

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE



WORLD TEACHER AID

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KIMUGU
IN
SCHOOL
DATE
CLASS 1 2
DAY B G B

PRIMARY SCHOOL
BOARD
THE TRIBE AND SEX
ATTENDANCE RECORD

4	5	6	7	8
B	G	B	B	B

A NOTE FROM AMY & STU

Jambo,

As I write this, I have to pinch myself to believe the impact that we have had.

When I started this charity several years ago, I was hoping to build one school, but thanks to many generous donors like yourself, this small dream has now turned into 11 schools! That is 88 classrooms with over 3,000 kids attending school each day.

NONE of this would have happened without the support of our donors, family and our incredible team.

I'm proud of what we have accomplished. We are a small team but feel that together we have had a big impact around the world.

We have put this magazine together to highlight some of the staff, projects and community that we serve.

We hope you enjoy reading through the stories, to learn a little more about what we do.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

All the best for 2018.

Take care,

Amy and Stu McLaren

OUR DAUGHTER COMES TO KENYA

By: Amy McLaren



This past year I had the opportunity to take Marla, our six-year-old daughter to Kenya with us. This was a special moment for us as a family.

Being an entrepreneur that doesn't run a brick and mortar business, it's been hard showing our children what mommy does. She sees me speaking at engagements, which helps, but she doesn't see the schools in Africa and the kids we help.

So, taking her to Kenya this past summer was a special treat. We flew Ethiopian Airlines down to Addis Ababa, then into Kenya. Marla has been fortunate to travel with us a ton, so

she's a pro on flights and super easy to travel with.

While Marla had a wonderful time with me, her dad, the donors and the kids, there were still some things that I didn't really think about.

For example, of course the kids were fascinated with her hair and skin (which I knew would happen), but what I didn't think about was how she would feel as the kids surrounded her. She's so little and having 50 kids surround her, blocking out the sky and being jammed in the middle of it all, was a little overwhelming for her.

She didn't take to the malaria meds very well and was feeling under the weather the first couple of days. It took a few days for her to not to want to be close to me, or in my arms, but by the last day, I couldn't find her. She was wandering around looking for chickens in the community. It was so amazing to see.

Of course, one of my favorite parts was opening the school with her, and having her cut the ribbon, but maybe a close second was spending time chatting with the other mamas in the community with her by my side. You can see this in the picture below.

All in all, it was a wonderful first experience in Kenya for our family.

This visit was just a short one, but I hope in the next year to take both of our children back, and make it a regular trip. Maybe then they will have a better understanding of what I do. ■





CREATING BETTER COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PROJECT OWNERSHIP

By: Sam Wagunyu

In any human endeavor, you have to take an account of past experiences to learn and better yourself if you want to succeed. This is very true in the development sector, where such experiences inform and reshape how a program is run and implemented. In this regard, we have learned of various ways to increase community participation and ownership in all our projects.

Over the years as we've worked with different communities, we have noticed that the more a community is involved and invests in the project, the better the outcomes from the project. In our first school from seven years ago, we did not have a proper way to involve the community and essentially did everything for the community - even beyond the present scope of World Teacher Aid community involvement - such as sponsoring individual kids in the community. In doing so, we created donor dependency on the part of the community. We also did nothing to manage expectations in the community and the parents of the new school we built were less willing to contribute towards the school, even when it

was supposed to be transitioning to a normal public school where community is required to take over and run the school (like any other public school in Kenya). These community members expected a lot of the burden to be taken care of by the organization and its supporters. In the last five or more years, the school administration has had to work harder than necessary to bring expectations down and we also had to redefine our role and scope to correct the situation. Now, the school and community is functioning well after putting effort and energy into creating a collaborative working relationships.

Upon learning this lesson, we set out to change the way we engaged the communities and learned how to manage expectations. We also started to communicate clearly our role as a helping partner in these communities. We even changed the way our donors interact with these new communities when they come in to visit. For instance, we discouraged individual gifting and instead pushed for gifts that would benefit the whole school or community as a whole. We ini-



THIS WAS ALSO A GAUGE OF HOW EAGERLY THE COMMUNITY WANTED THE PROJECT TO TAKE OFF, BECAUSE WITHOUT SUPPLY OF WATER TO THE CONSTRUCTION, THE PROJECT COULD NOT START.



tiate projects that are sustainable and can run well after initial phase and investment.

In the past, we just told the community what we would do and what we would not do so that they could look for help somewhere else. Since 2016, in the Baraka Shalom community, we took a step further and made it a requirement that the community to do a part of the project that was critical to the project beyond the organizing. We looked for an activity that did not cost too much - since money is the one thing that is really scarce - but was more time consuming. In Baraka Shalom, we asked the parents and the community in general to fetch all the water to be used in the construction project. We also made sure to leave the community to their own ways on how to accomplish this goal because this task would be crucial to successfully running the school after construction was done. This was also a gauge of how eagerly the community wanted the project to take off, because without supply of water to the construction, the project could not start. This was also a test for the local leadership in mobilizing the community towards achieving a common goal. Good local leadership is an important factor in reaching success in a community project like this one.

At the end of the construction project, we realized that the project had done even better than we had anticipated or achieved in previous communities. The local leadership had developed a good rapport with people and successfully mobilized them to contribute towards the project. Even those without school-going kids contributed by fetching water for construction. They had also gained a real authority over school matters and were invested in seeing the school succeed. This changed what



we required from new communities and schools.

For this year in Asanyo, Sun Marco and Ndatho farms, we changed the activity to the digging of the pit latrines for the construction of school toilet facilities. This is more appropriate for these communities since fetching water is too time consuming and would slow down the construction project. Water collection is also too tiring, so it is better to hire professionals and find an alternative. This new community activity forces them to organize themselves and mobilize community members to help achieve the goal.

In Asanyo farm, some members decided to contribute some money (KES 300/\$3) and employ local youths to dig the latrines while others did the work themselves. Thus, the community was invested in the project financially or through

toiling. In Sun Marco, every family - even those not from IDP camp but from the neighbouring villages - had to help dig the latrines. When the work became harder than anticipated, they hired some expert diggers from the community and raised the little amount required to finish the job. The same is happening in Ndatho farm as the other construction project goes on.

