



KEEI Notes

The Newsletter of Kijana Educational Empowerment Initiative

Empowering Kenyan and American youth through school development projects and cultural exchange.

Summer/Fall 2004

Kijana:

"Youth, or Young Person"
(In the Swahili language)

*A person is a person
through other persons.*

-Bantu proverb

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Cookout For Kenya—Second Annual



On Saturday October 2nd at the Gumbo Limbo Pavilion at Carlin Park, from 11:00 to 2:00 p.m., we will hold our 2nd annual *Cookout for Kenya*. We hope to raise at least \$18,000 through the event, and will have African food, music and Kenyan arts and crafts to raffle and sell. Participants who raise at least \$100 will receive a limited edition T-shirt, uniquely designed for our event by Kenyan artist James Gakush, of Nairobi. We will also have gift baskets donated by Nutrition S'Mart of Palm Beach Gardens. Contributing attendees will also receive gift certificates for use in the store. We hope you will join us for the fun and festivities so we can continue our important work.

Summer 2004 Projects: New Successes

In July, Jim Cummings traveled to Kenya to follow-up on the fall projects (described in our last newsletter) and oversee several new developments. He found the Ebusiloli and Essaba communities brimming with excitement over their recent improvements. Not only were community members proud of the physical improvements, and our partnership, but the developing pride is translating into noticeable improvements in academics. Essaba Primary moved from 9th to 2nd in their division (44 schools) on last year's Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination. Ebusiloli Secondary has seen enrollment skyrocket from around 100 in 1998 to almost 400 students today - while improving from 6th to 4th place in their division (out of 12 schools) in 2003.

Local community members, and Jim Cummings, oversaw several new and continuing endeavors to help the schools reach their goals. Additionally, we expanded our assistance to a fifth school in the region, Essumba Primary.

At Ebusiloli Secondary, we purchased 400 new textbooks and a TV/VCR (to share with the primary). The TV and VCR were the result of the efforts and initiative of Mrs. Devine's 8th graders, of The Benjamin School in North Palm Beach, FL, who held bake sales to raise the amount.



Students and teachers look over their new books.

Mission

Kijana Educational Empowerment Initiative, a non-profit organization, promotes and cultivates youth empowerment through educational development, cross-cultural dialogue, and sustainable and environmentally friendly economic growth, among rural Kenyan school communities and American school communities.

At Ebusiloli Primary, we hired local artists to paint a large world map on the outside wall of the school. Additionally, we hired local carpenters to construct 50 additional desks for students. Each desk will seat 2-3 students. We repaired the foundations of two large water tanks at Ebusiloli Primary - providing for a dramatic increase in water supply for the school. We purchased approximately 100 English storybooks for primary student usage and purchased over 6000 tree seedlings to be planted as fencing for the primary and secondary schools.

At Essaba Primary, KEEI repaired the gutter system to allow for more efficient water catchment. We purchased and installed a solar panel system to provide energy to run **WorldSpace Radio** - which is owned by the school but previously reliant on battery usage.



Ebusiloli Secondary teachers stamp new textbooks in school computer room.

At Essumba Primary, KEEI purchased approximately 100 storybooks. Essumba is a typical primary school with hundreds of students and mud floors throughout. The community, like most in Kenya, has received little previous assistance from external sources. Jim visited other schools in the Bunyore region, as well, for consideration of future projects. We hope soon to expand our activities with these other communities.



Artists putting the final touches on world map



Ebusiloli Secondary students in class.

Cross-Cultural Endeavors



Ebusiloli Primary students and Head Teacher with letters from Mrs. Devine's 8th graders.

A fundamental goal of *Kijana Educational Empowerment Initiative* is to inspire cross-cultural interaction between American and Kenyan youth. We are proud of the early dialogue developing among students in Kathleen Devine's 8th grade advisees of 2003-2004 at The Benjamin School and primary students at Ebusiloli. In October of 2003, Jim Cummings spoke with primary students at Ebusiloli. He asked them to jot down some information about themselves. Returning to Florida, he shared the responses with Mrs. Devine's students. They enjoyed them greatly and eagerly wrote back. Embarking on a fundraising drive, her 8th graders held several bake sales to raise money for a TV and VCR so they could communicate more visually with the Ebusiloli students. With the more than \$500 raised, we were able to provide Ebusiloli with the TV and VCR. Thank you to Mrs. Devine and her students for their initiative and effort. We anticipate students in both institutions sharing through this medium in the near future and we look forward to updating you. Ebusiloli students also wrote back again to Benjamin students in the spring and Jim Cummings has carried the letters back to share.

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Your contribution is making a fundamental difference on two continents. Please visit our website for more information and photos of our activities.
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