

Title : The Personal Story of One AGSP Scholarship Recipient

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Department : Education

Description : Thanks to the Ambassador's Girls' Scholarship Program (AGSP), Badji Traore, an 11-year-old girl student at the Sidi Mahmoud School in Timbuktu, is excelling in school and dreams of becoming a doctor.



Content : My name is Badji Traoré. I am 11 years old and am in 6th grade at the Sidi Mahmoud School in Timbuktu. I live with my mother. My parents separated when I was very little. My father lives in Bamako. My mother has three children: two girls and one boy. My aunt has four children who also live with us. My older sister went to school through 6th grade, but then dropped out because she was not encouraged by our parents.

Before the Ambassador's Girls' Scholarship Program, I was following in the footsteps of my sister. I had dropped out of school after 4th grade because I had too many responsibilities at home and did not have time to study. At home, I help my mom sell small condiments. I spend a lot of time walking from door to door or at the market looking for clients. I cook and do the laundry. Sometimes I have to go to the fields to look for firewood, because my mother does not have the means to take care of all these household chores. We have two books at home (reading and math) which I share with my brother, who is also in 6th grade. We live in a neighborhood that does not yet have electricity. I often go to a friend's house to study, since as we only have one lamp at home for everyone's use.

I benefited from an AGSP scholarship in 2005-2006 and this year again I received books, notebooks, school uniforms, geometry supplies, pens, a slate, and a school bag. I also participate in remedial classes and study groups for all of us AGSP scholars. When I learned that I was at a school benefiting from the AGSP program, I was very happy. I knew that as a scholarship beneficiary, I would receive all the materials I need to improve my study conditions.

It is because of this scholarship that I was one of the top three students in my class last year. Again this year, I was at the top of my class for the exams in December 2006 and January 2007. I scored 8.07 out of 10 in December and 8.26 out of 10 in January. At home, now I have more time to study, as my mother has been sensitized by the scholarship program's NGO staff. Many women who went to school have come to our school to encourage us girls to study and to stay in school. Both in school and at home,

people appreciate me because they see the efforts I put into my schoolwork. I will take the 7th grade entrance exam at the end of this school year. I will do all that I can to pass the exam and move into 7th grade, since staying in school is my dream. When I grow up, I want to become a doctor so that I can save people's lives.

Geographic area: Ségou.

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