



March 2014

JAMBO!

Girls Conference a BIG Success!



Our dynamic team of Kenyan women and girls pulled off the first-ever Kenya Keys Girls Conference this fall - without the help of the U.S. interns. United in love & determination, they brought together over 200 girls from nearby villages. The day

was filled with motivating speakers, drama, dance, poetry, and a showing of the film "Girl Rising." It was a powerful experience for all the girls. They left feeling strengthened, empowered, united, and ready to meet again next year! Thank you to an amazing female team! You are harbingers of change!

Look What's New:

Girl Rising Event: If you're in Utah, join us April 4th for a showing of Girl Rising: an unforgettable film featuring the strength of girls determined to rise. Click [here](#) for details.

A Gathering of Sponsors: We will welcome new sponsors to the Kenya Keys family at a gathering on April 13th. Click [here](#) for more information.

Facebook Updates: Keep your eyes on our [Facebook page](#), we will be sharing a lot of great updates in the coming weeks.

It's Never Too Late



The chance to sit for the national secondary exam is rare in rural Kenya. To do so as an adult is nearly unheard of. Until now. A group of women recently

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New Students & Sponsors

We are so excited to welcome 25 new secondary students to our Kenya Keys family.

We've been busy finding sponsors for each of these students.

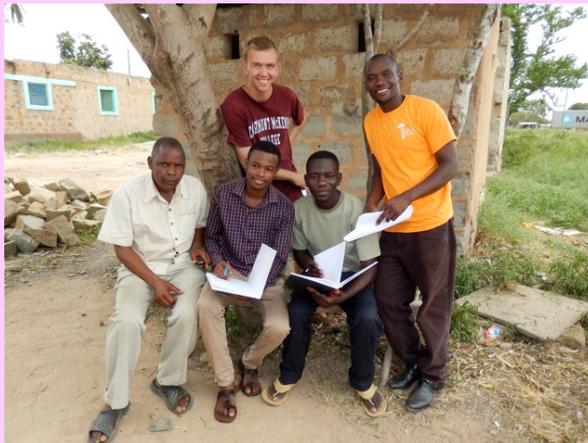
It's always a thrill to introduce an individual or a family to the student in Kenya that will become a part of their lives. There's nothing better! We offer our heartfelt gratitude to all our sponsors.

If you'd like to sponsor a student, contact Rinda Hayes:

approached Kenya Keys' assistant, Stephen Kabani seeking help to complete their education and sit for the exam. Kabani helped form an adult education class at Taru Primary School with five volunteer instructors-three of whom are Kenya Keys graduates! The class consists of 19 women and 8 men. Kabani says his dream is to see these mothers and fathers challenge their own children and improve the overall culture of literacy and educational achievement in the region.

Researching Opportunities in Kenya

What opportunities lie ahead for students in Kenya after they graduate? Jake Shimkus, 2010 Kenya Keys' Intern, returned to Taru this winter to research local business dynamics in the area. Bringing together college students sponsored by Kenya Keys and village leaders, Jake led a team that met with local business owners and conducted extensive surveys. The team identified important trends and significant challenges, but they also discovered hope and potential opportunities that can be leveraged to greatly improve economic conditions for individuals and the village at large. Read more [here](#).



Village Elder, Amos Jackson; college student Salim Hamisi; Jake Shimkus; college graduates, Samson Charro and Stephen Kabani

Just What I Always Wanted

We love this story from Christy Russell, one of our sponsors.

For years, my mother has made a donation of some kind as my birthday gift. This year, I asked her to sponsor a Kenya Keys student. I knew it would be a life-changing opportunity for the student. It was just what I wanted.



Christy Russell and her daughters meet with Rinda Hayes

Once I "met" our student, Mary, I was hooked. I couldn't stop smiling, and I couldn't stop thinking I could do a little more. My husband and I asked if Kenya Keys had another student we could sponsor, not as a present to us, but as our present to someone else.

My mother-in-law heard about it and decided she wanted to sponsor a student too. That feeling of meaningfulness is a little addictive, I think, and contagious. What an amazing thing that making a difference for someone else can be satisfying in a way that consuming something never can be. That feeling of

Fueling Education

We've started a new project on the GlobalGiving website. It's called "Fueling Education" and it provides light and food for students who sleep at Egu Primary School so that they have more time to study (using the light provided) for their national exam. Check it out [here](#).

Baba Brent in Kenya



Director Brent Hayes recently returned from a very successful trip to Kenya. The highlight was interacting with the 2013 high school graduates while participating in a Graduate Leadership Workshop. He also delivered needed supplies and software. Susan Nyamawi had this to say: "Brent is indeed so hardworking! We are amazed at his strength and dedication to Kenya Keys. His visit was such a blessing."

Want to see how much impact Kenya Keys is having?

[CLICK HERE](#)

Special Thanks to Deborah Shimkus!

Turning Awareness Into Action



What would you do if you found out that a college student on the other side of the world was starving? When 11 year-old Emma Kilgore learned that a Kenya Keys-sponsored college student, Cate Mashame, was struggling in her studies due to extreme hunger, she went right to work doing something about it. Learn all about Emma's efforts and the amazing success she had by reading Rinda's [blog](#).



Together with her son, Jake, Deborah Shimkus visited Kenya in December. While there, she conducted project assessment, interviewed students, and met with groups of women to discuss girl empowerment efforts. Her visit accomplished so many great things for Kenya Keys. We are very grateful for her dedication and hard work, as well as her passion for our work in Kenya!

Featured Graduate: Mercy Kamanza



Mercy working in the Taru Community Library

Born into extreme poverty, Mercy Kamanza's life would have been a daily struggle for survival. But six women in Arizona united to help Mercy enter secondary school. Mercy's bright mind and work ethic soon set her apart. She graduated in December from the prestigious Matuga Girls School. So what now? While awaiting her college career, she is volunteering as a Kenya Keys intern. Mercy is bringing new life to the Taru Community Library and she is teaching math and biology at the adult education class (mentioned above). She is a vibrant and dedicated mentor, encouraging students to achieve their dreams. Mercy told local students that, "through discipline you can achieve a lot in life."

We are so proud of all our 2013 graduates: 28 secondary students & 13 college students! We wish you the very best!

If you prefer, at any time, to opt out of receiving this newsletter, just go to the bottom of this email and click "SafeUnsubscribe". Hakuna Matata (no worries).

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DID YOU KNOW?

March 8th was International Women's Day (IWD). The theme for this year's IWD Celebration was *Inspiring Change*.

International Women's Day has been observed since the early 1900s.

Over 1,200 events were hosted to honor women on IWD on March 8th.

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