



Establishment

of the

Judge Emma Shannon Walser

Medal of Rule of Law,

Good Governance & Patriotism

Monrovia, Liberia

27 July 2021

A call to Liberian Patriots

Liberians patriots arise, arise
Find ways and means to help Liberia
Be prepare to pay the price
Make the require sacrifice
Not necessarily with blood
But more with courage

As one swims against the tidal flood
Being unafraid in the process to get wet
That sometimes to make the effect
Not just by merely criticizing, empty talking
But through no-violence and firm posture taking

Offer solutions to the problem
Say not only “what” should be done
But also state how and why
Take a stand

To promote the opportunity
Do so as best as you can in unity
For in union strong success is sure”

I am sure you have heard that before
To change the landscape of poverty
In your land, your Liberian land

Avoid revolutions that promise everything
Many have proven to deliver virtually nothing
We saw them before; they were destructive
Be committed and constructive
Study and work hard with dignity
Be honest and manifest integrity
The struggle for progress has been
It’s the noblest cause under the sun
Be steadfast until thus noble cause is won
Liberian Patriot arise

By Anthony Barclay

**Tribute to late Judge Walser paid at memorial service by
Former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on 19 June 2021**

It is a great honor to offer a short tribute to the late Judge Emma Shannon Walser. I had and have the highest respect and regard for her and believe that she is unparalleled in the history of our Judiciary. The state honored her when she served as the Independence Day Orator in July 2006.

As we were friends, I will refer to her as Emma, taking nothing from the esteem in which I hold her.

On a personal level, I benefited from her counsel and insight into our society. During her visits to Liberia, I was pleased that we were able to spend some time together, discussing a variety of matters and the state of the nation, while exchanging concerns and laughter. I also visited her at her home in Switzerland on one occasion.

I have used the word unparalleled and this is no exaggeration. Emma was unique. No other Liberian Judge before or since has ever stood so firm and so visibly for the right to the full full respect of individual and collective human rights. At one point in our tumultuous history, she joined a demonstration by brave young people, in her judicial robes, epitomizing the ideal that justice must be seen and felt by ordinary people. We owe her a debt of gratitude for helping many to find the courage to hold on to their own moral compass and to show solidarity with those seeking a better Liberia.

Jean and Ruby, family, we are forever grateful for the life and labor of your mother. Please accept my heartfelt condolences for your loss. May her soul Rest in Peace and Love.

At Lady of Lebanon Catholic Church

In Monrovia

By H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

Former President, Republic of Liberia

Revised

The Liberian Institute for “Growing” Patriotism Press Release

- Today 27 July, the The Liberian Institute for “Growing” Patriotism (LIGP) is launching the Establishment of a series of Certificate of Patriotism including The Judge Emma Shannon Walser Medal for Rule of Law, Good Governance and Patriotism.
- The Judge Emma Shannon Walser Medal is in recognition of her 92nd Birth Anniversary on 24th July 2021 and as a tribute to her Legacy and significance for the Liberian Judiciary and legal system. She died in Switzerland on 28th May 2021 while a memorial service was held here in Liberia on 9th June.
- Judge Walser had a keen sense of justice and was well known as a Progressive and a Liberal Judge. Her father, Eugene Himie Shannon of the Grebo ethnic group was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia.
- She was strong and would not bow to political pressure. She is known historically, for amongst others, standing up to the Government in the wake of the 1979 civil disturbances. She refused to condemn the alleged instigators of the 1979 Rice Riots and civil unrest.
- She was summarily dismissed for this, through a joint Resolution of the Legislature. This act promoted a cross section of Liberian Women from all sectors of society, young professionals and the Elders, amongst whom were several distinguished women as well as the leadership of the Market Women, to submit a Petition of some 500 signatories against the action, and was taken to the Legislature in protest. The matter also reached the Cabinet when President Tolbert took it there said “the women of the nation are against me”.
- Even though no action ensued at the time, the impact of the Petition was felt when the framers of the 1986 Constitution subsequently prescribed that the removal of judges must be preceded by due process.
 - Reference the case of Associate Justice Cabinet M. Janneh which had to be accorded due process even though there were some lapses for which he went to the ECOWAS Court, which in turn ruled against the actions of the Government of Liberia.
- University student at the time, as per Ambassador Al Hassan Conteh, former President of the University of Liberia, admired the Judge and gave her the nick

name of Shakespeare “Portia” from the Merchant of Venice, because of her sagacity and interpretation of the Law.