In conclusion, this is an ongoing process and we will continue learning and refining as we do more projects and engage more communities. Engaging the community to contribute and invest in the project themselves creates better participation and ownership even after the initial phase. They become more involved parents and a community that wants the school to succeed without anyone creating unnecessary hurdles. ■



HONEYMOONING WITH WTA

By: Tennielle Carter

After spending the better part of a decade together, Andy and I got married in July 2016. We created a life together that fostered adventure and love. We adore travelling and prioritize heading off to adventure each year. It soothes our souls and brings us back down to earth while putting life into perspective.

When deciding on where to venture for our honeymoon, we felt that it was fitting as we began the next chapter of our lives, that we took this opportunity to not only submerge ourselves in a new culture, but to contribute in a new way. World Teacher Aid's Kenya trip had been on our bucket list for years, and it seemed like a fitting time in our lives to take on this journey.

As our van drove up to the Shalom Community, I remember this so vividly. The singing, the cheering and the sheer joy that was emanating from children running and dancing alongside the van. We stopped and exited, and were swarmed by hugs and high fives. I held hands with two young girls, tears streaming down my face as we walked together to the school. Meeting the community, and experiencing what World Teacher Aid had provided to them, was completely overwhelming and emotional on a level that neither of us had ever experienced. We toured each classroom as students would proudly show us their books and the development

in their learning. It was heartwarming to hear each of their stories, their dreams and goals. They had been given the gift of learning and opportunity in Kenya, something not every student is lucky enough to have. I could not believe that I was fortunate enough to be there at that moment, to inspire, empower and help, and this was only the beginning.

As we continued on, throughout Molo, we camped with the new community, Baraka Shalom. There, we worked on the final touches of the school before celebrating its grand opening. Sitting around the fire each night at our camp site with the rest of our crew, shedding tears and sharing stories of life and gratitude, we felt completely grateful and blessed to join WTA in their mission to foster relationships within the community and change lives.

Each day we experienced surreal moments of raw emotion, as each of us wrapped our heads around how important the presence of World Teacher Aid was in the communities, and what an incredible difference they have made in each family's life. Being a small part of something so enormously grand stays within each of our hearts today. In order to have change, you have to be the change, and to be alongside the visionaries of World Teacher Aid, who make this possible, was an extraordinary and untouchable feeling that we will always cherish. ■

A COUNSELOR'S REFLECTION

By: Elidah Wakanyi

It is a chilly morning, 6:45 a.m. to be specific, and the venue is Springs High School. Students are rushing to beat the 7:00 a.m. reporting time deadline. The teacher and prefect on duty are busy urging students to settle down and study after their morning chores (such as sweeping classrooms). In 15 minutes or so, minimal noise or movement is all one can witness and in one class, a teacher has reported to school early to start teaching.

Near the staffroom area, in the counselor's office, a counseling session is ongoing not disturbed by the activities going on. This has been how some of the days begin for the counselor. This was worked out due to the tight program of the school considering that it is a day school and the school curriculum has to be covered. However, for such a program to get established, it has been a long journey.

For the last 8 months, since the inception of the counseling program, it was a time of testing the waters and getting schedules right so as not to interfere with academic programs. Further, it was necessary to understand the students' needs and activities suitable for each age group in both Primary and High School.

It was not an easy journey but it was possible and just required a lot of learning and adjusting. First, rapport had to be created with both students and teachers. It was of the utmost importance for all to see the counselor as one of them and not a stranger and gain their trust. This necessitated getting into their world, learning the culture, understanding the practices and challenges that were part of their lives.

In Shalom Primary, I took the Life Skills lesson for the upper primary and this started the journey of bonding which gave way to trust. However, the Springs High School's timetable was quite tight thus I could not meet the students weekly. Individual counseling sessions were more of referrals but within two months, students had gained confidence and started to seek counseling.



After one month of reporting, the schools went on break. This provided a great opportunity to know the students better. Visiting them in their homes proved to be very fruitful. The students were shocked (if not surprised) when requested to give the directions to their homes. This changed their view and the students were more trusting, open and not ashamed or afraid to share on the challenges they faced. This can be understood especially among the High School students (between 16-20) who do not wish to reveal their lack and humble backgrounds.

At the same time, keeping tabs on the performance of the High school student assisted in two ways. One, learning their names and addressing them by them brought some joy when identified. Further, any improvement or drop in



performance was noted and students praised or cautioned respectively. This way, it helped identify students facing personal challenges that were hindering their performance. The administration was also very helpful in providing backgrounds of students as and when requested so as to understand students challenges and needs and assist them accordingly. This provided an opportunity to get to know the parents and counsel them when necessary.

The first Group Therapy (girls) was held from the end of May to mid-July. This comprised of the class 8 girls who will transition to High School next year. It was quite successful as the girls were educated on adolescence and challenges that come with the stage as well as how they could successfully handle the challenges. Myths about boy/girl relationships

and adolescence were also demystified.

It emerged that the Primary School counseling program worked better with groups and for individual counseling, informal counseling was the better choice. In the High School, formal individual counseling bore more results. The class sessions were more of identifying a need in a student and following him/her up for individual counseling.

By September (third and last term of the year), two group therapy sessions (girls) were successfully carried out for the class 7 girls. Plans are underway to have two group therapy sessions (boys) in the beginning of 2018. It is encouraging to report that the boys requested them as they were eager to be taught on their own and get to ask questions.

It is important to note that most students in both schools come from dysfunctional families. This includes but is not limited to single parents, separated, step-families, children living with grandparents, living on their own or left by either one parent or both parents on their own for long periods up to a month or more. Moreover, they are financially challenged and most of them have big families. It is therefore not a wonder that many parents are not in the know of how their children perform as they are engrossed in providing for the basic needs of the family.

One success story from the High School is of the Form 2 class. The counselor noted with concern that all students would fail the Business course (highest marks 30/100 or thereabout). This included even the best performing students! After engaging in discussion with the class, it emerged that the students had developed a poor attitude towards the teacher and never studied the subject!

