

Willage Volunteers Quarterly

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A Note from Founder and Executive Director, Shana Greene

Hello all,
Moving into our 7th year, I reflect on our work together. Describing VV in a nutshell has never been easy. Change within village communities can be difficult to document and, therefore, when someone asks how many people have been affected by VV, I can only smile.



VV is a grassroots network of partners uniting local and international volunteers, donors, NGOs and local leaders from around the globe. Together, we face rural development challenges by reaching toward sustainable solutions and our work takes many forms. Making a global difference is as simple as showing up, lending a hand, reading a book to a child or planting a seed. That said, please accept my most sincere gratitude to all who have "shown up" and to the many volunteers and donors who share our vision.

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Emmanuel Tasur wraps a student of Kenya's Sirua Aulo Academy in a quilt made by Dawn Brislawn of Seattle, WA.

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QUILTS OF LOVE FROM DAWN BRISLAWN

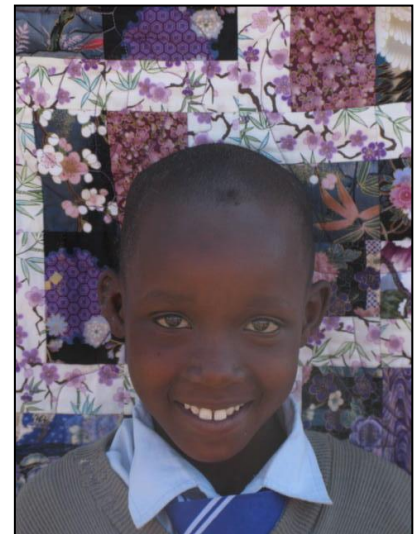
KENYA

Dawn Brislawn of Seattle, WA sponsors two attendees of Kenya's Sirua Aulo Academy, the youngest siblings in an orphan-headed household. In fact, Dawn and the employees at Getty Images of Seattle collectively sponsor 20 children. Compelled to do something more, something personal, Dawn wanted her two children to know how special they are.

As a quilting hobbyist, Dawn put her talent to use. She chose brightly patterned fabrics of blue, purple, pink, yellow and green, and began crafting two works of art stitched with love. When the second was finished, she continued on until four gorgeous quilts were made.

Emmanuel Tasur, Director of Namunyak Maasai Welfare, chose two additional children in need to receive these special gifts. One child was new to Emmanuel's school while the other was sponsored by another Getty employee. Once chosen, Dawn embroidered each child's first and last name on the front of each quilt and sent them to Sasha Rabsey, a Village Volunteer traveling with her family to Kenya.

On a picture-perfect morning under a blue sky, the unsuspecting student body of Sirua Aulo Academy met outside for their usual 10 a.m. tea. Before returning to class, Emmanuel gathered all of the children around him. One by one, he called out four names.



(Continued on page 2)

A Note from Founder and Executive Director, Shana Greene Cont'd.

While it is impossible to adequately acknowledge the many people who have contributed to villages over these past six years, each newsletter highlights some incredible participants and programs.

And then there are those people you don't read about. At the top of my list is our hard working and talented Erin Jergensen; our alumni volunteer, newsletter editor and social network moderator, Kim Clune; those who volunteer their time and skills in our office and our VV Board.

With all of the trials of running an organization, I thank you all for providing me with moments of sheer joy and camaraderie. I welcome this new year with excitement and a sense of hope for every project that lies ahead.



Best wishes
Shana

Baby Tasur Expected in December!

Lillian and Emmanuel Tasur of Kenya's Namanyak Maasai Welfare are expecting a child in December!



Along with the exciting news came this note from Emmanuel, "Just in case we are blessed with a baby girl, she will be Shana Noirin Naisula!" The child's pending first name has been chosen in honor of Village Volunteers Executive Director, Shana Greene. ☞

The first child, upon hearing her name, appeared surprised and timid but, as Emmanuel opened the quilt with her name on it, her eyes grew wide with delight. The other children followed suit. Emmanuel delivered Dawn's specific instructions; these quilts are to be used and snuggled in daily, not hung on a wall or saved for special occasions. He then wrapped each child in their gift and hugged them as they smiled and giggled.