- Notably in 2007, the Liberian People’s Party vindicated Judge Shannon Walser by characterizing her as a person who’s only “Crime” was to advocate for “participatory democracy” in Liberia.
- In view of the foregoing, testimony of the caliber of the late Judge; of her impact on the legal system of Liberia, and her uncompromising stand for Justice and the Rule of Law, the Liberian Institute for “Growing” Patriotism is today establishing the: Judge Emma Shannon Walser Medal for Rule of Law, Good Governance and Patriotism.
- The recipients will be both Posthumously as well as to the Living. The medal for those Posthumously will be given by end of August (24th August) –one month after her 92nd birth anniversary.
- The medal for the Living will be given in December, marking the 8th anniversary of the establishment of the Liberian Institute for “Growing” Patriotism which was launched on 12th December 2013 by Ambassador Charles Minor, then Chair of the Board of Tax Appeals, on behalf of Judge Emma Shannon Walser.
- The establishment of the Medal is being undertaken by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of the Institute: Olubanke King-Akerele former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Sister Mary Laurene Browne, retired President of the Stella Maris Polytechnic University, with its formal launching by Sister Mary Laurene Browne, OSF.

Formal Launch of the Medal (attached)

- In her closing statement following the launch, the Executive Director and Chair of the Board of LIGP reiterated the fact that Judge Emma Shannon Walser’s removal from office was a purely political move orchestrated by the Executive, devoid of the basic tenets of Liberian common law, that is “due process”, it denied her a fair trial and thus her removal should be declared null and void posthumously and she be reinstated as a Judge of the Circuit Court of Liberia! The Women of Liberia will **Petition** the Legislature accordingly, as they did along the lines of their earlier Petition some 42 years ago in 1979.





Perspective on the Judge Emma Shannon Walser Medal for Rule of Law; Good Governance & Patriotism

- I. Judge Emma Shannon Walser – Liberia’s first female Circuit Court Judge for Montserrado County
 1. Died in May 2021 in Geneva, Switzerland
 2. Memorial service held for her in Liberia in June 2021
 3. Official Gazette on the Judge
 4. Media report on the Judge and her significance
 5. Her significance in terms of Liberia’s Judiciary; Liberian Women in the Democratic evolution and political development in Liberia; rule of law

- II. Establishment of Judge Emma Shannon Walser Medal for Rule of Law; Good Governance and Patriotism by the Liberian Institute for “Growing” Patriotism:

1. Press conference on 27 July 2021 that announced the establishment of the Medal on the 92nd Birth Anniversary of the Judge and its basis.

That conference indicated that Medals would be given both to the Living and Posthumously to Liberians - both males and females – as part of the observation of the 8th anniversary of the LIGP (launched on 12 Dec. 2013) which would be effective December 2021.

2. Accordingly – 12 Medals were given posthumously on 9th January 2022. (Details are attached)
3. Additional medals will be granted to the Living as part of International Women’s Day on 8th March 2022.

- III. **Motivation for Establishment of the Medals.**

1. The over-riding consideration for establishment of the medals is the need to **give recognition of and show appreciation to** individuals who have contributed to or are contributing to “Nation-building” through Patriotism in one

form or another. This is expected to encourage the “Growing” (development and promotion) of Patriotism amongst Liberians as there is a tendency amongst our people to be **unappreciative** and show little recognition of those who have contributed and are contributing to Nation-building – essentially to what at the bottom line is nothing short of renewal of the soul of “Mama” Liberia.

2. Their individual works and achievements speak to this while Sister Mary Laurene’s Brief on “Growing” Patriotism (attached) captures the essence of what is meant by “Growing” (development and promotion of) Patriotism. Bearing in mind the essence of the objectives and mission of the LIGP, the – mentioned should be clear.
3. Individuals are invited to contribute with donation of Medals by the purchase of such Medals in the U.S.A. and facilitating their onward transportation to Liberia at an overall cost of \$40.00 USD. Indication of to whom the Medals should be given (posthumously or Living) with Brief on their contribution to “Nation-building” is all that is required. We encourage and welcome broad Participation. The Medals can be purchased in the USA from Fast Signs Worcester, MA 01603 cdbking@fastsigns.com or through the Liberian Institute for “Growing” Patriotism.

