

Together we are changing lives... one girl at a time.

Jambo Sponsors and Friends,

Together, we now sponsor education for more than 300 girls - from elementary school through college. ***We are changing lives—one girl at a time.*** Three of the original girls, sponsored in 1998, have now graduated from college. Our girls are almost always the first girls in their families to have completed elementary school, and could not even have dreamed of high school, let alone college.

College Girls (some of our graduates)

Rukia Kadidi studied social work through BEADS at Tangaza College and now works for BEADS in Kenya as the Program Manager, supervising all the girls and our programs. **Florence Maina** also studied social work, married in August 2008, to a man of her choice, where she will be the sole wife and is prepared to pursue a career in social work in her home community. **Mary Memusi** graduated this year in tourism and we look forward to her successful career. We are expecting several more college graduates this year. These are examples of the success stories toward which we all aspire. **THANK YOU, SPONSORS!**

Our parent/teacher organization in Kenya consists of a mixed group of teachers and parents, who, with the BEADS Program Manager, provide career counseling and assist the girls in selecting appropriate colleges and areas of study that will be successful in the local communities—such as teaching, law, nursing, pharmacy, business administration, and graphic arts/web design. A girl attending college in Kenya is a very big step, especially in our Amboseli Region. We have only been able to identify 9 people who hold college degrees in that entire region. Our girls will be among the first leaders and role models in their home region. The most frequent responses to the question “What will you do when you graduate from college”?

“Return to my community to help my people.”

“Build my mother a new house.”

“Educate all my children.”

In Florence Mania’s last letter, she thanked BEADS for her education and life opportunity and said, “If it were not for BEADS, I would have many children by now, as would all the older girls in the BEADS program. We all thank you.”

Interning and College Program

Girls usually join the BEADS program in class 4 through 6 (4th-6th grade) and continue through secondary school Form 1-4 (high school – 9th-12 grade). Most girls (98%) qualify to continue with their education and enroll in 4 terms of interning and 2-4 years of college studies. After secondary school, each girl receives 4 sponsors to cover the additional costs of interning and college. This allows each sponsor to maintain the original school fee donation. This can be a challenging task for BEADS to find an additional 3 sponsors for each intern. If you know other friends who would like to share the sponsorship of your girl, please let me know. The interns work in underprivileged public schools where the standard of education is abominable. They are often the only teachers in their classrooms. Their primary function is to teach classes 1-4 to provide a solid foundation—enabling their students to transfer to quality schools in class 5. Through interning, the girls receive their first work experience and feel rewarded by helping the young students in their local communities, often in their native language. The education the interns have received (in private elementary school, quality secondary schools and 3 months of teacher training at Top Ride Academy) prepares them very well to be successful in this endeavor. I especially like to join an intern's class—to watch them teach and see the admiration and respect of their students.

Rules and Consequences

Girls are required to comply with the rules of their schools and the BEADS rules and accept the consequences. Each girl and her family sign a contract in agreement of this policy. BEADS expects every girl to work to the best of her ability and achieve the best marks she can, to participate in BEADS programs and workshops and faithfully write to her sponsors and send school reports. In Kenya, the girl's schools expel them for pregnancy and we must support this criterion for sponsorship. As you can imagine, with more than 300 girls, there will be some problems. Our parent/teacher organization has been developed to address any girl's issues and help to solve them. Each case is reviewed on an individual basis. Girls should not bring their problems to you, the Sponsor, but to the committee. I request that if you do receive such communication from your girl, that you contact me immediately. This action is definitely against the BEADS rules. Any problem that needs to be resolved will be brought to your attention by me directly.

Fundraising - 2009 WALKATHON - JANUARY 5 – 21, 2009

The Walkathon is our only fundraiser to help cover operating expenses and special programs, as your school fee donations are used only for school fees and minor supervision in Kenya. BEADS has been adversely affected by the declining dollar, inflation in Kenya after the political strife early this year, and by extraordinary auditing expenses due to more stringent IRS guidelines. We are dependent upon the Walkathon and the generosity of our donors to continue our mission. Please consider helping BEADS by:

1. Joining the Walkathon – experience a lifetime adventure, make lifelong friends AND raise money for BEADS.
2. Promoting our cause to your friends and acquaintances.
3. Hosting a BEADS party at your house this fall. I am now scheduling events and would be glad to join you in the Northeast (Maine to Virginia). We do have many volunteers that could host your event in other areas.
4. Matching donations – inquire with your employer. BEADS is a 501(c)(3) organization.
5. Holiday Gifts - buy the Maasai Mama's handicrafts on the website and promote this idea to your friends. (This is especially important this year with the collapse of the tourist industry after the elections in December 2007)

OTHER WALKATHON GOALS

1. **Friends** - Develop a lifelong commitment between the overseas sponsors, their girls, communities and families. A unique opportunity to be part of your girl's Kenyan culture and community.
2. **Annual Gathering** - The Walkathon is our only annual gathering for all 8th grade graduates, high school graduates, Maasai warriors, mothers and fathers. The walk provides a unique opportunity for everyone to work together: men and women; young and old; black and white. We evaluate and define our goals and develop our strategy together toward implementing the programs designed for the sponsored girls and their communities.
3. **Celebrate Traditional Culture** - The walk engages the Maasai from the traditional regions with those from the less traditional, as well as with the other 11 tribes that are represented in our communities. Many of the girls and their communities from the less traditional Maasai areas have never experienced a traditional ceremony. Our 9th Coming of Age Ceremony (without the traditional cutting) will be shared by all during WALKATHON 2009. One of our mothers said, "I have not seen singing and dancing like this since I was a girl." We hope more girls and families will be inspired by this experience to ban the cutting in their regions.

4. **Mentor Sponsored Girls** - The sponsors mentor their girls in human rights and all the opportunities available for an educated girl.
5. **Major Kenyan Issues** - Focus on major issues facing the community, such as, the loss of their traditional culture, sharing a traditional coming of age ceremony, without the traditional cutting, HIV/AIDS training and career counseling,
6. **Land issues** - The Amboseli Maasai are at a crossroads at which they could lose their land and culture, and be sentenced to a life of certain poverty. As the land is being titled to the individuals of the region, instead of the communal ownership that has existed to date, the poor will sell and the greedy will buy the land. This will lead to fences, which will eliminate the traditional grazing lands for the cattle and the wild animals and eventually destroy the habitat, Amboseli National Park and ultimately, the Maasai culture. Our goal is to develop Maasai businesses that promote the value of the environment to the community. We are hoping to support traditional use of the land in a modern tourist framework that can be marketed to the tourist industry as a viable enterprise. (Programs the villages will explore: women's beadcraft, traditional medicine, beekeeping, walking tours with warriors, and home stays for individuals and college groups.)

SPONSOR PRESENTS

Again this year, I am pleased that we will be able to take your presents to your girls when we go in January. You are always welcome to write to your girl directly (but sometimes they do not get through) but presents should be sent through BEADS.

PLEASE follow these instructions as closely as possible as there are so many sponsor gifts.

1. Linda Sullivan and her team of volunteers will collect, unpack and repack the presents this year. I literally could not get in my door last year after being gone for two days. THANK YOU to Linda for this heroic effort.
2. **PLEASE have all presents to Linda Sullivan by November 15, 2008.**

Her address is:

Linda Sullivan
544 Headquarters Road
Phone: 215-808-7079
Ottsville PA 18942
Email: nhslmm@epix.net

Mark EACH item with your girl's number, name and school. (upper right-hand corner)

3. Remove all extra packaging – all plastic containers!
4. Include a packing list with what you sent, the girls name, number and school

and include \$15 per pound for shipping (estimate if you have more or less).

PLEASE DO NOT include your school fees or donations with the gifts.

5. Please keep your packages small and no bigger than a shoebox.

6. Separate lists will be sent shortly for those girls who will be walking, those who are in the sewing program at Top Ride (classes 6 and 7) and our annual book list suggestions.

Santa Fe International Folk Art Market - July 11-12, 2008

Agnes Papatiti was sponsored to represent our three women's beading groups by the Santa Fe International Folk Art Market in July 2008. Her husband Patrick also received a sponsorship to attend as her translator. It was an amazing event supported by our many sponsors and friends in Santa Fe and other sponsors from across the country. We plan to attend next year and hope that you will join us. We raised more than \$18,500 in craft sales to be directly returned to our beading groups in Kenya. After the festival, Agnes, Patrick and I traveled to many of our sponsors and friends on the east coast and were thrilled to be able to see so many supportive people. As you know,



Debby, Kenyan Ambassador Peter Ogego, and sponsor Morgan Little visit Broadway to see the Lion King with Patrick and Agnes Papatiti

Patrick is the only man that BEADS sponsors for his education. Patrick is the leader of his age set in the Amboseli Region. This is a group of 8,000 men and a position he will hold for life. At 27, he accepted a BEADS sponsorship and returned to 9th grade. In 2007, he graduated from high school and is ready to enroll in the university. Patrick is a women's rights advocate and vital to the BEADS sponsorships and women's rights programs.

Thank you for your support.

Deborah K Rooney

Debby Rooney

BEADS Co-Founder