The excitement was contagious among the classmates. According to Sasha, "As each child was called, the chatter amongst the rest of the children rose. After a few words of appreciation, the children ran back to class with the quilts still wrapped around their bodies." As they ran, their classmates ran with them trying to see and feel the treasures Dawn had sent.

Although making a difference was a pleasure in and of itself, Dawn also received a gift in return. According to Sasha, "All the female teachers commented on the quality of her craftsmanship and the lovely colors." This is a high compliment coming from a culture that takes great pride in the quality of their beadwork. By doing what she loves, Dawn is living proof that we all have personal ways to give using the skills we have already mastered – and that, in giving, we receive. ☞



Dr. Lisa Coico, Dr. Addae Mununkum and Dr. Richard Coico open the College of Integrative Medicine in Kumasi, Ghana.

THE COLLEGE OF INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE OPENS GHANA

Based on an article by Ariel Swartz

Dr. Addae Mununkum, a cardiothoracic surgeon and native Ghanaian, has dedicated his career to facing a national dilemma, Ghana's lack of medical doctors. As the Ministry of Health reports, there are merely 1,500 physicians available to treat 22 million citizens. The majority of the sick and injured are left to seek help from one of 250,000 traditional herbal practitioners. Without formal training institutions, almost all traditional herbal practitioners lack regulation or science-based knowledge.

Dr. Addae's mission was to open the College of Integrative Medical Science (CIMS) in Kumasi, the first of its kind, promoting a holistic and pluralistic form of health care through integration of western allopathic and traditional African herbal medicine. Drawing recent interest, Dr. Addae's vision was realized. Traveling through Village Volunteers in July, Doctors Lisa and Richard Coico volunteered to help Dr. Addae establish an important strategic alliance and bring the college into being.

Finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding, the doctors bridged two medical schools, Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah University and America's Temple University. This bridge allows for accreditation of degree programs in integrative medicine by the National Accreditation Board, providing exchanges between both schools, enhancing levels of scientific contribution, and offering support of teaching materials and laboratory equipment. (Continued on page 3)

Where in the World is Ramesh Nath Sharma?

Ramesh Sharma is the director of the Sustainable Agriculture Development Program (SADP) located in Pokhara, western Nepal.



The mission of the organization is to promote sustainable agriculture and improve the livelihood of farmers and their communities.



Click for stunning Nepal photos by Brian Whitmire.

Ramesh began SADP because the excessive use of chemicals in his agro-based country have become hazardous to human beings and the environment. "Due to this, soil condition is degrading day by day. Without healthy soil, production cannot be increased. I have been struggling in this sector for more than 15 years. There are so many challenges."

What Ramesh finds most difficult is convincing farmers that organic farming is best long-term because healthier soil increases production and provides healthier food. Still, Ramesh remains hopeful. "I have done many awareness campaigns so I could convince the farmers. Some of them have already started organic farming."

Many volunteer opportunities exist in Nepal in organic agriculture, teaching English, orphan/ refugee care and more. Ramesh says, "If we are able to get more volunteers, certainly we will achieve our goal." ☞

CIMS joins together medical and herbal practitioners, pharmacists, nutritionists, psychologists, and midwives. These health care professionals will participate in class-based courses, research partnerships, and collaborative opportunities. They will also offer clinical services and cutting-edge natural and conventional medical care to the citizens of Ghana.

CIMS commits to providing accessible health care to the nation and is devoted to initiating a sustainable health care system across the continent. To volunteer or to learn more, contact shana@villagevolunteers.org or call 206-577-0515. ☞



From left to right: Juliet Resiato Ampani, Georgina Nashipai, Hilda Akinyi Ogweny, Kitpek Nadupoi Beatrice, Nancy Atieno Olambo and Sialo Sankei.

