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EWEC/AP/Vital Voices
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During the month of July, I have been occupied with a number of activities and have been in the full swing of my summer fellowship with EWEC. My two primary tasks over July have been to administer the Vital Voices Baseline Survey and to get the EWEC Website up and running. Both tasks have proven to be a bit more difficult than anticipated, though I believe I've managed to achieve workable solutions for each.

For Vital Voices, the administration of the Baseline Survey has proven to be more difficult than anticipated. First of all, VV had requested that the 15-minute survey be administered primarily via email. Normally this might not pose an issue but in a developing country where email is still not a primary means of communication, it is often difficult to request that participants complete a survey online. Not only does it require them to have an Internet connection but it also requires them to have knowledge of downloading a document, editing it, and then reattaching it to an email. Furthermore, EWEC is a young organization that is still establishing membership. It takes time to cultivate relationships and gain committed, active members. The combination of EWEC's small number of active members and member's lack of daily Internet use proved to create difficult obstacles in administering the survey. Of the 50 surveys needed for Vital Voices, 25 have currently been completed. Being that the survey was given to Fellows five weeks after the expected delivery date, many of the surveys will be completed following fellow's departure. In my case, I have been working closely with EWEC staff and Vital Voices staff to create a solution that will benefit both EWEC and Vital Voices. Thus, in the process of doing the survey for the first time in Africa, we are coming up with amendments to the survey on its administration, questions, and how the data will be used. It is a learning process for all of us and we believe that the next round of surveys 6 months from now will go much smoother.

I've also been working on my 3rd and 4th member profiles for Vital Voices. When conducting profiles, I spend several hours with each member learning about their lives, work, and future aspirations. I've enjoyed these interviews greatly and I feel honored to have gotten to meet such amazing women! After completing the interviews, I have two outputs. The first is a short profile that I assemble which includes text and photos. This profile is used for the Vital Voices newsletter, the EWEC website, my AP Blog, and the ABWN Ning Blog. I also put together a video profile that is posted on all of the above-mentioned social media platforms. I most recently completed a longer video profile of Hilary Abedemah, rector of the Law Institute in Accra, Ghana. It's a great video and once I have a decent internet connection, I will upload the video to YouTube.

For EWEC, I have spent a great deal of time getting their website up and running. Initially, I was only supposed to be have a supervisory role of the website, however, as it turned out I was put in charge of working on all of the website content and design. Having little experience in html or the Joomla website engine, I've spent many long hours over the past few weeks working the website design, writing website content, and uploading information. It has been a great learning process for me and I'm happy to have been able to help EWEC when they didn't have any other options. The website is now live, however, some kinks are still being worked out. I've sat with an EWEC IT staff member I've identified to slowly orient them in how to make website changes. I've also promised to hold weekly Skype meetings with staff so that we can go over issues live.

EWEC also had a very successful event take place on July 23rd. After much planning and preparation, we held the 2010 Ladies Mentoring Night and had a turnout of over 100 tertiary students. With a panel of over 15 professional businesswomen in Ghana, we held open discussions on entrepreneurship, creating savings and investments, and picking a career. The press covered the event, we had great feedback from students, and overall, it was an incredibly successful night. Aside from covering the event by taking videos and pictures, I also helped with marketing materials for the event that included a flyer, a brochure, and an email blast template.

Lastly, I was able to attend an EWEC board meeting. EWEC's board is comprised of 6 businesswomen who are highly accomplished and committed to the EWEC cause. Aside from covering the meeting by taking pictures and videos, I also presented to the board what I've been working on over the summer. We had an in-depth conversation of the Vital Voices Baseline Survey and I reported back to Vital Voices on the boards thoughts. Their input on the survey will be very helpful in deciding how to amend the process when the survey is repeated in 6 months.

For the Advocacy Project, I have continued my weekly blogging as well as created a few video blogs. Readers have received one video, "My Journey To Work", very well and I've gotten a good deal of traffic to the blog because of that. I've also put together an AP Partner Page for AP. This page is similar to a brochure for EWEC except that it is used on the AP website. Being that I am the first AP Fellow to be placed in Accra with EWEC, the partner page I created for AP is the first. Lastly, I will be working on evaluations for EWEC and AP during my final week in Ghana. Evaluations are an extremely important part of the learning process and my input will be used to create more efficient systems at EWEC and give AP input on how to better organize the summer fellowship.

Overall, this summer has been filled with learning, sharing, and laughing. The EWEC staff members and organization members are truly a remarkable group of women and it has been an honor working with them. I look forward to continuing my relationship with EWEC over the next few years. We've already arranged to have meetings over Skype so that I can assist remotely in any guidance the staff

might need. It has been a wonderful summer and I'm proud of the contribution I've been able to make to such an incredible group of women.