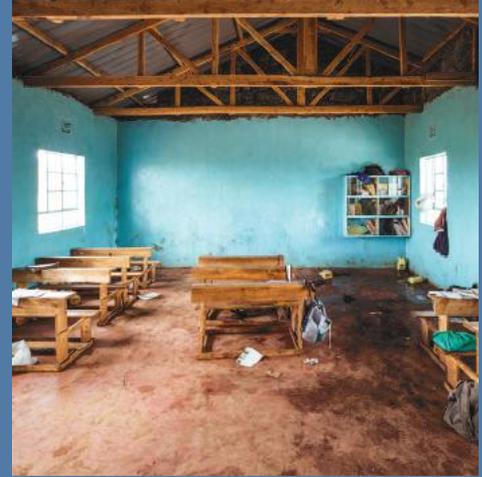
The counselor continuously engaged the students on the benefits of taking the course seriously, it was made clear that they were the losers and anyway, teachers are changed. Moreover, it would be sad if some dropped the course yet if they had studied, it would boost their final grade and open great opportunities for them. By the end of the year, the students had improved in their performance (highest marks above 60/100 or thereabout). In fact, some students had made up their mind that they would continue with the subject when they got to Form 3.



THE ADMINISTRATION WAS ALSO VERY HELPFUL IN PROVIDING BACKGROUNDS OF STUDENTS AS AND WHEN REQUESTED SO AS TO UNDERSTAND STUDENTS CHALLENGES AND NEEDS AND ASSIST THEM ACCORDINGLY.

Fast forward, the program has been growing and has now gained roots. There have been opportunities to visit parents and engage on how they could be more supportive of their children and encourage them to concentrate on their academics. The Chief (Government Official) has also been inclusive by inviting the counselor to guide in cases presented to him that touched on children. The community elders who work hand in hand with the chief have also been very helpful. They point out cases they have witnessed students who have been found engaging in unbecoming behavior and this provides a channel to counsel and follow up with a student for correction and assistance to reform.

Looking forward to great things ahead. ■



10 YEARS LATER... A MIGHTY PARTNERSHIP WITH VICDA AND WTA

By: Irene Ngatia Wairimu

WTA and VICDA started their partnership in 2011 in areas of community development projects. The first program to be initiated was a feeding program at Mama Tunza Children's Home, which cost around \$300 USD per month.

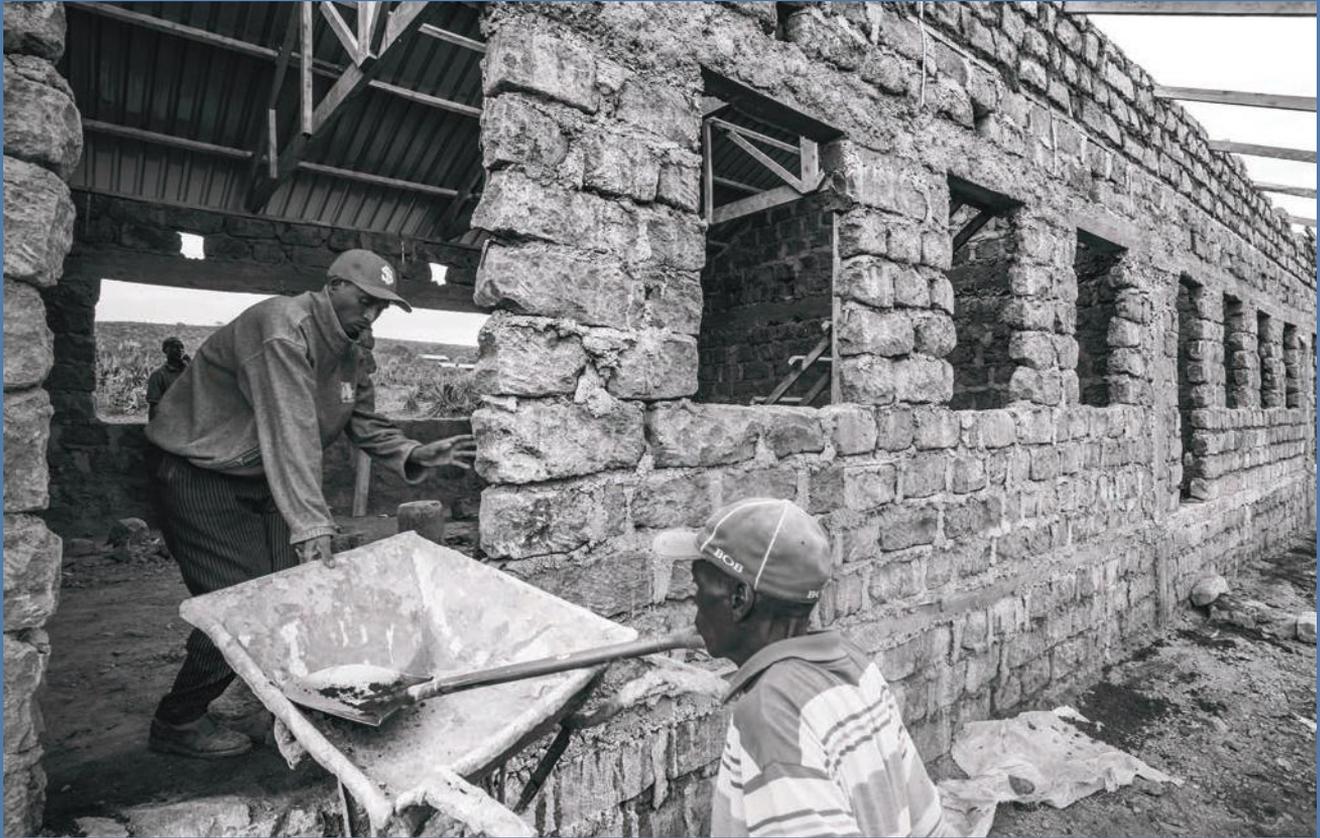
A few months later, WTA Founders, Amy and Stu (they were then boyfriend and girlfriend) were visiting Kenya and I took them to the Internally Displaced Families Resettlement land community of Shalom in Nakuru County of Kenya.

