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Meet a Scientologist—Tim Bowles, Idealism in Action

As you read this page, untold millions on five continents are attempting to scratch out a subsistence living, many unsuccessfully, deprived of their basic human rights.

A trip to Africa in 2005 changed Tim Bowles' life.

"When I arrived in Ghana, it was like coming home," he says. "I knew I had to do something to help."

Bowles, an attorney specializing in constitutional law, was in Africa to assist with the Youth for Human Rights International World Tour. Decades of gruesome civil wars have decimated wide regions of sub-Saharan Africa. Of the worst 20 countries in the 2004 Human Development Index, 19 are in Africa.

The wars dismantled the infrastructure, displaced entire villages, and destroyed livelihoods. The result: Widespread poverty and disease.

Bowles was so taken with the youth he met in Africa, and so moved by what they had been through, that he decided to take on the challenge personally.

Dedicated to making a real difference, Bowles returned to the continent the following year to launch a unique initiative. In coordination with a corps of young human rights activists he met there in 2005, each eager to bring about reform in his or her country, he developed the African Human Rights Leadership Campaign, under the banner of Youth for Human Rights. The Campaign has grown to provide young African men and women the training and experience they need to play key roles in creating and sustaining just and prosperous societies over the coming crucial decades.

In friendly competition with each other, teams of high school students generate and conduct public awareness campaigns on human rights abuses they select, based on the articles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including human trafficking, access to justice and government corruption. They first learn leadership, organizational and communication skills—including public speaking and videography—to present their points of view effectively. In the course of conducting their campaigns through contact with media, a broad range of public and private sector leaders and the general public, the program enables students to become meaningful participants in their respective nation's social, political and cultural advancement.

"The many remarkably bright young people with whom I have worked since 2005 are determined not to fall into the patterns of hatred to which many of their elders succumbed," says Bowles.

Over the past six years, Bowles and his team of Youth for Human Rights program directors in Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone—and more recently Togo and Ethiopia—have trained nearly 700 youth in more than 150 schools, formed over 300 local human rights groups, and educated some 15,000 high school and junior high school students on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and their own responsibility in seeing that these rights are honored.

Bowles' original decision to enter law followed a trip to India in 1973 where he first confronted the plight of the millions who live in poverty, deprived of human rights. He studied and practiced constitutional law to ensure the rights of others, including his church, were protected.

"I saw law as a helping profession," says Bowles, "one that would provide knowledge and skills to help improve social conditions and advance worthy causes."

The African Human Rights Leadership Campaign brings him full circle with this original purpose, as it is a means to improve the lives of millions. By empowering this and future generations with an understanding of their rights and responsibilities, the Campaign seeks to bring peace and prosperity in regions torn by hatred.

In the video *From the Ruins: African Human Rights Leadership*, Boersen Hinneh, Youth for Human Rights program director for Liberia, expresses the core concept of the program: "It's about teaching young people about their basic human rights and responsibilities. And that is the key issue—responsibility. When young people have been exposed to so much violence I think there is a need that they learn their basic rights and *responsibilities* so that when they get older they will know how to treat their fellow citizens, their fellow man, equally."

A Scientologist since 1975, Bowles says Scientology has enabled him to envision and pursue this purpose.

"I have gained the ability and willingness to confront and deal effectively with enormous challenges," he says. "It has helped me conceive of doing seemingly impossible things and actually do them. Scientology, by its philosophical foundations, its tools, and the examples it sets through members' actions, is an inspiration, a support and a means to my achieving my role in civilization's advance."

To learn more about what Scientologists are doing to create a better world, watch "Meet a Scientologist" videos at www.Scientology.org.

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The popular "Meet a Scientologist" profiles on the Church of Scientology International Video Channel at Scientology.org now total more than 200

broadcast-quality documentary videos featuring Scientologists from diverse locations and walks of life. The personal stories are told by Scientologists who are educators, teenagers, skydivers, a golf instructor, a hip-hop dancer, IT manager, stunt pilot, mothers, fathers, dentists, photographers, actors, musicians, fashion designers, engineers, students, business owners and more.

A digital pioneer and leader in the online religious community, in April 2008 the Church of Scientology became the first major religion to launch its own official YouTube Video Channel, which has now been viewed by millions of visitors.



Scientologist and founder and director of the African Human Rights Leadership Campaign, Tim Bowles



Scientologist Tim Bowles in 2008 with Emmanuel, an HIV-positive child at the Hardt Haven Home in Kpando, Ghana.



Young women from an Accra high school who participated in the Africa Human Rights Leadership Campaign, 2007.



Scientologist Tim Bowles at the 2008 inauguration of the Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone.