FUNDRAISING SPEECH

FOR

SAMUEL TURAY

Hello everyone! I am so pleased to see all of you here tonight: men and women, family and friends, distinguished guests and patrons, and of course, a special greeting to all of my brothers, past, present and future, from the Magburaka Secondary School for Boys. Tonight we’re here to show some “fancy footwork” in honor of this wonderful school, and the truth is, to be at this dance and to acknowledge the steps we’ve all taken and the paths we’ve forged to be here tonight is no small coincidence. With every beat of the music you hear tonight and with every vibration of the bass and trumpet, imagine those sound waves echoing back to our home in Magburaka and remember and learn about our homeland.

We’ve come a long way from that city, but it will always remain in our hearts. When I think of what life was like as a young boy growing up there, I still cannot believe that I am here with all of you, and what is even more amazing is that so many of **YOU** are **HERE** too! Which one of us would have ever imagined \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years ago that we would be dancing in this beautiful banquet hall and sharing this wonderful night together? Who would have imagined that all this would have been possible? There’s an old African proverb that teaches us, “For tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.” At the Magburaka Secondary School for Boys, each one of us got a wonderful education, and that education taught us the most valuable lessons. We learned about life outside of our town and we learned how to survive in ways beyond the primal instincts we were born with. We learned that no matter what our families, friends and neighbors did or did not possess materially, they made sure we all received an excellent education from the Secondary School for Boys and that education is truly priceless. As we learned our lessons and grew from the encouragement and guidance, we gained strength in receiving this wonderful gift. Now it’s time to shine the light for the next generations to grow and learn and continue to nurture and build those roots for others.

In Magburaka, an overwhelming majority of the population lives in poverty and it is now our turn to do what we can to make a difference in the community that raised us. Our country is rich in natural resources, but Magburaka needs infrastructure and the means to build the support systems that will strengthen our neighborhoods. Demographics also show that our community is young. It’s estimated that last year almost 42% of the population was under the age of fifteen years old. These young people need guidance. They need encouragement, and most of all they need a well-rounded education to teach them and prepare them for tomorrow. Progress is being made slowly but surely. Wells are being built so that fresh water is more than just a dream. Roads are being paved throughout the city so that local businesses can thrive and commerce can be promoted, but the foundation of self-sustenance is formed and built with an education.

Each one of us has challenges in our everyday lives that teach us to appreciate who we are and what we have. I know that one of the most important gifts I have received in my life is the education I received at the Magburaka Secondary School for Boys. I learned how to survive, grow, and give back.

The late Nelson Mandela was a brilliant man and one whose words and thoughts were wise and powerful. I’d like to share some of his wisdom with you, and I invite you to picture what you can do to give to and support this fine school. He said, “There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered.” Magburaka, as I said, is evolving, but with belief in and support of the next generation, that growth will be insured. Mandela also said, “Let there be work, bread, water and salt for all.” That too, is accomplished with education. And finally, “It always seems impossible until it is done.” So many of us, thanks to the lessons we learned, have transformed the impossible into opportunity. Can you imagine what your contributions to the Magburaka Secondary School would do to encourage these students and to alow more boys the opportunity to attend? Take a look at what your education has done for you. Your generosity and respect for the future of Magburaka is truly something to celebrate…so let’s dance!!! Thank you all!!