

Cape Palmas High School Alumni Association-USA, Inc.
23rd Annual Convention Planning Committee Report
East Lansdowne, Pennsylvania

August 12-14, 2022

Overview

The 23rd Annual National Convention Planning Committee of the Cape Palmas High School Alumni Association-USA (CPHSAA-USA) extends gratitude to the President, Dr. A. Senyon Tatus; the Chairman and members of the Board of Directors; and the entire membership of CPHSAA-USA, INC. for the opportunity offered us to plan, organize and implement this milestone program. The Convention Planning Committee (CPC) is honored to present its Final Report to the Executive Committee to be forwarded to the General Membership.

The 23rd Annual National Convention (ANC) was held from Friday, August 12 to Sunday, August 14, 2022, in the beautiful City of East Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. The events commenced on Friday with Meet and Greet at Mrs. Ruth Nyema George's residence; the Saturday Business Meeting, Benefit Ball and Worship Service events were held at the Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church; and the Sunday Farwell Cookout was also held at Mrs. Ruth Nyema George's residence. The theme for the 23rd Annual Convention was: "Reflecting on the Past, Focusing on the Future."

Members of the Convention Planning Committee were:

Mrs. Ophelia Gibson-Yarsiah - Chair
Mrs. Ruth Nyema-George – Co-chair & Host
Mrs. Helena Collins-Dennis – Co-Host
Mrs. Elfreida Golegio-Gueh
Mrs. Susan Collins-Karto
Ms. Gertrude Freeman
Mrs. Patricia Wallace-Farley
Ms. Pamela Thomas
Mrs. Rocardia Johns Taylor
Ms. Faith Lawrence
Mr. Benedict Doe
Mr. Samuel Gardiner
Mr. Musa Sounaro
Mr. David Hanson
Dr. A. Senyon Tatus – Ex-Officio

Meet & Greet – Friday, August 12, 2022

The Friday evening gathering was given the traditional Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection warm hospitality at the beautiful home of Mrs. Ruth George. The gathering started at 6:00 pm and the Meet and Greet interactions began at 7:00 pm with food and drinks on sale for fundraising. Mrs. George, who was the host of the 23rd ANC, welcomed the gathering. Fr. James Wilson offered the opening prayer. The Chair of the Convention Planning Committee (CPC),

Mrs. Ophelia Yarsiah, introduced the Executive Committee and the President of CPHSAA-USA, Inc., Dr. A. Senyon Tatus, offered a solemn remark.

The President expressed his personal appreciation and gratitude to all CPHSAA-USA members and thanked the Planning Team for planning, organizing, and implementing the Annual Convention. President Tatus also expressed thanks to Mrs. Ruth Nyema George for her kind hospitality and willingness to host the 2022 Convention. President Tatus further highlighted the importance of this year's convention because it was held in the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection. The President encouraged all convention participants to do their best to ensure that the 23rd Annual Convention was successful. The Meet and Greet was officially opened by the Chair of the CPC, Mrs. Ophelia Yarsiah.

Business Meeting – Saturday, August 13, 2022

The Business Meeting was held at Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church. The Business Meeting was preceded by registration with the following members in attendance:

President A. Senyon Tatus, Mr. Homa Allison, Dr. T. Edwin Freeman, Dr. Blidi Stemn, Mr. Abrom Cooper, Ms. Jennie E. Bright, Mr. E. Cholo Nyema, Mrs. Sylvia Nyema, Mrs. Rocadia Taylor, Mr. B. Tarley Nyema, Mrs. Jackie Chea Tuttle, Mr. Fred Wilson, Rev. Dr. James Wilson, Mrs. Laura Brewer, Rev. Joseph Kpanie, Mrs., Elizabeth Beyan, Ms. Faith Lawrence, Mrs. Elfrieda Gueh, Mrs. Susan Karto, Mrs. Ophelia Yarsiah, Mrs. Evelyn Brown-Wilson, Mr. Benjamin Tarway, Ms. Pamela Thomas, Mrs. Annie Jackson, Ms. Barbara Freeman, Mrs. Helena Dennis, and Mr. Benedict Doe.

The Business Meeting was opened and presided over by the President, Dr. A. Senyon Tatus. The President welcomed participants and thanked them for sacrificing their time and making efforts to be in attendance. Fr. James Wilson gave the opening prayer in the absence of the Chaplain, Ms. Poda Williams. The President presented the Convention Agenda for review, comments, and approval. Members approved the agenda as presented by the President.

The 2019 Convention minutes were subsequently read by the Secretary, Mr. Homa Allison. The minutes were accepted and placed in the archives of the Association. The President presented the Financial Report in the absent of the Financial Secretary, Mrs. Anna Barlee. Details of the Financial Report are in the Convention Meeting Minutes. Following the Financial Report was the Treasurer's Report. The Treasurer, Ms. JE Bright, presented her Annual Report. Details of the report are in the Convention Meeting Minutes. Following the Treasurer's Report was the President's Annual Stewardship Report. The Constitution mandates the President to present his report on the State of the Association. The President presented the State of the Association's Report. The President's report was well received and was given a five minutes rousing applause.

Highlights of the President's report are projects that were adopted and successfully completed during the period under review. The adopted projects for the Administrative Year 2019/2022 were:

1. Acknowledgement
2. Financial Standing
3. Accomplishments
 - A. Website Upgrade

- B. Online Payment
- C. Global Connection Conference
- D. Teachers Professional Development Workshop
- E. Water System Project
- 4. Appreciation
- 5. Bereavement

Details of the President's Report are presented in the Convention Meeting Minutes.

The President presented the below projects for adoption. However, the members argued that these are on-going projects and need not to be adopted. The President was advised to continue working on them. The President agreed to honor the mandate of the members.

Adoption of 2022/2023 Projects

- 1. Science Lab Equipment
- 2. Computers, Laptops
- 3. Teachers' Lounge Upgrade
- 4. Library Upgrade (Books)
- 5. Professional Development
- 6. Scholarships (Teachers & Students)
- 7. Affiliate Membership in NAMCAL
- 8. Stipend for the Principal
- 9. Social Media (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook)

Following the President's splendid report in which he highlighted the Association's achievements, Mrs. Sylvia Nyema, wife of Pastor E. Cholo Nyema, pledged \$1,000.00 to support the purchase of uniforms for students at CPHS. Mrs. Nyema said, "I am very impressed with the Association's accomplishments. I am equally impressed with the leadership, the transparency and accountability, and how funds collected have been used to support programs and projects at the school which have benefited the students and staff of CPHS". The President and the Chairlady of the Convention Planning Committee assured Mrs. Nyema that the pledged, when received, will be used for the intended purpose.

Elections of New Officers

The 2022 Convention ushered in New Leadership based on the mandate of the Association's Constitution. The elections were chaired by Mr. B. Tarley Nyema, assisted by Mr. Abrom Cooper, Rev. Joseph Kpanie, and Rev. Dr. James Wilson. Those elected were:

- 1. Augustine Tatus – President
- 2. Ophelia Yarsiah – Vice President
- 3. Homa Allison - General Secretary
- 4. Jannie Bright – Treasurer
- 5. Elfreida Gueh - Financial Secretary
- 6. Elizabeth Bayan – Chaplin
- 7. Pamela Thomas - Parliamentarian

Convention 2023

The date and venue of the 2023 Annual Convention were approved by the ANC. The 2023 Annual Convention will be held in Columbia, the State of Maryland from August 11 – 13, 2023. The President will consult with the Executive Committee before appointing the chairperson for the 2023 Convention Planning Committee, who will later select the Committee's members.

Dinner Ball, Benefit, and Fundraising Events – Saturday, August 13, 2022

The Dinner Ball, Benefit, and Fundraising events were held at Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church. The events began with an opening prayer led by Fr. James N. Wilson, II. Fr. Wilson invoked God's blessings on the participants and asked God to bless the food that were about to be served for the nourishment of our bodies. Dr. Bliidi Stemn, Advisor to the President gave the welcome remarks. Dr. Stemn welcomed the participants and thanked them for sharing their time and families with CPHSAA-USA. The President's Advisor informed participants that this occasion marked the 23rd Anniversary of the founding of our Association and that "let us reflect on the journey, time and efforts that have been invested in this body". The President's Advisor also informed members to enjoy the occasion and thank God for the blessings that He has bestowed on the Association over the years.

Following the welcome, Mr. Homa Allison, General Secretary of the Association, lighted a Memorial Candle in memories of all departed members of the Association. Mr. Allison, prayed for the departed souls to rest in eternal peace and may light perpetual shine upon them.

