

NEWLIBERIAN.COM LAUNCHES JOURNALIST BOOK DRIVE

Non-profit media organizations call on newsrooms to donate spare books to help indigenous reporters hone their craft.

November 16, 2009. (St. Paul, Minn) NewLiberian.com and The Niapele Project are calling on American newsrooms to donate spare books and magazines for a "Journalists' Book Drive" to benefit reporters in Liberia.

A major challenge for journalists in post-conflict nations is that examples of great writing aren't available. Even those books that do show up in bookstores are far outside what the average African journalist can afford. As a result, local reporters have trouble keeping up with contemporary conventions and trends, further encouraging a cycle in which indigenous reportage is edged out by Western-educated foreign correspondents.

"Books are very expensive in Liberia and some reporters can't even afford a day's meal, let alone buy journalism books," NewLiberian.com editor Semantics King Jr. says. "Therefore, books will really be an added advantage to many Liberian journalists who did not get the opportunity to study journalism at all in college."

This holiday season, NewLiberian.com is asking for the following donations:

1. **Spare journalism texts:** From ethics manuals to AP stylebooks, anything that would serve as a text for reporters looking to hone their craft.
2. **Examples of great journalism:** Whether this is your press club's annual Best Writing compendium or the review copy of the latest Eric Schlosser or Naomi Klein.
3. **Any text related to developing world or African issues.**
4. **News magazines** from the last three months. (Since it may take several weeks or months for this shipment to reach Liberia, anything older would be too outdated by the time it gets there.)

Books may be mailed to (please get them in the mail by Dec. 31):

Dave Maass
San Diego CityBeat
3047 University Ave., Suite 202
San Diego, CA 92104

"Books on journalism will be a great help to Liberian journalists especially now that Liberia is mending its broken pieces," King says. "If democracy is to thrive in Liberia, it will largely depend on how professional Liberian journalists can be, and this will depend on how knowledgeable they become of the basics of the profession."

All donations will be distributed to indigenous journalists and bloggers in Liberia with the help of Ceasefire Liberia and Journalists for Human Rights.

NewLiberian.com is a non-profit human-rights news site incorporated in Minnesota. Founded by Liberian journalist-in-exile and World Press Institute fellow Semantics King Jr and alternative newsweekly reporter Dave Maass, the site is a spin-off of The Vision, a newspaper originally serving the Buduburam refugee camp in Ghana. In 2009, NewLiberian.com signed a partnership with The Niapele Project, a US-based non-governmental organization that empowers vulnerable children through the development of community-based initiatives in Liberia.

For more information visit newliberian.com and theniapeleproject.org.

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