

Friends of Liberia



2018 Annual Report

Partners with Liberian-led Programs





Cover pictures top: Home Visitor working with mother on weekly lesson for child
 Cover bottom: Mothers in Adult Literacy Program (ALP) practicing new reading skills
 Above: Family Literacy Initiative (FLI) children demonstrating skills at program

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Message from the President and Board of FOL

Dear Friends,

2018 passed quickly as the newly elected president of Liberia, George M. Weah took office with the enthusiastic support of the majority of the electorate and, especially, the youth. I traveled to Liberia in March, 2018, in order to both see as many of our recent projects as possible and to renew many friendships. It was heart-warming to be back and I was impressed again with the resiliency and determination of Liberians to overcome conditions exacerbated by the years of war, displacement, and the Ebola crisis. While I met many college graduates who have not been able to find real jobs, the belief is always voiced with conviction that quality education is most essential to a positive future for both individuals and the country.

In the following pages you will read about the impact that the Family Literacy Initiative (FLI) continues to make in the final year of its pilot project. The Liberian Ministry of Education endorses it strongly, but is unable to provide any support, so its sustenance and expansion depends on FOL fundraising. FOL volunteers spent many hours researching and writing grant proposals, and we are very grateful to those foundations who have become our partners. Due to demand from parents, a pilot Adult Literacy Program (ALP) was researched, developed, and begun in 2018. These empowered parents wanted to be able to continue learning themselves as their preschoolers advanced and graduated from the FLI program! Many were unable to even dream of going to school during Liberia's civil war and subsequent setbacks. Visiting the program sites and spending time with the parents, children, and WE-CARE staff, who are our amazing implementing partner, inspired energy to continue working to sustain these programs.

Through donations from FOL members, FOL has continued its award of small grants to Liberian non-governmental organizations around the country, which are reported on within. I visited most of our projects in March and even some of our older ones, to see if they were utilized and maintained. None were disappointing -- they surpassed the small help we gave them with their own efforts. The groups involved were very grateful to FOL, and their commitment to the populations they serve deserves much praise.

FOL completed 2018 with the election of several new Board members who add enthusiasm, intelligence, ideas, and skills to our group. It gives confidence to FOL's future to welcome recent RPCVs (Returned Peace Corps Volunteers) into leadership and committee positions, as well as add successful experience in education, health, and business through others. Hundreds of hours a year are dedicated by these Board volunteers and committee members to ensure that FOL operates efficiently and effectively.

We proudly salute all the efforts of FOL members in the United States and worldwide to advance peace, health, education, and economic security. Many sponsor or participate in non-FOL projects back in Liberia, and others work with affiliate groups in the U.S. that promote better understanding among cultures through work with, e.g., new refugees. FOL members often speak about Liberia to schools, civil society groups, and departing new Peace Corps Volunteers, as well as mentor returned PCVs. Unsung FOL heroes advocate for respect for all human rights, the environment, development issues in Liberia, and immigration reforms.

Please contact me with any questions you may have about this report. Thank you, one and all.

Respectfully yours,

Sarah Morrison

Sarah C. Morrison, President and Board Chairperson, Friends of Liberia

WHO WE ARE

Friends of Liberia (FOL) began almost 35 years ago as a way for former Peace Corps Volunteers who had served in Liberia to maintain relationships with those who had similar experiences. As it grew to include academics, health professionals, diplomats, missionaries, development workers, and Liberians, as well as RPCVs (Returned Peace Corps Volunteers), it was formally organized as a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation in the District of Columbia. FOL helps support Liberian-led non-profit organizations to meet the needs and aspirations they identify as priorities and are congruent with FOL's mission and resources.

Over the last 30 years, FOL has worked to improve education in Liberia. FOL trained more than 300 primary teachers after the civil war in five of its largest counties, conducting workshops and participating in conferences, renovating schools, and sending supplies and appropriate books for school children. Its training of primary school teachers from 1999-2013 helped to introduce the concept of Early Childhood Education (ECE) to Liberia, which now has an ECE Bureau in the Ministry of Education. During the Ebola crisis, FOL raised and awarded over \$100,000 to support community-initiated education, prevention, and treatment programs related to Ebola, and has since utilized its Small Grants Program to address long-term challenges communities face in its aftermath. FOL has twice received the National Peace Corps Association's annual Loret Miller Ruppe Award for outstanding service, most recently in 2016.

FOL members, who now number over 2000, communicate through newsletters and social media, attendance at Board meetings, learning opportunities such as panels on Liberian issues, and social events organized by individuals in various regions or by FOL, usually in the Washington area. Planning has begun for an FOL event in conjunction with the 60th anniversary of the Peace Corps in 2021.

All who support our vision, mission, and values are invited to become members. Though membership fees are not assessed, active members are those who contribute at least annually to FOL. Our members live throughout the United States and in several foreign countries, including Liberia.

The FOL Strategic Plan provides our guidance as we make decisions and stay focused on what role we can best play as a volunteer organization dependent primarily on individual donations. The full Plan can be found on our website, FOL.org. It was revised and adopted during 2018 for the years 2019-2021. The cover page follows, but the full plan (which will be updated as needed) can be found on our website, www.FOL.org.

Vision

Our vision is for Friends of Liberia to be an effective organization helping Liberia in its quest to be a peaceful and just country in which every Liberian has opportunities for quality education and employment, and access to adequate health care.

Mission

FOL is a non-governmental, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization registered in Washington, DC that seeks to positively affect Liberia and Liberians through education, health, economic, and humanitarian programs, and through advocacy efforts in support of shared values between the people of Liberia and the United States.