Mrs. Ophelia Gibson Yarsiah, Chairlady of the Convention Planning Committee of CPHSAA-USA, Inc., introduced the Honorable Guest Speaker, Mayor Majovie Joe Bland, Mayor of the beautiful City of the Borough of East Lansdown, Pennsylvania, who graciously accepted our invitation to serve as our Guest Speaker.

Mayor Bland's Message

Mayor Bland, a renowned humanitarian, spoke on the Convention theme, "Reflecting On Our Past, Focusing On Our Future". Honorable Bland praised the Association for what it has done for their Alma Mater, the students of Cape Palmas High School, and the people of Maryland County. In addition, Honorable Bland called on the leadership and participants to continue to assist and support vulnerable students whose parents cannot afford to provide for them necessary education materials for school and to inspire others through our dedication and services. Mayor Bland emphasized that CPHSAA-USA should be the beacon of hope for the vulnerable in the humanitarian sector.

Furthermore, the honorable Mayor admonished participants to search for "economically acceptable ways to encourage and motivate members involvement and participation in achieving the goals and objectives of the Association. Honorable Bland finally thanked the Association for actions taken to enhance its support of services to students, faculty staff, and the people of Maryland County. He also advised the Association to do more. Honorable Bland later presented 50 Backpacks to the Association to benefit students of CPHS. In addition, Mayor Bland honored Dr. A. Senyon Tatus, Mrs. Ophelia Yarsiah, and Mrs. Helena Dennis with the City of East Lansdowne Humanitarian Service Award for their leadership, services, commitment and

dedication to the Association, students of Cape Palmas High School, and the people of Maryland County in Liberia.

On behalf of the Executive Committee and members of CPHSAA-USA, INC, the President, Dr. A. Senyon Tatus, thanked Mayor Bland for his kind gesture. The President assured Mayor Bland that the donated items will be sent to the school and that they will be used for the intended purpose.

Recognition Event

As a kind gesture of appreciation for their outstanding contributions and services to the growth and development of both Cape Palmas High School and the Alumni Association, some members of the Association were honored with a Meritorious Service Award. Before the Awards were handed out, the CPC honored President Tatus on behalf of the Association with a Plaque. On behalf of the Association, Senior Advisor, Mr. Abrom Cooper and President A. Senyon Tatus honored the following members:

1. Mr. Homa Allison
2. Dr. Blidi Stemn
3. Mrs. Ophelia Gibson-Yarsiah
4. Ms. Faith Lawrence
5. Fr. Dr. James N. Wilson
6. Mr. David Hne Erskine
7. Ms. Barbara Freeman
8. Mrs. Anna Barlee
9. Mrs. Susan Karto
10. Ms. Annie Sleweon

The Silent Auction and Men versus Women/Fundraising

The silent auction and Men Vs. Women/fundraising events were conducted by the Fundraising Committee, chaired by Ms. Faith Lawrence. These series of activities were the climax of the evening. They raised over \$2,725. The Silence Auction raised \$100.00 and the Men Vs. Women Rally raised \$2,100.00. In addition, we raised \$525 from donations from our stakeholders. We are very grateful to the Chairlady, Ms. Faith Lawrence and her Committee for the excellent job done. We also want to sincerely thank all participants who donated items for the Silent Auction. Members of the Fundraising Committee include:

Ms. Faith Lawrence – Chairlady
Ms. Pamela Thomas – Co-chair
Mrs. Laura Brewer
Mrs. Jackie Chea Tuttle
Mrs. Susan Collins Karto

Closing Remarks

In his closing remarks, the President of CPHSAA-USA, INC., Dr. A. Senyon Tatus expressed his gratitude to the 2022 Convention Planning Committee for successfully planning, organizing and implementing the program. Dr. Tatus also thanked the Guest Speaker, Honorable Majovie Bland for his inspirational speech and his services to the people of East Lansdowne, Pennsylvania and the United States of America. The President, on behalf of the Executive Committee and the

membership of CPHSSAA-USA, INC., thanked Mayor Bland for giving 50 Backpacks to the students of CPHS. Further, President Tatus thanked the Rev. Dr. Moses and Mother Helena Dennis, as well as the congregation of the Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church for their warm hospitality. President Tatus also lavished praises on the Installation Officer, Ms. Nee Allison for accepting and honoring CPHSAA-USA invitation. He also thanked Ms. Allison for the Proclamation issued on behalf of NAMCAL.

