

PROPOSAL FOR CEDRELA COLLEGE
A CHRISTIAN PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOL IN AJEGUNLE, OLODI APAPA, LAGOS, NIGERIA
Submitted by Dr. William and Victoria Udotong

THE STORY- A Journey to impact High School Teenagers!

Many have been asking about Victoria. Here is the story. After I resigned as a faculty member at WATS, the Lord began to lay a new vision to do ministry with High School level students in Nigeria. Victoria and I have always had a great passion to impact and influence young people with the unchanging power of the gospel using education as a tool.

It has been a struggle bringing this dream to fulfillment, but we are now seeing its fulfillment through the establishment of a high School known as Cedrela College. In Nigeria the term “College” most often refers to a High School. Cedrela College is unique because the Lord impressed us to start a high school in an area of Lagos where education at this level is a dire need. The city of Ajegunle in OloDI Apapa is an interesting city because of its association with negative societal vices. Ajegunle is often described as the largest slum neighborhood in Nigeria and Africa, although the OloDI area has seen some improvement in recent time. Even so, this part of Lagos is still characterized by increased vices such as violence, crowded accommodation, drug abuse, alcohol, and sexual immorality.

This is the physical environment of the school.

Ajegunle area has a high concentration of out-of-school children at the Primary and high school levels. The UNICEF statistics on



education worldwide states that Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children on the African continent. According to UNESCO, “One in every five of the world’s out-of-school children is from Nigeria”. This is a need that demands urgent attention from individuals since the government alone cannot meet this need. This is where God has called Victoria, my wife and me to establish Cedrela College, a high school that could become an instrument in meeting the educational and spiritual needs of these young teens. I agree with the statement of UNICEF in Nigeria, “All children, no matter where they live or what their circumstances, have the right to quality education.” (<https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/education>)

Victoria and I have a goal to provide not just quality education for these children, but education that is based and focused on a Christian worldview. We believe this is what these young people need in order to be emancipated from spiritual bondage and ignorance. We believe that education packaged in a Christian worldview would be a powerful instrument to bring about true-life transformation for

these children, their families and the community. Our philosophy and pedagogy of education is intentionally planned for the wholistic development of these youths so that they would be motivated and molded towards godliness, usefulness and positive leadership impact in the society at large.

ABOUT CEDRELA COLLEGE



Cedrela college is a Christian private High school established in September 2019 to impact and influence in order to make a difference in the lives of young teenagers through academic excellence and spiritual transformation. The school now has a total of 26 students in grades 7-10 and 6 teachers. We currently operate in a rented property and the school is already having a positive impact, as you can perceive through Mrs. Cellamare's testimony below.

The name Cedrela is native to South and Central America and the Caribbean. It is closely related to true mahogany wood. Both cedrela and mahogany are from the Mehiaceae family of trees and the name stands for strength, reliability and resistant.



It is our conviction that Cedrela College, with sufficient support, will grow to become an institution of strength. It will become a center of attraction to the community consistent with God's word in Psalm 92:12; 104:16; 148:9. The name Cedrela was also chosen because it represents our core believe that God wants Cedrela to affect the total person; body, spirit, mind and

soul. Cedrela College will, therefore, pursue the academic, moral, and spiritual development of students. Cedrela will pursue and model excellence in character and service that would result in individual and community transformation as seen in the lives of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Daniel 3).

OUR CHALLENGE

The prospect and future of Cedrela College is bright. Sound Christian education is desperately needed in this community and Cedrela College is committed to providing it. However, there are challenges which we have envisioned and we are committed to turning them into opportunities for the sake of these young ones. As stated earlier, the school is in one of the most morally challenged

and rough areas of Lagos State. Poverty and ignorance drive many youths to gambling, prostitution, drugs and alcohol. The influence on the youth is compounded by ignorance. Cedrela College seeks to counter this negative culture with education and Bible based education.

A major challenge of running a school in this community is that the environmental circumstances limit the amount we can charge for tuition and fees in order to keep it at a reasonable cost that parents could afford. In addition, there are many teenagers who cannot even afford those meager tuition and fees and are in need of assistance in the form of scholarship support. Cedrela is dependent upon God to supply such scholarship assistance for its students.



Current enrolment at Cedrela is 26 students in grades levels 7-10 and six teachers. At this starting point, the school income is quite meager in comparison to its expenditure. This is a journey of faith and I do believe God will provide for the needs of Cedrela since it is His vision.

Cornerstone pledged support beginning January 2020 at the Fall 2019 board meeting.