



Canadian Harambee Education Society

We can't do everything...but we can do something!

SPRING 2006 NEWSLETTER

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President's Message

This has been a busy time for the people volunteering in the CHES office. We have added a number of extra girls for the Cedar Foundation and that has resulted in increased workload. My thanks for those who have pitched in. We are also excited about the post-secondary program and look forward to seeing the results. These are life-altering times for the CHES girls and my hope is that they will succeed and become productive members of their society.

My heartfelt thanks goes out to those sponsors and supporters who gave "a little extra" for CHES's administration costs. We plan to remain with our policy of 100% of funds donated going to Africa but we simply need more things - a filing cabinet, rent for the CHES office, paper and supplies, etc. It is the cost of doing business, even charitable business.

Because of the Meritorious Service Medal, I was invited to Government House in Victoria for the International Day Luncheon hosted by the Lt. Governor, Iona Campagnolo with the special guest, the Governor General, Michaëlle Jean. It was a very blustery day and, because of the ferry, I barely arrived on time. We were presented in a receiving line then listened while both women spoke of the

road yet to travel for most women in the world to achieve equality. Education was touted as the most effective vehicle. CHES is on the right road. Despite the bumps that may occur, we are the experts in our field. After over twenty years of successful existence, we can be proud of what has been done. I never cease to be amazed by those of you who have never set foot in Africa and yet give generously to support girls there. It is easy for us to be motivated because we have been there and have seen first-hand. Never doubt that your contribution is not being fully utilized. Even if your girl does not go on to post-secondary, you have raised her status FOR LIFE. No small gift!

A special note to all our American supporters, especially after Katha Pollit's article in *The Nation*, we appreciate your generosity and your continued faith in our endeavors. Keep in mind that we would welcome agent applications from you should you be interested in going over to Kenya for a six-month period. Check out our website at www.canadianharambee.ca

Lorrie Williams

CHES Annual General Meeting

The CHES AGM will be held Saturday, Sept. 23rd in the auditorium of the New Westminster Public Library.
716, 6th Avenue, New Westminster, BC Canada

Meet inspiring people and eat some good food - and not too many speeches! Please come and show your support. Let us know if you need a ride to the meeting and we will try to arrange it.

Kenyan Workshop Success

On Friday, December 2, 2005 about 170 Form 3 and 4 CHES students eagerly registered for the Kenyan annual workshops. Topics included First Aid, Silk Screening, Making Chapattis and other treats from orange sweet potatoes, If Not University, then What?, Making Right Choices, Adult Assertiveness, Micro-Business, Money Management, Getting Employed, Challenges (Working as a Team to solve a Problem), and others.

The presenters and the CHES people were exhausted by the Monday closure but the students left feeling they 'had already eaten Christmas dinner,' as there were pieces of chicken served on Sunday night rather than the usual stew.

Some of the comments written by students were:

"I hope you can organize for another workshop like this. Bravo!"

"... I am living back home a different person with a lot of knowledge including how to manage stress."

"I have learned a lot which I am going to put into practice."

"This year's workshop has been excellent since we've learnt many things that can make us financially independent and advices that can change our perspective towards life."

And all of this for under \$20 a student! The form 1 and 2 workshops will be held in early May, just before the schools reopen for Term 2.

Our CIDA funding for the workshops has ended so I am hoping we can find funding for these workshops to continue.

Alinda Ware

below: First Aid Training



above: Tanzanian guests leading in song



above: Workshop Presenters, below: Student Challenges





Hello Canadians,

Congratulations for your good workshops being presented in Kenya for the sake of the youth. I really appreciate and sincerely acknowledge them.

Being a Kenyan CHES girl I have attended several workshops which have changed my life from simplicity to complexity. This is because of the last year's workshop (2004) which was at Bishop Sulemeti Girls School. It enlightened me of very many things which I didn't know.

During the workshop we were taught how to make juice from the sweet potatoes. The topic was presented by Rhoda Nungo from Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI). I listened carefully since very many people in my area grow vegetables but do not know that juice can be made from the sweet potatoes.

