



TANZANIAN CHILDREN'S FUND

2013 Fall Newsletter

Mission Statement

The Tanzanian Children's Fund provides support for the Rift Valley Children's Village and other community based programs that improve the lives of the marginalized children of Tanzania.

The Rift Valley Children's Village

The Children's Village provides a home, family and community for orphaned and vulnerable children. We prepare them to become informed, resourceful and responsible citizens in their community and Tanzania.

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Teresia and Kizzie

The Tanzanian Children's Fund is a registered 501(c)(3) not for profit.

The Road to Success

India Howell, Founder and Executive Director

As you all know, we at TCF are fervent believers in the power of education to change futures. As many of our children are getting older and approaching the time when they will need to "leave the nest," we have been focusing more and more on making sure that they have the schooling – and the life skills – to thrive as adults. We are so proud of all of our students – from the preschoolers to the university students – who have worked so hard this year. The road to success is long, but if we walk together, there's no stopping us.

Our Children

If you asked any of our kids about the past few months their answers would be all about final exams and the big vacation. Many of our kids scored at the top of their class in the mid-term exams and received exciting prizes as a result; a new backpack and pencils.

The toddlers, feeling left out of all of the school excitement, decided that they deserved a trip to Arusha for all of their hard work in preschool. Instead, they were awarded with a fieldtrip to TEC Plantation, just a ten minute drive away, for a juice with Agael, one of our social workers. They loved the trip and agreed that Arusha is a great place! Except of course for Joann - who has actually been to Arusha. At the end of the trip she said, "Uncle Agael, next time I want to go to the OTHER Arusha!"

KLR Kids

In late June, Mama Musa came to see me. Her sister in-law had passed away leaving behind three small children that Mama was now struggling to raise on top of her own chil-



India with secondary students Isaka, Jojo, and Nicola.

dren. After a long discussion it was decided that Elias (age 3), Raymund (age 7), and Magdalena (age 10) would join the RVCV family as members of the KLR Program. All three children were wary of the transition at first, but little Elias took immediately to all the love and hugs. Raymund is attending kindergarten because he had never been to school before. Magdalena is two grades behind her peers, but is determined to quickly catch up to where she should be.

To give you hope! William Wayda, who attends Tumaini

Top of Her Class—Hadija Salimu

In a new tradition at Gyetighi Primary School, the three top performing students from each class are honored with an invitation to enjoy a soda and chips with their teachers after school once per semester. This celebration of success has encouraged students to strive for those top spots.

At the August celebration, one



Hadija Salimu

student stood out from all of the rest. Hadija Salim is the number one student in Standard 5 and lives at

the Rift Valley Children's Village. Normally on the shy side of the group, Hadija was anything but the reserved girl we know when she was invited to stand up and share with the other top students and their teachers what success means to her.

As she stood among her classmates, Hadija spoke about the

The Road to Success (cont.)

Junior School, was much like Magdalena a few years ago when he joined the KLR



*Elias enjoys afternoon of
playtime at RVCV*

program, but today he is #2 in his class and determined to be #1 before year end!

The rest of our KLR kids have become so much a part of the RVCV family that it is hard to remember

that they are supposed to go home after snack and bath time!

Secondary Students

Having everyone home at the Children's Village for five weeks over July break gave us a real chance to see the positive changes taking place in so many of our "big kids." I am simply amazed at what natural caregivers and teachers they have all become! Who would have thought that our once naughty Swedi would be a natural helper with the little ones? Or that muscle-bound Benja would volunteer to supervise toddler time? I am so proud of them all!

Last year we started a program to encourage our secondary students to work hard and reap the rewards when they succeed. Eight of our students were in the top 20% of their class at mid-term, and they received soccer jerseys as prizes, which are surprisingly effective incentives!

Gyetighi Primary School

Things at Gyetighi have been running smoothly, thanks in no small part to Managing Director Peter Mmassy's involvement. The student teachers are doing excellent work, and all members of the staff continue to be motivated and engaged. This shows most tangibly in the great results we saw for students on the mid-term exams, as well as



Daniele, Saidi, Doctor, and Benja helped with the little ones during their vacation from secondary school

exams taken by our Standard 7 students competing against other schools in Monduli and Dar es Salaam. In all cases we made a GREAT showing and once again surprised teachers and officials from other areas that kids from a rural school could do so well!

