

January 12, 2018 – Travel Team Leaves for Sierra Leone

The Travel Team left for Sierra Leone last night and will be arriving in Freetown this evening. They have a very full schedule at the Centennial Secondary School and at the Mattru Hospital.

The closeout at Centennial Secondary School will wrap up eight years of work at the school that resulted in many successful infrastructure projects and dramatic academic improvements. Centennial is such a big part of EWB-LVP and our time there meant so much to all of us who traveled to Sierra Leone that it is hard to believe our work at the school is done. The youngest class in the CSS Junior School at the time of our first trip in 2010 has now graduated from the Senior School! We were so fortunate to work with the enthusiastic, energetic, and committed students of Centennial, watching many of them grow up during our years there. We also made many friends among the teachers, administrators, alumni, and workers. The CSS project succeeded beyond our wildest dreams due in large part to the support and hard work of those folks in Sierra Leone. We were lucky to have such a dynamic project team here in the USA working under the amazing and inspiring leadership of Diana Dunn. We also had the help of folks who never traveled to Sierra Leone but helped in design, fundraising, and logistics. And we received tremendous financial support from our LVP donors and from very generous grants from Rotary international.

The good news is we will be able to continue our work in Mattru, just down the road from Centennial at the Mattru Hospital. The Team has two big projects at the Mattru Hospital. They will be installing a much needed toilet facility in the admissions area. This is a good first project for the Hospital and will address one of their high priorities. The Team will also be working on a Five Year Plan during a visioning process led by Herb Klotz and Tom Portland. Herb led the very successful visioning process at Centennial and Tom has experience with long term planning at non-profits in a number of African countries. Civil Engineer Chris Blechschmidt returns to work on the toilet facility. Chris is joined by his family, Emilia and Allison, who will be making videos for our use and to report back to the students of Parkland High School who raised money for CSS scholarships. Electrical Engineer Jose Silverio is traveling to Sierra Leone for his first time. He has only been with the Chapter since March but has already become an integral part of the design team.

Herb will providing updates throughout their 2+ weeks trip so I will share them with you as I get them.

Tom

Sierra Leone 2018 January Travel Team



Herb Klotz

Chris Blechschmidt

Tom Portland

Allsion Blechschmidt

Joan Schork

Jose Silverio

Emilia Blechshmidt