



MHA

*Dolly's* Smile

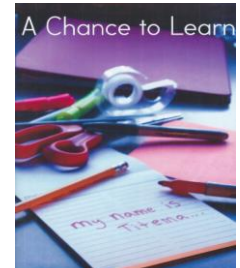
EVERYONE CAN BE **PRODUCTIVE**



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### Special Interest Articles:

- The Premiere of A Chance To Learn
- Bigma's Care Place Celebrates a Milestone
- Connie Thrash McGoodwin Vocational Training Hub



## The Premiere of A Chance To Learn

B&B Theatres Windsor 10, Windsor Hills - NW 23rd & Meridian - Oklahoma City, hosted "MHA Movie Night Out" Thursday, May 9, 2013, when it held the premiere of the Documentary - A Chance To Learn. The showing was made possible by corporate management and General Manager, Hal Smith.

Lovetie Major in *A Chance to Learn* tells a heart-touching story about the journey of her sister Titema, and her struggles and triumphs of overcoming the obstacles of having a learning disability and Down syndrome in Liberia, West Africa.

It speaks to the possibilities that every child can learn if given the opportunity,

the right vocational skills and training, along with a healthy dose of love and encouragement.

It will lead you on a journey of understanding of one Sister's love, commitment and vow to enrich her sibling's life by providing her with an opportunity to learn. This documentary is both inspiring and uplifting and it will leave you with an enlightened understanding of how children with disabilities can embrace learning and be productive.

The documentary was created and arranged by Lovetie Major and edited by Lauren Weingart of Created Photo Video in Oklahoma City. 🌟

### Individual Highlights:

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## Bigma's Care Place Celebrates A Milestone

January 2012 in Liberia, mothers came in search for help for their children with special needs to the home of the parents of Lovetie Major, when they heard an opportunity had come to service their children.

Mrs. Major met them on arrival and told them she did not have the financial means, but she sure had the heart to help. She asked the mothers for one thing, and that was she needed their prayers.

She made a promise to come back to Liberia and start a program, she said to mothers present, "I know you could not afford to send a daughter to the USA for

school, but I come today to tell you that I am your daughter and your children are my brothers and sisters."

With the help of Hannah's Promise Ministry at the United Methodist Church of the Servant in Oklahoma City, USA, Bigma's Care Place Respite Program was birthed, July 2012.

Bigma's Care Place provide respite for over sixteen families six hours, the last Saturday of every month. We are grateful for the partnership with St. Andrew Lutheran Church for allowing MHA the use of its facilities and the many dedicated volunteers who helped. 🌟



Lovetie Major, M.ED  
MHA CEO



*"Everyone can be  
productive if given  
the chance we  
want that  
opportunity."*



(L-R) Anthony Deline,  
MHA CEO Lovetie Major &  
Emmanuel Bright-Davis

## CEO's Reflections...

I commit to memory a grandmother and mother of two of our special needs children in our program that lost their lives during the course of the year.

I remembered the warmth in their eyes and the radiance when they smiled back at me when I last saw them July 2012.

The separation of a devoted care giver and a special needs individual in Liberia has always been my fear. My Heart's Appeal, Inc. will be a vehicle by which unlimited potential will be realized as we endeavor to bring about assistance to our target population.

The undertaking now is to continue phase one of our fundraising goal of \$300,000.00 for the 100 acres of land and surveying and securing the property for which we have now raised \$ 7923.00. The task though daunting, I am humbled and have accepted the mantle.

In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and to endure the betrayal of false friends.

-Continued on pg . 8

## MHA Celebrates World Down Syndrome Day in Liberia

A first for Liberia in its history was to have an event that recognized people with Down syndrome. MHA was honored to represent her country in breaking this barrier.

21 March 2013 marked the 8th anniversary of World Down Syndrome Day (WDS), which is a global awareness day and is officially observed by the United Nations. The date signifies the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of chromosome 21. MHA partnered with Down Syndrome International located in the United Kingdom and National Down Syndrome Society, USA to help bring about awareness for people with Down syndrome and to help dispel the myths about them.