July 2021



Posthumous Medallist
The Liberian Institute for “Growing”
Patriotism(LIGP)

Establishment and launch of Medal on 27 July, 2021
(in honor of Judge Emma Shannon Walser’s 92nd birth
anniversary)
at Press Conference at Bella Casa Hotel in Monrovia

Judge Emma Shannon Walser’s
Medal of Rule of Law, Good
Governance & Patriotism

(i.e. Promotion of Peace; National Healing;
Reconciliation;

contribution to nation-building; growing and
promotion

of Patriotism & National Unity)

-Posthumous Medallists-
being awarded as part of year-long
observation of 8th anniversary of LIGP
which was established on 12 Dec. 2013

at

AME University

Monrovia, Liberia
9 January 2022

Recipient of first set of Medals Posthumously

#	Names	Rule of Law	Good Governance	Patriotism	Comments
1	Elijah Johnson			✓	Pioneer and one of key founders of R.L
2	Chief Suakoko			✓	Played critical role in unifying of settlers & ethnic groups in foundation of Republic of Liberia
3	Rev. Emmanuel Bowier			✓	Liberia's Oral Historian
4	Hon. Yusador Gaye		✓		Former Auditor General of R.L.
5	Christine Tolbert Norman			✓	REAP & programme for Empowerment of Disadvantaged Youths in Bentol; & founder of Isaac David School
6	Teacher Jessie Wah King (died at 102)			✓	Iconic CWA teacher died last year at age 102 yrs.
7	Dr. Thomas Jaye (Security sector expert)	✓			Represented Liberia at Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre in Ghana & Director Institute of Research & public policy, University of Liberia
8	Elaine Dunn			✓	Patriot & entrepreneur; ardent Episcopalian
9	Atty. Mardea M. Wiles	✓			Atty. – Human Rights & Justice
10	Mr. Mulbah Gayflor			✓	Former Principal, Sr. High school, Firestone Harbel & Pace Setter
11	Irene David (died at 103)			✓	Centenarian who managed Ducor Hall as Govt. guest house; died in Nov.2021
12	Marpue Mamba Speare			✓	Former Executive Director of WONGOSOL

13	Rev. William R. Tolbert III			✓	National Peace Ambassador-Brutally murdered on 1 Nov. 2021
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-Presenters and Recipient of Medals -

	Names	Presenter	Recipient	Comments/Observation
1	Elijah Johnson	Amb. George Wallace	Former Mayor Cyvette Gibson	Great Great Great Great Grandchild of Elijah Johnson
2	Chief Suakoko	Dr. Romelle Horton	VP. Jewel Howard Taylor together with Great Grandson of Chief Suakoko	Honored as Chief Suakoko by people of Bong County
3	Rev. Emmanuel Bowier	Dr. Augustine Konneh	Ruth Bowier	Widow of Rev. Emmanuel Bowier
4	Hon. Yusador Gaye	Cllr. Yvette Chesson Wureh	Her Son	
5	Christine Tolbert Norman	Sister Mary Laurene	Widower Laurene Norman & Sons	
6	Teacher Jessie Wah King (died at 102)	Assoc. of CWA Alumina's		
7	Dr. Thomas Jaye (Security sector expert)	President of Univ. of Liberia Dr. Nelson	Brother of Dr. Jaye	
8	Elaine Dunn	Dr. Rev. Herman Brown	Amb. Edward Dunn	Widower
9	Atty. Mardea M. Wiles	AFELL Representative	Cllr. Martin Wiles	Her Widower
10	Mr. Mulbah Gayflor	Officer from Firestone	Stella Gayflor & Nephews of the deceased	
11	Irene David (died at 103) in November	Amb. George Wallace	Nakomo Duche Son in-law	

12	Marpue Mamba Speare	Roseline Tweh	Widower Mr. Jackson Speare	Her Widower Husband
13	Rev. William R. Tolbert III	Amb. Joseph Boakai	Henrietta Tolbert & Family	

Another Posthumous Medalist

At the Launch of Dr. Mary Antoinette Brown Sherman “Think Tank” at Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation (KAICT) at the University of Liberia on 8 March 2022, international Women’s Day, yet another Posthumous presentation was made to Dr. Mary Antoinette Brown Sherman of the Judge Emma Shannon Walser medal of Rule of Law, Good Governance & Patriotism. Accepting the medal on behalf of her family was Mr. William Bloh who served as Dr. Brown Sherman special Assistant when she was President of the University of Liberia.