Oldeani Secondary School

During the second quarter of this year we completed the new choo (bathroom) for the boys and the installation of gutters – not the most glamorous projects, but very necessary. Thank you to all who donated and made this happen!

During this period we also learned that all of our secondary students at Oldeani Secondary passed the National Exam with high enough scores to make them eligible for government loans to attend university. They have all sent in their applications. Fingers crossed!!

We have lots of exciting education initiatives and announcements planned for the next three months, so stay tuned!

Please contact India with questions or comments at india@habari.co.tz.

Hadija Salimu (cont.)

power of the recognition they were all enjoying. "That soda you are drinking and those chips you are enjoying are what the other students want. You cannot expect that you will get a top spot next semester just because you are here today. We must continue to work hard every day, push ourselves farther, and expect more from one and other if we want to be sitting together again. Otherwise, the top spot will be awarded to someone else in the spring."

Hadija also spoke of her dreams of going to Usa River Academy, a distinguished secondary school, where she hopes to study mathematics in order to become a book keeper. One day Hadija would like to be the first woman president of Tanzania, so that she can fulfill her dream of helping others achieve their potential and be productive citizens of Tanzania.

When Hadija came home from school that day, we talked about what it meant to her to be a top student. "I like all of my classes, but especially English, Social Studies, and Math. I love school, so I am always happy to work hard. I want to learn and change things," she said smiling.

Hadija is in Standard V at Gyetighi Primary School.



Hadija is a member of Girls' Club, which works to empower our girls and encourage our top performing students to continue their education in secondary school and beyond.

An End is a Beginning Peggy Bacon, Chair

When India moved to the Karatu district in Tanzania almost ten years ago, she was on a mission: to serve marginalized children and give them a shot at a brighter future. Give them what she was given.

Starting out, India didn't know what it would take. She only knew she would keep going until an end was in sight. Many said: "You won't make a dent – the problem is too big," and "the challenges are too complex – there are too many pieces to the puzzle." That was all white noise to her. Ten years later, we ARE making a dent. And we do see an end.

We began with orphaned children; we gave them the basics: food, clothing shelter, and love. Soon we realized Edina and Swedi needed more if they were **not just going to live, but to thrive**. Like all kids, the Rift Valley Children's Village children and their friends from school sprain ankles, have asthma, get ear infections, stomach aches, and sometimes even malaria. So we partnered with



Swedi and little India in 2005

Dr. Frank at FAME, hired a nurse, set up regular clinics, health classes and school check-ups. Suddenly, there was **more energy and more focus because everyone was healthy**. Free lunch and deworming medicine helped a lot.

Next, India wondered about school. While there was a government primary school down the road, very few children finished with the credentials to continue on to secondary school. Like all parents, we wanted the best for Benja, Abdul, and Lucy and the rest of the "neighborhood." After just three years of partnering with the community and the government, our primary school became the **top-rated school in the district**, with all students qualifying for secondary school.

But what about the rest of the children and the families in Oldeani? We **didn't want to leave anyone behind**. As part of our community, all children and families within our 8,000 person/50 square mile catchment area are benefitting from our free health clinics, our

excellent primary school and our economic empowerment (microfinance) programs. **So, we are finished, right? Not quite.** There is a high school down the road, but only 3% of students graduate with credentials. Teachers are MIA and the buildings are crumbling. Most girls drop out. So the final piece of the puzzle is access to quality secondary education to **create the ripple effect**: With a decent education, and the job opportunities that follows, the students return and help *their* families **climb out of the "under 2 bucks a day club."**

So, last but not least, we will complete the circle. With the government and community as partners, Oldeani Secondary School will become a high-performing high school that produces qualified candidates for jobs. How do we know? Because **we have a formula that works**.

Our Next Ten Fund will be dedicated to secondary education. It is the **logical and critical final pillar** to all that has come before. Join us as we build the means to a better future for the children and families of Oldeani. It's our end, their beginning.

Contact Peggy with questions or comments at peggybacon60@gmail.com.

Volunteer Spotlight

So far in 2013 we've had over 50 volunteers dedicate their time and energy to working at RVCV. Volunteers are essential to making sure all of our children get the love, attention, and extra academic help they need. They are vital to our work and we are so grateful for their help!

Not only do volunteers play a key role at the Village, but many of them do even more once they return home! **Sophie and Phoebe Gould**, former volunteers, ran a musical and dance program this summer for eighteen 7 - 12 year old girls. The classes culminated in a recital on an old-fashioned stage in Scarborough, Maine. The proceeds from the Sea Stars and Shooting Stars program (over \$3,000) were donated to TCF. Many thanks to the entire Gould family and all of our supporters in Scarborough!