VISION:

Our vision is that Friends of Liberia be an effective organization for helping Liberia in its quest to be a peaceful and just country in which every Liberian has opportunities for quality education and employment, and access to adequate health care.

MISSION:

FOL is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that seeks to connect and engage interested parties in Liberia to positively affect Liberia and Liberians through education, economic and humanitarian programs and through advocacy efforts.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019 - 2021

STRATEGIC ISSUE 1: PROGRAMS

01

What programs can we support with a large impact that draw on the expertise of FOL membership, capitalize on FOL's comparative advantage, and support Liberia's long-term development strategy?

STRATEGIC ISSUE 2: FUNDING

02

How can FOL diversify, increase and sustain its financial resources to support programming for bigger impact on Liberia and more engagement of members?

STRATEGIC ISSUE 3: GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

03

How can FOL organize itself for more efficiency and effectively management of its work in the U.S. and in Liberia?

STRATEGIC ISSUE 4: MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

04

How can FOL recruit new members and engage more members in its work by offering opportunities to carry out FOL's mission?

CORE VALUES:



Service:

We are committed to timely and reliable service based on mutual respect. We engage in programs and activities that respond to needs identified by Liberians and that help them shape solutions.



Partnerships:

We value collaboration and seek partnerships with like-minded organizations and individuals. We build strong working relationships and coalitions to help ensure self-reliance and sustainability as ultimate goals of our work.



Accountability and Transparency:

We follow the highest ethical standards, and demonstrate honesty and fairness in every action that we take. Measurable outcomes and sound financial management are important elements of our accountability. We expect the same from our partners and those we serve.



Integrity:

We are responsible to our members, board, donors and the communities and country we serve for ensuring that our programs and activities meet the highest standards of professional and personal integrity.



Stewardship:

We are able to accomplish our mission through the generosity of our members and others. We respect donors' intentions on the use of their gifts, and are responsible stewards of the resources they entrust to us.

SECTION I: FOL Program Committee Reports

Education Committee

Liberia Family Literacy Initiative



Graduation Day, end of school year 2018

Overview

Our flagship program, the Family Literacy Initiative (FLI), was launched after a nationwide survey of education programs done by FOL members indicated that the greatest unmet educational need in Liberia was for preparation of preschoolers to have a quality educational experience. Several preschool preparation programs were researched for suitability to Liberia, and the HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents and Preschool Youngsters) model was selected, which recognizes that parents are a child's first teacher and learning begins at home. A three-year pilot project was developed through effective partnerships with [WE-CARE Foundation](#) and [HIPPY International](#) and implemented in November, 2015. Propelled by positive Year 1 evaluations in 2016 and fueled with a generous Open Society Foundations grant, FLI completed its second successful year in 2017, and in 2018, 45 children completed the three-year FLI/HIPPY curriculum. Approximately 180 families from four communities are participating in Year 4 of the program, including new first year children who replaced those who finished the third year. Details on FLI and reports on the program's impact may be read at <http://fol.org/programs/literacy-initiative/>.

2018 Developments

In Year 3 of the pilot FLI program, 179 children between the ages of 3 and 6 participated from four impoverished communities. Twenty-one trained home visitors worked each week with families under the supervision of Gbima Bahtokpah and assistant coordinator David Sonjor. HIPPY International and its director, Miriam Westheimer, continued to mentor, coach, and provide resource and technical support and advice. Grants from the Open Society Foundations International, the International Foundation, and the Rolander Family Foundation, as well as FOL member support, have made this pilot program possible.

FOL recognizes and is committed to capacity-building as an essential element to success and sustainability. All three partners work collaboratively to ensure the transfer of skills and knowledge to the implementing staff. The one-week training program for Home Visitors at the beginning of this program year was planned and delivered entirely by WE-CARE, and the Bracken School Readiness Assessments were also conducted entirely by them. In turn, the WE-CARE coordinators developed the exceptional parents in the program who had some education and much enthusiasm into home visitors, expanding employment opportunities and impacting the family economy. They are proving to be dedicated, and relate excellently to new program participants, parents like themselves. Some of the home visitors who began with decent high school educations are making plans to become accredited teachers.

The three partners are exploring ways to make the service delivery model more cost-effective without compromising the impact, such as by working with several parents/caregivers together during one longer weekly session instead of making individual home visits to every parent every week.

The curriculum cultural-adaptation work ("Liberianizing" the HIPPY materials) is a continuing and highly praised initiative. The first year curriculum adaptations have been completed. It is an added cost, but changing references of things like snow to rain and illustrating African children and habitats helps students identify with stories and feel important.

Watching the weekly lesson being taught to a parent by a Home Visitor on site in West Point (picture right) was inspiring. This little girl later demonstrated to me (FOL Pres) what she had learned the previous week.

A strategy to transition and track children leaving the FLI program as they move on to kindergarten and first grade is being implemented. During site visits, FOL President Morrison met several FLI mothers who have now become quite vocal advocates for smaller class sizes, more resource materials, better attendance and engagement by teachers, and more involvement by parents in the public schools. Empowerment has been a byproduct of FLI participation.



Monitoring and Evaluation is ongoing. Dr. Ron Mertz manages and supports the evaluation team. The FLI program is evaluated using a variety of tools, including test scores and reports, observational visits, and quarterly coordinator reports. FOL's Education Committee is available to answer any questions about the results of testing and the secondary impact of FLI on the families involved and their communities. As noted, reports on the program's impact may be read at <http://fol.org/programs/literacy-initiative/>.