The event was held at the SKD Sports Complex in Paynesville, Monrovia. Activities for the day were two- fold:

Morning Event (10-12pm) which included a 30- minutes walk in support of people with Down Syndrome and a group awareness campaign and informational gathering for 1 hour and 30 minutes. Afternoon Event (12-2pm) showing of a My Heart's Appeal's Special Documentary- A Chance to Learn, and Remarks and Question and Answer Period.

The theme of WDS was "Right To Work." Invited to give remarks were Dr. Dawn Barnes, Co-founder Aurora Foundation, Inc. Monrovia, Liberia. The program was moderated by Eva Flomo of United Nations Radio and sponsored by the Ministry of Education through their radio outreach made possible by the Minister Etmonia David Tarpeh. Thanks to the Ministry of Youth & Sports for its facility use. 🌟

## Ancient Free & Accepted Masons Partners With MHA

Grand Lodge Officers, Worshipful Master, Wardens, Past Masters and Brethren of Oriental Lodge #1 Masons, in Liberia, presented MHA CEO Lovetie Major with a 2.5Kva Generator for use at their offices.

The contribution was made as one of the charity event planned as the group identified with MHA in partnership for

World Down Syndrome Day 2013. Mr. Anthony W. Deline II, Deputy Grand Master, in his remarks admonished the audience to treat children with Down syndrome with kindness.

Special thanks goes to Worshipful Master Emmanuel Bright-Davis and Senior Warden Victor Prall who helped with event preparations. 🌟

## Connie Thrash McGoodwin Vocational Training Hub



MHA begins vocational training programs July 2013 in Monrovia, Liberia West Africa. The program will begin as a pilot phase to service people with a primary diagnosis of intellectual disabilities. The programs will be held at the Connie Thrash McGoodwin Vocational Training Hub (CTM Hub). The center is named after Connie Thrash McGoodwin, M. Ed. who is the Executive Director for Dale Rogers Training Center, who was honored and recognized at the February, MHA Pasture for the Sheep Benefit Dinner 2013. She was also presented a citation from Oklahoma Governor Mary Falin, presented by Oklahoma County Commissioner, Brian Maughan.

Dale Rogers Training Center is the largest facility of its kind in the Southwest, United States. This 60-year-old agency operates in seven locations across the state of Oklahoma. For over thirty years the driving

force behind these amazing accomplishments has been Connie Thrash McGoodwin, M. Ed. Having taught and lectured in New York and Australia, McGoodwin also ran a smaller but similar agency in Dallas, Texas, USA. "Who knew", says McGoodwin. "I'm a Speech Pathology major with a Master's degree in Education; I never thought I'd be developing and overseeing services, products and businesses." McGoodwin gives her long time management team a lot of the credit.

My Heart's Appeal has collaborated and formed partnership with Dale Rogers Training Center to initiate, develop and manage special programs that allow individuals to maximize their potential for intellectual development as would enable them to contribute to national development. Some of the initial programs to be offered are food service, crafts, agricultural, floral arrangements and social life skills.

It is a great honor and pride to name our vocational training center after a trailblazer who has spend her entire career paving the way and altering the minds of society and eventually proving the fact that everyone can be productive if given a chance. 🌟

## MHA Honors Partners and Business Associates in the USA

### Designsmith, Inc.

Diana Smith, a freelance graphic designer since 1984, her business has always been by word of mouth and is very blessed to have wonderful clients. She tries to portray their professionalism and concepts as best she can and find them economical way to produce their pieces, caring passionately about their endeavors and goals.

### Creative Photo Video

Our motto is professional and personable and we care as much as the customer does about each project. Lauren Weingart exemplifies CPV's standards and is an asset to our customers.