THE BUTTERFLY PROJECT RECIPIENTS 2009

KENYA

We are incredibly excited to announce the recipients of the 2009 Butterfly Scholarships pictured above. These special women have been chosen for their maturity, motivation, discipline, ability, and commitment to serving their communities. The Butterfly Project scholarship fund, founded by Carole Peccorini in 2005, creates college opportunities in education and nursing for promising young East African women with no financial means of fulfilling their dreams. To learn more, or to donate to The Butterfly Project, visit VillageVolunteers.org.

Sasha Rabsey, while volunteering at Namunyak Maasai Welfare, conducted the following interviews. They have been edited for length. You can read the original interviews covering all of the incredible Butterfly Project scholarship recipients at VillageVolunteers.org.

Juliette Resiato Ampani



Juliette speaks in a lovely high whisper about her desire to be a primary school teacher. Her inspiration and perseverance come from several teachers she had in school. Working to improve her Maasai community through education is very important to her. Supporting her family with her six siblings is equally important since her father died and her mother does not work. Fortunately, Juliette's family is supportive of her wish to continue her studies at a nearby teacher's college. After two years of study, Juliette would have a teaching certificate allowing her to teach at the primary and middle school levels.

Juliette prefers to attend school in the fall rather than to marry an older man who has made a proposal to her family. She has seen too many of her schoolmates suffer female circumcision, marry by the age of 14 and have families to raise. She does not want this same fate for herself. By becoming a teacher, Juliette hopes to inspire other Maasai girls in her community, showing them that they too have the choice to live their dream.

(Continued on page 4)

Juliette Resiato Ampani Cont'd

From Juliette's application:

"I seek to be a servant of all. Getting the skills to impart knowledge on young children is a God-given gift and I hope to assist as many children as I could through my education profession. I will cherish to encourage boys and girls in equal measure to put more emphasis on education. I want to help my community to come out of the illiteracy tag that they have held for a long time and move them to realize that they as equal to the task of education like the rest of the communities in the country." ~Juliette



Georgina Nashipai

Georgina, with her beautiful smile, is a very determined 22 year old. Born into a polygamist Maasai family, her father is married to four wives, each having 10 children for a grand total of 40 siblings. Growing up, Georgina saw the boys in her immediate and extended family given priority in education. However, she refused to relinquish her desire to learn. Attending the local public school where education was substandard, Georgina had the motivation to study hard. She sat for the competitive National Exams at the age of 13 and earned her place in a local high school.

When Georgina passed the exam, her father dashed any hope of moving forward. Georgina was to undergo the painful and often fatal process of female circumcision required for marriage. Her marriage was arranged with an older man in the village and she was to stay home to raise a family. She refused the circumcision by running away, returning to marry only after a community support group convinced her father to let her come home without having the procedure done.

Once married, Georgina attended high school but she became pregnant at the age of 14. Fearing her education was through, she was deeply saddened. Fortunately, her mother cared for the baby while Georgina continued with her classes. Then, in her second year of high school, Georgina became pregnant with her second child. Feeling completely defeated, Georgina thought she would never make it to University. But for her mother's support and guidance, Georgina could not have finished high school. She has since had a third child.

Inspired by teaching her own children, Georgina began teaching the nursery level at Sirua Aulo Academy of Namunyak Maasai Welfare, a partner of Village Volunteers. Georgina offers her children and students love, individual attention and patience. She remains acutely aware of each child's strengths and weaknesses, always finding ways to engage all students, including the two special needs children in her class. With her Butterfly Project Scholarship Georgina is devoted to being the best mother and teacher that she can be.

From Georgina's application:

"For a long time, there has been a desire in me to transform our community to the current world standards. It is for this reason that I thought of the best route towards realizing this dream. The road towards an informed decision of how best I can approach this matter has never been smooth. On my day and nights of hassling, I arrived at a point I considered would be the best to achieve and attain the change I would wish to be noted in my community. A 'profession', I realized can bring an instant change to the entire community through advising them on the importance of education to our young generation. Having been a practicing teacher for some time now, I realized that I can change the entire society whom I will be handling. Through the teaching profession, I intend to develop, a self-reliant child, wholly molded and ready to approach the radically changing technologies with competence and diligence. With this urge in me, I choose to be a teacher!!" ~Georgina



A Special "It Takes a Village Party!"