FLI operations were observed on site by FOL members many different times during the year, including by FOL President Sarah Morrison, past-president Stephanie Vickers, and several times by Sia Barbara Kamara, FOL's principal FLI liaison and recognized international expert in early childhood education. While there, Stephanie also met with the Monrovia Rotary Club, which FOL hopes to engage as a funding partner with Rotary in the U.S. FOL and HIPYPY feel incredibly fortunate to have the WE-CARE Foundation as its implementing partner. The senior leadership and managers, Yvonne Capehart Weah and husband Michael Weah, are masters at organizing and coordinating numerous programs at once with grace and expertise. Parents in the poorest of communities are treated with the same respect as the Minister of Education.

Adult Literacy Pilot Program (ALP)

Since Year Two of the FLI program, many parents have expressed a desire to improve their own literacy. A survey of participating families found that 68 percent of respondents thought adult literacy classes would be very useful in helping them educate their children and also to develop skills for employment. FOL and WE-CARE, with an expert consultant, developed the Adult Literacy Program (ALP) to implement as a pilot in two communities for adults and caretakers who have participated in FLI for at least one year. Class size will range from 8 to 15 participants per site, with a waiting list for additional parents.

Job descriptions and qualification requirements were developed with adult learning experts, applications received, and selections made for an ALP assistant and contracted teacher-trainer. A second consultant, familiar with the HIPYPY curriculum, has developed a contextualized curriculum for ALP which she will update through the first six months of the program. We appreciate the contribution from HIPYPY International that helped fund new curriculum materials.



Left: Training on Adult Literacy Curriculum in late 2018

In December, ALP conducted an Out-of-School Learning Assessment (OLA), a pre- and post-class basic literacy assessment developed by Dr. John Comings, former director of the U.S. National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy at Harvard, in the two communities (Duazon and Caldwell) where the ALP program is being piloted. The objectives of the assessment were to determine participants' entry level skills and to help program staff

differentiate instruction and establish baseline data that can be referenced at the end of the instructional period. Classes will run for 36 weeks; students must agree to attend at least 80 percent of the classes and be tested using OLA.



[Left: FLI Director Yvonne Capehart Weah, GOL Education Minister Prof. Ansu Sonii, and FOL President Sarah Morrison discuss future of FLI during March 2018 visit]

As a result of FLI's achievements, which are regularly reported to the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Family Literacy Initiative/HIPPY was incorporated into the short- and long-term plan of the Liberian MOE's Bureau of Early Childhood Education. The Bureau recognizes FLI as the

home-based component of the national early childhood system for Liberia. FLI/HIPPY was also incorporated into the Ministry's five-year Education Sector Plan to reach its "Education for All" goals. The Home Visitor Trainee and Home Visitor/Teacher positions have been incorporated into Level III of the Early Childhood Development National Professional Development Framework, as well as the Certification and Recertification Criteria. Unfortunately, there is no foreseeable MOE budget allocation to provide support for FLI (or the ALP portion) in order for it to become available and sustainable across the country.

Looking Ahead

WE-CARE Co-Director Yvonne Capehart Weah and FLI Coordinator Gbima Bahtokpah attended the international NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) conference in Washington in November, with the new Liberian Assistant Minister of Education for Early Childhood Education and other officials, and FOL's liaison Sia Barbara Kamara. FOL hosted a gathering in honor of the Liberian delegation at the lovely home of RPCV George and Beverly Koch. Yvonne and Gbima (pictured right) presented an unforgettable overview of FLI and shared the excitement about the



pending commencement of adult literacy training. The possible role of WE-CARE as a model and hub (e.g. a National Center for Family Literacy) was discussed and will be developed further. It could possibly become self-sustaining as a learning center to train community volunteers in other regions who want to pilot a type of FLI program, or even for other countries via corporation or institutional support.

Small Grants Committee

The Small Grants Committee approved four grants in 2018. Many requests were received and carefully reviewed, and possibly will be funded after more information is received. The pending formation of a FOL member group in Liberia that could be used to interview prospective grant applicants and monitor projects would be extremely helpful to the Small Grants Committee. The dire economic state in Liberia puts difficult financial pressures on groups, even those with the best of intentions. At the final Board meeting of 2018, the Board approved the potential partial funding of Peace Corps Volunteer-proposed projects that they develop with their communities, assist, and monitor.

Grantees for 2018 included:

1) Ganta United Methodist Hospital Workers Association, Ganta, Liberia: \$2000

Purpose: Construction of a fence around the Family Care Center that was partially funded in a previous FOL grant. FOL President Morrison visited this facility, adjacent to the campus of the largest



hospital serving northern Liberia. The Care House operates like a dormitory-based "Ronald McDonald House" that provides a temporary place to stay (for a minimal fee) for relatives who have brought patients to the hospital from far-away villages, and need to be present to help care for them. Furnishings are still being constructed as part of the organization's in-kind contribution, but it is in operation. The fence was needed to protect the building's caretaker and occupants while they sleep and secure from theft the minimal supplies like linens, pails for bucket baths, soap and some food kept there.

President and GUMHWA members in the Family Care Center during FOL President's site visit with Lyn and Jim Gray



2) Respect Liberia NGO, A B Tolbert Rd, Monrovia: \$2830

Purpose: To set up six high school clubs and work with law enforcement agencies in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh to educate students on discrimination, sexual harrassment, and gender-based violence.

3) Grow Hope Foundation, supporter of Liberia Central Academy in Jacobs Town, Paynesville: \$3000

Purpose: To construct four compartment toilets and handwashing stations at the Liberia Central Academy in Paynesville.



Left: Community and contractor digging the new septic tank

Below: View of completed outside toilets; nice branding!