The community was in desperate need of daily living essen-

tials, since there were no social amenities (schools, dispensary, shops, water, power) in the area. The kids were all over the area playing and loitering around but they were supposed to be in school.

As we mapped the situation on the ground, the idea of building a school within this community was born. These two great individuals (Amy and Stu) had only \$300 USD in their account awaiting the next month feeding program.

I remember Amy asking me, "Irene, where are we going to get the rest of the funds to build a school?" I said to her,



“WE KNOCKED AT YOUR DOOR AND YOU OPENED FOR US WITH LOTS OF LOVE.” - UNKNOWN

“Amy!” and the vision of WTA began in that single conversation.

I could see a lot of passion in them and I had no doubt their hearts were in humanity (you can always tell whose heart truly is in it). After they went back home, they started the ball rolling!

Two months later, the construction of Shalom Primary School started. At that time, I thought everything was running smoothly until one of the local politicians (who represented the Rongai constituency as Member of Parliament) thought I had a political interest. He took me to the media houses accusing me of colluding with the government (he meant the government was funding the construction of the school) to disregard him.

It turned out to be opposition against the government, and I could watch them holding media conferences while I was quiet and still doing my work. After realizing I was not moved by the media, he decided to personally confront me when I visited the construction site. After a heated confrontation, I decided I was not backing down from the great work that was taking place. I called one of the neighbouring

politicians, and I briefed him on what was going on. He dealt with him as an individual until they later organized a meeting with the community, which erupted with public confrontation.

At this time, the government came in to give us all the support we needed and the Member of Parliament was left on his own. Having no choice but supporting our efforts. Apart from this initial trouble, the rest of the projects have been running smoothly. Looking back, thousands of children have accessed education, which is the foundation of fighting poverty in society.

On behalf of VICDA, I do not have enough words to thank you, as I watch the lives you have positively impacted. You have tirelessly donated your finances and time to visit the community you support. You have given hope to many innocent lives who were hopeless. ■

Be blessed,

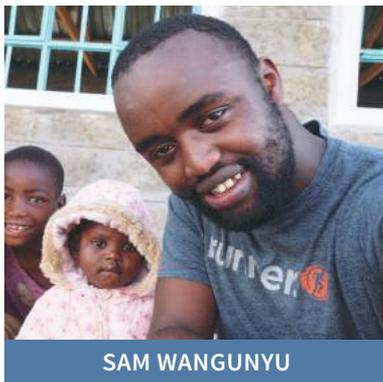
Drene Wairimu
Founder of VICDA

MEET THE TEAM

By: Carey Leader

Our team has grown over the year! We are very fortunate to be able to add a few additional members to our team this year. With the completion of our eleventh school this year, we realized we needed extra support. We have added a School Counselor, a Field Rep and a Web Developer.

KENYAN TEAM



3 words to describe yourself.
Energetic, creative, quiet.

Where did you go to school? What is your degree?
Egerton University Undergrad- BSC in Community Development.

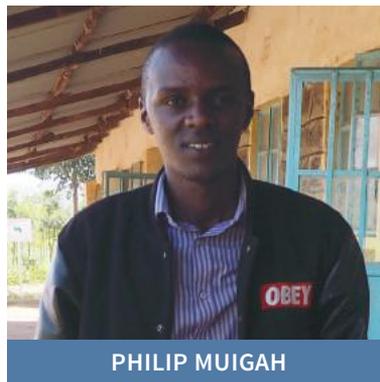
How long have you worked for WTA?
Oct 2013 to Sept 2016 - Part-time
Oct 2016 to Present – Full time.

Where are you from?
From Naivasha, Kenya. Currently residing in Nakuru Kenya.

What is your role for WTA?
Field Representative - Mainly managing relationships between WTA and beneficiary communities.

Favorite memory while working for WTA.
My favorite memory is holding for a meeting to establish Amani Kuresoi school in August this year. It was the fruit of a long process to get the school started and also the first step to having the school going on.

What do you like to do when you are not working for WTA?
I love taking nature and landscape photos.



3 words to describe yourself.
Ambidextrous, innovative, kind.

Where did you go to school? What is your degree?
I went Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Nairobi, Kenya. I pursued a degree in Bachelor of Commerce-Finance.

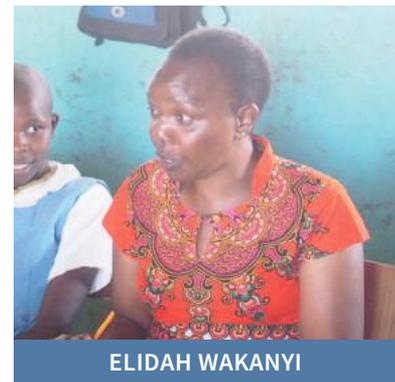
How long have you worked for WTA?
I have worked for WTA for a period of a month.

Where are you from?
From Nairobi, Kenya, currently residing in Nakuru, Kenya.

What is your role for WTA?
Field Representative aka the Ground Guru.

Favorite memory while working for WTA.
It was our visit to Safina Haji school. The view and the surroundings are phenomenal. Second, was our visit to Kuresoi, East of Nakuru (about 100km from Nakuru Town). The reception in the school was just so welcoming. We felt at home and also got a chance to talk to the students and indulge with them.

What do you like to do when you are not working for WTA?
Mostly hiking-going for nature walks. I'm also acquiring some knowledge on photography, video shooting and editing, watching historical movies and documentaries.



3 words to describe yourself.
Compassionate, loyal and organized.

Where did you go to school? What is your degree?
I went to University of Nairobi BA social Work and MA Counseling Psychology.

How long have you worked for WTA?
I have worked with WTA from March 2017.

Where are you from?
I am from Murang's County but residing in Nakuru County.

What is your role for WTA?
My role is School Counselor but sometimes becomes mother role and is actually lovely.

