



Lifeforte Scholarship Foundation

The essence of living is giving and giving is living

SARAH JOHNSON LAUNCHES LIFEFORTE SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION



Sarah Johnson

Mrs Sarah Johnson, CEO Lifeforte International Schools and Chairperson of Lifeforte Scholarship Foundation, a woman of indomitable strength, character, excellence, passion and discipline, in conjunction with her husband, Pastor Olubi Johnson, established Lifeforte International Schools in 1990.

Lifeforte is one of Africa's foremost private junior and high schools, ranking amongst the top two percent of African schools. A member of AISA (Association of International Schools in Africa), it was established when the standard of education in Nigeria was deteriorating.

Mrs Johnson, alongside with a dedicated home-grown team, has the vision to build an educational institution that is global in outlook rather than locally focused, but at the same time is 'Afro-centric'. Lifeforte's success in bridging this educational divide is attested to by a large number of students coming from the United Kingdom and other

parts of Europe, America, Canada as well as Africa.

Following her passion of always looking for opportunities to stoop down and lift others up, Mrs Sarah Johnson has been used by God to enhance the fallen standard of education in Nigeria, as she remains committed to excellence, thereby adequately providing and upgrading the high standard of instruction and learning facilities that is the unparalleled success story of Lifeforte International Schools. The school has recorded consistently high performances in Cambridge GCE 'O' and 'A' Level, with 90% of students fielded for these exams achieving A-B and 95% achieving A-C ratings on a 5-point scale.

A silent philanthropist who supports several charitable organisations, orphanages and foundations, Mrs. Johnson through Lifeforte International Schools has also awarded many scholarships and impacted the lives of myriads of youths at home and abroad. Her ruling philosophy and ethos is 'the essence of living is giving and giving is living'.

Her motherly affection, benevolent nature, and love for children and youths are some of the qualities that endear her to children and youths all over Africa and have earned her the name 'Mama Africa'.

Mrs Sarah Johnson has won several accolades, most notably the PSR Woman of Merit Gold Award, Leadership in Nigeria Gold Award, Grand Award for Productivity in Africa and a nomination for the Time News Development Achievers Merit Gold Award.

Below are excerpts of a chat with her on her new initiative, the Lifeforte Scholarship Foundation.

Q. Congratulations! We have been reliably informed that you recently launched the Lifeforte Scholarship Foundation. What is the propelling thought behind this passion?

Ans. Thank you very much. I believe that in order to practice the philosophy behind the popular J. F. Kennedy quote that says, "Don't ask what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country", you need to go a step further to ask, "What can I do for

my neighbour?" because a conglomeration of neighbours constitutes a nation. Mr. Mal Whitfield, an 85 year old World War I veteran Tuskegee fighter pilot, as an envoy to Kenya, began an educational scholarship foundation to sponsor Kenyans and discovered that one of the beneficiaries of his foundation was the late Barrack Obama Sr, father of the first African-American President of the United States. Bringing it nearer home, an informally uneducated community, Ijebu Esure, realising the potentials in a young boy some sixty-three years ago decided to sponsor a thirteen year old to Kings College, a rare opportunity at that time. The beneficiary of this magnanimous, forward-looking charitable act is my father, HRH K.A.O. Sansi, who later won scholarships right through school, earning himself BVMS (Edinburgh) and Ph.D (Cornell). The impact of these charitable acts has instilled in me, by the mercy and grace of God, a sense of service, passion and empathy which birthed the vision of Lifeforte Scholarship Foundation.

"I am following my passion to be a blessing, under the direction of God the Holy Spirit, to provide world-class education to outstanding students who otherwise may not have been able to afford it."

Q. What is the objective of the Lifeforte Scholarship Foundation?

Ans. The objective of this foundation is to sponsor outstanding graduating students to pursue undergraduate study in top universities at home and abroad.

As President Obama declared, 'we are at a rare inflection point in history where the size and scope of the challenges before us all require that we remake our world to renew its promise of change, a brighter tomorrow and much better days ahead'. In Lifeforte Scholarship

Foundation, we are firmly committed to investing in the future of our children and our nation, 'touching hearts and minds as we work alongside, bound together in the service of others, to do what we can to make a difference in the lives of those with whom we share the same brief moment on planet earth.'

