

A Foundation of Dreams Grows

Gregory Scott Reid sets the bar for Foundation support

By Robert Valenzia

"Giving is the first sign of real success," says Lee Beard of the Wake Up . . . Live team. "Chances are that many people were generous in the creation of your success, so it is both natural and important that you give back to humanity."

"That's the charge Steven E. and Lee gave us, and it was more than enough to get us started on a great project," said the Wake Up . . . Live Foundation director Vicki Jo Stevens. An educator with over ten years' experience in religious education and administration, Vicki's charge is to find a focus for the Foundation's charitable activities.

The Foundation was introduced to the Wake Up family at the first "Balanced Lifestyle" seminar held in Costa Mesa, Cal., in February of 2005. Vicki told the 900 attendees, "I've been into the inner city and into the hardcore poverty areas of Appalachia," she said, "But there was one place that immediately came to mind. Today, it seems especially appropriate that entrepreneurs from

developed countries all over the world would want to look here for a place to help."

"Here" was Sierra Leone, a coastal nation on Africa's Atlantic shore. Recent surveys have identified Sierra Leone as the poorest nation on earth. Out of 174 impoverished countries, Sierra Leone is ranked 174 – last and poorest. Unlike the victims of natural disaster, such as the tsunami that struck near Sri Lanka in December, the

people of Sierra Leone go unnoticed and, too often, unaided. Vicki has just returned from her second trip to the war-ravaged country.

She was struck by the fact that,

instead of giving up, the people are coming back from the deepest kind of poverty with the only tools available: hope and hard work. There are thousands of amputees left by fighting and land mines; childhood mortality is common as untreated water is often a vehicle for parasites and diseases which lead to dehydration, illness and death among the weakest. Still, the people of Sierra Leone refuse to give in.



"These people (she points to a photograph of laborers pushing a small truckload of lumber through the streets of Freetown) need things that seem even smaller to us: water, basic education, the tools to build. They inspire you with their optimism and their hard work." In an impromptu response to her appeal for a clean water treatment facility, \$400 was raised by passing a basket around the room at the Costa Mesa Hilton.

The result was better support for a team who visited in Taiama, a remote village in Sierra Leone. They instructed local residents in the operation and maintenance of a water purification system. Only weeks after Vicki and the team left, word was received that a cholera epidemic has swept the country. Taiama recorded one of lowest incidences of the disease in the entire nation thanks, in part, to the encouragement of the Wake Up Foundation.

When he heard the story in September, 2005, Gregory Scott Reid contributed \$1,000 to the Foundation. Others contributed, as well, and the Wake Up family has again moved to help the poorest among us.

For his leadership and his caring, the Foundation is announcing in this article that Gregory Scott Reid, author of *The Millionaire Mentors* has been named the first Foundation Fellow.

If you are interested in supporting the Foundation's work, please contact Vicki through her website at Vicki@wakeuplive.com. Contributions are tax deductible, and the Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation associated with the Heritage Foundation.

"This is the tip of the iceberg," said Steven E, co-creator of the *Wake Up . . . Live the Life You Love* series. "The people we're associated with are success-oriented, and that means that they appreciate the needs of others. We are going to share success with the whole world, and this is our starting place." ■



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