### Oklahoma Web Design & Hosting

Oklahoma Owned and Operated since 1997 by owner Angela Drabek. With a passion for being creative and artistic, all websites are custom designed with the clients goals in mind. With great pleasure, our web design team has had the opportunity to design and manage the website for My Heart's Appeal since early March 2012.

### Dale Rogers Training Center

Gayle Curry is one of Oklahoma's celebrated fine artists and an advocate for the arts. She is the Media Relations Coordinator for Dale Rogers Training Center. Through DRTC's support of My Heart's Appeal, Gayle used her expertise in graphic design to redesign MHA's logo and other material in order to communicate MHA's mission of hope for people with disabilities in Liberia, West Africa.

### Hannah's Promise-Church of the Servant

Thank you, Lovetie, for having the vision to believe that Hannah's Promise would be a good model for Big Ma's Place. Thank you for sitting all those hours in rapt attention, as I itemized all the details of how Hannah's Promise works, and told just how wonderful our parents are, how faithful our volunteers are, how extra-special our children are, and how much this ministry means to me personally. -Lola Burgtorf



### MHA 2013 Benefit Dinner Acknowledgments

- ▶ Stefanie Fields
- ▶ Commissioner Brian Maughan
- ▶ Rev. Linda Brinkworth
- ▶ Dr. Robyn Goggs
- ▶ Will & Mitchell Snow
- ▶ Infant Crisis Center
- ▶ Church of the Servant
- ▶ Creative Photo Video
- ▶ Lilygrass Flowers
- ▶ Dale Rogers Training Center
- ▶ Wednesday Evening Bible Study Church of the Servant, OKC

## MHA Newsworthy ...

Davis Merrey is the Owner/CEO of **TeamLogic IT** of Oklahoma City. His company provides local, online computer maintenance, backup, service, and troubleshooting expertise for hundreds of businesses across metro OKC at rates that are affordable. In our infancy stage, Davis and his team have offered and working with MHA to help set up our computer system. ☺

Marcia Mitchell is Founder and CEO of **The Little Light House**, a Tulsa-based Christian Developmental Center

providing educational and therapeutic services to children and Infants with special needs. MHA was blissful to have Marcia and her husband Phil at our February 2013 Benefit Dinner on such an icy evening. ☺

Mrs. Major was a guest of Eva Flomo, on the United Nations Missions in Liberia, (UNMIL) Station 91.5 FM **"Woman's World"** program, March 2013 to create awareness of MHA presence in Liberia. You can listen to the full interview on the YouTube page of our website. She also held interviews with other local radio stations: ELWA, ELBC and Truth FM ☺

## MHA forms partnership with Local Oklahoma Business

MHA was new to Oklahoma and Alicia Rankin, owner of Lilygrass flowers was the first business to contribute to our Silent Auction we held June 2012 by providing a beautiful floral basket. She also provided arrangements for our benefit dinner February 2013.

There has to be a connection here stated, Mrs. Major who always looks for an opportunity to shine the light on others. So she set out with occasionally visits to the floral shop to chat with the owner whenever she could.

She found a way to honor Alicia by partnering with her and naming the

Liberian flower shop in the CTM Hub , Lilygrass Flowers & Decor.

I was lead to the floral industry as a senior in high school by God. I was asking what he wanted me to do with my life and He lead me to a local flower shop in my area. I proceeded to learn the skills and went to college for a horticulture degree, says Alicia.

She bought Lilygrass flowers and decor in June 2011. Lilygrass flowers and decor has been around for 34 years and has had 3 owners in its life span. It is our prayer that patrons in the program shares Alicia's passion. ☺



Alicia Rankin & Lovetie Major

## Mission Trip To Liberia March 2014

Special thanks goes to the United Methodist Church of the Servant in Oklahoma City for allowing MHA use of its community hall on an icy Winter evening, when the building was shut down because of the weather, to host our February 21, 2013 Benefit Dinner. We are indeed grateful for this unprecedented gesture. ☺

MHA wants you to mark your calendar and **Save The Date**. United Methodist Church of the Servant is planning a mission trip to Liberia, Spring break next year (March 15-24) as guest of MHA. Details are being worked out for

the trip and more information will be forth coming by Fall 2013.