A Brief on Dr. Mary Antoinette Brown Sherman - A Trail Blazer and Nation Builder – first woman President of the University of Liberia – and first woman president of a University in Africa – a True Trail Blazer and Nation-Builder - follows.



Dr. Mary Antoinette Brown Sherman

1926 - 2004

Preeminent Educator

Former President, University of Liberia

« A Liberian Woman of high standards and sharp intellect » - Jane Martin

Dr. Mary Antoinette Brown Sherman was born in Monrovia on October 27, 1926, to Louis Arthur Grimes (former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia) and Victoria Elizabeth Jellemoh Cheeseman Grimes.

She graduated with a B.A. and valedictorian of her class from Liberia College (now University of Liberia) in 1947 - a rare move for young girls at that time. She continued her education in the United States, earning an M.A. in Education from Radcliffe in 1949, and a PhD from Cornell University Ithaca, in 1967, with a thesis on "Education and national development in Liberia, 1800-1900."

A professional educator, her career began as an instructor at the University of Liberia Teachers College in 1950, becoming director in 1951 and later dean of the William V.S. Tubman Teachers College (1960 to 1975). In that year, she was appointed Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University, and served in that post until 1978, when she was made president of the University of Liberia by the UL Board of Trustees, the first woman to ever hold that position in Liberia.

Dr. Sherman was a transformational leader who was committed to quality higher education in Liberia. She assumed her position at a critical time in the history of the University, and of the nation. She provided the leadership for the process of renewal of the University, and played a decisive role in the aftermath of the 1980 coup d'état when students and professors were clamoring for social and political change and the rule of law, subsequent to the military takeover.

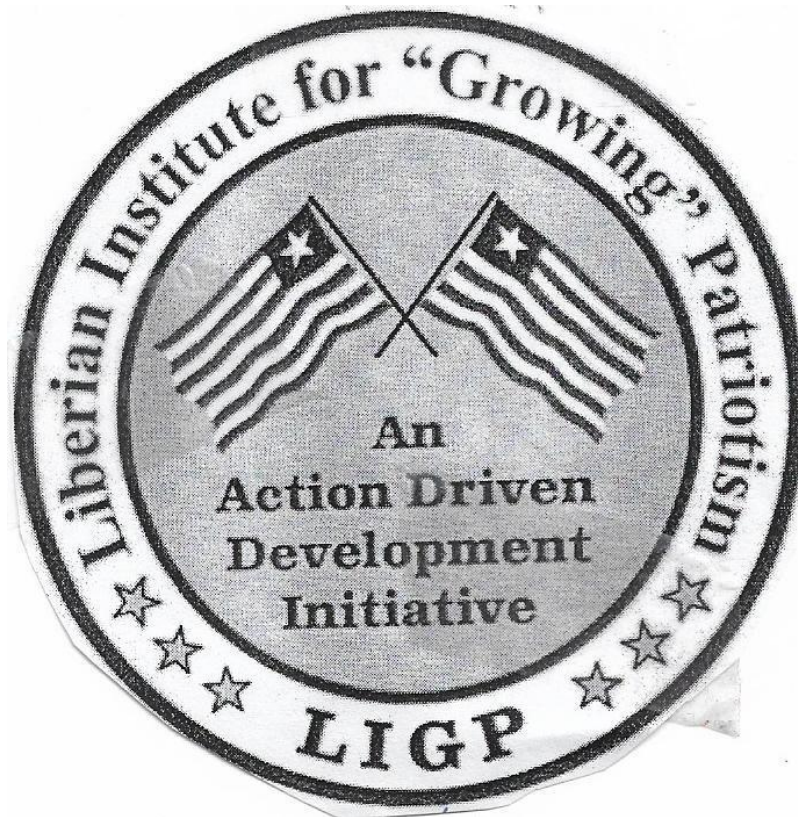
Liberian Institute for Growing Patriots (LIGP)

**King's Building
Broad & Gurley Street
Monrovia, Liberia**

OFFICIAL PROGRAM MARKING THE AWARD OF THE Judge Emma Shannon Walser Medal for Rule of Law; Good Governance & Patriotism

