

October 2012

Ghana's Schools - Stephen Botchey

Dear Friends,

This article is about Stephen Botchey, a 21 year old man that I know as one of the success stories to come out of the Akrampa Mission School! Stephen finished school in 2005, and completed junior high school in



2008. But he did not pass the final exam to receive his Basic Examination Certificate, and therefore was not able to be admitted to high school. For two years Stephen stayed at home doing menial jobs and engaging in farming, on a small scale. According to Stephen, he cultivated mainly vegetables which he sold at the nearby market, but this did not satisfy his aspirations.

Stephen felt that a vocation would enhance not only his image in the village but also his overall prospects in life. In 2010, his family agreed to his plans to learn a trade and an agreement was made with a Master Mechanic for Stephen to be taken on as an apprentice. One of Stephen's brothers, who lives in the neighboring state of Ivory Coast, came back to represent the family when Stephen was committed into the care of James, the Master Mechanic. James is a local specialist in fixing Japanese and Korean vehicles. Normally an apprenticeship of this nature spans a period of three years. Stephen would first be taught general vehicle maintenance and then will progress to specialize in the Japanese and Korean vehicles like James does. Stephen has already done some minor repair work on my Jeep!

Stephen currently lives with some of his relatives near James's garage. Stephen works six days a week, for 10 hours a day, excluding a one hour daily lunch break, and a day off to attend church with his family. Stephen's apprenticeship will end in 2013 and he will have the choice to work for his teacher, James, or to move on and set up his own roadside garage for fixing vehicles. (More photos on the Ghana bulletin board.)

Blessings, Pastor Ben