MHA will hold an informational gathering during preparation for the trip where interested persons will be able to walk around and get first hand information of the programs and projects that MHA wants to undertake. They will also be able to get a better insight of the directions of MHA.

The trip is a welcomed opportunity to bring a little light of sunshine to another part of the world. ☺

" Be the change  
you wish to see in  
the world."

-Mahatma Gandhi

## Walt & Harriot La Grone Wood Carving Creations

It began with a discussion of an African art on the sidewalk and then an invitation into the home of a neighbor. Mrs. Major through observation had discovered a hidden treasure in this home she exclaimed, and immediately wanted this talent to be shared.

Walt & Harriot La Grone have a passion for wood carving. The wood carving program in the Connie Thrash McGoodwin Hub has been named in their honor. The couple along with some of their friends donated an 18in gas chainsaw, a wide variety of carving tools, and patterns to the "Walt & Harriot La Grone Wood Carving Creations."

Walt started carving when he was six years old after his grandmother gave him his first pocket knife. There were many snakes in the rural area where he

grew up he said, and always took a long stick with him whenever he went walking. Over the years, he always tried carving something on them, even if it was only a small design. He took his first wood carving class at age 62.

Harriot began carving at age 60. Her first carvings were caricatures since they are humorous faces and shapes and they don't have to match. Then she took a "cottonwood bark" class and this type of carving has become her favorite. The houses are very whimsical and/or weird depending on the shape and thickness of the cottonwood bark.

The beneficiary of this donation, teenager and adults admitted into the program will learn some of the skills through patterns from Walt & Harriot who someday plan to visit Liberia. The program begins July 2013



Walt & Harriot La Grone

## MHA Pasture for the Sheep Wall of Fame

### Shepherds Staff Sponsorship Level

#### Shepherd Sponsorship Level

Dr. Arthur & Charlene Richardson +

#### Ram Sponsorship Level

Piper Pfister + Susan Leonard Burke Major +  
James & Cherrie Hampton Loren & Julie Plotkin

#### Ewe Sponsorship Level

Jill Walker + Alfred & Korpo Telewoda + Dr. Bracha Laster +  
Jack & Nancy Morgan Jim & Connie McGoodwin

#### Lamb Sponsorship Level

Suzy Wolfe + Amy Chao + Gina Musae Miki Farris  
Diane Folks Suzette Drake + Leni Burrow Dr. Marion Paden  
Ellen Hickerson William Wiggins Lillian Brejda + Daniel Short  
Kirk Mullen Marcia Brejda John & Karen Martin William & Barbara Russell +  
Phil & Marcia Mitchell + David & Toni Conrady Dr. Zwannah & Yatta Dukuly  
Dale Rogers Training Center + Susan Musae Dr. Roxanne Hughes-Wheatland  
Mark & Kay Harsha + Cary and Terry Fisher Susan Sutter  
Larry & Cynthia Stacy Judith Raulston Ronald & Shirley Beckett  
The Path Class, Church of the Servant



*"The work of My Heart's Appeal is a story of commitment, unshakable faith and determination--the key ingredients of a great VISION."*

*- Dr. Arthur Richardson  
MHA Board Chair*

*MHA fundraising drive -Pasture for the Sheep- is to buy land in Liberia, West Africa in support of Special Education. Wall of Fame will be posted on an erected wall when campus is completed. Thank you for your support!*



## MHA Gives Accolades at February 2013 Benefit Dinner, USA



MHA 2012-2013 Executive Board Members Installed  
(L-R) Dr. Arthur Richardson, Chair; Dr. Bracha Laster, Secretary  
Kysha Williams- Esq., Treasurer & Lovetie Major, CEO