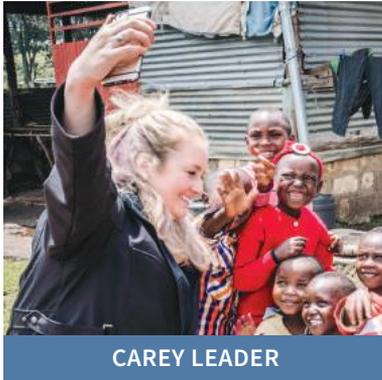
Favorite memory while working for WTA.
My great memory so far while working at WTA is the first few weeks when I settled in Nakuru and where I was living there was no running water. I had to carry a Jerry can of water on my back after work. It reminded me of the days I was growing up in the village.

What do you like to do when you are not working for WTA?
While not working for WTA, I love listening to Christian music, reading or watching movies. I want to start a new hobby of making shaggy mats.

“THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH STAYING SMALL.
YOU CAN DO BIG THINGS WITH A SMALL TEAM.”

Jason Fried

NORTH AMERICAN TEAM



CAREY LEADER

3 words to describe yourself.
Loyal, kind, creative.

Where did you go to school? What is your degree?
Southeastern University - Lakeland, FL.
Undergrad - B.A in Church Ministries and Social Work / Graduate- Masters of Ministerial Leadership

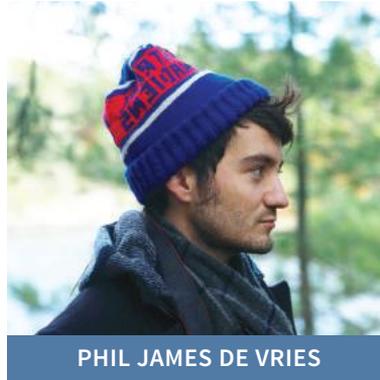
How long have you worked for WTA?
Dec. 2015 Part-time
July 2016 Full-time

Where are you from?
The good ole' USA - currently residing in Ash Grove, Missouri.

What is your role for WTA?
Operations Manager a.k.a. Managing Ninja of the day to day operations.

Favorite memory while working for WTA.
My favorite memory is Amy, Irene and I's Rickshaw adventure in India to raise funds for WTA. We drove a rickshaw over 1200 KM on the crazy streets of Southern India. We were able to raise over \$10,000 for WTA. It was a great adventure and it was even sweeter one to raise funds for WTA.

What do you like to do when you are not working for WTA?
I love to travel! I am always up for an adventure. I am teaching myself calligraphy and hope to start a business with my designs.



PHIL JAMES DE VRIES

3 words to describe yourself.
Compassionate, ambitious, an amicable.

Where did you go to school? What is your degree?
I attended the University of Guelph, graduating with a BA in Psychology, and Humber College in Toronto with a diploma in web programming.

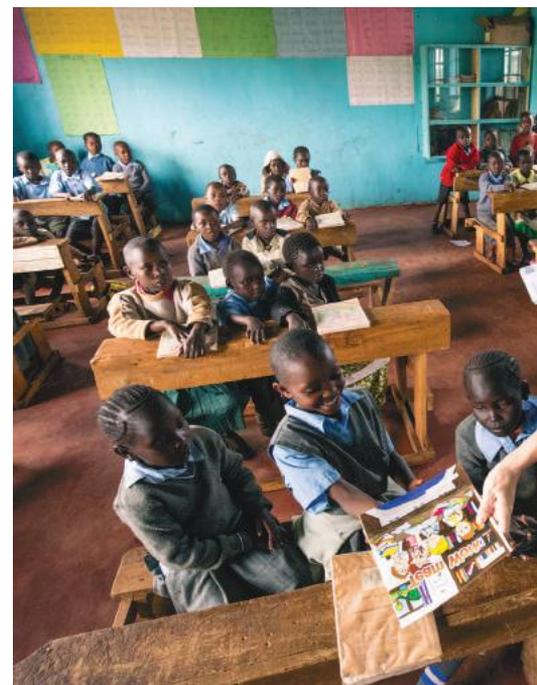
How long have you worked for WTA?
I am brand new, having just started with WTA in November 2017.

Where are you from?
I am originally from Toronto, Canada but currently living in Montreal.

What is your role for WTA?
I am working as web developer for WTA to help further develop and grow their digital assets.

What are you looking forward to working on for WTA?
I'm looking forward to helping WTA revitalize their Write to Give project and make it easier for individuals to contribute their personal stories.

What do you like to do when you are not working for WTA?
I run a small digital record label and record my own music as well; I also like to spend time in the more rural parts Northern Ontario & Quebec.



Q&A with Russell Brunson, ClickFunnels

By: Carey Leader



Tell me how you first got involved in with WTA.

My close friend and former business partner at the time, Stu McLaren, and his wife, Amy, were starting a charity. I did not know a lot about it but I was friends with Stu & Amy. They asked me if I would participate in a few interview calls. We did it a few times and I helped promote the calls. This was ten years ago. We were able to raise a pretty good bit of money. It was not a ton but back then it was a ton to all of us. I also helped with an end-of-the-year promotion to continue to help raise funds. Our friendship continued to grow

and I have so much respect for Amy & Stu. Later they told me, if I wanted to leave a greater impact and see the impact that I had been able to help with, that I need to go to Kenya. This was their very first donor trip Kenya. I thought about it and I decided not to go. They made a video for me with all the kids outside my classroom. The kids in the video were thanking me for all I have done. I then realized I missed a really important opportunity. The next trip, I went back with them and had a life-changing experience that fuelled the passion I have for the charity.



Why is supporting a non-profit important for you and your business model?

We get into business to have the time and freedom and eventually make more money, but the impact becomes more important. Impact on our clients, employees is important but to be able to leave an impact on others is also important. It's a good thing to do and gives us a chance for our whole company to get involved. It feels good helping entrepreneurs through our company, but also helping kids in third-world countries to get education feels really good. It is also important for our community to get involved. We have had WTA to our events. It allows everyone at our events to get to know WTA and be a part of this movement. It is a very special thing to be a part of.

What is your favorite memory from your experience on our Donor Trip?

