



# YALE ALUMNI SERVICE CORPS

## Summer 2016 Newsletter

### A Message from Puneet Batra '02 MS, Yale Alumni Service Corps Chair

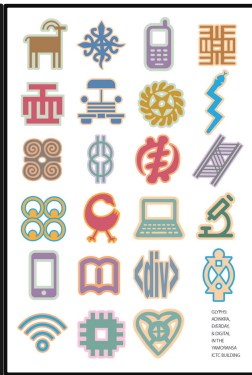
Dear Alumni volunteers and friends;

At the time of our last newsletter, YASC had just returned from Brazil and preparations for Ghana were in full swing. That perspective has now flipped, as we reflect on the recent trip to Ghana and start to make preparations for a return to Serra Grande in March, 2017. As you'll see below, the visit to Ghana was tremendously productive and the long list of achievements is a direct consequence of the months of effort that goes into planning each one of these trips. As an organization, we continue to grow, working with more local partners and finding ways to make our projects have an impact long after we leave. In Ghana for example, in addition to the inauguration of the Information Communications & Technology Center, we organized a wide array of projects ranging from athletics, business consulting, construction, education, library (we brought access to a rich set of online learning courses and expanded the literary content available to the community, via a large collection of books, both paper and electronic), public health, gardens, murals, and college mentoring. We are also continuing to explore the possibility of domestic service trips so we may work with communities closer to home. All of this is possible because of you and all of the time you donate towards planning the trips and the projects. Thank you!

### Yale Alumni Service Corps 2016 Program to Yamoransa, Ghana (August 4-14, 2016)



YASC group photo



Mural by John Boak '70

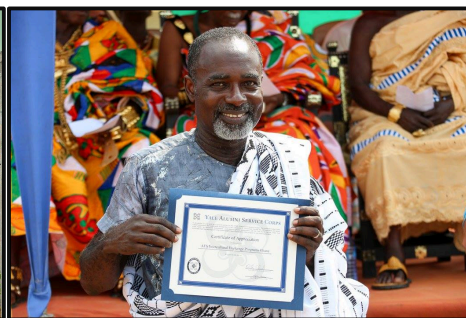


Children reading donated e-Readers

Under the leadership of Trudie Agbozo '05 with assistance from Bob Unsworth '86 MFS and Lisa Unsworth, YASC recently completed an amazing trip to the community of Yamoransa with a group of 80 volunteers to build on the work we've done over the past four years. Working in partnership with AFS Ghana and University of Cape Coast – vibrant organizations with local volunteers who collaborated with us during the program and will continue to sustain projects after we leave – we accomplished great things. During our time in Yamoransa, our projects ranged from athletics, business consulting, construction, education including reading and library, extended arts, public health including an eye clinic, and special projects such as Helping Babies Breathe, Gardens for Yamoransa, and a college mentoring camp organized by GhanaThink Foundation.



Opening ceremony of the ICTC



Kwame Othere from AFS Ghana



Remarks by US Ambassador to Ghana

We also had an opportunity to inaugurate the Information Communications & Technology Center (ICTC) with the community during our stay – this event was marked by a Durbar closing ceremony on August 13<sup>th</sup> that consisted of an arts cultural display and musical concerts by the children from Yamoransa as well as a ribbon cutting ceremony featuring an appearance by Robert

Jackson, US Ambassador to Ghana. The ICTC is nearly 600 square meters (more than 6,000 square feet), with classroom, library, and meeting space, a kitchen, secure storage for equipment, electricity, and bathroom facilities. The building will provide the community with a venue for expanding computer literacy and access to information. In doing so it helps bridge the digital divide that currently places information out of reach for most members of this community. Access to computers and the internet will improve access to: markets and employment opportunities outside of Yamoransa, much needed health care information and treatment, educational materials and technical information, and training in the use of computers and information and computer technology for all. As Yamoransa has lacked adequate space for community activities, the ICTC is expected to fill other community needs as a library, health clinic, educational center, and place for local council meetings.