Lauren Weingart,  
Creative Photo Video



Gayle Curry, Graphic & Media  
Coordinator, Dale Rogers Training  
Center, Oklahoma



Lola Burgtorf, Hannah's Promise Director  
Church of the Servant, Oklahoma City



Burke Major, Spousal Support



Phil & Marcia Mitchell, The Little Light House  
Tulsa, Oklahoma, (Marcia- Event Speaker)



Brian Maughan, Oklahoma County Commissioner  
(Presenter: Oklahoma Governor Citation)



## A May 2013 Day at Bigma's Care Place



I visited Liberia from Germany. The last Saturday in May, I was privileged to be a volunteer at Bigma's Care Place (BMC). About 24 children gathered there starting by 8 o'clock in the morning up to 3 o'clock in the afternoon. About 16 of them were children with Down syndrome and other disabilities, the others their siblings. There were shortage of volunteers. Several of those who usually help to take care of the children could not come that day.

I had brought some color pens and simple puzzles. Most children in Liberia are not used to doing puzzles, simply because they are hardly available in Liberia. Therefore, I was even more amazed how quick most of the children were able to fix the puzzles. One girl was so fond of one of the puzzles that she almost cried when somebody else

wanted to do it and grabbed it as soon as it was free again. There were also other activity rooms where children could color pictures or fix red paper crown, play with toys or read. There were story time and lots of fun for the children outside in the yard. During the days before and after BMC, I experienced how Down syndrome children are treated by other children and in the street and even adults. BMC for them is a place where they are dealt with respect and just as normal children. A kind of safe haven for them. They eagerly wait for the four weeks to pass until the next last Saturday in the month comes. 🌟 -Rev. Marina Rauh, Lutheran Pastor



## BMC Receives Contributions



Susan Leonard, Hannah's Promise Volunteer, Oklahoma

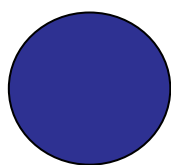
## Pictorial of World Down Syndrome Day in Liberia





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We're on the Web!  
See us at:



[www.myheartsappeal.org](http://www.myheartsappeal.org)

## MHA Online Store

MHA online store is now opened and contributions are accepted. We will periodically add items. All profits from online sales will go towards the objectives of My Heart's Appeal.

MHA CEO's manuscript accepted for print by TATE PUBLISHING in Mustang, Oklahoma is now finished and ready for orders. It is titled, *A Sibling's Vow*. The release date is October 1, 2013. Pre-orders are now available at our online store through Tate Publishing website.

## CEO's Reflections....Continued from pg 2

To appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

Dr. Arthur Richardson, Chairman of MHA board concluded his May 2013

## About Our Organization...

My Heart's Appeal, Inc. (MHA) was founded in Maryland (USA), 1996, as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to meet the special education and training needs for people with disabilities who live in Liberia, West Africa. The organization was inaugurated in 2001 and has defined its target population as the mild,

Future purchases can be made from our online store, major bookstores, Amazon or scheduled book signings.

A collection of plain African greeting cards and posters have been uniquely designed for MHA online store. We have partnered with Dale Rogers Training Center - Wyman Frame, for framing options for the posters. 🌟

Visit us at [www.myheartsappeal.org](http://www.myheartsappeal.org) and check out all of the taps and drop buttons on our site.

newsletter, "So now we have an opportunity to join in the building of God's Kingdom in a corner of God's great earth...Liberia. "

I want to thank you for all of your prayers and support. If you have not already partnered with us; let me personally invite you to do so. 🌟

moderate or severe intellectually disabled. MHA is now incorporated in the United States in Maryland and Oklahoma, and in the Republic of Liberia, West Africa. MHA's future goal is to lay a solid foundation in West Africa.



MY HEART'S APPEAL, INC.  
EVERYONE CAN BE PRODUCTIVE

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