It would be our second time going back to Kenya. My wife, Collette, really connected with some girls in one of the communities. One in particular was Jane. There was a four-year gap in between our two trips. Collette had kept communication with Jane during those four years. When we went back, we were unsure if we were going to be able to connect with Jane while we were there. During the welcoming ceremony at Shalom, Jane walked in and Collette started bawling her eyes out. Jane started crying. We all hugged each other. To see the transformation that took place during the four years was so magical!

What has surprised you most about working with WTA?

The thing that has surprised me the most was how right Amy & Stu were about the mission of WTA. The first trip we went on, I remember seeing all these kids who were hun-

gry and going without many needs. Honestly, I was really frustrated the first two days. I asked Amy & Stu why we were spending money building schools rather than feeding the kids. The infinite wisdom of Amy & Stu took us to two orphanages. At the first orphanage, there was a lack of education and it showed in the sustainability of the orphanage. They were dependent on government and private donor assistance. Their main focus was just keeping the kids fed. The second orphanage was the opposite.

The Director had a background in education. She instilled education as a key value in their life. I saw how education transformed the kids. Their education helped develop a place of sustainability through agriculture. They were not hungry. They had nice clothes. Their education provided them life skills that will help sustain them for their lives. I realized that Amy & Stu were right. When education is a key component it becomes the magic behind it all.

What advice would you give to someone wanting to give back to a non-profit, whether it be personally or with their business?

It is one of the things that you will never miss the money. The impact it has is crazy. It literally changes lives. The money that you spend on something can be given to transform someone's life. That is what impact is really about. The products and services we sell have impact but the bi-products can have huge impact as well. My belief personally is when you do those things and help other people, God or the universe will bless you for it. It's worth doing because your life will be blessed. The blessings you will receive will not make you think about the sacrifice you made when you gave. The blessings are worth the giving! ■



THE 8-4-4 SYSTEM AND ITS EFFECT WITHIN OUR COMMUNITIES

By: Philip Muigah

The birth of the 8-4-4 system began in 1985 after then president Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi proposed the system to be implemented within the education sector. The system requires one to go through eight years in primary school, four years in secondary school and another four years in University. Since the introduction of the system, the curriculum has been revised from time to time.

Students were required to first go through kindergarten where they would be trained on how to read, write and build social relations with other students. The students who had the ability to comprehend what they had learned would be admitted into primary school at the age of at least six years old. They would later be subjected into a curriculum of nine subjects namely Mathematics, English, Swahili, Science, Music, Arts and Crafts, GHC (Geography, History and Civics), Home Science and later, Computer Education. The subjects were later on reduced to five subjects. After eight years of rigorous intensive training and multiple examinations, one would be subjected to a national examination also known as the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE). The students who performed well would be later incorporated into Government schools or Private Schools. The poor-performance students would be placed into technical colleges where they would study carpentry, masonry and mechanical work. Other students would opt for other apprenticeship solutions from friends, mentors or peers.

While in secondary school, one would study various subjects before sitting for a national examination at the end of four years. This was all done in a quest to find which particular field one would be best suited for. Science in secondary school was divided into Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students would hence be recommended to choose two sciences from the above, compulsories (Mathematics, English and Physics), a humanity (either Geography, Christian religious education, Islamic religious education or History) and an art (Home Science, Agriculture, Computer Studies, or Business Studies). Well-established schools would also have



the option of choosing Aviation as an art. A national examination also known as the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education would take place. Its main goal was to enable individuals to establish their core strength and be aware of their weaknesses. Students who attained a C+ grade would be absorbed into government or private Universities. They would later be offered different courses according to their strength subjects which are also referred to as clusters. The other students who did not qualify to attain the minimum threshold set would opt into colleges, tertiary institutions or minimum-wage jobs.

Many questions have been posed in the past with regard to the effectiveness and efficiency of this system towards



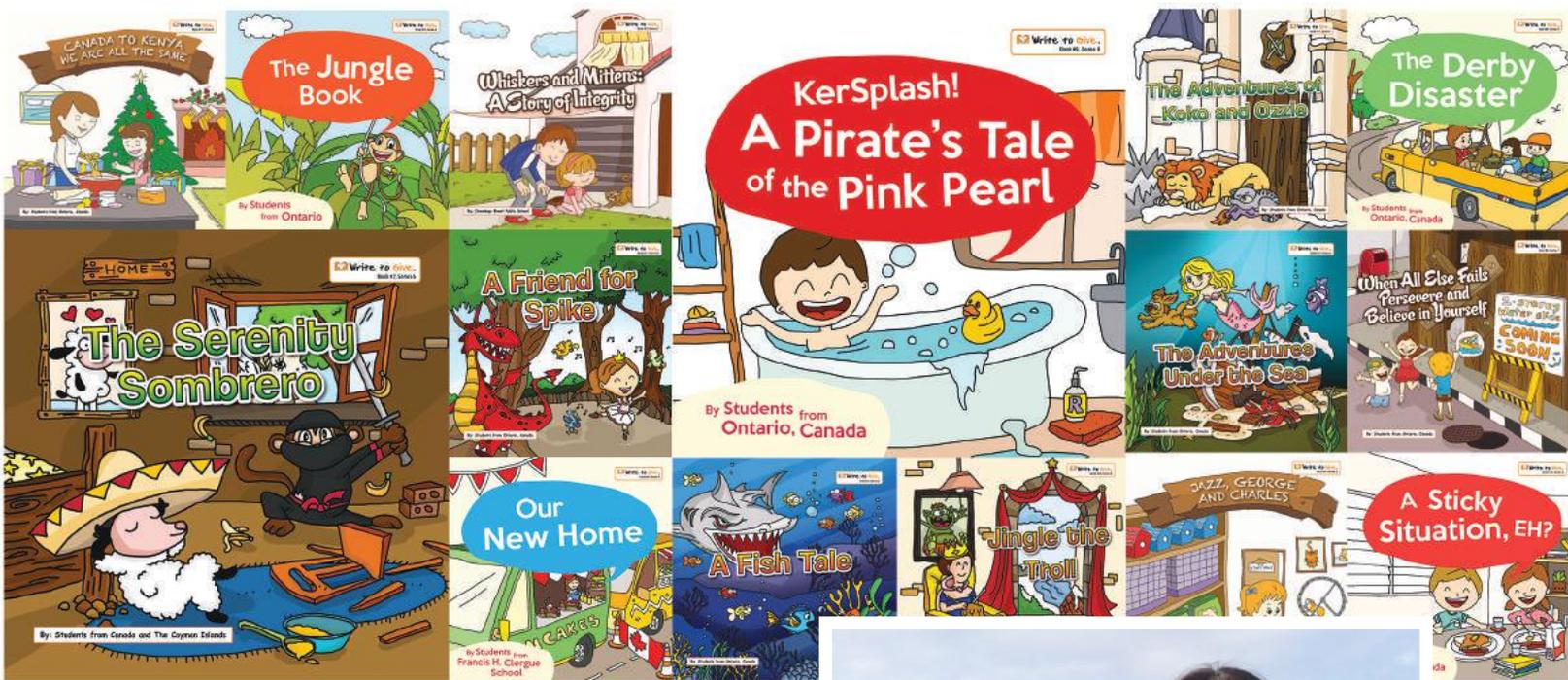
nurturing individuals within the society. The biggest puzzle is on the way the 8-4-4 system deems many individuals as failures on the basis of one examination. There has also been a major concern on the need to study for so many years in the quest of attaining knowledge, most of which is deemed unnecessary in individual personal growth. Issues such as corruption have also paved the way in giving slots to wealthy individuals rather than rewarding hard work. The government has from time to time revised the syllabus, with the aim of establishing an essential system that works for students from all walks of life. The challenge of inadequate schools and learning institutions especially as the level of education cascades upwards has also been a major concern. On the brighter side, individuals have attained basic know-

ledge, and also the ability to articulate on issues affecting the society.

Our community schools are also incorporated when it comes to the 8-4-4 system. Poverty has been one of the major effects leading to the poor performance of some students. This is shown by the need of our students to consider survival a priority over education. This has resulted into John opting out of education and into other minimum-wage paying jobs. Some students are forced to take up other household roles, while their parents are busy trying to fend for their families in a quest to make ends meet. Past trauma may also be a major cause of bad performance. Lack of adequate resources such as electricity, efficient reading and writing materials may also play a big role in our school performance.

World Teacher Aid has taken up the responsibility of ensuring that these students have well-equipped facilities for better learning. In some areas, they have been subjected to offering guidance and counseling services not only to the school but also to the community at large. The schools have also taken up their roles in ensuring that parents embrace the need for education by involving them in the day-to-day running of the schools. Our hope is that all these efforts will boil down towards ensuring that John achieves the best grades and becomes a reliable individual within the society. In the words of Aristotle, "Educating the mind without educating the heart, is no education at all." ■





WRITE TO GIVE

By: Amy McLaren

Write to Give has produced hundreds of books now, and we are extremely thankful for Keller Chin! Chin is our Graphic Designer and creates our books covers. Chin is a mother of one and a Freelance Designer based in Malaysia.

Check out this small interview I did with Chin:

How long have you been an entrepreneur?

I have been an entrepreneur for 6 years now. It started with my little humble online business, Keller Homemade while I was also attached to a company as a Graphic Designer. Right after I got married (4 years ago), I decided to go full time designing from home. And right now, I am juggling between my passion in design, and helping my husband in his coffee café.

When did you start working on projects for WTA/W2G?

I started working for WTA/W2G in March 2014.

How many book covers have you done?

I have done 77 book covers.

Do you do all your book covers by hand?

I use Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop in all my designs.

How long does it take to do one book cover?

It takes approximately 3-4 hours to design one book cover.



Where do you currently live?

I live in Malaysia.

Are you involved in any other entrepreneurial projects?

Yes, I do. Just to name a few, I have worked with a Singaporean home baker who wants to launch her own website for easy ordering. I am also currently working with an American client on his e-museum site of really good emails that have been circulating around.

What is your favourite thing about being an entrepreneur?

I love the flexibility of working at my own pace and time, as well as the extra time I get to spend with my family and my 18 month old baby. ■

THE BRAVE STORY

By: Amy McLaren & Carey Leader

In January 2017, three of us left our families to adventure through India. This was not an organized tour. This was an epic 1200-kilometre adventure on a motorized rickshaw (a glamorized lawnmower with a backseat).

This adventure was designed to raise money for World Teacher Aid, a Canadian charity that helps bring education to students in rural communities of Kenya.

The three women on this trip included myself (Amy), Founder of World Teacher Aid and proud mom of two children under five, Carey, a southern gal from the USA and Operations Manager for World Teacher Aid, and Irene, our NGO partner in Kenya who left her fiancée to drive over 1200 kilometres from Chennai to Travindrim.

Together we navigated our way through the insane streets of many cities, to the countryside and endless fields. We got lost many, many times. Some days we drove for 12 hours, trying to locate our destination each day. We broke down, ran out of gas all while eating local cuisine and meeting some incredible, very helpful people along the way. We cried, laughed and encouraged each other to keep going when at times we were ready to give up.

Together we were Brave.



We knew this would be a great opportunity for us to help raise funds for World Teacher Aid. We decked out our rickshaw with the WTA logo. It was a great way to start conversations. We had many people stop us at gas stations to take pictures and ask us about WTA. We were able to share our story and mission. It was incredible to be able to share about the lives that have been changed through education.

Many of our friends followed our journey through Facebook and Instagram. We would like to thank all those who encouraged us. Thank you for all the messages we received! We truly felt them along the way.

We would also like to send a thank you to all those who helped us raise funds for WTA. We would like to thank Lisa DiGeso and Erin Brule, from the Milky Way – A Photographer's Resource, for their generous donation of \$10,000. We were blown away by this generosity! Thank you to all that supported us!

Are you ready to be Brave?

