



Friends of Sierra Leone

December 2024 Newsletter

Projects Report

by Jim Hanson

The projects committee has kept very busy since our annual meeting this summer. FoSL has funded five projects, totaling over \$8000, though November, with more expected to come in December.

You can see a full list of the projects funded this year on our FoSL website. We currently have \$22,900 in our projects budget.

In August, the Daphne Sawyer-Dunn Scholarship provided \$250 to the **Paul School for the Blind**, in Bo, helping needy students with uniforms, fees, and transportation.



Cross session of Students of Paul School

Inkundla Spaces, which showcases and promotes local artists through open-mic sessions in Freetown, was granted \$1500 to expand its work into the provinces.



Three health projects have been funded, two of them where Peace Corps Volunteers are working. The **Blama Community Health Centre**, in Kenema District, received \$1560 to repair a manual water pump and install an electric pump to provide the clinic with running water. In Kambia District, the **Tawuya Community Health Centre** received \$1050 to retrofit a cargo tricycle for use as a medical transport vehicle. And, the

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President's Address

by Michael Lee

What a great year it has been for Friends of Sierra Leone! We have funded 18 projects throughout Sierra Leone, ranging from school construction to providing solar lights to a remote health center. I cannot be prouder of this organization and its commitment to giving back to the country that we love. Most of the praise goes to you, the FoSL members, for your continued support, whether it be financially through donations or physically through your participation on committees or your attendance at our virtual talks. We are striving everyday to make your FoSL membership an experience!

We are proud that we can still say that 100% of all donations go directly to the projects we fund! This commitment is only made possible by the dedication of our FoSL board members and committee members for tirelessly devoting countless volunteer hours to make sure that our membership is up-to-date, that project applications are reviewed and voted on, and that our advocacy efforts are focused and highlight the needs of the ones we serve.

Looking to the future, we are ready to continue to serve the communities of Sierra Leone. We will continue to fund projects. We will continue to advocate for Peace Corps Sierra Leone. We will continue to highlight fellow organizations that are making huge impacts on the lives of Sierra Leoneans. We started new fundraising efforts this year, including an online FoSL store. However, we need to do more and we will. One of our goals this year is to increase our fundraising efforts so that we can serve more communities with the money we raise. We also plan to offer more ways for our members to be heard as well as ways to be hands-on with the communities we serve. The future is bright, but it starts with you. Please consider donating today! If you are able to donate your time as well, our committees are always looking for volunteers. If you have any interest, please reach out:

info@fosalone.org

 Thank you all again for your continued support and have a wonderful holiday season. See you in 2025!

Advocacy

by Marco Cavallaro

Stateside:

December 20 is the deadline for funding the Peace Corps in 2025, with several budgets currently being reviewed in Congress. In addition the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act is facing some challenges. Be on the lookout for opportunities to get involved and add your voice in support of the Peace Corps.

Salone:

We strive to support groups and individuals doing great work in Sierra Leone, and have hosted three Zoom meetings since the last newsletter. These FoSL Advocacy Connects are available on FoSL's website for anyone that missed these meetings and would like to learn more.

Kent Winchester shared about his work around the Chukudu wooden scooters and Solar Cooking Heat Retention Basket systems on September 15. These low-cost innovations directly address local needs such as creating income and saving time, as well as have a positive impact on the environment.



On October 13 **Tom Johnson** discussed **Africa Surgery** and the many successful life-changing surgeries he and his team have recently accomplished.



And **Joshua Poppel** from **Village Bicycle Project** spoke on November 17 providing insights around the workshops, projects and excellent results his organization is achieving in Salone, including a reduction in student absenteeism and increased GPAs of students who receive bicycles.



Be on the lookout in 2025 for more FoSL Zoom discussions highlighting others, who are also making a positive impact in Sierra Leone. We hope you join us!

Dear Friends of Sierra Leone!!

