

Liberia: Cummings Africa Foundation Donates To Visually Impaired, Deaf and Dumb Students



By Obediah Johnson

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The Executive Director of the Cummings Foundation Africa, Dr. Wede Elliot Brownell (female with nose mask) and some of the beneficiaries post for a photo shortly after the donation

VIRGINIA – In the wake of a state of emergency, the Cummings Africa Foundation has donated a huge consignment of rice and assorted items to the Liberian Schools for the Blind and Deaf and Dumb as part of efforts to help reduce the consistent pressure on the

Government of Liberia (GOL) for the provision of basic necessities to less fortunate groups and citizens during this lockdown period.

President George Manneh Weah recently declared a state of emergency in a bid to promote social distancing and help curtail the spread of the coronavirus across the country.

The state of emergency which lasts for 21 days, takes effect 11:59PM on Friday.

At least five persons have died of the coronavirus, while 48 other cases have been reported by Liberian health authorities.

The beneficiaries, Liberian School for the Blind and the School for the Deaf and Dumb, are located in the Mango Town Community, Virginia Township outside Monrovia.

The schools were founded several years ago to provide psychosocial counseling and education to Liberian students with impairments, including the visually impaired, and the deaf and dumb.

The Cummings Africa Foundation presented 45 bags of rice, several gallons of cooking oil and cartons of soap to authorities of the two less fortunate institutions.

According to the foundation's Executive Director, Dr. Wede Elliot Brownell, the donation was made possible by the Chief Financier of the foundation, Mr. Alexander Benedict Cummings.

Mr. Cummings is also the political leader of the opposition Alternative National Congress (ANC).

She disclosed that the gesture was the foundation own way of identifying with the less fortunate during this international health pandemic.

She added that the two institutions are among some of the institutions that have been abandoned during this troubling time, and as such, the foundation's gesture was intended to put smile on the faces of the visually impaired and deaf and dumb Liberian students.

"On behalf of the Cummings Africa Foundation, I want to present some food items and cleaning items to the School for the Blind. We want to identify with you to ensure that once you are lockdown, you will be able to provide meals and cleanliness for your

students”.

Speaking to reporters shortly after the donation, Dr. Brownell noted that the beneficiaries are challenged both physically and financially during this “challenging times”.

“Mr. Cummings thought about this and said, ‘we need to do something because they already have many challenges”.

She pointed out that the separate donations to the two institutions is just a stepping stone towards numerous supports and contributions that will be provided to them by the Cummings Africa Foundation in the soonest possible time.

She disclosed that though the foundation’s focus for the year 2020 was education, a shift has been made through the provision of food and assorted items to the needed during these troubling times to help reduce the “pressure” on government.

For his part, the Dean of the Liberian School for the Blind, Kelvin Beahquoi, commended the foundation for the donation.

He pointed out that the gesture came at a time authorities of the institution were faced with uneasiness as a result of the lack of food and other basic necessities for the up keeping of the students and caretakers during this health crisis and lockdown period.

“We want to firstly extend our appreciation to the Cummings Africa Foundation for coming in at this time. We have been worrying how we were to manage during this lockdown. This organization is the first to come to our aid. This donation shows that Mr. Cummings has a heart for disabled persons in Liberia. We just want to be like the one leper that came back to Jesus. We want to say thank you to the Cummings Foundation; God will bless you because this is a surprise to us”.

He noted that though the Ministry of Education has been doing well in providing support to the institution, authorities of the MOE and the Ministry of Health are yet to identify with the Liberian School for the Blind in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Like Mr. Beahquoi, authorities of the School for the Deaf and Dumb also commended the foundation and Mr. Cummings in particular, for the donation.

They urged other philanthropic and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to emulate the good example of the Cummings Africa Foundation.

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