The final report from this group exemplifies the cooperation between the community and the local organization that FOL wants to foster through its small grants program. The PTA was actively involved, as well as teachers and students themselves, in the construction of these four private toilets and hand-washing facilities that serve 300 children, staff, and teachers. Health and sanitation practices, maintenance, and small repairs training were part of the community-led project. Improved health will certainly result, as well as increased pride.



4) SEED Global Health, Phebe Hospital, Gbarnga: \$3000



Purpose: To purchase tablets that will be loaded with educational materials and "just in time" teaching modalities otherwise not available. These can be used and updated throughout the country to provide quality medical resource materials to graduates of the anesthetist program and enable better service to Liberians. Each tablet costs less than one professional textbook.

Picture: Instructors at Phebe's School of Nurse Anesthetists with tablets to be loaded, then students will be trained how to use as a ready resource in the field after they graduate.

The Board adopted the recommendations of the Small Grants Committee for changes to the application and reporting requirements and provided new formats for uploading on the FOL website. FOL found out that some organizations have begun to use (para-) professional proposal writers, because of the competition for the decreased donor funding, but we discourage this because it does not provide a reliable picture of the group's capacity. The Small Grants Committee instead tries to work with groups, and having a representative or a committee on the ground will help FOL determine the competency of applicants and follow up with grantees to ensure impact reports are completed and valid.

Health Committee

The Friends of Liberia Health Team assessed the need for an education-focused health project designed to help improve the knowledge base and competency of faculty at the Liberian schools of nursing and midwifery. Since nurses and midwives provide the bulk of the health care in Liberia, it is extremely important that these health care workers in Liberia receive the best quality of instruction, both while obtaining their initial training and ongoing throughout their careers.

It appeared that there was not sufficient continuing education, especially, but decisions needed to be made on data more reliable than perceptions, so in 2017 a needs assessment was developed and conducted by the Friends of Liberia Health Team with faculty members from eleven (11) Liberian nursing and midwifery schools. Focus groups also served to clarify and expand upon answers to the needs assessment instrument. The data was analyzed by the Health Team in Liberia and discussed by the joint U.S.-Liberia team. The review of the data demonstrates that there is a strong need for continuing education workshops to increase and improve the teaching skills of the faculty at the schools of nursing and midwifery, as well as bring new discoveries and international medical opinions on issues such as HIV/AIDS, cancers, TB, malaria, and Ebola to their attention.

The results of the needs assessment were reviewed with the FOL Board of Trustees at the December 2018 board meeting. The Board approved the Health Team moving forward with the development of a proposal



that would include the details for a project and a budget. When the health project proposal is completed, the Health Committee will seek the FOL Board's guidance about the nature of the project, feasibility, development strategy, potential partners, funding, and sustainability for the project. The team will involve and consult with the appropriate Liberian Boards and Councils and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

The Health Committee is composed of a team in Liberia and a team in the U.S. The four (4) members of the team in Liberia graduated in the first class of the Masters of Nursing Education program at Mother Patern College of Health Sciences in Monrovia. FOL Health Committee Chair Pat McGeorge was teaching there at the time. The members are: Edwin Beyan (shown in picture left), Harriette Mondaye, G. Clinton Zeantoe, and Humphrey Loweal. FOL President Morrison was able to meet with three of these during her visit, as well as with other

health experts including Sister Barbara Brilliant, Peace Corps Reponse medical workers, USAID program supervisors, and several USAID contractors working in the field. All confirmed the need for this continuing education, especially as many donor-funded health programs are winding down and Government of Liberia funding for salaries and pharmaceuticals is dangerously behind budget. The eleven (11) member team in the U.S. are: Dr. Karen Hein, Roger Kropf, Sarah Morrison, Richard Nisbett, Beth Fischer, Bob Fischer, Joe Franta, Chris Piccione, Pat McGeorge (chairperson), Jim McGeorge, and Madeline Farron.

If you would like to help with the Health Committee, send an email to: liberia@fol.org and put in the subject line "Health Committee."

Entrepreneurship Committee

During 2018 this was not an active committee, but proposals promoting entrepreneurship goals from Liberian non-profit organizations were positively evaluated by the Small Grants Committee. FOL members with an interest in this area are encouraged to become a leader or active committee participant and help develop a way forward for FOL in this area. Your ideas are welcomed at: liberia@fol.org, with the subject line "Entrepreneurship".

SECTION II:

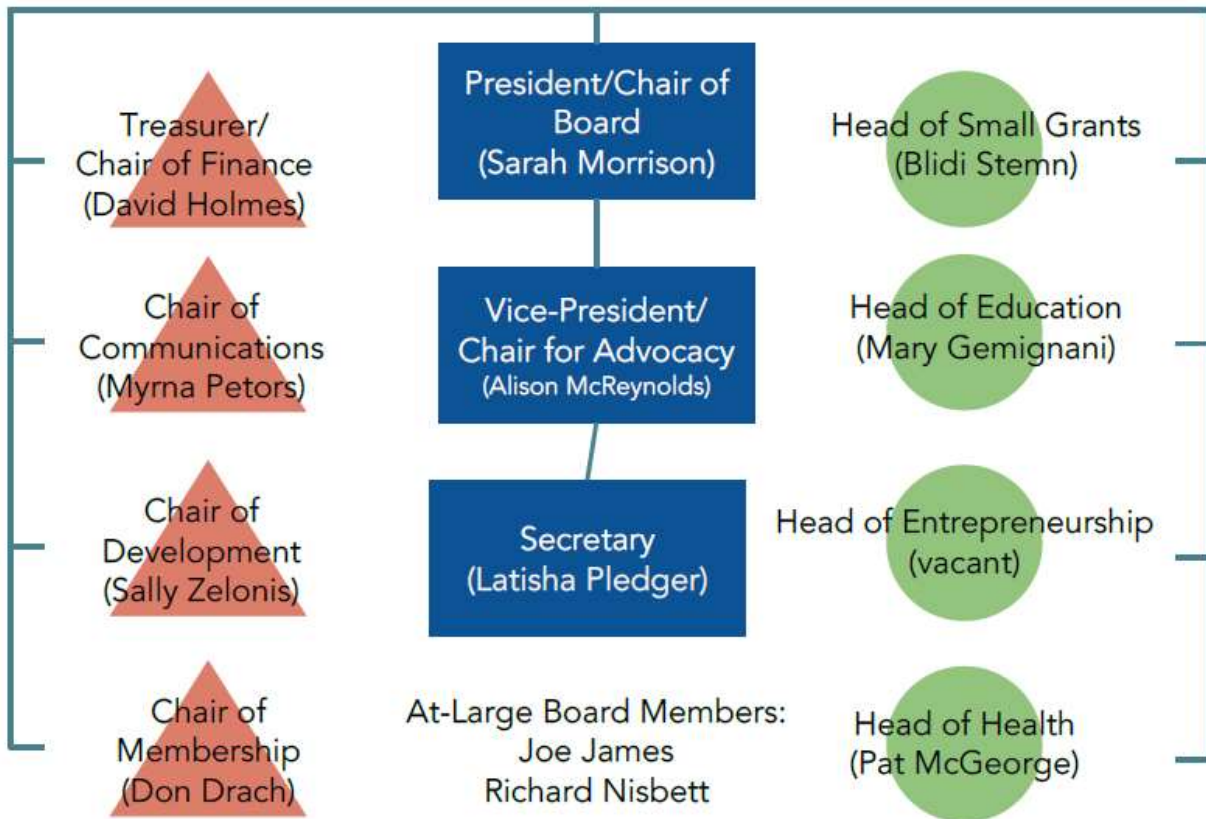
FOL Governance, Outreach, and Operations

Friends of Liberia complies fully with the District of Columbia Code for Incorporation as a Nonprofit, and has been recognized since 1988 by the Internal Revenue Service as a Section 501(c)(3) non-profit, charitable, and tax-exempt organization.

The governing board trustees include the FOL officers, committee chairs, program heads, and at-large members. After considerable analysis, FOL revised its Bylaws in 2016 and implemented this structure in 2017 to reduce duplicative meetings and facilitate decision-making. The revised Bylaws describe the organizational structure (shown in the following diagram) with a flexibility that allows FOL to make several structural changes as needed to address changing needs and member participation.

FOL ORGANIZATION CHART

Effective January 1, 2019



The Board meets quarterly, at least once a year in person and at other times either in person or via electronic participation. Some Board members who are not able to come in from other states or countries join us by telephone conference call or a widely available video app for meetings.

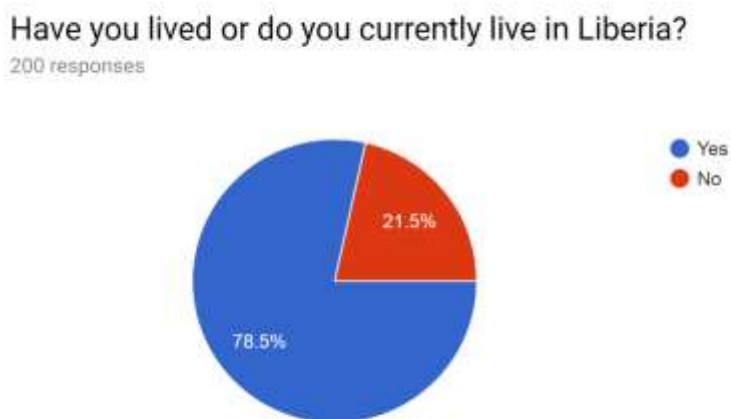
Board meetings may be called at other times. A quorum must be present for official decisions to be taken, such as budget allocations, changes in structure or Board membership, and project additions or major changes. Program and management committees confer often, and communication among committee members is frequent between official board meetings.

FOL members are welcome to attend Board meetings and share opinions at any time. Members interested in serving on the Board or on a committee should contact the Nominating Committee Chair, Don Drach (please see contact information at the end of this report). He can answer questions about position qualifications or forward your expression of interest to the proper person.

Membership and Outreach

In August, a Membership Renewal form was sent out via an eBlast. (Most, but not all, of our members have shared email addresses with FOL. Therefore, bulletins in hard copy are sent out twice a year via the U.S. Postal Service.) The open rate from the eblast was 38.6%, which is significantly higher than the industry average (21.8%) -- but still a statistic we want to improve! Response was fewer than we hoped (around 200), but there continue to be submissions. We will include the form in the next eBlast as well, to remind people to send it back if they haven't already. Responses are really helpful feedback, helping us determine our direction and possible activities to better achieve FOL goals.

