

Dear Jim,

I was born and raised in Sierra Leone. Born in Kailahun in Eastern Sierra Leone, I moved with my family and parents to Kabala in the North where I started my early Primary or Elementary education and later went on to Magburaka in the Upper Northern township, where I completed my Elementary School. I left my parents at a young age of 10 and bravely traveled to the Southern Head district of Bo, where I started my High School. As a student in an all-boys boarding school, (The Bo Government Secondary School) I rose to the position of a School Prefect of Education. I was also part of his School's Drama Group where I acted the hilarious but didactic short play 'Bombastic Johnson', and was part of the Play 'Our Husband has gone Mad Again'. I was a pioneer and columnist for the 'Satellite Press' box in my school, where I wrote about social issues about life in my boarding school, spiced with drawings and cartoons. At such tender age, I have begun my life long quest to end violence. The Civil war in Sierra Leone resulted in the separation of about 12,000 children from their families, boys and girls as young as seven were kidnapped and forced to become soldiers. I fled to neighboring Guinea where I taught English and literature to displaced children and refugees. There I joined the Campaign for Good Governance Democracy and Human Rights programs, helping in the production of a range of advocacy materials for peace-building and the restoration of democracy in Sierra Leone. I was also a member and 'Cultural Officer of the world Peace Prayer Society Sierra Leone working closely with Friends Teddy Foday Musa and Bockarie Enssah in the peace movement in the late 1990s. He also served as Board Secretary for Defense for Children International in Sierra Leone in the early 2000's and previously served as volunteer with the Peace Child project and Peace Links in Sierra Leone in the use of online interaction for peace initiative building.

Life Story as an Adult

Andrew decided to dedicate his life to serving and teaching children who were brutalized by the violence all around them. He was Secretary General of my college's Student Union between 1996-1998. He graduated from Fourah Bay College University of Sierra Leone in 1998 with concentrations in English Civil Law and International Relations. During his college years, Greene's writings were frequently featured by the BBC in which he talked about 'Freedom of Movement Under the new civilian government'. The rewards and financial compensation of his writing efforts by the BBC were used to tackle the challenges at 'Mount Aureal'. Here is one of his favourite quotes in his short talk writing contracts to the BBC read by BBC Producer Tom Porteous: "On a sunny afternoon a couple of days ago, I decided to follow a group of pedestrians who were walking along the once prohibited route leading to the 'State House' here in the heart of Freetown. I felt a

great sense of relief when I discovered that this route is now accessible to the general public. But the faces of some of the people I walk along with, seem to reflect the recent past, prior to the dawn of democracy when it was an offence for any unauthorized persons to ply this route. Even my feet felt heavy as if huge bags of sand were tied around my legs, or someone was yelling at me, or trying to shove a gun at me or maybe kick me with heavy boots. But the sentries that used to guide the route with menacing looks are no longer there. As people began to laugh and speak with chirpy voices, this showed me that, 'Freedom of Movement is here, and this is a good symbol of democracy. But what about freedom movement throughout my entire country? I felt that this will soon be achieved now that the RUF have declared a cease fire. I want Sierra Leoneans to be able to move freely all over the country in the way civilians and I felt when we peacefully strolled along the route, leading to 'States House' here in the heart of Freetown.”

Since 1999, he joined the non-profit International Educational programs that enable young people to use the Internet and other new technologies to engage in collaborative educational projects. He served as a volunteer educator in Sierra Leone Projects for many years, where he worked tirelessly to locate resources so that children can communicate with others throughout the world. 'We are proud of our accomplishments so far', he once said, ...'but remain in dire need of financial support to strengthen our programmatic activities, train our youth, and give them a voice through the power of the Internet.' At a BBC Interview by Tracy Logan 'Go Digital Technology' in UK, he reflected on the 'cathartic effect' of young people using technology in post conflict Sierra Leone. He was also featured by Tele-Quebec Canada on a TV series that was showcased around the world.

He is now the founder and CEO of B-Gifted Foundation www.bgiftedfoundation.cfsites.org that was named in honour of my 10+ years work as a volunteer educator and human rights activist in Sierra Leone and around the world.

Andrew has an elder brother Anthony and two elder sisters Margaret and Cecilia, putting him as the last of four. His father, a retired civil servant, has been battling with illness and flown to the UK with his Mum. His mother has been a primary school teacher for over 30 years and has also retired. Both were inspiration to Andrew.

“I am Christian and in that faith has carried me through my selfless service to humanity, and in the face of many challenges and sometimes hate and spite, I am confident in God's protection and benevolence that was shown through his son Jesus Christ and his wonderful examples on earth. I look upon Him for salvation and mercy.”

Jim, I am pleased to have you shed your light of hope in this dark world
and continue in your love and kindness to the people of Sierra Leone
as shown through the examples you have given in your peace mission
warm wishes and peace,
Andy

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