

**Graduation of 10,000 Women Entrepreneurs
Friday December 3, 2010 at 2pm
Samuel K. Doe Stadium**

**Remarks by Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield
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It is a real honor to be here today with you and celebrate your hard work, courage and dedication to your country. As you graduate today and return to your businesses, I encourage you to think of your training as a beginning, rather than an end, to this journey. Because it is you – the women business leaders of today and tomorrow – who will be the architects of a new Liberia.

The U.S. Embassy wholeheartedly believes that entrepreneurs are the backbone of a proud, independent Liberia. It is you who will contribute to a Liberia where *all* Liberians, men *and* women, can find dignity in employment. And it is you who will provide the ingenuity, the goods and services, the jobs and the local know-how that will encourage foreign investment, promote industrialization, and break the chains of Liberia's import dependency.

But beyond the economic jargon, the contributions that you make as business owners have real-world social benefits. Ms. Browney, Ms. Baryou and Ms. Mensah: your daycare centers provide the early learning that will prepare Liberia's children to be educated citizens and future leaders. Ms. Sumbo and Ms. Gant: your agri-businesses will help show the world that Liberia can feed itself and someday

export to the world. And Ms. Pratt: not only did you have the courage to enter the historically-male construction industry, but you provide jobs to 136 of your fellow Liberians!

Your ambitions and your potential are the reasons why the United States proudly partners with Liberia. Since the end of civil conflict in 2003, we have provided over \$2 billion of assistance in Liberia. This year alone, we will spend over \$75 million to rebuild this country's private sector, because as we have seen in so many African nations, there is no assurance of lasting peace unless people have jobs, dignity, and food on the table. We are working with the government to turn on the lights, bringing electricity to Monrovia and beyond. We will increase agricultural production and food security by introducing improved seed varieties and building farm-to-market roads. And we will promote private enterprise and expand access to credit for ordinary men and women, farmers and entrepreneurs.

But we cannot do it alone. In the end, this is *your* country and *your* economy. In Liberia, the United States is your guest and your friend. We stand ready to support *your* leadership, but it is you who must be the true agents of change.

Following this prestigious training, your family, friends, business partners and even business rivals will look to you as a leader. I challenge you to fulfill that role, to give back to your community what you have received from this training. Relish the important social and civic role that business leaders can – and I believe must -- play.

In the United States, the business community plays a crucial role in government decision-making and ensures legislation and policies that strengthen the private

sector. I know that your businesses consume every waking moment of your day, but your business cannot succeed unless you carve out some time to work jointly with the government to improve the environment for *all* Liberian businesses.

Together, there is much that you can do. I urge you to speak out against the culture of corruption that discourages investment and cheats you of hard-earned revenues. Demand that the Legislature draft business-friendly laws. Press your government to renovate the run-down port, so that your goods can move quickly to market. Agitate for social investment, and ask your government to create the kind of education system that ensures literacy, provides valuable technical skills, and guarantees all citizens can find a job. But most of all, let it be known that the voices of entrepreneurs must be heard!

As you graduate from this training, and return to your businesses full-time, you will face challenges and frustrations on your path to success. But you need not face these alone. Look around the room. Here are your professors, who helped you design a solid business plan. And here are your LiBA mentors, who will guide you in its execution. But most importantly, here are 25 other women, strong and determined and ready to succeed. Even as you leave this classroom, and return to your businesses in Elwa or Redlight or Paynesville, I encourage you to stay in touch. If you can continue to give each other the friendship, moral support and tough love that has helped you reach this point, I am certain that you will achieve success for your business and your country.

My government and the American people are proud to walk with you on this journey, to be your partner, your friend, and to work with you to realize the full

potential of Liberia, its businesses and its people. I wish you every success.

Congratulations Graduates!