The Engineers Without Borders DC Chapter (EWB-DC) "Dumangbe Bridge Project" invites you to join our 2024 End of Year fundraising campaign. A partnership between EWB-DC and the community of Dumangbe, Sierra Leone (near Zimmi), the project seeks to construct a permanent, safe crossing of the Korgorgi Stream which runs through the community and limits access to education, medical care, and economic opportunities. This is especially true in the rainy season when the stream waters can raise several meters, spread 100 m or more in width, and often damage the existing stick bridge. During these times, the community and villages beyond is isolated and the unsafe crossing can lead to drowning. A safe, permanent crossing would not only improve access to critical services, but also increase incomes via better access to markets for the communities beyond Dumangbe in the Pujehun District.



The Dumangbe Bridge Project is currently fundraising for final construction of a culvert bridge. Our End-of-Year Fundraising goal is \$25,000. Reaching this goal will bring us one step closer to providing a safe and reliable connection that will transform the daily lives of Dumangbe's residents. Additionally, a generous member of our EWB-DC community has pledged to match every donation up to \$5,000 through the end of December.

For more information and to make a donation, please visit fosalone.org/donate, select the Sierra Leone Project to donate. Engineers Without Borders - USA (EWB-USA) is a non-profit dedicated to addressing unequal access to infrastructure by connecting volunteers with engineering expertise with communities in need worldwide. Every dollar donated goes directly to supporting the Dumangbe Bridge Project. Your support is greatly appreciated and will make a significant difference in the lives of the people of Dumangbe and surrounding areas.

Please reach out to info@fosalone.org with any questions or interest in the project.

T. Skee Nordmark (SLPCV 1976 to 1978)

YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS HAVE FUNDED NUMEROUS FOSL SMALL GRANT PROJECTS

Past Projects Funded:
fosalone.org/projects

Donate:
fosalone.org/donate

(Projects - continued from page 1)

Bangor Masanga Partnership was granted \$4000 for the purchase of a portable anesthesia machine for use at Masanga Hospital. This device is designed for use in low resource locations, and a North Wales hospital charity will provide training for the Masanga staff.

The **Mamaka Agriculture Project** has received \$25,450 from private, earmarked funds, to expand its operations. The project's 135 farmers are expected to harvest about 120 metric tons of rice next year. With this in mind, work is beginning on a new rice and cassava processing facility, which will be powered completely by solar energy, the first of its kind in Sierra Leone. A beekeeping program will also be added, providing 10 farmers with hives, equipment, and training.

I would like to thank all of our donors for their loyal support. All of your money, with the exception of banking fees, goes directly to projects in Sierra Leone. As word spreads about our small grants program, more and more local communities are looking to FoSL for help, and we are happy to provide it. Your donations are providing a better future for people in these otherwise overlooked communities. My thanks, also, to our committee members, who do the work to make all of this possible.



United Islamic JSS in Modema, Kenema District, funded in April.



FoSL supported projects

FoSL Annual Meetings

2025 - Zoom

2026 - Freetown

SAVE THE DATE! We will host a virtual annual meeting in 2025 on Saturday, May 3rd via Zoom! Additionally, the 2026 FoSL Annual Meeting will be on May 1st to May 3rd 2026 in Sierra Leone.

Here is a Google Form to complete, if you are interested in attending our 2025 virtual annual meeting and/or our 2026 annual meeting in Sierra Leone: <https://forms.gle/LdykYVwrPTo6rLTh6>

More details on these upcoming annual meetings to come! Any questions, please reach out by email: Info@fosalone.org

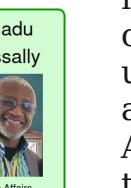
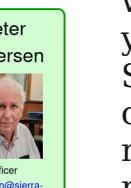
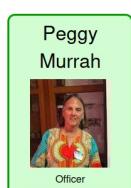
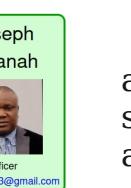
How can you help?

