

KIJABE CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND



November 2017

Dear Friends and Supporters of KCEF,

We are so grateful for your continuing interest and support of the mission to serve the “poorest of the poor” children and schools in Kenya. This is **your mission** and we hope you feel a great deal of joy and satisfaction about what is happening in the lives of these “forgotten children”.

The third and last term of 2017 has ended. The children are now off for November and December, and this is always a mixed blessing because of danger and lack of food among other challenges of being away from the structured and supportive environments of the schools.

The Rites of Passage Experiences (ROPES) camp – a program of the Tanari Trust – has just been completed for 90 8th graders, with universal appreciation for the changes in their lives from both children and parents. All 8th graders also took the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) test to determine if and where they might attend secondary school beginning in January. This is a time of great anxiety before the results are announced. Regardless of their scores, most of “our” students could not even think of affording the fees. And so, we will be providing partial financial and mentoring support for over 100 of them in the 2018 school year.

Our approach has always been to find outstanding school leaders in the most difficult areas and partner with them. These are *their schools*, not ours, and so we thought it would be good for you to hear from them directly. We asked three of them to share comments and reactions to their partnership with KCEF (and you!).

Esther Waweru is founder and leader of Gentle Bells School in rural Longonot, Kenya—where the unemployment rate is close to 90% and there is little hope for the future.



You have been with us at Gentle Bells from almost the beginning, when we had 50 preschool children in a small shack with a dirt floor and no windows. Because of your help and partnership, we now have a fine school building and five acres of land for farming (feeding the children) and recreation. We now have 240 students in preschool through grade 8. And you are helping with the secondary school fees for 55 students who have graduated and gone on to secondary school—they could not have done so otherwise. We are especially thankful for the computers and training you have provided for our teachers and students. Almost no schools in our area have any such opportunity, and this gives our students a great assist in learning and preparation for future jobs and careers. Thank you to all at KCEF and your supporters!

Seline Munyasa is Principal of the Blessed Children's Centre in Nairobi's infamous Kibera slum. When we first met Seline a few years ago she had a school of 150 students meeting in a small, leaky church building with a dirt floor. It had no partitions, or desks and tables. She was not able to provide any meals for the children, had virtually no teaching materials and paid the teachers irregularly. Now there are 270 students in eight grades, with two classes that have moved on to secondary schools.



When you met us, we had almost nothing, just good teachers and eager students. Because of your help we have been able to purchase a nearby building with five rooms, and then add five more. We have added indoor toilets and sinks for hand washing—and health has improved. We now have teaching materials and books for all eight grades. We are so grateful that we can give the children two meals a day—and we can see the results in their learning. The teachers are so happy that they are now paid every month in full, and we now have almost no teachers leaving. And you have helped our girls and boys soccer teams win tournaments and awards! Thank you from the depths of our hearts. We love all of you.

Anne Owiti is an ordained minister and founder of KICOSHEP (Kibera Integrated Community Self-Help Programme) – also in Kibera slum. The school is in a very dangerous area, and when we visit local police always accompany us. Support and treatment groups are provided for a number of the students who are HIV positive. Related programs are also offered for AIDS patients and commercial sex workers in the community. There are 350 students in eight grades.

We met you KCEF people through a Nairobi friend some years ago. You have remained our friends and partners, and we are so grateful. We just moved into a new school building provided by the World Bank, after our other school was torn down by the government. You gave us partitions for the classes, a security fence and desks and chairs for our children. Thanks to you we now provide two meals each day to all of our students, most of whom do not find food at home. Because of the support we receive from you this community feels our presence, and we make a strong contribution to the community welfare. We are so thrilled that all of our 8th graders can go through the Rites of Passage program you brought to us. We are grateful to God for all of you—your love, support and prayers for us.



We work very hard to evaluate each school and its program seeking ways to add value. Six of our board members will be traveling to Kenya in January to visit each school and work with the leaders, teachers, students. We go as your representatives to assure that your gifts and ours are being used wisely and carefully so that each of these 1500+ children will have an opportunity for an excellent education and preparation for leadership in their country.

We hope you share our excitement about what is being accomplished in this mission, and we humbly ask for your continued support. A gift to KCEF this Christmas season is truly a gift to the “last and least” children in Kenya—and their hope for the future.

Craig Hammon and Nancy Mering
On behalf of the KCEF Board

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