



Executive Director: Chris Collins

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West African Vocational Schools is a Christian NGO that works hand-in-hand with local leaders in Guinea-Bissau to equip young women and men with life-changing job skills so they can transform their communities.

Guinea-Bissau is a largely overlooked part of West Africa struggling with poverty, drug smuggling and human trafficking. WAVS believes education and job training are long-term solutions to these challenges.

The WAVS School, which is attended by more than 250 students each year, is run by an all-Guinean staff and offers classes in computer basics, auto mechanics, welding, English and French – courses that are in demand by people in the community and are designed to equip young women and men with marketable job skills so that they and their families can thrive. The school is located in the rural town of Canchungo, which has a regional population of about 40,000. Since the school opened, more than 800 students have attended.

Chris Collins traveled to Guinea-Bissau in February 2008 and saw first-hand how the West African Vocational Schools is transforming the community of Canchungo by investing in the spiritual growth of students and by giving them job skills training. In December 2010 he became the first full-time executive director of WAVS, and has helped the organization expand its influence and pursue its vision.

This year, WAVS will begin construction on a new, much larger school campus in the capital city of Bissau, which will multiply the school's impact for decades to come. The new campus will enroll 1,000 students a year, provide space for business incubators, and train the country's future leaders – all while sharing God's love through word and deed.

Chris and his wife Holly travel to Guinea-Bissau for several weeks each year, spending time developing the local leaders of the school and helping the WAVS School expand and further its mission of transforming Guinea-Bissau by raising up future leaders of the country.