We are convinced that the perpetuity and continuity of this kind of charitable act will break down walls, foster cooperation, and open the door of limitless opportunity to our young people throughout the nation to be global citizens and individuals who can compete with the best anywhere in the world.

Q. Where did you get the inspiration for your popular quote "The essence of living is giving and giving is living?"

Ans. God so loved the world that He gave. People live for many reasons; some for adventure, some for fame, some for riches, some for power and some just to be comfortable. But I have come to see and deeply believe that if the focus of life is not ultimately to give, then there can never be complete fulfilment. Like the good Samaritan, we must exercise character ideals that mark us out as being our brother's keeper. For me, giving is truly living.

Many famous and rich people such as the Rockefellers, Bill Gates, Warren Buffet and Oprah Winfrey have also discovered that giving is a major source of true fulfilment. In the light of this, I challenge well-meaning Nigerians, philanthropists and corporate organisations to partner with us in the objective of this foundation.

Q. What other charitable acts are you involved in?

Ans. On an annual basis in Lifeforte, at least



Ayooluwakunmi Jeje

thirty of the students enrolled are on scholarships awarded by the school. The beneficiaries include the children of widows, Christian missionaries, indigent students as well as students who excel academically. In the pipeline, the Olubi and Sarah Johnson annual grant to the Paediatrics Department will provide funding for Research &

Development, incentive awards for deserving staff and funding for treatment of indigent ailing children. We also collaborate with charities and community schools in our community, such as Oyiza Orphanage, Motherless Babies Home, Remand Home and Awotan Community School (to name a few).

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Q. Who are the beneficiaries of the Foundation?

Ans. With the establishment of the Lifeforte Scholarship Foundation, I am following my passion to be a blessing, under the direction of God the Holy Spirit, to provide world-class education to outstanding students who otherwise may not have been able to afford it.

The scholarship award for this year is going to Ayooluwakunmi Jeje, an outstanding scholar with a brilliant and impressive resume: 13 straight A's at NECO, 9 straight A's at GCE "O" level, 4 straight A's at GCE 'A' level (AS results) and SAT II scores of 800/800 in Math, 800/800 in Chemistry and 770/800 in Physics.

Ayooluwakunmi gained admission into Stanford, Purdue, Texas A&M and California Institute of Technology (CalTech) but has chosen to attend CalTech, ranked number 5 out of the top 500 Universities in the world. This further attests to Lifeforte alumni gaining admission into top echelon universities such as Harvard, University College London Medical School etc. Our aim is for beneficiaries of these scholarships to flourish through a cross-pollination of ideas and aspirations fostered in the enabling environment of globally recognised, top-tier higher institutions of learning which has produced technocrats the likes of Mrs. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala whose expertise and erudition has contributed to the development of Nigeria.

Q. Is the Scholarship Foundation open only to Lifeforte Students?

Ans. We invite intelligent outstanding students from all over the nation who recorded straight 6.0 scores at Cambridge Checkpoint, straight A's at NECO/JSSCE and straight A's in their O-Levels to have Access to Lifeforte Educational Training and

subsequently become eligible for scholarship nomination. Qualified candidates should please contact the Lifeforte Scholarship Foundation through our Lifeforte Scholarship liaison office at 156, Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, our scholarship secretariat at #1, Lifeforte Boulevard, Awotan GRA, Ibadan, or visit our website: www.lifeforte.com and www.scholarship.lifeforte.com or by e-mail at scholarshipaward@lifeforte.com

Q. What role can well meaning philanthropists play in the support of this worthy innovation?



Sarah Johnson

Ans. There is a core of founding members, individuals and corporate entities of like passion with Prof. Mrs Grace Alele-Williams as Life Patron. Many of our beloved Lifeforte parents have also given overwhelmingly and sacrificially to this noble cause. The response to the foundation continues to be prodigious and we give all the glory to God.

We reiterate our call upon all corporate entities with an inclination for social responsibility, philanthropists and well-meaning Nigerians to join us as we arise together to this worthy and highly rewarding challenge to invest in the future of our children, our nation and our continent.

I implore you to make giving to this charitable cause a way of life, so breaking down walls, engaging in the spirit of cooperation and setting aside all differences to work in a united effort towards this laudable goal.

You can access our Scholarship Foundation website at <http://www.scholarship.lifeforte.com> for more information and filling of forms online.