



Annual Report 2014



Project OKURASE, Inc.
www.projectokurase.org

Message from THE Leadership

Dear Friends of Project OKURASE,

This annual report covers the activities of Project OKURASE, an NGO in Ghana and Project OKURASE a 501 c 3 nonprofit in the United States. 2014 was an exciting and successful year. We made progress on all objectives and our organizations have continued to grow. Project OKURASE in Ghana made significant progress on building projects and programs. Nana Ama Yeboah continues to work as Project Coordinator in Ghana. Project OKURASE in the United States became an independent nonprofit organization, met significant fundraising goals, and hired Linda Norton from Charleston, South Carolina as Executive Director.

Most notably, in January we officially opened the safe water system in Okurase. Water is pumped from a deep well to a tank in the Marketplace. There it is treated and pumped to a second tank and water flows from this tank to 6 taps. Students from Miami Valley School of Ohio joined with us to conduct WASH training in all schools in Okurase to encourage children and families to use the safe water. Solar lights installed at the Marketplace have made it possible to fetch water after dark.



Dr. Samuel Nkrumah Yeboah
Director and Founder, Ghana

In addition to progress on water, we initiated work on bringing biogas technology to Okurase. One system was built that converts waste to gas for cooking and organic fertilizer. This system was chosen by the village as an alternative to burning wood for cooking and use of harsh chemicals for farming. The use of a gas cooking alternative will also help address the serious issues of deforestation. This project is ongoing.

In July we conducted our 6th annual Village Health Outreach (VHO) and served over 1000 patients. As usual, the VHO was a great collaboration of Ghanaians and Americans from many places in the U.S.



Dr. Cindy Cupit Swenson
Board Chair, USA

Our progress on the Skills Training School and Medical Centre continued to move steadily forward as we near completion of the Skills Training school. In the final weeks of the year, carvers were busy creating doors that are true works of art.

In the realm of economic sustainability, the Okurase women's gari cooperative continued to move forward with development and marketing of gari in Ghana.

With regard to education, we continued to cover school fees for 15 students. In June students from La Jolla Country Day school worked with the village to build an electronic classroom. Nkabom Children's Cultural Troupe has continued to thrive. Funds were raised in the U.S. to bring part of the group for a U.S. tour. We are working on visas to allow us to develop tour dates.

In 2014 Okurase village continued to serve as a site for service learning of groups from the United States and beyond. We hosted high school and college students. In addition, Okurase served as an internship site for university students studying anthropology, hotel management, international business, public health, engineering, and medicine. In December 2014 we became an internship site for the Clinton School of Public Service and look forward to working with them as we move forward. Our service learning trips are a significant way that people come to help in Okurase and that Okurase residents can help those who come.



Nana Ama Yeboah,
Project Coordinator Ghana

All in all, we have had a very busy and productive year and are grateful to all involved. The Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Senegal began to impact travel to all of Africa by the end of the year. We are committed to overcoming any challenges we face from this crisis, although Ghana is and has always been ebola free. We wish the best for all who have been personally impacted by this crisis.

We look forward to continued growth and completion of large-scale projects in 2015. We also look forward to meeting everyone with whom we cross paths to bring our goals to fruition. Together we can make it happen.



Linda Norton
Executive Director, USA

All the Best,
Dr. Samuel Nkrumah Yeboah
Director

Dr. Cynthia Cupit Swenson
Co-Director

About Project OKURASE

“Project OKURASE” is a 501 c 3 nonprofit in the United States and an NGO based in the rural village of Okurase, in the Upper West Akyem District of the eastern region of Ghana West Africa. Okurase is about one and one half hours from the capital of Accra. It is home to approximately 3,500 people, one-half of whom are children. Most of the adults are subsistence farmers or carvers. Though the people of the village are hard-working, they face many difficult challenges. The mission of Project OKURASE is:

Collaborating with the village of Okurase, Ghana to develop sustainable, replicable solutions to life's biggest challenges and sharing lessons learned with other impoverished villages



Project OKURASE has a particular focus on women and orphans & vulnerable children across 5 objectives. These overarching objectives are focused on transforming the lives of the village by creating *collaborative, sustainable, and integrated* solutions to address the following areas of need: 1) Water and Sanitation; 2) Health and Nutrition; 3) Education and Technology; 4) Economic Self-Sufficiency; and, 5) Buildings and Energy Sources. Critical to our mission, **Okurase is positioning itself as a *Teaching Village*, a place for others around the world to visit to see solutions in place that were developed at a grassroots level, to be inspired, and to be empowered to put in place their own solutions.**

A key underlying principle of Project OKURASE is the recognition that the people of the village know what is best for improving their lives and how to attain sustainability. Thus, all programs are locally determined and locally led. Outside collaborators offer assistance with resources and ideas for implementation. While external collaborators are respected and valued, the elders and leaders who live in the village have the ultimate authority about whether a program will be initiated and how it will be adapted to the culture of the village. Using this model, the majority of projects to date have occurred after discussion with village leaders and as resources or expertise have become available. The village residents contribute labor (sweat equity), and collaborators help with expertise, fundraising and grants.