Membership Renewal Form Responses



FOL was surprised that almost a quarter of the respondents had never lived in Liberia. This question did not ask if the person had visited Liberia, however, e.g. perhaps on a work-related trip with a major NGO or academic institution. Another question did ask about the primary connection the respondent had with Liberia. Sixty per cent (60.5%) were former Peace Corps Volunteers, from all decades. Some members are

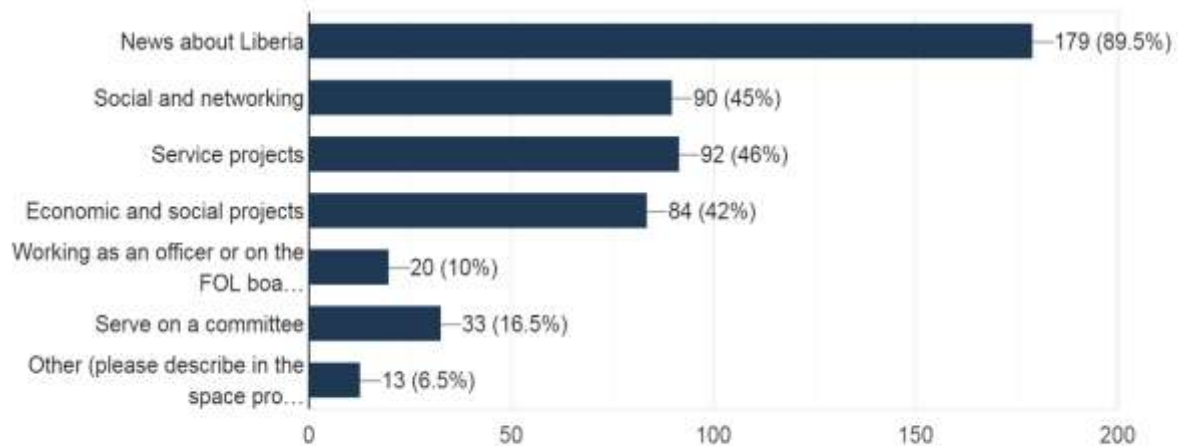
of Liberian heritage who have never lived in Liberia, but 13% of respondents identified as Liberian. People who had worked in Liberia comprised 23% (including U.S.-based and international NGO workers, diplomats, and others), 5% identified as missionaries, 2.5% as former Firestone associates, and the rest individualized their responses from academic research to marriage to a Liberian.

We treasure the diversity of FOL and the richness of insights it brings to our organization.

Another one of the results of the survey follows:

What are your areas of interest in FOL? (select all that apply)

200 responses



FOL has responded to this information by adding more current news from Liberia to its website under the "blog" tab, and on the FOL Facebook page. The Communications Committee, under its new chair, is looking at the cost/benefit of more social media utilization. All those interested in serving on a committee or on the Board have been communicated with. We would welcome a member who would organize a service trip to Liberia with our assistance, similar to the last one in 2013 that was very successful both for FOL members and the projects they worked on in Liberia.

FOL grew by over 100 members in 2018; a few people opted out of receiving emails, and if there is no response to email inquiries and we don't have a street address, the name is in time removed from the membership list. Anyone who donates or anyone who reaches out and asks to be added to our mailing list is considered a member, which is the practice of the National Peace Corps Association now. FOL has introduced levels of membership to encourage at least annual donations and more active participation. The donors to FOL will be able to post information about milestones in their lives, requests to help find another volunteer or Liberian counterpart, memorials, activities they are sponsoring in Liberia, and so on. These will be screened by the Communications Committee and/or Board before posting. Approximately 10% of our members made a donation in 2018, and several made multiple donations both through checks and PayPal monthly contributions.

Development Committee

FOL's Development Committee is happy to report that Sally Zelonis, a returned early '70s volunteer who served in Karnplay, has joined our efforts and is willing to be the Board representative beginning in 2019. She spent her career in fundraising, most recently at the Indianapolis Zoo, from which she retired last year. Sally joins Pat Reilly, Stephanie Vickers, and Sarah Morrison on the committee, with assistance from Barbara Kamara, Ron Mertz, and Don Drach.

Pat, Stephanie, Ron, Barbara, and Don worked on the resubmission in October, 2018 to Open Society Foundations of a proposal for Year Four activities for FLI and the startup of the adult literacy component, which will pilot in two communities for \$35,000. The total requested is \$202,000. This year there are new personnel at OSF and priorities for Liberia may be changing somewhat. Apparently we will not know until 2019 what level of funding may be approved. Fortunately, careful spending by our Liberian partner WE-CARE will enable FOL to secure a no-cost grant extension so that carry-over funds and FOL member donations can bridge the gap until the OSF funding is known.

The International Foundation granted FLI \$25,000 and the Rolander Family Foundation gave \$5,000. Our FLI partner, HIPPY International, donated \$5,000 for adult literacy curriculum development, and some of our individual members have made very generous donations. Gratitude is boundless for them.

FOL, through Sally, has made contact with the head of the International Grant Committee for the Indianapolis Rotary Club. We will seek a small grant from them, which could lead to a greater Rotary International relationship. Pat Reilly, Don Drach, and Sarah Morrison had also explored Rotary grant possibilities with DC and VA Rotary Clubs, but realized stronger direct connections were needed to get a foot in the Rotary door. Stephanie Vickers visited the Monrovia Rotary Club leadership with their past-president Mike Weah (our partner WE-CARE's co-director). Rotary Monrovia is excited by the possibility to partner with a U.S. Rotary, which is a Rotary requirement for grants.

FLI used \$600 from its administration fees to hire a professional researcher who found a few other prospective donors who are being explored further. She confirmed that a lot of major donors don't work in West Africa. Never-the-less, we persist in our searches and welcome suggestions.

The Legacy Circle received a posthumous donation from the estate of member Andy Evans, and is our first model for our new Legacy Circle, even though he may not have been aware of it. With permission, as given by Andy's sister, Legacy donors will be included on the FOL site and remembered forever for their commitment to Liberia and their generosity. All FOL members are encouraged to remember FOL in their wills like Andy did, in whatever amount is feasible. More detailed information is available on our website at <http://fol.org/donate/legacy-circle/>.