Living Recipients

**AMEU Graduate School
Camp Johnson Road**



Date: March 10, 2022

Time: 1:00pm – 4:00pm

ORDER OF PROGRAM

1. Opening Prayer ----- AMEU
2. Welcome Remarks ----- Dr. Augustine Konneh
Director Graduate School
AME University
3. Background & Purpose/ LIGP - Ms. OluBanke King-Akerele
Executive Director
LIGP

Observation of 8th Anniversary

- Establishment and Highlights of Achievement
 - Judge Emma Shannon Walser Medal for Rule of Law; Good Governance & Patriotism
- Motivation for medals -
4. Significance of the Judge for Liberia's Democracy & Judiciary:
 - a) Perspective of **Senator** Conmany B. Wesseh
 - b) Perspective from the Judiciary: Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott
Former Chief Justice
 5. Granting of Medals (see chart)
 - First Six Honorees

Reading of Patriots Poetry ----- Dr. Anthony Barclay

- Second six honorees
6. Closing of Program ----- Cllr. Yvette Chesson-Wureh
 7. Vote of thanks ----- Ms. Miatta Fahnbulleh
Board Member

---GROUP PHOTOS ----

Refreshments

Updated
1 March 2022

Recipients of Medals for the Living
On International Women Day
8 March 2022

#	Names	Rule of Law	Good Governance	Patriotism	Comments
1	Dr. Chris Hena			✓	Medina Medical Centre in Kakata
2	Rose Mendscole Sherman			✓	Each One Teach One
3	Mrs. Joyce Kumbah Ogunti			✓	Millsburg Community Health Centre
4	Celestine Seepo			✓	Dress in Flag Republic of Liberia
5	Musu Thompson	✓			First woman Governor on the Traditional Council
6	Hon. Amelia Ward			✓	Former and first woman Minister of MPEA and MARWOPNET Activist
7	Trypetus Padmore			✓	Heritage Learning Centre-Camp Johnson Road
8	Brenda Brewer Moore			✓	Promoting culture of Reading and establishment of Reading Room throughout the country
9	Mother During			✓	Praying mother for the Nation
10	Hannah Darami			✓	Extraordinary work at Min. of Culture during 60's
11	Hon. Theresa Leigh Sherman		✓		Signer of Accra Peace Agreement
12	Ms. Clara Doe Mvogo		✓		Exemplary Role as Mayor of Monrovia in fight against Ebola

Annexes

Source of Financing ----- Annex 1
for medals

Summary of LIGP & it's
Launch ----- Annex 2a & 2b

“Growing” Patriotism --Annex 3

Celebration of life of Judge

Emma Shannon Walser -- Annex 4

Source of financing for Medals

1. Medals: first 10 medals cost \$ 300 & were financed by “Out of pocket” resources of the Executive Director, OluBanke King-Akerele
2. Nephews of Executive Director (C.D.B. King III and C.T.O. King IV) are so impressed with LIGP & the concept of “Growing” Patriotism that their business (Signs etc. in Rhode Island in the USA, which produced the Medals) have decided to donate and absorb the cost of addition medals.
3. Son in law, Edward Neuville III (and son of late Edward Neuville, Bishop of Episcopal Diocese of Liberia) is donating additional five medals as well for medalists in 2022.
4. The first set of medals are all expected to be granted in early Jan. 2022

Of these 13 will be given **posthumously** in Jan. 2022 as part of the 8th anniversary yearlong observation of LIGP

Medals for the **Living** will be granted by July 2022, as part of our July 26 observation
5. Others are encouraged to support this initiative by contributions to LIGP in the name of any family member or public servants who have gone to the Great Beyond and had contributed

their part to “nation building”. A brief on them must be provided when the support is given to LIGP.
6. Additional medals to be given posthumously, are planned by second half of 2022. in that connection Sister Mary Laurene, Deputy Chair of LIGP, has contributed 20 additional Medals - 10 of this to be given before end of 2022 and other 10 early in New Year/2023.

(LIGP)

The Liberian Institute for "Growing" Patriotism has been established in recognition of and as a tribute to the memory of Liberians throughout the nation, from all ethnic groups and those of settler or emigrant origins as well as Liberia's sung and unsung Heroes and Heroines from all walks of Life and all levels of society for their contributions over time, to nation-building and the development of "Mama" Liberia.