Projects in Yamoransa included:

- Athletics program for 250+ children consisting of soccer, volleyball, and general physical fitness activities - led by Bob Unsworth '86 MFS,
- Micro-business consulting team that provided services to business owners on business strategy and opportunities - led by Lisa Unsworth,
- Construction team that built children's tables, children and adult bookcases, and chairs - led by Henry Chan '07, '14 M. Arch.,
- Library project organized over 600 books sourced by volunteers before the trip, trained a local librarian, and provided resources on the Dewey decimal system - led by Judy Crawford '76,
- Education team organized 9 active learning education courses and 8 fine arts and performing arts classes to over 600 children - reading program also included 35 e-Readers and 1 solar charging station donated in memory of YASC volunteer Lucy Hood '79 - led by Andrew Werboff, Linda Keller, and Julia Norcross,
- Public health team where 350+ patients visited public health education workshops, had their blood pressure checked, received individual counseling, and were treated for Hepatitis B and/or Type 2 Diabetes - led by Fred Cantor '58, '62 MD; we also taught "Helping Babies Breathe" and "Essential Newborn Care" courses to midwives and senior lecturers at the University of Cape Coast - led by David Bergman '68 and Steve Keithahn '85,
- Eye clinic team worked with optometry students from the University of Cape Coast to distribute close to 200 eyeglasses with over 400 patients seen during the week - led by Mary Ann Keithahn,
- Mural project worked with AFS Ghana volunteers and children from the community to paint murals in two separate rooms in the ICTC with new and traditional designs - led by John Boak '70,
- Garden project volunteers worked on small gardens, planted trees in Yamoransa, and continued to encourage the Yamoransa Garden Club - led by Alrie Middlebrook, and
- College mentoring Junior Camp mentored over 100 high school students consisting of 10 mentors from the Central region of Ghana and Accra along with GhanaThink leaders, YASC, and AFS Ghana volunteers - led by GhanaThink Foundation.

Click on the following link to check out the video for this program: <https://youtu.be/UgtEboiEd8g>



Business consulting class



Musical performance by local children



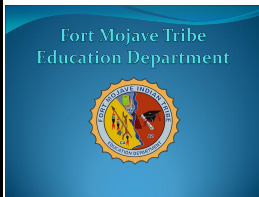
Children painting mural

## Upcoming Trips



YASC Brazil 2017 (March 10-19, 2017) - Led by Andrew Garling '68, YASC is returning to Brazil in March 2017 for our second service program to Serra Grande. Andrew and João are traveling to Serra Grande in late September to meet with key community leaders and our ground partners Instituto Floresta Viva and UESC. In addition to discussing each project in detail, the focus of these meetings is to identify ways in which members of the community can be more involved with our volunteers in next year's program. We expect registration for the 2017 program to open in early October so please stay tuned for details!





YASC-NAYA Advance Trip (October 12-15, 2016) – Led by Max Sklar '06 and accompanied by Kathy and João, we will travel to the Fort Mojave Indian Reservation in Nevada in October on an advance trip to prepare for our inaugural Native American YASC Program in October 2017. The purpose of this trip is to meet with tribal leaders and administrators, visit the reservation and identify key projects (possibly college mentoring, health empowerment, and outdoor learning space activities), and discuss program logistics. Our visit will coincide with the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Fort Mojave Indian Days Celebration, which honors the culture and tradition of the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe.

If you have contacts in these locations please let João Aleixo know at 203-432-1943 or by email at [joao.aleixo@yale.edu](mailto:joao.aleixo@yale.edu)

### Other News

We are delighted to share the news that J. Weili Cheng '77 was appointed Executive Director of the Association of Yale Alumni on July 18, 2016.



Weili has a long history of service to Yale having graduated with a B.A. in philosophy in 1977 (Pierson College). Shortly after graduating, she became actively involved as a Yale volunteer and has remained deeply involved ever since. She served on the AYA Board of Governors from 1986 to 1996 and as chair from 1992 to 1994 — the youngest and first female graduate of Yale College to hold that position. She has been a board member of the Yale Club of Washington, D.C., including serving as its president. She has also served as chair of the Class of 1977 Class Council, an Alumni Schools Committee volunteer, and a trustee of the Yale Library Associates. Since 1994, she has served on the board of directors of Yale Alumni Publications, Inc., which publishes Yale Alumni Magazine. For her service to Yale, Weili was awarded the Yale Medal in 1997. She and her husband, Brad Dobeck, are also Yale parents; their son, Stephen, graduated from Yale College in 2010.

Cheng comes to Yale from The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, a subsidiary of Marriott International, Inc., where she was most recently senior vice president and deputy general counsel responsible for oversight of all legal matters relating to the company's operations, which include 124 hotel, residential, and club properties in over 30 countries. As a member of The Ritz-Carlton Executive Committee, she also played an active role in shaping the company's global business strategies and policies across the Americas, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe.