

2018



Jeanne contracted polio at the age of one and is badly crippled but she's smiling all the time. She finished her diploma in human resources management but couldn't pass the test for government service—she failed 10 years in a row. That's when we stepped in and sent her to an elite school that prepares one for government work. Before she even finished her first year, she aced the exam, finishing first in her group. She was given a job in Ouagadougou and on her meager salary is paying tuition for a younger brother and sister.



Jeanne with colleagues at the office.

2017

Crippled by Polio at the age of 1, she had failed the national competitive exam every year for ten years. A friend asked us to pay her tuition to a school that prepares students for government service. We did. After just three months of courses, she passed the exam, finishing first in her group. She abandoned her studies and now has a government job in Ouagadougou. (Recommended by Lambert Djiguemde.)

2016

In 2014, Jeanne d’Arc Traore began her studies to prepare a career in government service as human resources manager. Just a few months into her first semester, she took the exam for government service and passed. (She had taken it each year for the past 10 years and always failed.) In fact, she REALLY passed—she was first in her group.

She did finish the semester but then dropped out while waiting to be assigned a job. That didn’t come soon, because of the political turmoil in the country. She wasn’t informed until October 2015 that she would work for a government office that processes student and teacher complaints. She was told that she will have a salary starting November 2015, but she hasn’t actually been paid yet nor does she know her salary.

Happily, she is able to live with a sister who has a two-bedroom apartment.



Jeanne d’Arc at her new job.



Hitching a ride.

2015

Jeanne d’Arc is at the end of her studies. She asked us for help with tuition for a two-year program in training for government service. For this visit, I was accompanied by Awa, Christiane’s assistant. Jeanne was afflicted with polio at the age of one, and struggles through life partly paralyzed. She guided us on her three-wheel motorbike.



Jeanne had a surprise for us. She has been taking the civil service exam every year for ten years, without success. But with the additional training she received at the institute, she aced the exam this year, finishing first. She now had to choose between a job and continuing her studies.

The Administrator explained that because Jeanne has passed the civil service exam, if she is to finish her studies at l'ENAM two things need to happen. First, the Government needs to assign her to a job in Ouaga, which is not at all certain. If yes, her new employer must agree that she can take time off to complete her studies, also not certain. For Jeanne, the job was the priority; we agreed.



At l'ENAM.



Her aunt confirmed that Jeanne's father left her mother when Jeanne was very small. When her mother died ten years ago, Jeanne helped raise her two younger sisters and one brother and send them to school. She worked odd jobs. Now Jeanne will have a secure job for the rest of her life.

Jeanne and her aunt.