

**THE MIRACLE OF BEN'S MERRY-GO-ROUND
(THE LIGHT OF OPPORTUNITY)**

Sometime ago expectations weren't reached but satisfaction was attained in the academic work of the pupils in the Akim Essam branch of the Golden Sunbeam Montessori School. The cause of this was the lack of access to electrical light. So children were bound to learn or do their home works right after school, which wasn't good enough. This is because their parents would need their services by then. To add to the above, Essam is a farming community where every family practices the subsistence style of farming. This automatically burdened the children everyday after school. Boys would fetch food from the farm while girls did the cooking. By the time they finished the chores, their bodies had gone weak and exhausted.

How challenging it was. Home works were not totally done, and night befalls them. It was virtually driving the children away from their books, consequently, degrading their academic performance. Management deemed to purchase a brand new generator for the school and the children immediately started coming to school at night to do their home works and to study, but what do we get in return when they close at night?

Fortunately and luckily an NGO from BYU by named Empower Playgrounds (The Light of Opportunity) led by Ben S. Markham (President) supplied the school with a lot of rechargeable lamps. These lamps are charged using a marry-go-round, supported by a solar panel, manufactured by BYU engineers from USA. Not only did the marry-go-round provide energy but it also served as a source and form of entertainment and joy to not the Golden Sunbeam students alone but the entire children of Essam village. Moreover, children of the school were given access to these lamps; they took them home and used them at night for their home works. They only bring them to the school for re-charging.

Lo and behold! Gradual change and improvement was seen in their studies. Home works were being done to the liking of teachers. Good marks were being gotten during class tests and term examinations. This metamorphosis got to the peak when the WAEC - BECE 2009/2010 form three (3) students came out with a brilliant and historical results, with the lowest grades as (17) and highest as (8). One can boldly say that the introduction of the lamps to their homes had really helped in the improvement of the academic performance of the children in the school.

In conclusion, as the Principal of the school, I would like to express my profound gratitude to Ben S. Markham and his team of engineers and their resource personnel for their wonderful and unforgettable mark they've left in the school. And that, even though the electrification project has reached Essam village, I will ensure that all the lamps that are with students living in Essam village will be redrawn for students living in the surrounding villages to have them.

We say bravo to the Empower Playgrounds, Long Live BYU, and Long Live Golden Sunbeam Montessori Schools. Thank You.

Signed,

PRINCIPAL (Nii Amanor Kitson-Dodoo)