

Fair Trade Recycling to Share "Student Ambassador" Report

Four New Internships in USA and Ghana, Africa, Demonstrate Novel Reuse Program for "E-waste" Trade

Ghana -- Free-Press-Release.com -- Sep 04, 2017 -- [Middlebury, Vermont] Four interns based in Vermont and Tamale, Ghana, worked during the summer to demonstrate Fair Trade Recycling's "Student Ambassador" Program. A new report shows the benefits of cooperative partnerships between USA Recyclers and Africa's Tech Sector.

The interns from Middlebury College, University of Florida, and Wentworth Institute focused primarily on "flat screen" (LCD and LED) television reuse. Two students worked in the USA, dismantling the TVs and testing parts, while designing a new online distribution system. These were tested with USA "DIY" markets and USA based TV repairs, with 98% success. The intern from Wentworth Institute (Morgan Whittemore) continues to do cross-section data analysis on the parts and screens to improve inventory systems and supply chain efficiency.

Meanwhile, in Tamale, Ghana, two interns (Middlebury College and University of Florida) completed a 6 week apprenticeship under African Tech Sector entrepreneurs. The interns were in the role of learning expertise which Africa already has - replacing capacitors, power supplies, and other board level repairs. Because of the high cost of ordering replacement parts from manufacturers, most Tech Sector use "scavenger opportunities" to re-purpose parts from older units, often taking two "broken" sets to make one working set.

One of the aftermarkets studied by the interns was a repurposing of working backlights and lamps. Normally discarded in the USA as "hazardous waste", the interns documented ingenious ways African technicians retain added working value from the lamps, and demonstrated the techniques on their return to the USA. Tool kits were provided to the two USA interns by IFIXIT.org

In autumn, Middlebury Collage and Post Landfill Action Network will review the findings from report and provide a classroom analysis of how to use "social entrepreneurship" to increase these fair trade recycling opportunities, and address ways to lower barriers to supplying working parts from flat screen TVs to Africa's Tech Sector, and incorporating solar panels to power some of the novel reuse methods demonstrated by Ghana's "savvy geeks".

At a minimum, the project successfully demonstrates an alternative to "boycotts" and "poverty porn" e-waste directives which have led to impugment, racial profiling, and even imprisonment of Africa's Tech Sector repairmen.

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