Attachments:

1. Schedule of graduation ceremony
2. Biography of 26 graduates

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Cleared:

DCM: KAlbrecht 12/1/10

POL/ECON: WMcCulla 12/1/10

PAO: DGhebreab 12/1/10

Event Agenda

- 1:30 pm – 1:55 pm Graduation Guest Arrival
- 2:00 pm Graduation Ceremony Begins
- 2:00 pm – 2:02 pm *Welcome Remarks* by Brett Sedgewick, Country Director, CHF International Liberia
- 2:02 pm - 2:03pm Edwina D. Vakun-Lincoln, Master of Ceremonies
- *Introduces Goldman Sachs Video*
- 2:03 pm – 2:09 pm Goldman Sachs Video
- 2:09 pm – 2:59 pm Edwina D. Vakun-Lincoln Introduces the Speakers and Each Speaker Delivers Remarks (Order tentative)
- *Ministry of Commerce: TBD*
 - *Ministry of Gender: TBD*
 - *Ministry of Education: TBD*
 - *Ministry of Finance: TBD*
 - *US Ambassador to Liberia – Ms. Linda Thomas-Greenfield*
 - *Cuttington Representative – Ms. Precious Brownell Dennis, Associate Vice President for Professional Studies of the Graduate School*
 - *LIBA representative – Mr. Samuel A. Mitchell, Jr., President*
 - *Class speaker – Ms. Cecelia J. Pratt*
 - *CHF representative – Ms. Chris Sale, Head of the Office of Development Finance*
 - *Goldman Sachs Representative – Ms. Noa Meyer, 10,000 Women Program Director*
- 3:00 pm – 3:03 pm Introduction of Her Excellency Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf by Ms. Ajouvi Delorer Mensah
- 3:03 pm – 3:23 pm Keynote Remarks by H.E Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia
- 3:23 pm – 3:25 pm Ms. Edwina D. Vakun-Lincoln recognizes *10,000 Women* Scholars
- 26 graduating scholars who will be receiving certificate
 - 25 alumni – stand for applause
 - 43 new scholars – stand for applause
- 3:25 pm – 3:55 pm Certificate Granting to Scholars
- 3:55 pm – 3:57 pm Closing Remarks by Edwina D. Vakun-Lincoln Invite attendees to reception
- 3:57 pm – 4:00 pm Group Photo with VIPs
- 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm Reception: Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex Room # 2
- Light Liberian refreshments and non-alcoholic beverages



Rouguiatou M. Jalloh
Mamadou S. Diallo Business Center

Rouguiatou M. Jalloh is the sales manager at Mamadou S. Diallo Business Center, which sells and markets household consumables for customers in the center of Monrovia. Rouguiatou has 2 employees. She would like to improve her management skills and increase networking opportunities with other entrepreneurs. She has been in business for 4 years. Rouguiatou is presently pursuing a Bachelors degree from University of Liberia.



Beatrice Abbie Lewis
Sunrise Enterprise

Beatrice Abbie Lewis is the owner and serves as the managing director of Sunrise Enterprise. Sunrise develops gift baskets for all occasions, does interior decorating, and sells many other items for men, women and children. She aims to improve her managerial and operational skills. She has been in business for 5 years and has 2 full-time employees. Beatrice is a high school graduate.



Dede Agnes Dolopei
Kade Catering Services

Dede Agnes Dolopei is the manager and sole owner of Kade Catering Services. Kade services include party catering, wedding and reception planning as well as services and catering for other occasions. Dede has two employees. She would like to improve her general management, financial record keeping, and marketing skills. She has been in business for 7 years. Dede has a Bachelors degree from the University of Liberia Business College.



Martha Decontee Browney
Webs International Daycare & Primary School

Martha owns and manages Webs International Daycare & Primary School. Her business impacts Liberia's next generation, striving to increase the knowledge and skills of participating children. She wants to better manage her human resources and keep rigorous financial records. She has been in business for 6 years and has 27 employees. Martha Decontee Browney has an Associates Degree in Teachers' Education from the LICOSESS Mobile Teacher Training College and has participated in many professional training programs.



Christine Juah Settro
Big Treat Bar and Restaurant

Christine Juah Settro runs and a successful bar and restaurant called the Big Treat. In addition to everyday dining, her business also offers catering, planning wedding, and reception for other special occasions. Christine has 10 employees, and she aims to improve her general management, financial record keeping, and to access networking opportunities. Christine has been in business for 2 years, and she holds a Bachelors Degree from the African Methodist Episcopal Zion University, Liberia.



Karty Wanasue Wilson
Exotic Travel Tours & Docu

Karty Wanasue Wilson is the owner and serves as manager of Exotic Travel Tours & Docu. Her business provides travel arrangements for clients, including ticketing, tour arrangements, accommodations, and cars rental. She has also just started a mini-mart and a gas station. She wants to improve her skills to be able to manage her business effectively and efficiently. She has been in business for 4 years and employs 5 staff. Karty Wanasue Wilson holds a Bachelors of Science Degree in Business Management from the African Methodist Episcopal University, Liberia.



Kabeh Suyah Sumbo
Passawa Agriculture Trading Center

Kebbeh Suyah Sumbo is owner and general manager of Passawa Agriculture Trading Center. Passawa deals with domestic sales and exportation of locally-made cooking oils. Passawa exports her products twice a year to clients both in the United States and Africa. Passawa is also involved in warehousing. Passawa has a total of 7 employees and regularly engages numerous contractors. She is a high school graduate.



Jemmah Beatrice Mathies
Home Smile Hotel

Jemmah is the general manager of Home Smile Hotel, which provides lodging, catering, laundry, and restaurant dining. Jemmah has 7 employees. Jemmah hopes to broaden her managerial skills in the area of human resource management, access to finance, customer service, and financial record keeping. She has been in this business for 2 years. Jemmah is a high school graduate and is currently pursuing her university degree.



Ruby Abigail Crawford Kromah
Ruby Business Center

Ruby Abigail Crawford Kromah is the owner of Ruby Business Center, which sells products for all infant needs, including baby clothes, toys, shoes, and beds. Ruby has a total of 4 employees. Ruby's objective is to gain knowledge in the area of customer service, marketing, and access to finance. Ruby has been in this business for 8 years. Ruby is a high school graduate and is in the process of obtaining a university degree



Victoria Hannah Porte Baryou
Angeline School and Angeline Medicine Store

Victoria is the owner and proprietress of two businesses. She runs a school that provides primary education and a drug store. She has presently in her employed a total of 6 people. Victoria would like to improve her knowledge in financial record keeping and access to capital. She is a high school graduate and is now pursuing her university degree.

	<p>Adjoui Delores Mensah Covenant Nurturing Center</p> <p>Adjoui Delores Mensah is the owner and manager of the Covenant Nurturing Center, which provides early learning and quality education to children. Adjoui employs 15 trained and qualified teachers and support staff. Her goal is to improve her skills in the various disciplines and learn more about accessing finance to expand her school for accommodate the growing number of students in the Monrovia area. Adjoui has a Bachelor of Arts in Child Psychology from the Spellman College in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.</p>
	<p>Patricia Foster Gant Patom Farming Enterprise</p> <p>Patricia Foster Gant is the general manager and owner of the Pantom Farming Enterprise. Pathon is an agri-business that grows crops and engages in animal husbandry, and directly markets varieties of fresh vegetables in the local Monrovia market, shopping centers, restaurants, and other business sites. Pathom has 5 employees. Patricia wants to improve her managerial skills in marketing, financial record keeping, and gain knowledge about access to finance. She has been in the business for 3 years. Patricia holds a Bachelor Degree in Accounting from the African Methodist Episcopal University.</p>
	<p>Cecelia Jawalay Pratt Gilgal Construction Company</p> <p>Cecelia is owns and operates Gilgal Construction services, which provides a range of services from designing, rehabilitation of debilitated structures, and construction of schools, hospitals, clinics, water dams, community city halls and guest houses. She wants to improve her business skills. Cecelia has 136 employees, and she has been in this business for 6 years. Cecelia has diplomas in Industrial Electrical Engineering from London Institute and the Takoradi polytechnic in Ghana.</p>
	<p>Mary Klubo Kokulo Mako Business Incorporated</p> <p>Mary is the proprietress and sales manager of the Mako Business Incorporated, which is engages in the production and sales of cement and also sell sand for construction purposes. Mako has a total of 7 employees and several daily hired contractors. Mako has operated for the period of 10 years. Mary wants to improve her business skills and establish branches offices in other counties. Mary is a high school graduate.</p>
	<p>Hannah Johnson Slocum Slocum's Farm & Star Medicine Store</p> <p>Hannah is the Proprietress of a farm and pharmacy. The farm includes a sugarcane cane plantation and markets sugar-based products throughout the Liberian market. Hannah also runs a medicine store/pharmacy with provides medication and first aid services to her community. Hannah has 3 regular employees and daily hired contractors. She has been in business for 3 years. Hannah hopes to broaden her knowledge in the areas of marketing, financial record keeping, and eventually access finance for expansion of her business. Hannah has a diploma in midwifery.</p>



Christine Seyboe Tour
Chrisseta Beauty Institute

Christine Seyboe Tour owns and runs a school of cosmetology and beauty therapy called Chrisseta Beauty Institute. She has been greatly involved in the area of capacity building and skills trainings for many years. Christine has 5 employees and has been in this business for 5 years.