As a young Kenyan anticipating becoming a scientist and training in medicine, I took the initiative of expanding the topic in the science congress year 2005. I visited the school laboratory and tested the sweet potato and found that it had the following nutrients: carbohydrates, reducing sugars, vitamin B complex, fats and protein. This is very exciting since I can educate the people in my area on how to make juice from the local available material.

I planned my work and competed with other young people from different schools in Kakamega District in the school congress. There were 83 projects competing and I managed to take the first position. I won the year's Science Congress Certificate and a young scientist book of science. I feel great!! If it were not for the CHES organization offering workshops, I wouldn't have gotten this knowledge. I have gained so much at the workshop and it is unfortunate that I can't put it all on paper.

Lastly, which is also very sensitive to my gender in the Kenyan society where females have little or no say over their rights, I have learned that we, females, can speak up for our rights. I have learned this through a female magistrate, Mrs. Teresia Wekulo, who was invited to speak to us at the CHES workshop. I am very happy since I know I can stand firmly and tell someone that I have a right to own this, do this, and above all, a right to be educated. This has helped me so much since I saved a young girl who was being forced by the parents to undergo female circumcision. She did not undergo the painful ritual and to date, she is proud to stand up for her rights.

I wish you a nice time as you plan for more workshops.

Noel Khatushi
Form 4 graduate, 2005

CHES LOAN WOW

The 4D's: determination, discipline, diligence and dedication are the treasured gifts my dad taught me when I was eight. I'm a lady aged 19. I completed my primary school education in the year 2000 and I was lucky to get the CHES scholarship which has enabled me to go through my secondary education (2001 - 2004). I obtained a B mean grade of 66 points. After the Annual Workshop in December 2004 at Bishop Sulumeti Girls' High School, the Form 4 CHES graduates were each given KSH to start a small business. I invested the



cash in a grain business. Initially I bought half a sack maize and beans grains and resold them at a greater price making a profit. Within two weeks I started purchasing the grains in full sacks and selling them to local businessmen. Since I had advertised around the community that I was doing the grain business, I incurred minimal transportation costs. By the beginning of January, 2005 I had a total of Ksh. 4500.

I decided to invest the money to gain knowledge. Since I had the desire to know how to use a computer, I joined the ACK Computer School, which is managed by Patricia and Rod Crossley. I used Kshs. 2500 to pay for my fees, Ksh. 1000 to repay my loan and the rest I paid myself for having worked so smart.

Currently I am working at the ACK Computer School as an instructional associate. My aspiration mid this year is to begin my course in Banking and Accounting. I'm proud to be a CHES girl who invested wisely. Actually so much lies ahead for those who strive.

Lydia S. Kihara, CHES graduate 2004, Kakamega, Kenya.
E-mail: lyzkss@yahoo.com

January 2006 marks the beginning of a new chapter in the life of CHES in Kakamega, Western Kenya. Being able to offer the CHES Form Four graduates the opportunity to go further with their education by attending a post-secondary institution is a very nice job and I am thankful to be here for this stage of CHES' evolution.

Presently, by the end of February, we have completed the registrations and sent off 13 CHES students to 9 different universities and institutions around Kenya. The choices of training and study are diverse; two young women are studying mass communication and information technology, one student in applied biology, 5 in education, 1 in electrical engineering, 1 in design & tailoring and 1 in community health nursing. Alinda and I have started visiting the various colleges,

universities, and polytechnics to become familiar with the programs and form liaisons with the registrars and principals. The emphasis on encouraging our grads to enter non-traditional fields is well received here.

ACK Computer School in downtown Kakamega is taking 6 CHES grads into each of their 3-week intensive computer courses. So far 17 students, many who are waiting for their KCSE results and letters of acceptance, have finished the course. One of our goals for the post-secondary program is that every CHES grad has the opportunity to become computer literate.

All this is being made possible by the generosity of the CEDAR Foundation. Thank you on behalf of some very happy young women.