The selflessness and dedication of our supporters never ceases to amaze us. The entire TCF family was incredibly touched when another former volunteer, **Hannah Doyle**, chose RVCV as the recipient for a very

special gift. Hannah was identified by the Make-A-Wish Foundation as a recipient for a life-changing wish last year and the organization granted her \$7,500 to spend any way she desired. What did she choose to do with the money? She donated the entire grant to TCF to pay for scholarships and school supplies for the children of Oldeani Ward. Our hearts and thanks go out to Hannah!

TCF is saddened to have recently lost a young, vibrant volunteer who had brought so much joy with her to Tanzania. **Kristy LeMond** spent two and a half months volunteering at the Children's Village in 2011 and touched every person she met with her compassion, enthusiasm, and overall joy of life. This June, Kristy passed away after bravely battling cancer.

Kristy started a blog called "Wake Up and Live" during her time in Tanzania. An excerpt from a posting she wrote while at RVCV gives a small glimpse into what a

special and loving young woman she was:

"Things I am now an expert at:
-Making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.
-The Tanzanian chicken dance.
-Cutting 17 slices of bread from one loaf—the mamas didn't think I could do it...yeah, I did it.
-Hula hooping. Well maybe not an expert...
-Loving more than I thought possible."

Kristy lives on in our hearts and minds. If you'd like to read more about Kristy's time in Tanzania and her volunteer experience, please visit <http://khlemond.tumblr.com/>.



Kristy and Eriki



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Asante Sana to all of our 2013 volunteers!

Jim & Barb Schubauer, Julia Schubauer, Eleanor Doar, Susan Scott, Laura Tillman, Ann Lasman, Carolyn McGoldrick, Pooh & Libby Gephart, Zoe Colqhoun, Eva Weber, David & Holly Perkins, Philipa Kerckerinck, Chris Lee, Annie Watters, Harry Tucker, Meghan Gallagher, Ian Anderson, Wyatt Fowler, Linnie Gummo, Jeanne Boissel, Katie & Lia Mondavi, Elissa Zirinsky, Lorraine Campbell, Sarah & Phoebe Gould, Melissa Becerra, Monica Zoerner, Kate Dahl, Sarah Sewell, Emma, Maddie & Cashen Conroy, Katie Drollette, Sarah Elmongy, Lizzie Grubman, Emily Urban, Linda Carlile, Robert Mast, Sara Boisvert, Alexis Bocian-Reperowitz, Harrison Everts, Anna Semple, Helen Sidebotham, Ashley Peters, Will Gray, Jill Gramolini, Laisee Rintel, and Kylie Knight

A Year of Change, A Year of Progress

Microfinance Program

Chris Isele, our microfinance director for the last two years, finished his time with us in mid-May. He did a wonderful job and moved the program to the "next step" with improved accounting systems and repayment plans. It is always hard to say goodbye to a member of our staff. It's usually even



Grace and Emma

harder to find their replacement. Not so this time!

We are very proud to announce that Grace Christopher, our former HR manager, has been promoted to the position of Microfinance Direc-

tor. Grace completed her MBA last year and has run our employee Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization (SACCO) since its inception, making her ideally qual-

ified for this position.

Grace will have her hands full with trainings, and disbursing and tracking loans for 444 clients, of which 75% are active! She and her team will also continue to bring on new clients and administer the three local SACCOs in Oldeani Ward.

Sponsorship and Communications

In June we said goodbye to Ashby Brown who had been our sponsor and communications coordinator for nearly two years. Ashby did a fantastic job for us and will be greatly missed by kids and staff alike! But we are very fortunate to have Ben Whelan take over the reins. Ben is loaded with positive energy and has already become an invaluable member of the TCF family.

Our sponsorship program is the cornerstone for ensuring that all of our kids have access to a safe home and quality education and medical care. But we need more sponsors!

If you're interested in sponsoring either a primary or secondary school student, please contact Ben at:

sponsorship@tanzanianchildrensfund.org.



Ben gets lots of hugs before departing on annual leave!

We've Moved!

Just a reminder that TCF has moved our US office. We are now located at the Next Mile Project, a nonprofit incubator in Boston's North End. Please be sure to use our new mailing address listed above!