

New Year, New Clinic

Volume 6

Winter Travel Team

January 1st - 3rd



KNUST-EWB and ISU-EWB together for a group photo.

Issue VI Updates

- Assembling the school garden irrigation system
- Soccer Victory
- Soaking in the Ullo culture



The clinic team, Joe, Libby and Matt D, after erecting the sign marking the future site of the Ullo health clinic named in honor of Ullo Naa, the paramount chief of Ullo who hosted our EWB-ISU travel teams from 2014 to 2020.

Saturday, January 1st

Joseph Kim Industrial Engineering

For the start of 2022, it was a pretty normal day other than being to yell down the street “Yompala!” (which means “Happy New Year” in Dhagari). In the morning, we were all hanging out around the house, doing laundry, and just easing ourselves into the New Year. However, since we only had a few more days left in Ullo and a couple of small tasks to complete, we weren't able to relax for terribly long, so after a delicious lunch of a tomato stew with rice and black-eyed peas, we set out to work a bit on the clinic and rainwater catchment projects. For the clinic project, we wanted to hang bottles off of the metal stakes we used to show where the clinic would be located so that they were more visible and people would be less likely to get hurt. Although there were a few dozen stakes to cover, the amount means nothing when there is a herd of kids with Agape (one of the most helpful kids here who is also fluent in English) leading the way. On the rainwater catchment side of things, we just had to finish putting up a fence with chicken and binding wires. Again, with the help of a gaggle of kids, Paul, Justine, and a couple of others, we made considerable progress on each project.

Along with the project work, the real highlights came with all of the sports-related stuff that we could do. On the walk from the clinic site to rainwater catchment, we scheduled our football (soccer) match for Monday at 4 PM; this was also when all of the trash talk started. It was very entertaining to watch even some of the more reserved kids (cough cough Agape cough cough) start the trash talk, too. Despite this rivalry, we were all able to push that aside later that night to watch the Cyclones play the Baylor Bears in one of the biggest matches of the year. Despite the outcome (we played well, just gotta do better than shoot 1/14 from 3), it was very fun to share some of Iowa with them all the way from Ullo.

I will say, although it has been very different from previous trips by staying in a pretty technologically advanced house (we have WiFi, running water, and plenty of outlets), one of the best parts has been being able to share our culture with them by showing them pictures, videos, and other things just to share slices of our own lives just like how they’ve been opening up to us about theirs. We were also able to watch some of the Bowl Games (NCAA Football) and share that with them, too. Overall, we all really enjoyed our New Year’s Days and definitely started it off on the right foot.



Sunday, January 2nd

Jennifer Culver
Biological Systems Engineering

Some of us went to Mass in the morning, the rest of us went to Jirapa for a few last minute things. At the end of Mass, Paul gave an announcement to the congregation about how the team would be leaving this upcoming week. In English, he told us that the entire parish would be praying for us and wishing us well on our travels back to the United States. In Jirapa we got some groceries for the last few days and got to walk around the market as well.

In the afternoon we dug holes for the posts to make the fence around the tanks at the school. Watching Justin tear through tree roots to make a hole for a post was one of the most masculine things I've seen the entire trip. Seeing the final parts of the implementation project come together made it feel like our work here was just about done (but only for now).

At night we got our game plan set for the soccer game that's taking place on Monday at 4. After that we went outside and passed the ball around in preparation for the big game. The evening also included a women's group who danced with us. After they left a group of us watched the stars on Joe's sleeping mat- I'm pretty sure the record was 5 people on the mat at the same time. As this was going on Paul was completely entranced by Wu Tang on the projector.



Monday, January 3rd

Mary Okkema
Civil Engineering

Today, on January 3rd, 2022, history was made. At 4 PM (Ghana time), EWB played soccer against the Uilo children. In all seven years that we have been volunteering in Uilo, we have never scored a goal. The last travel team lost their match 0-7. This year was different.

Our team consisted of mostly novice players with a few more advanced players sprinkled in. Most of our players' skills were developed at practice last night. The Uilo team consisted of nine skilled 11-year-olds.

However, some of the kids looked like 11-year-olds on steroids.

The game was super intense. It consisted of Joe running all over the field, Jenn making amazing saves, Rebecca and Libby being star defenders, George breaking ankles with the slide tackles, and Matt B using his head (quite literally). Surprisingly enough, we were able to spend a decent amount of time in front of their goal with multiple opportunities to score. We ended up sealing the deal with a header into the goal assisted by Joe. It was possibly the most amazing moment of the whole trip. Anyways, one can say we are the best prepared and most well informed travel team.
