

Education bserver

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USAID, Alfalit, Leadership Africa Declare Essay Contest Winners

By Edwin M. Fayia III

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Liberia's foremost adult literacy organization (ALFALIT), Leadership Africa USA and International Bank Liberia Limited (IB) last week Thursday officially declared several high school students winners of their essay competition in Monrovia.

The well-attended program held at the JJ Roberts United Methodist School in Sinkor, brought together high profiled Liberian Government officials and a Western diplomat accredited to Liberia.

The winners according to the organizers of the essay contest were selected based on professionalism, merit, competence and sound judgment by a panel of prominent personalities in the Liberian society who are of moral characters and are rated excellent.

Speaking during the presentation ceremony, Liberia's Budget Director Augustine Kpehe Ngafuan sounded an earnest call on Liberians to see the education of the nation's youths as a foremost and a priority by all Liberians irrespective of backgrounds.

The Liberian Budget chief who spoke on several issues of

the nation, called on the Liberian youths to consider themselves as future leaders of the nation if only they (youths) can begin to prepare themselves now and not later in the country.

Director Ngafuan also underscored the need for those youths in the current Liberian Government to serve as ambassadors of positive and genuine change to be emulated by a new generation of youths.

The young Liberian Budget chief also a poet asserted that, there was a grave situation about Liberian student's ability to write good English and stressed the urgent need for the continuation of the essay contest across the nation.

On the issue of the menace of corruption in the country, Director Ngafuan called on the youths and Liberians to view the issue as a serious cancer in the Liberian society that requires swift action to minimize the uncontrollable menace.

He further urged students across the country to take the challenge that without cheating, they (students) were academically capable to pass any public exam which also includes the West African Examinations Council test.

Director Ngafua also advised students and Liberians to do away with the commission of crime that has no room for their future development, growth and

progress as there was no smooth ride to a successful future.

Director Ngafua intimated that speaking to students at the auditorium of the JJ Roberts School reminded him of the fond memories when he onetime sat the WAEC's exams there in 1985 as a 9th grade candidate.

THE University Liberia's accounting lecturer also noted that seeking the fountain of knowledge by the nation's youths was indeed critical and crucial to the socio-economic and political enhancements of the country's overall development, growth and progress. grade

Director Ngafua further cautioned the Liberian youths to not let the older generation to find an excuse to pass on the leadership of the nation's owing to inadequate preparation of the youths in meeting the huge but achievable challenges in the areas of professional and productive education.

For his part, the United States ambassador to Liberia Donald Ernest Booth said, the occasion reminded him of his college years when he was challenged to work hard and achieve those things in the best ways an initiative and endeavor that would ensure a successful future.

The American diplomat lauded the efforts of the organizers and implementing partners, USAID, ALFALIT-Liberia, Leadership Africa (USA), International Bank

(Liberia) Limited (IB) and all Liberian stakeholders associated with the students' essay contest.

On behalf of the Minister of Education, the Assistant Minister of Professional and Technical Education Mr. Yonton B. Kesselly called on the organizers to make the essay contest an all inclusive initiative across the nation.

In a Youth and Sports Ministry's statement, a representative called on the organizers to encourage the participation of more schools as that would serve as an incentive for those talented students in rural Liberia.

For his part, the Executive Director of ALFALIT-Liberia, Reverend Emmanuel J. Giddings, disclosed that the selection process was indeed done in transparent, fair and credible manner as the overall winner student Page W. Kialain was tested in a separate room and proved very excellent.

At the end of the essay contest ceremony, the International Bank Liberia's representative presented checks in US dollars to the winners who were drawn from several Monrovia's schools.

In brief remarks, the valedictorian of the USAID's essay competition Page W. Kialain lauded the efforts of all the students who participated in the competition but did not win.

He also extended thanks and appreciation to his parents for the support and inspiration as well as the organizers for the farsighted initiative.