Executive Director, Shana Greene, just returned from New York where her son, Jonathan Greene, and dear friend, Elizabeth Woodbury Kasius, hosted an "It Takes a Village Party!" to benefit Village Volunteers.



While conducting a successful silent auction and as friends served food and wine representing each VV country, Elizabeth, Jonathan, and their band Heard put on an impressive performance playing jazz and world music with an African flair.



A very special meeting also took place that night as Shana and VVQ's designer and editor, Kim Clune, met for the first time. They have worked together for over two years, phone each other weekly (if not daily), and have become each other's family - yet they had never laid eyes on each other until this exciting visit.



Online Resources:



Get Connected!

- VillageVolunteers.org
- [VV's Volunteer Network](#)
- [Volunteer Journals](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)

Manage Your VVQ Subscription

[VVQ Subscription Management](#)

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Umoja ni nguvu

A Swahili proverb meaning
"Unity is Strength"



In these difficult times, Village Volunteers is facing operational challenges. Even a small donation toward

administration costs helps our small staff support programs in Kenya, Ghana, India and Nepal. Please consider a donation today.

VillageVolunteers.org

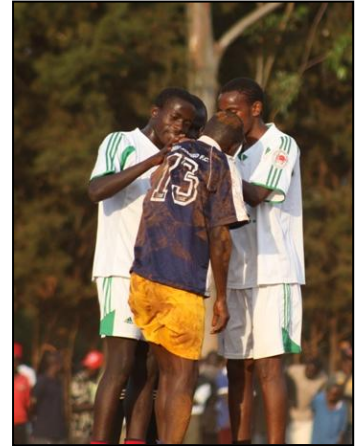
KickitwithKenya



KICK IT WITH KENYA: A HUGE SUCCESS

KENYA

We are proud to announce that Kick it with Kenya (KIWK), Village Volunteers' partner program, was an *overwhelming* success this year. Patrick Adoyo, program director at Dago Village, hosted the week-long soccer conference, during which participating youth were provided with public health, HIV/AIDS, and environmental education. A grand total of 360 dedicated participants, some making a 3 hour journey, formed 12 men's soccer teams and 12 women's netball teams. Approximately 3000 excited attendees watched the games each day, many taking advantage of free health services offered by medical professionals on site. Thanks to a donation of 40 ceramic water filters through Village Volunteers, Youth Outreach Mentors (YOM) coordinated clean water distribution for all during the long, hot days.



As a result of many fundraising efforts, an awards ceremony took place on Friday afternoon. To promote good sportsmanship, many trophies, awards, team uniforms and balls were given to the top scoring, most disciplined players while commemorative t-shirts were presented to officials and organizers. The Yago women's netball and Kokuro men's soccer teams took first place while Dago came in third in both soccer and netball.



Notably, Patrick Odoyo's 51 year old wife Pamela was the fourth best scoring player of the tournament, earning the name "Super Mama" from volunteers.

Free medical services allowed 561 patients to be tested for AIDS/HIV. Testing positive, 34 people were immediately counseled on site by the HIV Voluntary Counseling and Testing team with assistance from Youth Outreach Mentors (YOM). They were also referred to Afya II HIV awareness program (coordinated by Pamela Odoyo in partnership with USAID) for further assistance. Additionally, 164 children under the age of five were treated for malnutrition and received immunizations, 100 pairs of free eyeglasses were distributed, and over 200 free eye exams and 64 free dental exams were performed. These services were provided by six members of the Kenyan Red Cross, the Awendo Health Center, four health professionals from Migori District Hospital, Samwel Jmbue from Mgori Eye Clinic and the St. Joseph's District Hospital dental team.



Patrick Odoyo says, "Everyone at Village Volunteers should be very proud of the lives that were improved during this event. This program would not have been possible without the support of Village Volunteers, Shana Greene, the KIWK team, donors and volunteers." Given its tremendous success, Patrick hopes to host a KIWK tournament annually. As a result, an estimated 30 coaches will participate in a follow-up training event with a coach from Nairobi. ☸