A second underlying principal of Project OKURASE is the spirit of Nkabom, a Twi word for bringing people together in unity. Nkabom refers to bringing the community together but also expanding the reach of the community to other villages and beyond. Indeed people from all over the world have come to Okurase to be involved.

Objective 1 - Water and Sanitation:

Since Project Okurase began, unclean and unsafe water in the village has been a primary concern. In addition, there are few toilets in the village. As in many African villages, open defecation is the only option. Flying toilets (use of a plastic bag as a toilet that is throw on a rubbish heap) are also common. The health problems from such practice are immense. This and other refuse has created several mountains of rubbish, which spawns disease. The Odikro (Village Chief) and Elders of the Village and everyone is interested and committed to finding a

solution to this key issue of water and sanitation in the Village. A summary of key areas of focus:

- a. Maintain a safe, clean water system – Thanks to the generosity of Amanda’s Fund, the first phase of the safe water project is complete. Okurase now has a safe water source with taps in the village marketplace. Okurase also has its first Okurase Water Commission that represents all the sub communities in the village. Amanda Dyke’s family honored her memory by raising the funds for the safe water system. Amanda was a vibrant and talented 13-year old who died from leukemia. The village also chose to honor Amanda’s memory by naming the clean water system Amanda’s Legacy. Doug Logan and family installed solar lights in the Marketplace so that water can be fetched at night. Phase two of the water system in Okurase will include piping and extending the safe water to taps located in each sub community within the village. We are raising funds at this time for the extension.



- b. Build a sustainable toilet system – The pilot phase for a biogas toilet system is underway. The village is fully committed to biogas systems that provide toilets and convert waste to gas for cooking and safe organic fertilizer. An intern from College of Charleston, Alex Wilson, was working in Okurase and spearheaded the building of the first biogas toilet system in Fantefum community. Thanks to a small grant from the Medical University of South Carolina’s Center for Global health, we are extending this work through Ghana’s top biogas specialist, Dr. Aklaku from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.



- c. Establish a pattern of environmental cleanliness by removing the waste mountains and managing day-to-day rubbish – Locally, a waste bin has been placed at the Marketplace to manage day-to-day rubbish. We have completed an initial assessment for removal of the two largest waste mountains. We have not yet secured the funding or identified a partnership in order to start the waste mountain removal. Our plan is to remove the



waste mountains and repurpose the land with parks, playgrounds, and soccer fields to prevent the creation of another waste mountain in its place.

Objective 2 – Education and Technology:

Educational opportunities have been very rare for children and adults in Okurase. Most people are aware of the importance of education to well-being and job attainment. Project OKURASE's education and technology objectives span a variety of activities that include job skills training, formal education, and education in the arts. To be competitive in school and the job market, knowledge of computers is essential. Finally, Okurase wishes to serve humanity by educating people from around the world in how to solve serious problems in a sustainable way. A summary of key areas of focus:

- a. Build a nursery to senior high school to increase educational opportunities – Architectural plans have been completed for a school linking children to formal education. Construction has not yet begun. While the funds are being raised to complete the school, Project OKURASE is teaching children reading and math at the Project OKURASE office and supporting some children to attend area schools.
- b. Establish a vocational school to advance work training skills and to support our teaching village mission – We are 80% complete with the school!
- c. Integrate technology to support enhanced education, teacher mentoring and school certification – We have created the Okurase Electronic Classroom with 15 laptops and solar power. We are working to establish reliable Internet access to support distance learning. The primary schools in Okurase are using the Electronic Classroom on a regular basis.
- d. Support Education through providing school fees – We have paid the school fees for several students who have been identified by the village as needing our support.
- e. Nkabom Children's Cultural Troupe – Okurase children's dance company has been well established and is thriving, taking in and training new members. The children rehearse daily and provide service to the community through the arts. They have performed on TV3, in Koforidua and greater Accra. Here are a few videos of the children at work:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmU6vyA8yKg>



- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-DRI_ysDVI
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qE42Vq0Kyuo&feature=relmfu>

Importantly, students from Miami Valley School in Dayton, Ohio joined with Gethsemani Circle of Friends and Project OKURASE to raise the needed funds to bring a subgroup of the children to the United States on a cultural tour. We are in the planning stages of this tour in preparation to apply for visas. The Nkabom children have made training videos of several dances for Djole Children's West African Dance and Drum Company in Charleston as a method of cultural exchange and education.

- f. Internship and Service Learning – Project OKURASE has hosted interns and residents from 4 universities and 2 medical schools. We have recently formed a relationship with the Clinton School of public service as an internship site. We have hosted people from many walks of life in Okurase for service learning projects. We are a partner with Studies Abroad for Global Education that has led us to host large high school groups from Saudi Arabia and the U.S. Please see this video developed by Miami Valley High students: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOvGFX963qQ>
- g. Our internship and service learning program exemplifies the true spirit of Nkabom – bringing people together in unity as one community. Our internship program led us to be involved with Possibilities Without Borders, a College of Charleston student organization that conducts a major fundraiser annually. This fundraiser helped with our first phase of the safe water project. In addition, College of Charleston has developed a course for credit for high school and college students who go to Okurase for internship or service learning. We have also begun work in Charleston to partner with The Citadel to extend our service learning with students there.



**Students from Univ. of Leeds,
UK with Okurase residents**

Objective 3 – Health and Nutrition

Health problems in Okurase certainly relate to environmental issues such as unsafe water and lack of sanitation. In addition, low food security and lack of nutritious foods foster malnourishment that sets the stage for even greater health problems. Historically, Okurase has had limited medical and health care services and little support in the way of children's nutrition. Health and nutrition objectives primarily target specific medical needs and nutrition. A summary of key areas of focus:

- a. Provide access to health care – Working in close partnership with the District Health Directorate, and Ghanaian and International Health professionals, we have held a Village Health Outreach each summer for 6 years. We have completed the foundation for a Medical Clinic at Nkabom Centre and pillars to hold the second floor. Each year we work to enroll more people in the Ghanaian Health Insurance Scheme. The upcoming Village Health Outreach will occur from July 13 – 18 in the village Marketplace.



- b. Promote Health and Nutrition programs – We have provided ongoing health and nutrition education. Funded by the Medical University of South Carolina’s Center for Global Health and under the direction of Dr. Eve Spratt, we have completed a young children’s nutrition study. Also, in conjunction with Development in Gardening (DIG) we developed a community organic vegetable garden using seeds donated by Baker Seed Company. People in Okurase are trying out new vegetables such as beets.
- c. Investigate telemedicine for providing medical assistance and training – We are working to determine a company to install a reliable Internet connection to support this program.



Objective 4 – Economic Self-Sufficiency

Limited job training opportunities and lack of resources for business start-up have been major barriers to men and women moving forward in their lives and educating and feeding their children. Project OKURASE’s economic self-sufficiency objectives address training and support of business start-up for men and women but with a special focus on women, who have less opportunity and greater obstacles to overcome. A summary of key areas of focus:

- a. Develop a relevant, comprehensive skills training program that supports economic growth in Okurase – We are 80% complete with the skills training centre.
- b. Start micro enterprises to support economic growth in Okurase -- Currently, three main job training programs have been conducted at the Village:

- *Compressed Earth Bricks* - Project OKURASE has trained 9 men and 9 women to make compressed earth bricks. They made over 60,000 bricks (1 at a time, 1000 per day) and the machine that was on loan was taken back. Clemson Architecture Center designed 4 machines, Church of the Holy Cross on Sullivan's Island, South Carolina funded materials, and MUSC shipped them to the village. The bricks made by the village are being used to build the vocational school. USA for Africa has supported the brickmaking training through small grants.



- *Sewing* - A nonprofit from New Jersey called Pedals for Progress donated over 100 sewing machines and a women's service organization called The Charleston Chapter of the Links Incorporated (Charleston LINKS: a national service organization of professional women) held a drive to supply the new Okurase sewing center with all the needles, threads, scissors and other supplies they would need to get a center off the ground. Items have been created that are being brought back to the USA for sale, which helps provide income for the Village and supports Project OKURASE.



- *Gari* - Through a small grant with African Women's Development Fund, a group of women in Okurase started a gari (ground and roasted cassava used in food) making cooperative. Gari is an important daily food in the lives of the people of Ghana and throughout West Africa. The women now have a viable small business.



- *Village-based microloans* – the women's gari making cooperative has had their first venture in issuing small loans to women in the village to enable them to start their own businesses. The first recipient used a microloan to start a fish frying business. She was given the loan in July of 2014 and paid it off in November of 2014.

Objective 5 – Building and Energy Sources

Central to the vision for Project OKURASE is to build the Nkabom Centre for Skills Training and Formal Education. The building process itself has offered an opportunity to teach construction-related job skills. Furthermore, Ghana has had significant challenges with electricity outages and the cost of electricity is soaring. Okurase is a village with few electricity resources but with a great resource in the sun. As such, solar power is a strong consideration. A summary of key areas of focus:

- a. Construct the Nkabom Centre, a complex of 17 buildings designed to be environmentally friendly -- When the Nkabom Centre for Skills Training and Formal Education (Nkabom means Unity) is completed it will contain up to 17 buildings. Under the guidance of architects Robert Miller and Ray Huff, 14 students from Clemson Architecture Center in Charleston, South Carolina completed the design as a service learning project working with the people of the Okurase. The largest building (vocational school) of the complex is 80% complete and the second building (a medical centre) is 40% complete.



- b. Employ local resources and teach job skills during the construction -- The Nkabom Centre buildings are being built by local professionals with support by the people from the village. The Nkabom Centre is being constructed with compressed earth bricks and blocks that are being made by the village.
- c. Take advantage of renewable energy – We are powering the Okurase Electronic Classroom with a solar generator from a group called Burro Brand. We have also installed solar lighting in the classroom, the village marketplace and other areas around the village. We are evaluating costs of solar power for the Nkabom Centre.



Conferences, Research Papers and Active Grants

Conference Presentations

Drs. Linda Plunkett and Cynthia Cupit Swenson delivered a presentation entitled *Economic Empowerment of Women as a Development Strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Report from a Village in Rural Ghana*, at the Oxford Women's Leadership Symposium in Oxford, England.

Nana Assah, a doctoral student in Pharmacy at the Medical University of South Carolina delivered a presentation entitled, *Developing a Partnership Between MUSC and Okurase*, for the MUSC Center for Global Health in Charleston, South Carolina.

Linda Norton, Dr. Cynthia Cupit Swenson, Dr. Sarah Logan, Shelley Kawamura, Austin Logan, Matthew Norton, Nana Akosua Yeboah, and Damorea Johnson held a Project OKURASE Showcase presentation at the National Youth Leadership Conference in Washington, DC.

Dr. Eve Spratt gave a lecture on Project OKURASE and global health for the Medical University of South Carolina Global Health Class.

Research Papers Submitted for Publication

Drs. Linda Plunkett and Cynthia Cupit Swenson submitted a manuscript on *Economic Empowerment of Women as a Development Strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa*. This manuscript was submitted to the Conference Proceedings Publication of Oxford Women's Leadership Conference.

Dr. Cynthia Cupit Swenson, Dr. Samuel Yeboah, Nana Ama Yeboah, Dr. Margarite Archie-Hudson, and Dr. Eve Spratt submitted a manuscript on *Okurase as a model for a new type of foreign aid to an international public affairs journal*.

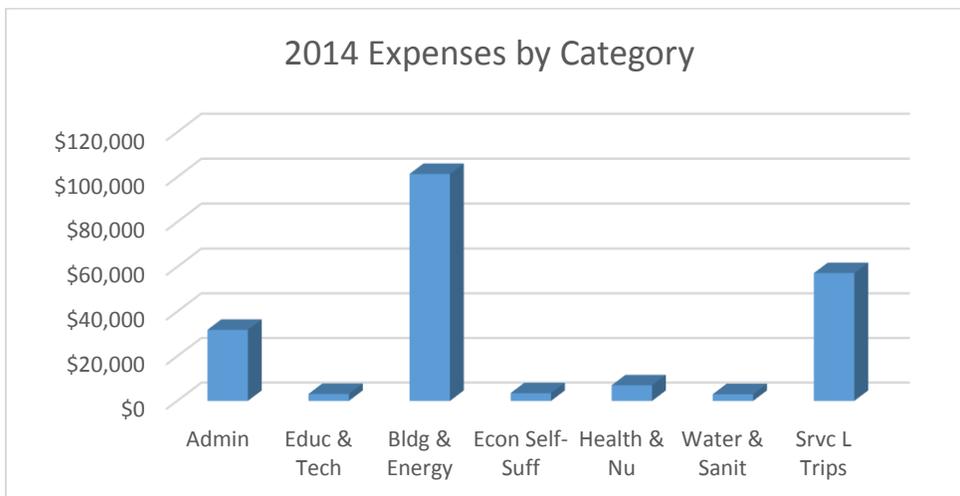
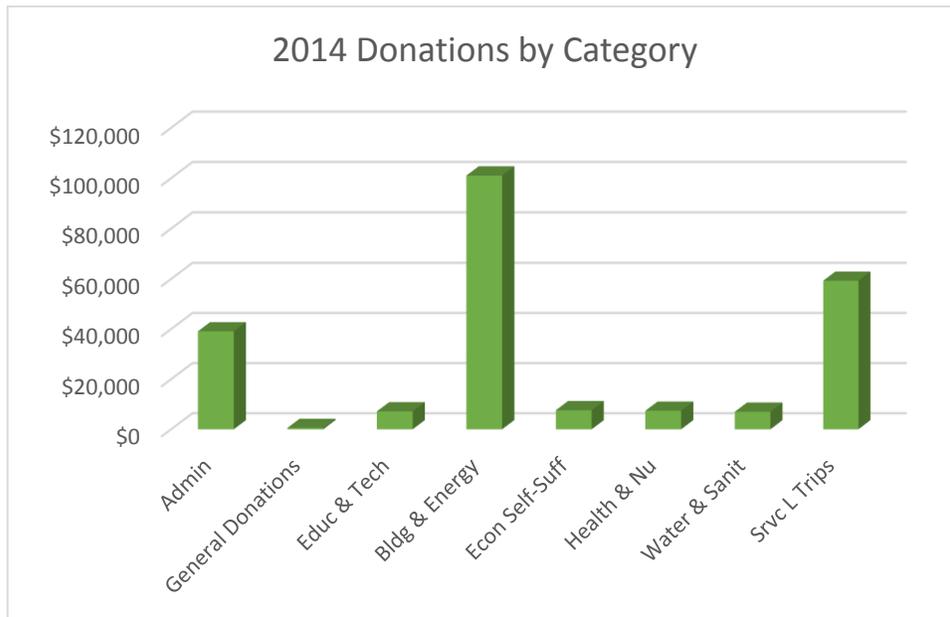
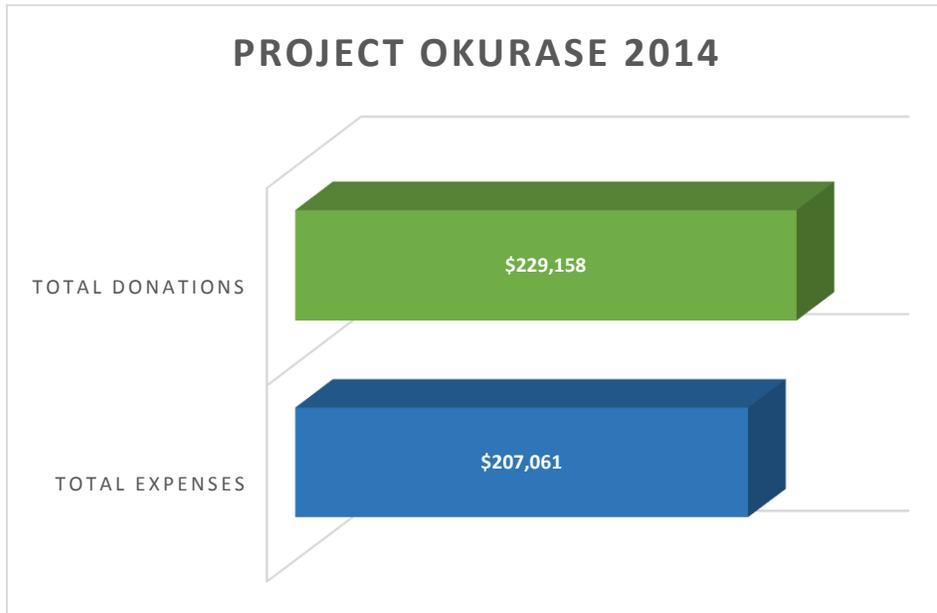
Active Grants in 2014

Spratt, E.G. received a grant from the MUSC Center for Global Health, *Pilot Study: Home Visitation Interventions to Improve Nutrition in Rural Ghana*.

Swenson, C.C., & Logan, S. received a grant from the MUSC Center for Global Health, *Improving Health Through Implementation of a Village-Based Complex Biogas System*.

Resources and Financial Management

In fiscal year 2014, Project OKURASE made progress on all objectives and continued to grow. Thanks to our generous donors, we implemented a safe water system at the village market center in Okurase with six taps, made significant progress on the building of the skills training and medical centre buildings, installed solar lighting in the market center, initiated a pilot for a biogas toilet system, built an electronic classroom with 15 computers and a solar generator, hosted the 6th annual Health Village Outreach reaching over 1000 people, paid the school fees for 15 students and much more. 2014 was an exciting year in Okurase. Here's a summary of our donations and expenses:



Donate and Make a Difference

As you saw in our financial report above, your donations primarily support jobs for people in the village as they work to build the school, medical centre, and biogas systems. In addition, donations help us purchase medicines and supplies for our Village Health Outreach, cover school fees for children, and run our local programs. Our service learning and internship programs stand on their own and do not operate on private donations.

Importantly, in Okurase there are no handouts. Our view is that handouts create inequality. Every resource put into Project OKURASE is met with work and commitment from the village.

If it is possible for you to make a financial donation, we would be very grateful and will use the funds with highest integrity. Donations may be made in the following ways:

- Through our website: www.projectokurase.org
- By mail: Project OKURASE, c/o Dr. Cindy Swenson, 176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 104, Charleston, SC 29407

There are many ways to be involved with Project OKURASE other than financial donations. Donating time, resources, skills, and ideas are ways others have been involved. Here are some ways to consider:

- Stay in Okurase and work on a service project
- Help raise funds
- Donate resources such as solar devices, clothing, building supplies, technology, a vehicle
- Sell merchandise made in Okurase
- Bring your sustainable solution that's aligned with our objectives and test it in a safe and supportive environment
- Assist with grants
- Provide training

Bring your school to Okurase - we are an official partner of Studies Abroad for Global Education (SAGE) at www.sageglobaled.org.

The spirit of volunteerism and our global partnerships are our main support! We look forward to working with you. Here's how to reach us:

- Linda Norton: Linda.norton@projectokurase.org
- Dr. Cindy Swenson: swensocc@musc.edu
- Nana Ama Yeboah: nyeboaa@gmail.com
- Dr. Samuel Nkrumah Yeboah: powerfuldrums@yahoo.co.uk
- www.projectokurase.org

Friends Who Help Project OKURASE

Individuals

Over the past 8 years as we have started Project OKURASE, many individuals from around the world have made donations and contributions that have made it possible for us to meet our objectives and change and save lives. We are grateful beyond words for all the people involved.

Organizations and Groups

Following is a list of organizations or groups that have been or are currently involved with Project OKURASE.

ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS	NATURE OF INVOLVEMENT
UNITED STATES	
MST, Inc.	Corporate Philanthropy donor towards building the skills training school.
Amanda's Fund	Raised money to hire Water Missions International to develop a safe water system in Okurase that opened in January 2014.
United Support of Artists for Africa	Grantor for several small projects.
National Christian Foundation	Funds for medical care and towards building the skills training school.
The Citadel	Service learning projects with Project OKURASE; Faculty visit to the village.
Church of the Holy Cross	Donated funds for medicines and shipping.
John's Island Church of Christ	Donate clothing and medical supplies to Okurase for the annual Village Health Outreach.
Clemson University	Internship program with Project OKURASE; Service Project – produced architectural design for the Nkabom Centre and made brickmaking machines.
College of Charleston	Internship program with Project OKURASE and Service Learning Projects in Ghana – provide course credit for high school and college service learners in Okurase.
Medical University of South Carolina	Global Center has funded 8 small grants for Project OKURASE; service learning by medical students and residents; university president funded a photo exhibition with images of the village by Gerald Bybee from San Francisco- the exhibition is on permanent display at the Medical University.
Studies Abroad for Global Education	Arranges service learning trips to Okurase and Charleston.
Porter Gaud School of Charleston	Service learning projects in Okurase; raised funds for Project OKURASE.
La Jolla Country Day School	Service learning projects in Okurase – worked with the village to build an electronic classroom.
Miami Valley School of Dayton, Ohio	Service learning in Ghana, raised money to bring an Okurase village child going blind to be treated in the U.S.; Raised funds for Nkabom Children's Cultural Troupe to conduct a tour in the U.S.
University of Leeds, UK	Sent student service learners.

American International School in Riyadh	Service learning in Okurase.
The Clinton School, Little Rock, Arkansas	Internship program with Okurase.
Possibilities without Borders	Student organization at the College of Charleston that held a fundraiser for Project OKURASE to help support the work of students going to Ghana.
Gethsemani Circle of Friends	Nonprofit fiscal agent until Project OKURASE attained 501 c3 status, also raised funds for Project OKURASE.
Gethsemani Quilters	African American women quilter's group that has made quilts for orphans and vulnerable children in Okurase for 7 years. They traveled to Okurase 2 years ago and taught a week-long quilting class to women.
Djole African Dance and Drum Company	Children's dance company in Charleston, SC that raised funds for school fees and medicines for children in Okurase.
The Charleston, SC Chapter of The Links, Incorporated	African American women's service organization that held various drives to donate items for Okurase programs – such as the sewing centre, health outreach.
Baker Seeds	Donated seeds to allow us to develop an organic community garden.
Pedals for Progress	A nonprofit in New Jersey that donated bicycles and sewing machines to Okurase.
Gerald Bybee Studios, San Francisco	Volunteered his services to develop an exhibition of images of the village for the Medical University of South Carolina.
Congresswoman Barbara Lee	Wrote letters of support and presented Project OKURASE to the Congressional Black Caucus. Led to a visit with Congressman Clyburn.
Rhion Magee, Creative Director of DreamWorks Animation, Los Angeles California	Designed early marketing materials and developed the design for what is now the Okurase market bag that is made in the village.
Chris Wilson of Moving Pictures, Inc., Charlotte, North Carolina	Volunteer filmmaker who created some short videos for Okurase.
Mayor Joseph Riley of Charleston	Declared January 22, 2013 Project OKURASE day and has been supportive in encouraging Charleston to be involved with Okurase.
Mason Preparatory School	Helped design a science class for Okurase children. Donated clothing.
Water Missions International	Hired by Project OKURASE to develop a safe water system in the village.
UNITED KINGDOM	
Mayor's Office, Totnes, Devon, UK	Held a fundraiser for Project OKURASE.
Unity Train – an African drumming and dance group in the UK	Held fundraisers for Project OKURASE.

Respect Music Festival	Used some proceeds from the festival to help put a roof on the skills training school.
Grove School	A primary school in Devon, UK that held a fundraiser for Project OKURASE.
Dr. Dominique Chadwick and Patrick Chadwick, Filmmakers from Cambridge, England	Volunteer filmmakers for a women's fruit drying project in Okurase.
EUROPE	
Ambassadors Club Westland – Belgium	Men's civic club that held a fundraiser to help with building the skills training school.
GHANA	
Royal Keep Fit Club	Helps with cleaning job site and fitness events at time of the annual Village Health Outreach.
Action Keep Fit Club	Helps with cleaning job site and fitness events at time of the annual Village Health Outreach.
The Lincoln School – Accra Ghana	Service learning project in Okurase.
Okurase Keep Fit Club in Okurase	Organizes a run for the startup of every annual Village Health Outreach.
Upper West Akyem District Municipal Chief Executive - Ghana	Attends project functions to give speeches of support.
Canadian Business Association in Ghana; His Excellency Alhaji Nantogma Abdulai	Donation of supplies for digging trenches.
African Women's Development Fund	Grantor – 2 small grants.
Adeiso Health Centre	Supports the annual Village Health Outreach medical clinic; provides medical services to volunteers as needed.
The Churches of Okurase	Provide fresh vegetables to feed volunteers at the annual Village Health Outreach.
Sight for Africa in Accra	Helped with vision care at the annual Village Health Outreach.
OIC International in Accra	Grantor – a feeding grant for Okurase orphans and vulnerable children.
Peace Corps, Ghana	Volunteer helped with our Village Health Outreach.
ACTS in Afrika	Volunteer medical support of our annual Village Health Outreach.
Infanta Malaria	Volunteer medical support of our annual Village Health Outreach.
Nkabom Artists and Craftspeople Association	Volunteer support of all Project OKURASE events.
Alero Olympio Trust	Loaned Project OKURASE a brickmaking machine that allowed the startup of the first skills training program in brickmaking.
Ataa Lartey and the Street Children's Academy in Accra	Artistic support of Project OKURASE events.

Abibata Mahama, Filmmaker in Accra	Volunteer support of filming for a fruit drying project.
Medical Assistance Program (MAP)	Donation of medicines and malaria testing kits for annual Village Health Outreach.

Wish List

There is always so much that can be done. Here is Okurase's current wish list:

Key Building Projects

- Purchase a Kia truck for hauling supplies and materials. Estimate = \$27,000
- Complete the school for skills training – We are nearing completion of this School. We need roughly US \$75,000 to complete.
- Complete the medical center – We have completed the foundation and pillars to support the second floor.
- Complete the security hut.
- Build a fence/protective barrier around the Nkabom Centre.
- Solar Energy – install solar energy for skills training school building, medical centre, and security hut, Nkabom House compound, and Project OKURASE office.
- Water catchment system with underground storage for the Nkabom Centre – we have extensive plans drawn up for this system. Estimate is roughly U.S. \$400,000.
- Complete the Okurase International School for children nursery through senior high – estimate \$500,000

Water and Sanitation

- Biogas Toilet System – We are currently working on our initial biogas plant for the Fantefum community. We need to add additional toilets and build systems in other subcommunities. – Estimate U.S. \$500,000
- Expand Safe Water System – In January 2014 we opened a safe water systems that pumps water from near the Nkabom Centre to the village marketplace with 6 taps. We plan to extend the pipes to all sub communities. The estimate is \$100,000
- Remove waste mountains from the village and repurpose the land with playgrounds and soccer fields. \$90,000 is needed to remove all 6 waste mountains.

Education and Technology

- Internet Access, Electronic Classroom and Internet Cafe - we need to complete the installation of the satellite internet service and hire a technology person to help manage it and the electronic classroom and to get the Internet Cafe implemented. \$15,000 is needed.
- School Fees for Village Children – The fees depend on the school the child attends and the city in which that school is located. Range of fees = \$200 – \$800 annually
- Community Organic Garden - we invested in a community garden and we would like to expand it and encourage the community to eat healthy vegetables and learn organic farming. \$5000 is needed.

Economic Self-Sufficiency

- we need to ensure the Gari business is continuing to move forward with marketing, packaging and expanding the market

- We would like to develop a training course to teach basic business skills and entrepreneurship to people who start small businesses through Project OKURASE
- We would like to support the women of the gari cooperative to continue to provide microloans to women in the community. \$4000 is needed to fully operate the program
- We need to purchase vehicles to help reduce costs for the building of the Nkabom Centre and to implement a small business around using and maintaining them. We would like to train a group of women and men to do vehicle maintenance and repair and driving. These are all businesses that could go forward well in Okurase.

Looking Forward

In the U.S. and Ghana we look forward to working together to meet several goals in 2015.

Finance:

We expect to increase funding by 5% through online donations, in order to expand unrestricted funds, and hope to initiate a capital campaign by year's end.

Objectives:

Water and Sanitation: We expect to complete and accomplish smooth running of our first biogas plant and pursue grant funding to expand biogas technology throughout the village. In addition we will pursue grants and other funding to expand the clean water system to all sub communities.

Education and Technology: We expect to find a workable internet solution and install internet services in our office and electronic classroom. We will continue to fund school fees for children who are unable to attend school otherwise. We will continue to help and support local schools as much as we can. We will continue to work with the Nkabom Children's Cultural Troupe and will pursue visas to take some of the children to the United States for a cultural tour. We will continue to implement and expand service learning tours and internships.

Health and Nutrition: Our annual Village Health Outreach will be conducted July 13-18, 2015. We will continue to help village residents who need medical care as much as possible outside the health outreach. We will complete the medical centre to at least 60%. We will work with the Peace Corps to attain a village-based Peace Corps Volunteer. We will work to sustain and expand our village organic garden and begin to support tree planting.

Economic Self-Sufficiency: In 2015 we will continue to support the expansion of business for the Okurase Gari Cooperative and encourage them to continue to provide microloans to women to support small local businesses. We plan to work with entrepreneurship groups to develop business-related training for village residents starting up small businesses.

Buildings and Energy Sources: Our primary goal in 2015 is to complete the skills training school and open it for service. We will work to discover solar energy sources and begin fundraising to solar power the school.

Administration

We plan to introduce our new logo, redesign our website, implement a cost effective online donation system and implement a donor management system that focus on donor retention.

Research and Presentations

We plan to publish three articles in 2015. Dr. Swenson, Shelley Kawamura from Studies Abroad for Global Education, and Anne Griffith, a teacher with Miami Valley School will conduct a presentation on Project OKURASE at the Global Education Benchmark Group Conference in Miami, Florida in April of 2015. We plan to increase our presentations on Project OKURASE in the United States in 2015.

We hope that you will join Project OKURASE in any way that you can. We remain grateful for the leadership of our Chief in Okurase, Baffour Ampofo, III.