In addition, Dr. Tatus thanked the community members and stakeholders who attended the Dinner Ball in support of CPHSAA-USA programs and initiatives. Dr. Tatus further thanked the members of CPHSAA-USA for their turnout and participation in the 23rd Annual Convention. Finally, President Tatus solicited the active involvement of all the Alumni to foster collaborative growth and development of CPHSAA-USA. President Tatus called on the Executive Committee and members of the Association and said “let us give our flowers now to our pioneers and don’t wait until they are dead”.

The Dinner Ball, Benefit, and Fundraising Events were climaxed with a traditional Grebo dance led by Dr. Blidi Stemn. The dance featured “Dou See Dou Panaway, My Karlor Murning OO, Jerusama, etc.” Fr. James N. Wilson, II current Outreach Coordinator of the National Maryland County Association, USA, advised members to take the programs of the Association seriously because these programs benefit not only the students of CPHS, but also the people of Maryland County.

Dr. T. Edwin Freeman, former President of CPHSAA-USA, served as the Master of Ceremony (MC); Mr. Steven Allen Woods served as the Disc Jockey (DJ); and Mr. Diamond Hne served as the Photographer at the Dinner Ball, Benefit, and Fundraising Events. I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Freeman, Mr. Woods, and Mr. Hne for their extraordinary performances. They made the programs a great success. We are very grateful.

Farewell Cookout – Sunday, August 14, 2022

The Farewell Cookout was hosted by Mrs. Ruth Nyema George. On behalf of the President, Executive Committee, and the Convention Planning Team, I would like to sincerely thank Mrs. Ruth Georget for her outstanding and kind hospitality during the 23rd Annual Convention. CPHSAA-USA shall forever remain grateful to her.

23rd Annual Convention Financial Statement

The approved budget for the 23rd Annual Convention was originally \$3,500. The Planning Team later requested \$648 to increase the budget to purchase T-Shirts. It was justified that every member who paid their Convention and Registration Fees deserves a T-Shirts. Thus, \$4,148 was approved for the Convention by the Executive Committee. Below is the financial statement from the Convention operations. For breakdown and other details, please contact the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary.

My special thanks and appreciation to the CPC’s Financial Secretary, Mrs. Elfreida Gueh, for her dedication, commitments, efforts, and cooperation in receiving funds, contacting members and preparing the Financial Statement. Her Accountability and Transparency have echoed the President’s call for good record keeping and leadership.

The 23rd Annual National Convention Financial Statement

Revenue

Tickets & Convention Fees Membership Dues	\$5,200.00	
Men Vs. Women Rally	2,100.00	
Silent Auction/Fundraising	100.00	
Pepper Soup Sold	80.00	
Drinks Sold	100.00	
Donations	525.00	
Total Revenue		\$8,105.00

Expenditure

Hall Rental	\$350.00	
Food	1,400.00	
Silverware, Plates & Napkins	200.00	
Drinks	500.00	
Program, Flyers & Tickets	400.00	
Hall Decoration	150.00	
Music & DJ	350.00	
Church Gift	100.00	
T-Shirt	650.00	
Miscellaneous	541.00	
Total Expenditure		\$4,548.00

Net Income

\$3,557.00

Conclusion

The Convention Planning Committee would like to reiterate its gratitude to the President, Dr. A. Senyon Tatus, Executive Committee members, and the entire CPHSAA-USA membership for giving us the opportunity to serve the Association in this capacity. Special thanks to Mrs. Ruth Nyema George, Co-Chair and Host, and Mrs. Helena Collins-Dennis, Co-Host for their kind hospitality and leadership during the 23rd Annual Convention of CPHSAA-USA. I would be dismissed if I do not extend my sincere gratitude to the entire CPC members for their support, efforts, dedication, and commitment to the planning, organization, and implementation of the 23rd ANC. I am very proud of you all. We did it.

I look forward to seeing more Alumni in Columbia, Maryland for the 2023 CPHSAA-USA Annual National Convention.

Blessings to all.

Respectfully Submitted:

Ophelia Gibson-Yarsiah

Mrs. Ophelia Gibson-Yarsiah

Chair, 2022 Convention Planning Committee
CPHSAA-USA, INC.