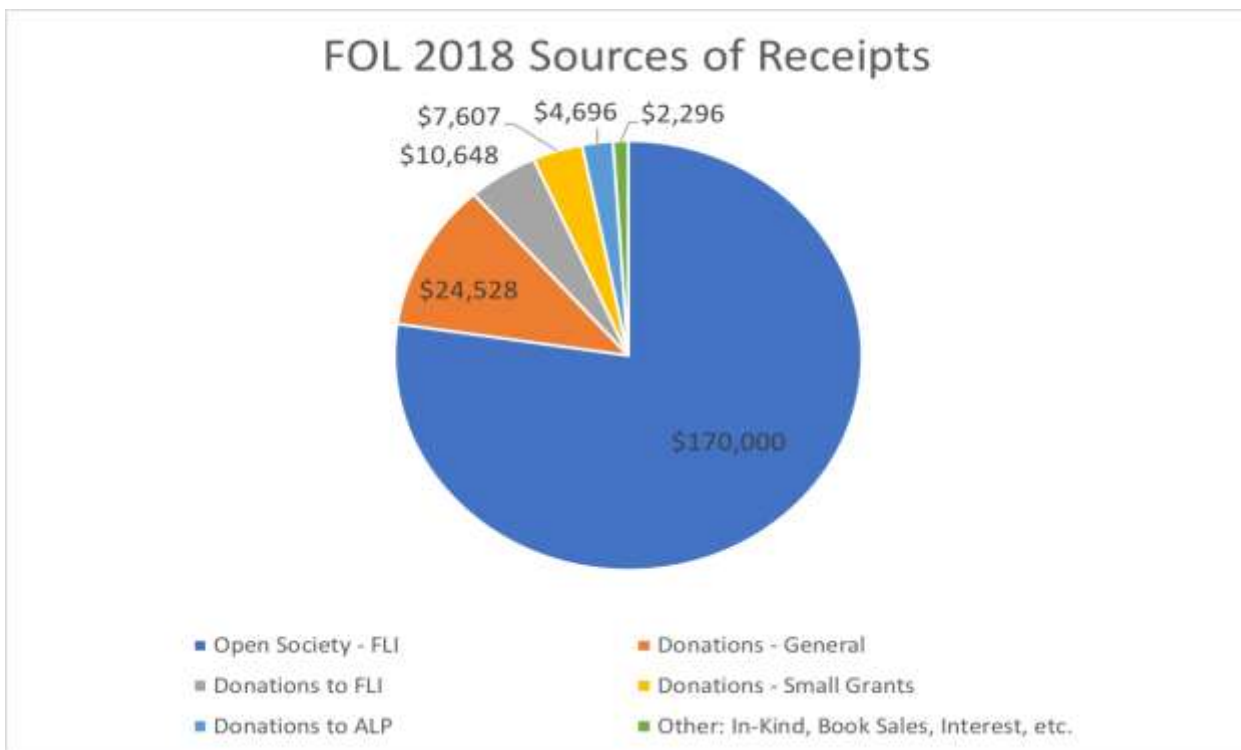
Communications Chair Myrna Peters developed a GoFundMe page, separate from FOL.org, with stories, videos, and photos from FLI's first graduation in Caldwell. Other approaches will be explored in 2019.

Finance Committee

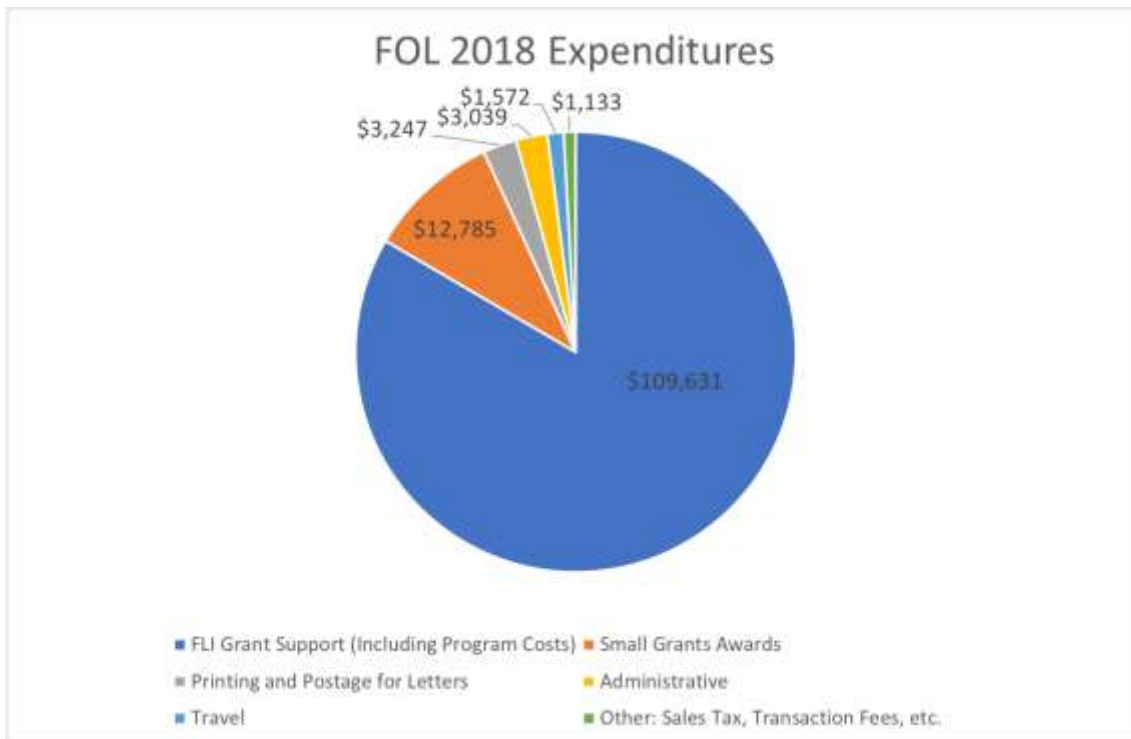
Friends of Liberia (FOL) started 2018 with \$164,000 (rounded to nearest thousand) on hand, of which \$131,000 was unrestricted. At the end of 2018, FOL accounts totaled \$252,000, of which \$158,000 was unrestricted [not allocated to a specific program by the donor]. Unspent funds are carried over to 2019 and