Marion Mendimasa Sando Nimely
The Liberia Needy Women & Children Organization

Marion M.S. Nimely established and owns The Liberia Needy Women & Children Organization. Her organization is a micro-finance business to empower small women-owned businesses in Liberia. She has been running this business for 17 years and has 8 employees. Marion holds a BBA in Public Administration from the University of Liberia.



Mary Sayeyaih Jarsor
Sayeyaih Business Center

Mary is the proprietress of Sayeyaih Business Center, which retails imported used clothes and new clothes. Mary has 5 employees. She wants to improve her business and take it to a higher level. She has been in this line of business for 5 years. Mary is a high school graduate pursuing a university degree.



Agnes Volar Thomas
Abel Hair Trading Center

Abel is the proprietress of Abel Hair Trading Center, which deals with the production and sales of hair products, weaves, and attachments. In addition to the sales of her commodities, Agnes also runs a beauty salon. Agnes hopes to learn more about marketing to enable business for growth and development. Agnes has operated this Abel Trading Center for a period of 5 years and has 3 employees.



Nandy D. Johnson
Nandy's Business Center

Nandy's Business Center imports and sells new clothing, with a specialization in children's needs. Nandy has been in business for 8 years and has a total of 6 employees. Nandy wants to become a better entrepreneur and improve and expand her business. Nandy is presently in the process of obtaining a University degree from the University of Liberia.

	<p>Tarmai Lovetta Kolee Mushroom Enterprise</p> <p>Tarmai Lovetta Kolee is the proprietress of Mushroom Enterprise, a local Liberian restaurant. Tarmai also offers catering services for weddings or other special occasions. Tarmai is interested in learning more about customer service. Tarmai has 4 employees and has operated Mushroom enterprise for 6 years. Tarmai is high school graduate and is preparing to enter the university.</p>
	<p>Eunice Dendeh Logbah Delight Beauty Plaza</p> <p>Eunice is the proprietress for Delight Beauty Plaza. Delight Beauty Plaza is a beauty parlor, specializing in hair dressing and other beauty services. Eunice has 3 employees and has operated her business for 2 years. Eunice aims to gain more knowledge about financial record keeping. Eunice is a high school graduate who hopes to further her studies and get a university degree.</p>
	<p>Mrs. Leona King West Chez Afrique</p> <p>Leona King West owns Chez Afrique. Chez Afrique produces designer African clothes for men and women. The business has been in operation for 16 years and has 2 employees. Leona is a high school graduate. She seeks to strengthen her accounting abilities.</p>
	<p>Veronica Munah Snoh V2 Smart Stop Food And Things</p> <p>Veronica Munah Snoh is the proprietress of V2 Smart Stop Food and Things, a mini-mart that sells basic household items and general merchandise. V2 Smart also renders catering service for all occasions. Veronica's is interested in gaining more knowledge about investment diversification. Veronica has 3 employees and has operated V2 smart for 5 years. Veronica holds a Bachelors degree in Accounting.</p>
	<p>Christiana Uzoamaka Kalu Xtienmeso Enterprises</p> <p>Christiana is the proprietress of Xtienmeso in Liberia. Xtienmeso directly retails stuffed animals, women hair products, and jewelry. Christiana has 2 employees and her business has been in existence for 4 years. Christiana Uzoamaka Kalu holds a Bachelor of Education Degree in guidance and academic counseling.</p>



Helen Girl Kulue
Safety Plus Inc

Helen is the co-owner and manager of a waste management and pest control business called Safety Plus, Inc. Safety Plus, Inc presently has 16 employees and has been in business for 2 years. Helen is a high school graduate pursuing her university degree. She wants to gain better insight into emerging business prospects in Liberia.