

Inaugural Speech July 4, 2015

Madame outgoing Chairman, Gudrun Harris and her administration, distinguished guests, Board members here present, Chapters' Presidents, my fellow Spartans, Class of 1983 Reunion members, my family, ladies and gentlemen, one and all. I bring you kind felicitations of my highest esteem on behalf of the Freeman-Richards team 2015-2017.

I must first thank the almighty God for health, strength continuous wisdom and guidance, my family, especially my husband Mr. G. Orlando Richards Sr. for his encouragement and support in this endeavor; and all our supporters and those who have helped to make this day possible.

Thanks for the confidence you have entrusted in our team to serve you for the next two years. For those who did not vote for our team, we ask you to join us to lift our alma mater to new beginnings.

I am standing before you today because someone sacrificed, loved and cared for me. I am who I am because someone saw and knew I had to become somebody; Please join me in standing for a moment of silence for all our deceased Spartans and loved ones and remembering all those who are ill and cannot be here with us today. May the souls of all the faithful departed continue to rest in perfect peace. **++++Thanks**

As the gavel has been passed on to this administration, I have no regrets and I make no apologies for accepting such responsibility, because our cause is just. This is not to say that we will not be faced with challenges ahead of us. I want to encourage you to continue your sacrificial commitment and generous financial support in giving back to our Alma Mater and the children of B.W. Harris Episcopal School who are tomorrow's future leaders. Please let me emphasize that your generosity will never be in vain, knowing that we have impacted the lives of many, some who we will only know as Spartan children. Our generosity is returned manifold by the good that we do.

One of our goals during this administration is to continue to improve the educational standard at B.W Harris School through enhancing technology and teaching for the 21st Century. In order to be successful in our endeavors, we will be working in close partnership with the school's administration and Board of Trustees of the school in Liberia so that our goals and vision will be implemented, as part of the school's educational program.

To accomplish this, for Grades 10th, 11th and 12th, we propose to develop and implement the West African Examination Council (WAEC) Tutorial Program. The primary aim of this initiative is to equip the students for better performance in WAEC examinations. The tutorial will include study tips and testing using prior exams. This heightened intensity in these higher level grades will improve the academic standard of the school.

In this same vein, for Grades 11th and 12th, the University Entrance Tutorial Program will be developed and implemented to prepare students to take university entrance examinations. The program will include instructions and study skills using the newly renovated computer lab and new all-in-one computers at the school.

For the Elementary section, the bedrock for improving the academic performance of B. W. Harris, we will develop and implement Science, Math, Reading and Writing Enhancement Programs.

There would be 3 programs each in the elementary and junior high sections and would be tailored to the students' grade levels. Examples would be instituting Science, Math, Reading and Writing Clubs.

For their level, we also propose to implement the same kinds of program in the kindergarten division, noting that children who get a head start at that age are better prepared to meet the academic challenges they will meet later in school.

The program goals would be to increase students' interest in the 3 areas, expand awareness of career options and reinforce and enhance classroom learning. The programs would offer students opportunities to explore the subject areas beyond the classrooms and solidify their educational foundation.

We ask the school administration for their unflinching commitment and cooperation in this endeavor. Our association's sole objective is to support the school and your work. In unity there is always strength and success.

I suggest that we guard against any rumors or vices that will tend to keep us apart. Staying away from the association is counterproductive and does not in any way support our cause. We have a special bond that unites us and that is: B.W. Harris School; Once a Spartan, always a Spartan! We are opened for any constructive criticism backup with your recommendation, commitment, support and dedication in helping the cause. We've come too far to turn back now. A people united can never be defeated. As National officers of our Association, we will always be opened to communications from any member.

In closing, Reunion Class of 1983 has a special spectacular surprise presentation for you all. I ask your indulgence, to digest the strong message in the presentation.

Members of B.W. Harris Alumni Association-USA, Inc., the Executive Board, Spartans, your humble servant, Joanna Hawah Freeman Richards reporting for duty as your next National Chair!

Thank You!