Sally Gellard

THE CHES DORM

In 2004, Catriona and I made a commitment to build a dormitory in Katesh, Tanzania so that local girls could attend the residential technical school (nearby) and thus become readily employable in this country where trade skills are in high demand. We thought the hard part would be raising the estimated \$60,000. If this were accomplished, we assumed the building would be built and the girls would move in.

We worked hard, speaking to numerous groups in Canada, and we were heartened by the generosity of our audiences. Despite significant competition by tsunamis and such, we were able to raise the money. Construction began in March, 2005.

Now, one year later, we have learned not to make assumptions; rather, we should expect the unexpected.

A major problem is the lack of a fixed and permanent water supply. Somehow the school has operated for 15 years without this seemingly essential utility. However, having to bring water in by donkey is another reason why building costs have risen. It is recognized that one cannot have a coeducational government supported school without water. VETA (the country-wide government vocational school organization somewhat akin to BCIT) has budgeted to provide this service only in 2007, as it cannot afford the necessary \$4500 in this year's budget, despite their commitment to the general upgrading of the school, the supplying of qualified teachers and a necessary start for the limited purchase of school equipment. Frankly, the school desperately needs the water THIS year. We are working to find a solution.

As of mid March, the building is up and the roof is on. Five rooms are now completed and ready for occupancy. The wiring is in and enough plumbing to provide for the first class of girls is about to be installed. The school is preparing application forms and we have learned that a considerable number of young women throughout the district are hoping to attend. We have been told that they expect to have the first classes underway by mid April.

Our dream is close to being realized. Nearly 150 people, many of them CHES supporters, have contributed generously to the building of the dorm. With the money we have received, we have a usable building. We would dearly like to see it completed. To do this, we require an additional (estimated) \$15,000. You can probably guess how grateful we would be if you find yourself in a position to help, and remember that all CHES donations are tax deductible.

Chris Harker



A letter from Justina Getaknod in Tanzania...

The following comments were taken from a letter that Justina wrote to her sponsor, Jane MacEwan. Justina finished 4 years of secondary schooling at Ashira Secondary School in Tanzania. She passed 6 of her subjects and received Division IV – 26 points.

She wrote a very nice letter of thank you to her sponsor and we thought that others would like to read part of the letter. The following was part of Justina's letter:

“My intention is to say thank you for your sponsorship and to write to you a short story of my life.

Madam I shall never tire of saying thanks to you for your sponsorship. Thank you very much to support me to get this education. Following this education I have learned many things, not only about subjects but also to know my Right as a Human Being. I thank you because the women together with the girls in our society, I mean the Barbaig Society, have no right to do anything to improve their own development without the permission of men. From your sponsorship and my education I have learned that women and girls do have Rights just like men. So this is why I say I shall never tire of saying thanks to you. I am happy to tell you the story of my life.”

Justina went on to tell her sponsor of her life, being one of eight children to a mother who was the third wife of a Barbaig man. When Justina passed Standard 7 in Primary school she was able to go on to secondary school with the help of CHES.

These comments illustrate many of the things that CHES has been trying to do over the 21 years that we have been helping girls to obtain a secondary schooling. To improve the girls self esteem and feeling of worth in their society is maybe more important than the exam results that they obtain as they finish school. Justina will now be able to take a short-term training course on the computer or maybe teacher training to teach at a primary school through the CIDA project that is ongoing in Tanzania. What ever she chooses to do I am sure that she will be a credit to her society, her sponsor and CHES.



CALL FOR AGENTS

If you or anyone you know (a friend or relative) would love to have the adventure of a lifetime, steer them in our direction! Check out our website at www.canadianharambee.ca to discover what CHES is all about. All appointments are for six months in Kenya or Tanzania.



SPONSOR A STUDENT

If you are interested in helping a young girl in Kenya gain a high school education, please contact our office. With your support, CHES is able to help poor, bright girls in Kenya and Tanzania get educated and improve their lives.



DONATIONS

Without the renewal of funding from CIDA, CHES is looking for help in covering admin costs. Any donations would be greatly appreciated specifically for admin. Donations are tax deductible.

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please e-mail your request to canadianharambee@shaw.ca**