The primary mission of the Institute is two-fold:

- Firstly, to provide informal training and education for "Growing" (development and promotion of) Patriotism amongst Liberians. The institute achieves this through a series of interventions that will enhance the knowledge of the citizenry by specific actions including training and workshop in civics and advocacy thereby creating a sense of pride in being a Liberian.
- Secondly, to promote the upliftment of the welfare and well-being of Liberians through support to project activities (ongoing and otherwise) that contributes to the transformation of the Liberian Citizenry and the society.

The institute was launched under the auspices of the Angie Brooks International Centre for Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security (ABIC) at the AME University on 12 December 2013 by the Chair of the Board of Tax Appeals, Amb. Charles Minor on behalf of Liberia's First Female Judge, Her Honor, Judge Emma Shannon Walser.

Governance Structure

Executive Director & **Chair of Board:**

Olubanke King- Akerele

Vice Chair: Sister Mary Laurene Browne, OSF

Secretary: Cllr. Yvette

Chesson Wureh

Other Board Members:

Dr. Augustine Konneh

Dr. Romelle Horton

Ms. Miatta Fahnbulleh

Rev. Rita Townsend

Pastor Wah Wallace

Rev. Emmanuel Bowier

(Emeritus & recently deceased)

**Inquirer, Wednesday, December 18, 2013
Launched of the Liberian Institute for “Growing” Patriotism**

The Liberian Institute for “Growing” Patriotism has been launched with the quest of restoring the lost cultural and valued norms Liberians once enjoyed especially at the level of the leadership of government.

There has also been a call for the reintroduction of civic education that would help to justify the identity of Liberians. The institute incorporators which include former Minister of Foreign Affairs, OluBanke King-Akerele, Angie Brooks International Centre Establishment Coordinator, Cllr. Yvette Chesson-Wureh and former Minister of Information the late Emmanuel Bowier said the institute is established in recognition of and as a tribute to the memory of Liberians throughout the nation.

Cllr. Wureh said the institution comes at a time when Liberians need more ever before to add values to their lives and put the country first. She said its purpose is not to serve only working class individuals but will cut across down to the youths who are to take on the mantle of leading the country in the country in the right direction.

She said it is only patriotism that will drive the nation to peace. Madam King said disrespect has bred the lack of patriotism the country now suffers and that the institute is establish to address action driven development initiatives.

Madam King observed that there has been so much disrespect for Leadership in the Country but with everybody doing something to correct the wrong there will be a difference because of the generation’s lack of knowledge they are full of arrogance.

Former Chief Justice, Henry Reed Cooper stressed that Liberians need to begin sending their children to grade school at early ages adding that too has bred some of the country's problem. He said those who are clothed with informing the public about what the government does or is doing need to be the right people who know what they are doing or saying and saying the truth instead of being reactionaries.

He said so many things are being done wrongly in Liberia therefore a lot needs to be changed so that patriotism can be squarely identified.

The mission of the newly launched institute is to provide informal training and education for "growing" patriotism amongst Liberians and to promote the upliftment of the welfare and wellbeing of Liberians so that they can contribute to the transformation of the Liberian society and nation-building.

Amongst other personalities who graced the launch of the institute for patriotism were University of Liberia Emmet Dennis, Madam Elizabeth Mulbah of Governance Commission, the City Mayor of Monrovia and Paynesville respectfully. Dr. Togba Nah-Tipoteh, Rev. Wah Wallace, Charles King, Caesar Morris, Rev. James Larbala and Sister Mary Laurene Brown while Mr. Charles Minor launched the institution officially on behalf of Judge Emma Shannon Walser, first female Judge of Liberia.

The institute will focus on legal advocacy, the promotion of Liberian national identity through culture and nation events, establish a private-public partnership unit for support of the Liberian economy, capacity building and research, documentation as well as the dissemination of production materials and reference books.

“Growing” Patriotism

Everywhere in the world, people fall in love. As the love grows, they stay in loves. Growing in love is essential to staying in love.

Some people say that leaders are born, but think about leadership, especially good or excellent leadership, is learned.

A patriot will never say, “O mam, I tire with this country here; nothing good here.” The patriot will say, “how can I help to make things better in my country?”

