an accountant



Saikou would like to work with animals.



Sanna Silva



Elena Silva

MY APPRECIATION



I am Sheikh Sey, a final year student of the Gambia College School of Nursing and Midwifery - Banjul. I am one of the students who benefitted from the scholarship granted by Stella's School Scheme. I write to express my sincere appreciation on the scholarship granted to me for my three-year-course at the above mentioned school. I don't know the exact words to start with. All I can say for now is "may the almighty God bless you for wiping the tears of a student who was in desperate need of help to accomplish his career'

In the year 2007, my father left us in the village and went to Senegal. My mother was the only one struggling to make both ends meet. Currently, my mother is very old and weak, she cannot afford to pay my tuition fees. My father passed away in Senegal since last January, 2020. I have never in my life thought of even completing my high school, talk less of College.

A friend who told me about the scholarships that you offer to students and she gave me the number of a woman I will never forget for the rest of my life - Aunty Fatou. When I linked with Aunty Fatou and told her about my desperate need of sponsor, all she asked for was my documents and admission letter. My fees were settled within ten days.

Once again, I really thank Stella's School Scheme for making my future bright. I would also like you to know that, Aunty Fatou is the type of a woman that all poor students like me need. She is good hearted. Please, never underestimate her qualities. My Aunty, thank you very much may Allah reward you and satisfy all your needs. Ameen...

Once again, Thank you Stella's School Scheme, thank you Aunty Fatou.

We would like to extend our warm congratulations to Fanta Jallow who had outstanding results at the end of year 9.

Her results were in the top 26 in the entire country! What an incredible achievement! We hope the final years of your school career will be as successful. We are all very proud of you and we wish you well for the future.



Fatoumata Marenah is studying law and is in her third year at the Faculty of Law at the University of The Gambia. She hopes to go on to the Gambia Bar School for one year and upon successful completion of that, then for a Masters LL.M

It is her wish to work for the Legal Aid Department and provide pro bono services to those who cannot afford legal help.

Muhamed Baldeh



Our own Muhamed Baldeh, who has been sponsored by us since he was tiny has just graduated from The Gambia College. Muhamed (Mo) comes from a subsistence farming family in Sambel Kunda. He is the first person in his family to have completed school and gone on to College and we are all very proud of his achievements. He has always spent a lot of his time at The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust (GHDT) and is very good with animals. After school he joined the GHDT apprenticeship project as there is normally a long time before school results come through by which time College and University places have been taken by the previous year's school leavers. His results were so good that the College accepted him there and then. Mo's apprenticeship was sponsored by the Westbourne Rotary Club and they kindly agreed to allow him to attend College and continue

doing his apprenticeship in his spare time. Mo lives at the GHDT Makasutu Centre which was a relief for his parents as it was his first time down at the coast. It also gave him more confidence to be with people he knew. He worked with the animals on his evenings, days off and weekends to maintain his skills and to complete his apprenticeship. Mo's ambition is to become a vet and we are looking into ways that he can get further training.



Ebrima Ndow



I am indeed overwhelmed to humbly express my sincere appreciation for the funding of my university tuition fees. I remain grateful to you for helping me get to another level in the fulfilment of my dreams. You have positively affected my life through this scholarship.

I am now in the final year majoring in Development Studies. Being so passionate to support Community development propelled me to study development studies at the University of the Gambia, so as to acquire more knowledge that I can utilize to service humanity at large.

The scholarship package enabled me to concentrate more on academic works, and extracurricular activities in the university. I have been engaged in various training at national and international level in different fields. Your generosity had allowed me to be one step closer to my goals and has inspired me to serve others especially by giving back to my community. I cofounded Farafenni Association For Development (FaFoD) which over a number of years, has continue to support the advancement of the people, especially

students and youths of Farafenni, through education, awareness creation, capacity building, sports and civic engagement among other areas of intervention; all geared towards remedying problems in the community. I also cofounded the Farafenni Annual Talent Exhibition Championship with my friend Omar Dibba. It is a designed academic platform that aims at enabling students from Farafenni and the school communities to discover and utilize their potentials in constructive public debate. Extracurricular activities are greatly in need to assist the marginalized provincial students to accommodate academic study. We successfully organized the first ever British Parliamentary debate system in Farafenni in 2018 and 2019.

Words can't express how delighted I am, I therefore in conclusion pray that the Good Lord bestows blessing, good health, guidance, protection, and prosperity in your life.

Ebrima Ndow is in his third year reading Development studies at The University of The Gambia.

APPLICATION FOR SPONSORSHIP

Sometimes we receive quite sad letters. Fatou always checks them out to ensure that they are genuine, but this one touched us as he appeared to have tried so hard to make a go of it.

"I am pleased to inform you that, due to my success at The Gambia College entrance interview, I was accepted to undertake a course in Advanced diploma secondary at The Gambia College last year. I was struggling to pay for myself because my parents are unable to pay for me, so I decided to pay for myself but I paid only half of it last year, that's D6000 and am unable to complete the remaining balance. So I would love your support to help me in order to complete my education and am so hoping your kindness you would help me out. I am currently sitting at home while my friends are attending classes which is because I haven't pay my tuition fees, so please help me if not I will be a drop out. Thank you" Dawda Sowe.

Aunty Fatou

Fatou continues to administer SSS affairs in The Gambia. Her mother worked for my parents and Fatou worked with both my father and Stella before becoming SSS administrator. She has a very big heart and is good at identifying people in genuine need of help. In The Gambia students fees are paid directly into the bank and it is only on production of the bank receipt that students are permitted to attend classes. Fatou takes an interest in all the students in her care and she is regarded with great affection by them. In days gone by in UK, an adult was never called by their first name by youngsters. They were always addressed by their title, Mr. or Mrs. or as a mark of respect they could be called Aunty. It is the same in The Gambia and this is now how she is known to the students that she looks after.

Thank you Fatou for your care and hard work.



"Stella's School Scheme

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generosity in funding my university education. Thanks to your scholarship, I am able to finish my Bachelor's degree at the university of The Gambia.

I am currently teaching in a high school in Busumbala. My main goal after completion of my Bachelor's degree was to pursue a masters degree, which I am still working on.

Stella's School Scheme and opportunity to attend university has helped me create a solid foundation for which to build my future. Thank you again for the generous support.

Sincerely, Binta Jeng

