



Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND BASILEUS



The Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. recently commissioned the construction of drinking wells, or boreholes, for two impoverished communities in Ghana.

Each day, villagers in Borishe, a suburb of Akropong, Ghana have to obtain their water to cook, clean and bathe from a nearby, muddy, disease-infested ditch.

"I was heartbroken to see and hear the things that we saw and heard when people don't have something as simple as water, that we here in the States don't put a lot of value on," said David E. Marion, the international president of Omega Psi Phi.

The United Nation estimates that roughly 115 people in Africa die every hour from diseases linked to poor sanitation, hygiene and contaminated water. Marion said that is why boreholes are essential to quality of life for many Africans.

Working through the Tau Chi Chapter, located in Accra, Ghana, the fraternity financed a borehole for the village and the Akropong School of the Blind, another community that had struggled with access to potable water.

Boreholes are narrow shafts drilled to extract water from below the ground. The water is collected into an above-ground container and villagers are able to fill their buckets and containers.

Mahala Maku Narh, headmistress of the Akropong School for the Blind, applauded the fraternity's work.

"The water situation in Akropong is currently better, but formerly we had serious problems when it comes to water," Narh told the Ghana News Agency.

"We have one borehole drilled by World Vision International, but that alone cannot do for all the staff and students in the school. Even people from the community sometimes had to fall on us for water."

Marion said the two boreholes will provide villagers with an endless supply of fresh, clean and potable water.

"When you put it into perspective, you are talking about water and everyone needs it to survive and for Omega to go over and give water, right now that is absolutely mind-blowing to know that these wells will provide water for generations of our people," Marion said.

Carl W. Bampoe, president, or basileus, of Tau Chi Chapter, said members would continue to find ways to support the communities.

"This is the first, but certainly will not be the last," Bampoe told the Ghana News Agency.

Marion and other fraternity members made the trip in August as part of an invitation from Nana Akufo-Addo, the president of Ghana, to participate in an economic business development summit.

Omega men were welcomed to Ghana by a crowd of government dignitaries, tribal leaders, as well as dancers and drummers. Marion was among those invited to have dinner with the Ghanaian president.

The visit also was part of the "Year of Return," that commemorates 400 years since the first enslaved Africans arrived in Jamestown, Virginia.

The fraternity is encouraging its members to consider Ghana for business and economic development projects. Marion said he plans to encourage other historically African-American Greek-letter organizations to make humanitarian and economic investments in the country.

Marion said the fraternity's ability to provide the area and its residents with a sustainable water supply made the trip invaluable and historic for the fraternity.

"If you could have seen the faces waiting for us to turn the spigot on, all eyes are on the first beginning of water coming from that well, then you know that what you have done is something impactful," Marion said.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Marion Ph.D." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David E. Marion, Ph.D.
Grand Basileus