those allocated to projects will provide bridge funding during periods when decisions about grant awards are pending.

During 2018, FOL received approximately \$220,000, of which \$170,000 was a grant from the Open Society Foundations International (OSFI) for FLI. Approximately 22% of receipts were member donations, \$47,479, which is slightly greater than in 2017; its percentage of overall receipts is smaller due to the larger OSFI grant received. Additional receipts came from cookbook sales, interest, Amazon SMILE returns, etc. plus some in-kind donations for which receipts were provided (and subsequently shown as expenses). This included the self-funded travel of FOL Board members to meetings and the FOL president's transportation to visit FOL projects in Liberia.



Expenditures for 2018 totaled \$131,407. The costs associated with fundraising include printing appeal letters, postage, and in 2018 the FLI program funded a contract for a grant researcher to assist its sustainability efforts. Total indirect costs were slightly less than 7% of total expenditures.



It should also be noted that hundreds, likely thousands, of hours of expertise are not included but have been donated by the FOL members serving on committees and the FOL Board, as well as tangible gifts such as refreshments for various events and outreach materials.

Please contact liberia@fol.org if you would like to request a copy of IRS 990 financial report.

Nominating Committee

During 2018, FOL's Nominating Committee was successful in developing a slate of candidates to maintain energy and creativity as well as utilize experience and institutional history. At the December meeting the slate was voted upon and approved, with the new officers to assume their positions on January 1, 2019. They are shown in the organization chart under the "FOL Governance" section. Details regarding responsibilities and expectations for anyone interested in serving on the Board may be made by writing to the chairman of the Nominating Committee, Don Drach, at liberia@fol.org.

Communications Committee

FOL's new Communications chair, Myrna Petors, was joined by Rebecca Martinez and Kayla Gonzalez, and continued to work closely with the FOL Board member, Alison McReynolds, who had been our guru on all electronic media and communications for several years. Fred Lange continued to provide invaluable volunteer service with updating our website and responding to Board ideas.

Most of the committee's own communication is done via email and tasks are assigned in that manner. The following topics have been discussed or accomplished, or are continuing:

- Designating a section of the website for Memorials for FOL members that have passed. It will be important to plan a campaign to encourage members to let their families know they want this to happen and (ideally) providing them a picture and brief narrative. However, we can also include instructions on the site that family members may find and submit on the highlighted individual.
- This will also be a way to highlight the Legacy Circle possibility and donations made in memory of a loved one.
- Blast Emails and Appeal Letter – Pending submission from Board members, the chairperson will be partnering with Alison McReynolds to construct and potentially take over responsibility of tasks related to distribution going forward (including orders and follow-up with the printer, use of the most current membership list, etc.). Surveys, news bulletins, etc. may be included. Statistics on responses and analysis of effectiveness will be part of the periodic reports to the Board.
- Social Media – Rebecca and Kayla will construct a social media strategy in 2019 and the committee will meet to further discuss increasing participation via social media and making frequent updates on all platforms.
- FOL Website Uploads
 - WE-CARE/FOL/HIPPY FAMILY LITERACY INITIATIVE (FLI) Reports
 - Membership e-enrollment form created and implemented on the portal
- How best to connect members with each other through a website news page, periodic social events, and relevant regional and local programs happening in the area.
- Construction of FLI GoFundMe site. (Removed for new advertisement in 2019.)
- Reviewing the best method for conferencing/meetings for board members. Comparison of Zoom vs Blue Jeans
- Designed 2018 NPCA conference banner [image on the last page]

Contact Information

We sincerely welcome feedback at liberia@fol.org and invite your participation on any of our committees. As a completely volunteer organization, we apologize if a response is delayed or if (heaven forbid) your question or comment is unintentionally filtered out. We hold Board meetings quarterly, whether in person or by tele- or videoconferencing. Members are always welcome to attend. If interested, please write us and we can send information on when and how to connect.

The best way to contact Friends of Liberia is by email at Liberia@fol.org. If you know what officer or committee you would like to communicate with, please feel welcome to use: board@fol.org; ; communication@fol.org; development@fol.org; education@fol.org; fli@fol.org; health@fol.org; smallgrants@fol.org; membership@fol.org; president@fol.org; v-p@fol.org; secretary@fol.org; treasurer@fol.org; representative@fol.org, admin@fol.org.

We also refer you to our website www.FOL.org for additional information on FOL, its history and accomplishments, and all our programs. It includes links to be added to our mailing list and to make donations. We will also post news about Liberia, sustaining members, the Legacy Circle, and about any

future service-oriented trips to Liberia sponsored by FOL or a trustworthy organization. Please follow us on Facebook and watch for more social media interaction!

Friends Of Liberia



WWW.FOL.ORG
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