

Liberia: Cummings Model Science and Technology School Hosts 'Maiden' Science Fair



By Gerald C. Koinyeneh

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Paynesville – It was an exciting moment for parents, students and the administration of the Alexander B. Cummings Model Science and Technology School (ABCMSTS) on Friday as the school successfully launched its inaugural annual Science fair.

This year's Science fair was organized under the theme: "Channeling Curiosity and Ingenuity to Invent." It showcased science projects undertaken by the students.

Speaking to reporters at the event, the Principal, Cheryl Flah-Kiahon said the fair was sponsored by the Cummings Africa Foundation (CAF), the Royal Grand Hotel and Aqua Life Mineral Water Company.

Its purpose, she said is to promote STEM education at the school and to serve as a motivation for students to engage in scientific and technological activities. And in the process, planting the seeds for future Liberian scientists.

She thanked Mr. Alexander B. Cummings and Mrs. Theresa Cummings for the support through the Cummings Africa Foundation over the years, and also the Ministry of Education and Aqua Life for the support.

She commended the teachers for their innovation and ingenuity in ensuring the fair is a success through the use of local materials to supplement some of the items that are not available locally.

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“We believe innovation through technology and science is where we are going to make great stride in our country. So, we focus on teaching through all of the sciences,” she said.

“The Ministry of Education’s curriculum is great, but where we struggle is getting the lab materials. They are expensive and we had to work with pharmacies and institutions to get some of them. But our teachers are ingenious. They helped the students work with the local materials.”

She thanked the parents for their cooperation and assistance rendered to the students at home to ensure their presentations are successful.

Before the fair, the Principal revealed that the students were engaged in research, experiments, and collaboration with students at the ABCMSTS’ sister school, College Park Academy in Maryland, USA over the

past few weeks and the results of their work were being displayed for the invited guests to view.

The event, streamed live by FPA, saw students demonstrating principles in the field of biology, chemistry, physics, the environment, and engineering. The fair showcased exhibitions from a select group of technological companies in Liberia as well as exhibitions from the Chemistry Department of the University of Liberia.

“All these exhibitions are intended to pique the curiosity of our students to delve into the world of research and technology whereby the development of Liberia can be enhanced and hastened,” the Principal stated.

Meanwhile, special guests, comprising of prominent Liberians including Mrs. Cummings and Dr. Wede Elliot Brownell, Country Director of the Cummings Africa Foundation, parents and students from other schools within the community graced the fair. A panel of judges comprising of scientists, educators, business people and others, appraised the students' projects. Results are expected to be announced on Wednesday with the top three group winners expected to walk away with fabulous prizes.

“I am so proud of the school for the amazing work they are doing for our children. We are grateful that the school would come up with such a wonderful setup for the students. I am really moved by it because it brings out the creativity and innovation of the students. It is wonderful being here and we want to appreciate the administration,” said a parent, Apostle Samuel M. Kollie, Jr.

Some of the students, speaking to FPA thanked the school and their parents for the opportunity.

"I am so thankful to our teachers for the learning opportunities and to our parents for the support always. When I grow up, I want to be a Pharmacologist. And this is the foundation to achieve my goal," said student Elijah B. Yoewah, as he and his friends passionately demonstrated their experiment on the dissection of a frog.

Gift Joy Bright, another student added: I want to be someone who will make a positive impact in the world. Like the turbine we are studying, it is not widely found in the developed world. So, I want to be an Engineer to help develop turbine in our part of the world. I believe with the foundation that is being built and with the help of my parents, I will achieve my goal."

The Alexander B. Cummings Model Science & Technology School, established five years ago, is dedicated to the provision of standard and quality education to students from grades 7 through 12, with a high emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and Computer literacy.

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