This is what “Growing Patriotism” is all about: learning to love and loving dearly, in the word and indeed, the country God has given you, given me, given to all Liberians.

The Institute’s objective is; To collaborate with training entities in helping to imbue trainees with an unshakable love for Liberia and to promote the upliftment and well-being of Liberians to enable them to transform the society. To this end, emphases are placed on Education and Training, Law and Governance, Economic Empowerment of Liberians, giving each Liberian a pace in the national history and Advocacy which may entail Responses to selected Social Challenges.

Each of these five pillars has a chair and co-chair, along with members working assiduously to help patriotism grow in the heart of each Liberians. We must all “Grow” Patriotism on our hearts and minds for this glorious land of Liberty, which, by God’s command, shall be ours, and as a result in the words again of our National Anthem, “In Union Strong Success is sure.” (The foregoing is a presentation from the radio programme of TEACH FM in first half of 2014).

Sister Mary Laurene Brown, OSF
Sub-Committee Chair on
Education and Training-LIGP
&
President of Stella Maris Polytechnic University

Celebration of the life of the late Judge

Emma Shannon Walser

The memorial service of the late Judge Emma Shannon Walser was held on 9 June 2021 at the Lady of Lebanon Catholic Church on Capitol Hill, Tubman Boulevard, Monrovia, Liberia.

There has been considerable reporting on it, thanks to Togba-Nah Tipoteh's two articles in the New Democrat and the Daily Observer. As such, I will not be repeating here much of who Judge Emma Shannon Walser was about and the significance of her Judgeship and ruling for the rule of Law in Liberia.

But there was significant aspect that was not brought to light, namely the reaction by Liberian Women to the Joint Resolution by the Legislature that removed the Judge. Liberian women across the society – market women; Senior and elderly women; with young professionals (like myself at the time) constituted ourselves into a group called Concern Women for Justice. We went to the Legislature with a 500 plus signatures petition protesting the action taken to remove Liberia's first woman Circuit Court Judge of Montserrado County. It was unprecedented.

We called the media and I read the petition some 47 years ago. Leading the initiative of structuring the petition and galvanizing signatures were the Cassell Sisters (Ernestine and Clara;) Lotte-Mai Phelps – (now deceased) – and myself – Olubanke King-Akerele).

Amongst the Elders signatures were Ma Martha Johnson (Mother of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf); Jeanette Howard King (widow of President C.D.B. King); Cllr. Leona Chesson, (mother of Cllr. Yvette Chesson-Wureh and wife of the then Minister of Justice); Ma Beh , head of Liberia Market Women. We were invited into the Chambers of the Legislature by the Sargent at Arms, to present the petition.

The significance of all of this was when President Tolbert took the Petition into Cabinet and said- “the women of the country are against me.” But all we wanted was Justice.

Fast forward – although the Petition did not result in the redress we expected, at the crafting of 1986 Constitution, the crafters stipulated that to remove them, judges are to be impeached thus due process must be granted for the removal of Judges. This was not done during the removal of Judge Shannon Walser, as a Joint Resolution was passed by the Legislators and she was not given the opportunity to be heard, or to defend herself.

The net result is that in the effort to remove Supreme Court Justice Kabineh Ja’neh, the legal procedure of impeachment had to be followed, even though there remained some serious issues with the other rules governing impeachment and the trial, to the extent that Justice Ja’neh took the matter to the ECOWAS Court and was vindicated about his appeal against the Liberian Supreme Court’s ruling. Clearly what the Concern Women for Justice did, 47 years ago, had “seen its face.”

Subsequent to this release, women of Liberia intend to follow – up with a formal Petition in concert with the Liberian nation Bar Association

to the Legislature asking for the repealing of the joint resolution or some other appropriate legal action to restore her stature. We pray that that Petition will be successful.

At the same time, we call on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to apologize investigate and report its findings to the Family of the late Judge and to the Women of Liberia for its absence from her memorial service and not reading of the Gazette by an official of the Ministry Of Foreign Affairs as is customary and for which she was entitled.

In their absence, I had to come to the defense of the Government of Liberia, and as former Minister of Foreign Affairs, read the official Gazette in that capacity.

May the late Judge's soul rest in peace and light perpetual light shine on it.

Olubanke King-Akerele
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs