

Date:  
June 2011



# Kekeli

News



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Hellene, a recipient of the Tulsi Trust Education Aid Programme, with her grandmother, a cured leper

Kekeli Inc.  
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Kekeli Inc.  
News

Faustina Sonu, 27, a Kekeli photography student and a recipient of the Tulsi Trust Education Aid Programme, with her grandmother, a cured leper

Greetings from Ghana,

Kekeli Inc. opened its doors to students in Ho in April 2008 with the goal of establishing a photography school that will provide an opportunity for Ghanaian youth to learn a vocational skill they can use to earn a living. In the last two years we have successfully completed photography classes for adults and children. In addition, we have developed photography projects to promote inclusion in schools for children with learning disabilities.

This year we have new students, new projects and many new photographs to share with you. We are also happy to announce that we are receiving funding for four students' education from Tulsi Trust, a Charitable NGO.

With all these new projects developing, I am reassured everyday that Kekeli Inc. is making a difference in children's lives in Ghana. This is all possible because of **your support** of the program. You are making these projects happen.

Thank you,

*Carrie Brown*

Carrie Brown

## Tulsi Trust

Tulsi Trust is an organization in Accra Ghana that I was introduced to due to a common interest in helping children. Their mission is “Equal Opportunity to all for Access to Better Health and Educational Facilities.”

Currently Tulsi is sponsoring four Kekeli students from the cured leper community. One of the students, Faustina, is 27 years old. She lives in Ho with her grandmother, a cured leper. Her grandmother is blind and unable to walk. Faustina’s mother is disabled and her father is no longer alive. Faustina takes care of her grandmother everyday. Four years ago she was unable to complete Junior High School because of her financial situation, but has always wanted to return to school. The headmistress of Ho EP JHS has agreed to admit her to the school to repeat JHS. Faustina is also a Kekeli Inc. photography student. She attends classes every Saturday to learn photography and computer skills.



Bright

Three other students are now sponsored by Tulsi Trust. Savior is attending Mawuli Senior High School and has been able to move into the boarding house due to the support of Tulsi Trust. Hellene is attending Have Tech. School. Hellene’s family struggled paying for both the school fees and feeding fee. Tulsi supports Hellene with her school fees easing some of the pressure from the grandparents, both cured lepers. Bright is in Junior High School and is living with his father, the caretaker of the cured leper community. All three students will begin learning photography during the school break.

Kekeli is very grateful to Tulsi Trust for making it possible for these students to attend school.



Patience,  
Helekpe EP  
Primary School

## Special Education

### Helekpe, Volta Region

This project is designed to use photography and art using peer-to-peer support to promote inclusion in the Helekpe EP Primary School and in the community. Kekeli is providing information on the United Nations Convention on the Rights Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) articles during workshops that we have organized in Helekpe. We have met with parents, students and teachers to match each student’s interests with programs. We meet with students once a week to participate in photography and art projects. Currently we are working on teaching photography and bead work. Along with training the students we are training one of the parents, who can then teach the students when Kekeli staff is not around.

In Ghana, children with special needs are often kept out of sight and rarely have the opportunity for an education or to participate in cultural activities. Parents often fear that the child cannot cope in these situations or they fear the stigma that having a child with disabilities often carries. It is not easy to determine the reasons for any given family’s actions. However, there have been times when a parent has pointed to his child in the presence of a visitor, saying angrily “Look what I have been given!” Another parent fears allowing her child to go outside of the home, because he has been beaten by people in the neighborhood when he has done something that seems unusual. Whether it is because of fear, shame or anger cannot always be determined, but it is clear that children with disabilities are often mistreated, shunned or simply ignored. The government is now starting programs for the disabled, giving these children a chance to learn and interact with other children. But these programs are few. By establishing a photography, art, music and drama program that will use peer-to-peer support, we are promoting inclusion in the school and in the entire community.



Charles, one of Kekeli's photography students  
He also attends the Friday get-together.

## Special Education

### Ho, Volta Region

Kekeli is currently working with four young adults with intellectual disabilities. I have worked with some of these students, teaching them photography, but decided to bring them together on Fridays to have a chance to learn about each other. It's a safe environment for the students to speak freely about problems they face in Ho due to their disabilities. Along with talking we have fun activities, such as singing and dancing competitions.

## New Students

### Ho, Volta Region

Christian Anku is one of my newest students. He is 25 years old, completed primary school (grade 6) and is a trained Kente weaver who has been weaving for four years. He approached me about teaching him photography so that he can market his weaving. He is creating a photo album of his different designs, making it easier for potential customers to make selections and place orders. He is also putting his photographs on his Face Book page and on his personal blog - [www.voltagoldkente.wordpress.com](http://www.voltagoldkente.wordpress.com). He would like to be able to show his work on the site and take online orders. Kekeli provided Christian with a three-month training program to learn how to use the camera, how to take high quality images of his Kente cloth and how to transfer those images to the computer. Now we meet twice a month so I can check on his progress and answer any questions. Christian is extremely excited. While he is familiar with film cameras, he had never seen a digital camera. I showed him the camera by holding it up and taking an image of myself. "How did you get in there?!" he exclaimed.

Christian was the first recipient of a camera set to keep for his own use. Last spring the Kekeli Board approved the purchase of five camera sets that Kekeli could use to help students become independent.



Eric Ofori (back) with eye screening team  
in a village outside of Ho.

Eric Ofori is a partially sighted person in Ghana who has established the New Horizons Foundation for the Blind, an organization created for the purpose of helping children and young adults with vision problems get the assistance they need. He travels through parts of the Volta Region, Ghana with people who can provide eye screening (see photo). Eric asked me if I could train him and two of his sighted staff members to photograph the work being done by their Foundation. Eric is the second recipient of a camera set. We are currently running the class and soon will learn how to put the photos on their blog and also use them as a means of spreading information about their work in order to raise funds. Eric is on the board of Kekeli Foundation Ghana, and I am on the Board of New Horizons Foundation for the Blind. We are working together to help raise awareness of the rights of people with disabilities in Ghana.

FOR MORE  
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SEND DONATIONS TO  
Kekeli, Inc.  
c/o The First Reformed  
Church of Bethlehem  
38 Church Rd, Selkirk  
NY 12158

*Kekeli Inc.*

Established to bring light and life  
to new photography students in  
West Africa

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Kekeli Inc. is a 2007  
Recipient of the American  
Society of Media  
Photographers (ASMP)  
Educational Grant.



### How to Help

\_\_\_\_\_ \$2,500 Guardian Angel  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$1,500 Angel  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 Patron  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$500 Supporter  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$250 Friend  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$100 General Member

Your donation is 100% tax deductible as a charitable expense.  
Please make check payable to:

Kekeli, Inc  
c/o The First Reformed Church of Bethlehem  
38 Church Rd, Selkirk, NY 12158 USA

Along with monetary donations we accept donations of cameras both film and digital.  
Cameras can be sent to the above address.

### Note cards available

Sets of four note cards are available for \$10 depicting images of Ghana by Ghanaian students. All proceeds will go to Kekeli Inc. to help support future student projects. To order cards contact Mary Jane Brown at (518) 465-6576 or by email [kekeliinc@gmail.com](mailto:kekeliinc@gmail.com)

*To see more photographs from Kekeli  
Students Visit our  
Blog*

[www.kekelinews.wordpress.com](http://www.kekelinews.wordpress.com)

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