

Maggie Josiah

Jan. 2009



## A New Year for AHI



The African Hospitality Institute is officially a public charity under 501(c)(3) recognized by the IRS. We celebrated with a local chicken and sodas for all. AHI is blessed with a great Board that was able to fast track this process. We thank God for his continued favor.

At the beginning of the year we were also blessed with a visit from FAHI: Chad and Becky Dale with Jason and Jenny Jost. They arrived at the same time Wayland and Courtney, also from the Seattle area, were providing our staff with a one week intensive computer lab. Chad and Becky taught business basics, Jenny, a Physical Therapist, taught ideas on how to protect your back and Jason, a Counselor and graduate from Mars Hill Graduate program in Seattle, was especially helpful for me to sort through many issues that needed to be addressed.



Having 2 of our young girls become pregnant was a serious wake up call for all of us, forcing us to look deep into the heart of AHI and confront the unspoken secrets and resentments hidden away. It's not easy to be a community. It's even more difficult to be a mixed community of different tribes and cultures – and to always be on 'display' for our guests.

Last year was a blur of activity, confusion and change. Much was accomplished with the opening of the school, forming our own non-profit and caring for many visitors. Unfortunately, many foundational thoughts and practices were forced to be ignored. At the end of the year, all of us here on the field suffered from an identity crisis – Who is AHI and why are we here working so hard.

The Dales and Josts helped to identify this confusion. I am very grateful. As a staff we have now spent the last few weeks re-focusing on the mission and vision of AHI; as well as the values that formed the foundation of this organization. I have had to take the role of teacher, one I am not very comfortable with, especially when I looked into the pained faces of staff, wondering if they were understood anything I was sharing. BUT GOD .... One day last week it was like a light turned on, their faces reflected an eager anticipation. Staff would come up to me after a class and say that they felt as if they were waking up from a long slumber – as if they had been sleep walking through life and only now were beginning to feel alive. Others would pull me aside and tell me that if no one else was being helped with these teaching, they felt their life was changing dramatically from an understanding of values. Many wished I had had time to teach all this last year, that we would have avoided so many problems. I just keep hearing my Lord say how he came to give sight to the blind, to set the captives free, to give us life abundant. I am humbled again at how he allows this very overwhelmed and frightened woman to partner with him.