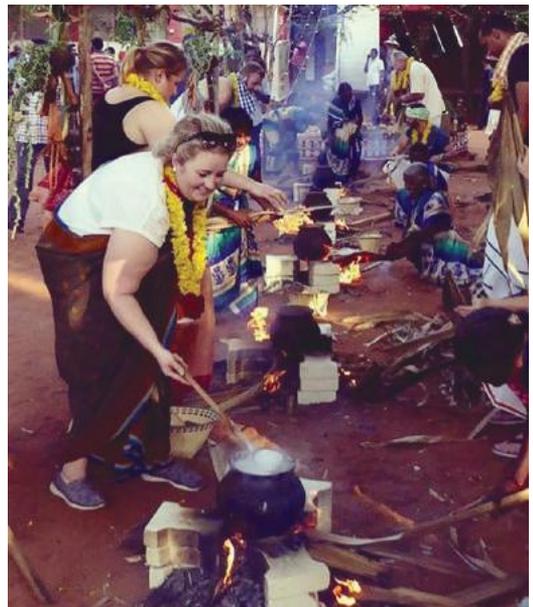
Be inspired to be Brave to step out and try something new. Your braveness will inspire others!



“

*WE WOULD LIKE THANK
LISA DIGESO AND ERIN
BRULE, FROM THE MILKY
WAY - A PHOTOGRAPHER'S
RESOURCE, FOR THEIR
GENEROUS DONATION OF
\$10,000.*

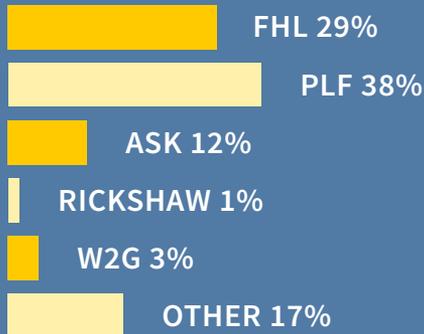
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FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN

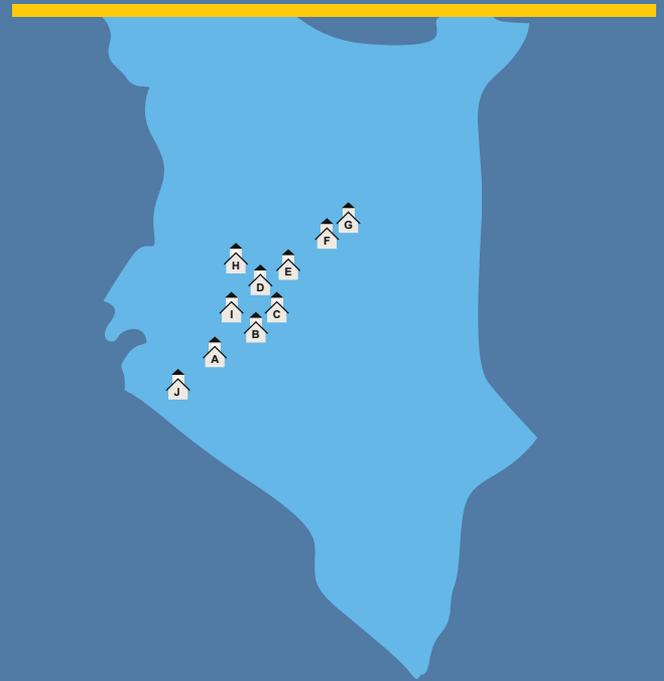
By: Carey Leader

2016 REVENUE

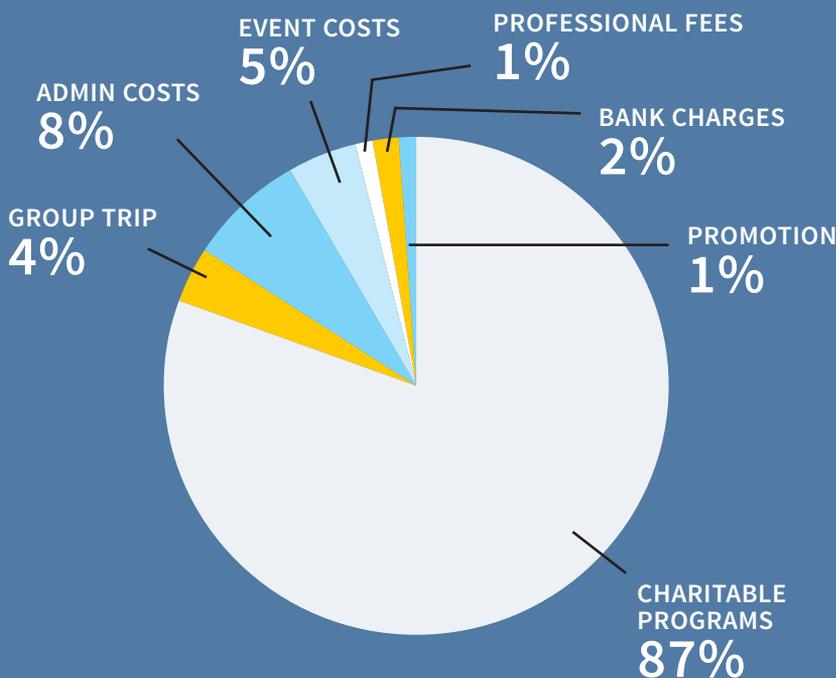


TOTAL: **\$720,504**

SCHOOLS IN KENYA



2016 EXPENDITURE



- A Baraka Shalom Primary School Molo
- B Shalom Primary School
- C Sinendet Primary School Lemolo B
- D Kimugul Primary School Lemolo A
- E Bright Hope Lemolo Secondary School
- F Safina Haji
- G Safina Haji Primary
- H Sun Marco Primary
- I Ndatho Farm Primary
- J Amani Kuresoi Primary School

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND WTA TEAM

By: Carey Leader

THE BOARD



Amy McLaren



Ellyn Bader



Jeremy Laidlaw



David Frey



Braden Douglas



Nancy McKen



Collette Brunson

THE TEAM



Amy McLaren
Co-Founder



Stu McLaren
Co-Founder



Carey Leader
Operations Manager



Kelly Roloson
*Gibb Widdis
Accountant*



Irene Ngatia Wairimu
NGO Partner - VICDA



Elidah Wakanyi
School Counselor



Samuel Wangunyu
Ground Representative



Philip Muigah
Field Representative



Phil James de Vries
Web Developer