Sarah Hagan – Senase Project

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A recent WKU graduate is making a huge difference to children in a remote farming village in Ghana. In this week’s View from the Hill, Amy Bingham shows us how Sarah Hagan’s Semester at Sea has changed many more lives than just her own.

Twelve countries in four months, Semester at Sea is an amazing opportunity to see the world. But it was an excursion in Ghana in 2010 that captured the heart of a WKU student and five others.

“While I was on the ship I met five students who said they were going to go to a village and visit a school where no semester at sea students have been to before.”

Sarah Hagan made a last minute decision on how to spend her time when the Semester at Sea ship docked in Ghana.

“I said that’s exactly what I want to do.. I want to go off the beaten path and engage people.”

This is what they found in the African village of Akatim located more than nine hours from the ship.

“The school we were looking at reminded me more of a fort that me, my brother and sister would build when we were kids.”

“The government had just forgot about them.”

And the students, well their faces said it all.

“They didn’t have light in their eyes like you are used to seeing in children, they just sat there very reserved and quiet, their eyes were empty.”

Hagan and the other students immediately went to work.

“We started conversing with Ghanaian government. We said we are American students, we’ve seen the school and its conditions.”

Once back on the ship, the group established a non profit organization to help.

“None of us had ever started a non profit. I think we were all so driven and so angry at what we saw.”

Now the efforts in Akatim are paying off, just a few months ago, the group received a picture of a brand new school building the government built.

“I couldn’t imagine those children’s faces realizing people care enough about them to fight for them.”

The non-profit organization is called The Senase Project named for a village near Akatim. The school building is just the beginning. Supplies, uniforms and a teacher education program are planned for the village. Find out how you can contribute to the cause by logging on to the senase project dot org. With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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