Friends of Sierra Leone runs on the work of volunteers. Whether it's working on a committee or participating as a board member, there are lots of opportunities to help Friends of Sierra Leone and to continue your service for the people of Sierra Leone. We are always looking for **volunteers!** Are you interested in **education**, maybe you have a background in education? If so, we need your help our education committee. Do you like the work we do with **projects** and want to be a part of the decision making process? Do you like our recent efforts regarding **advocacy** and feel that you could be an asset to the committee? Maybe your specialty is **organizing events** and your leadership would be vital on our annual meeting committee. Maybe you want to help build our organization's **membership** and have ideas for ways we

can promote our organization amongst fellow Salone RPCVs. Maybe your background is in **fundraising** or you have ideas for friends of Sierra Leone on ways to bring in more money for projects that help multitudes of communities throughout Sierra Leone. If any of these opportunities interest you or you would like to learn more please reach out to info@fosalone.org.

Remember there are also current **Peace Corps Sierra Leone positions available** either for yourself or for people in your lives. Just advertising these positions to groups and individuals is another way you can support Peace Corps Sierra Leone and the values of this organization. Visit <https://www.peacecorps.gov/ways-to-serve/service-assignments/browse-opportunities/peace-corps-volunteer/#results>

FoSL Board This could be you!

 <p>Michael Lee President president@fosalone.org</p>	 <p>Aiah Fanday Vice President vicePres@fosalone.org</p>	 <p>Patty Bruzek Secretary secretary@fosalone.org</p>	 <p>Mark Hager Treasurer treasurer@fosalone.org</p>	 <p>Amadu Massally Public Affairs amadu@fosalone.org</p>
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 <p>Marco Cavallaro Officer marco@fosalone.org</p>	 <p>Hannah Benga Membership Chair membership@fosalone.org</p>	 <p>Jim Hanson Projects Chair projects@fosalone.org</p>	 <p>Jamie Brown Website webmaster@fosalone.org</p>	

And lastly, doing your part to promote Friends of Sierra Leone and our **project grant application** is another way you can help serve this volunteer-based organization. Like us on Facebook, follow us on Instagram and X. Share our posts and engage in our virtual community. Attend our monthly Zoom talks on topics that are relevant to Sierra Leone and the work that organizations are doing there. If you have communications with those in Sierra Leone, share our project grant opportunities with them, so that we get more applicants for projects that are needed.

The future of our organization relies on all of us and our commitment to serving sweet Mama Salone! Thank you, as always, for your continued support!

Check the date on your mailing label or subject line. Is it time to renew? If there is no date, or if the date is some time in the past, it's time to renew! Fill out and mail the form below with your check.

**Or renew through our website:
<https://fosalone.org/mbrship/>**

FRIENDS OF SIERRA LEONE MEMBERSHIP FORM	
Name (include maiden) _____	FoSL needs your participation. Circle your areas of interest:
Address _____	Advocacy
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	Education
Home Phone _____ Email _____	Membership
Day Phone _____ Occupation _____	Newsletter/ Communications
Relationship to SL (e.g., Sierra Leonean, PC, etc.) _____	Projects
Sierra Leone Home _____ Years _____ to _____	Events
Membership: \$25 per Individual \$ _____	Would you be willing to be part of a network to receive information and contact your members of Congress at important times? (Please include your email address.)
Donation to Projects: \$ _____	Yes
FoSL Circle \$1000 and up	
Supporter \$500 to \$999	
Sponsor \$100 to \$499	
Friend \$50 - \$99	
Overseas Mail (add \$10) \$ _____	
Total Remitted \$ _____	
Membership dues support operations for Friends of Sierra Leone, including meetings, newsletters, and the website. All other donations support FoSL projects in Sierra Leone.	
Dues and other contributions to Friends of Sierra Leone are fully tax-deductible.	
Thank you for your support! Please return this form with your check made payable to Friends of Sierra Leone to the address at the right. →	
PO Box 15875 Washington, DC 20003-0875	

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