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NEW STUDENTS AWARDED SCHOLARSHIPS

By Tom Bode, President

On January 29, Gidraf and Paul started their first year at Loreto Nakuru Secondary School in Nakuru, Kenya on scholarships provided by World Scholarship Initiative. The scholarships, funded by donations, pay for the boys' tuition and boarding for four years at the Catholic school. We are excited to watch them learn and mature as they take advantage of this life changing opportunity.

Despite challenging circumstances, Gidraf did very well in primary school. Before moving to boarding school, he lived with his mom and six younger siblings, his father being married to someone else. His mother worked as house help, a

common job for poor women in Kenya. Money was tight and Gidraf occasionally took side jobs to earn money for the family. He also worked at his primary school weeding the school farm to earn lunch money. As his teacher, I remember him as the type of student who sat in the back, but paid close attention and frequently had the correct answer when no one else did. His favorite and best subject was Science. Being a boy in Kenya, he loves soccer and is a big fan of the British Premier League.

Paul also overcame challenges to succeed in primary school. Before starting secondary school, he lived with his father and three older siblings, as his mother died when Paul was very young. His father does unskilled work,

such as delivering water on a bicycle (many homes do not have running water and have jugs of water delivered by bike) or working as a night security guard. I also taught Paul. He was polite and friendly and a bit shy around adults, but had many friends among the other students. His favorite subject is math and he also loves British Premier League soccer.

We selected Gidraf and Paul to receive these scholarships because of their high performance in primary school and their financial need. I knew both of these students and personally am extremely pleased that we are able to award them these scholarships. They are both very smart and I am excited to watch them continue to succeed.

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Peris finished the year ranked
3rd out of
110 students in her class

A BEAUTIFUL FIRST YEAR

In December, Peris, Triza and Villitracia finished their first year of high school at Christ the King Girls' Academy, an all-girl Catholic boarding school. It was an exciting year of changes. They transitioned from a day school located in a slum to a boarding school that serves the brightest students from the upper class of Kenya. Each girl sent us three letters during the year, describing their experiences. (When reading their letters, remember that English is each girl's third language and that Kenyan English normally sounds strange to American ears.)

Villitracia wrote about being nervous on the first day of school:

“On the first day of school I was so surprised and full of questions of how life in boarding school is like because I had never stepped into a boarding school. After some days I came to realize that boarding life is so cool. Thanks to you I am here.”

We sponsored these girls because they were the top performers at their public, primary school and they could not afford to attend a high-quality secondary school that matched their talents. Looking at their grades for the first year, it is clear that our girls can hold their own with peers who have better educational backgrounds. Peris and Triza improved considerably over the year and all three finished in the top half of the class.

Class Ranking Percent		
	Term 1	End of Year
Villitracia	76%	75%
Triza	41%	65%
Peris	65%	97%

Peris is obviously an outstanding student, at the end of the year ranking first in Chemistry, second in Physics, and third in overall class standing, out of 110 students. Her achievement is more impressive considering the advantages that her classmates had before high school. Peris told us that her friends were surprised that she didn't know what a “flash drive” was, or how it worked with a computer: “They assumed that I was from the same world with them, because they all have computers at their homes.” In fact, she did not have a computer at her home or even at her primary school. Computer studies is required at Christ the King, giving her a chance to catch up with her classmates.

Villitracia's studies were interrupted in Term 2 by pneumonia, which required her to spend some time at the hospital. She recovered and was back to her energetic self in Term 3 when she proudly announced that she had been elected “Liturgy Executive,” a position within the student government responsible for organizing student participation in mass.

These girls have worked tremendously hard to get where they are, so it is no surprise that they have strong sources of motivation. Triza told us what she hopes for her future:

“My favorite subjects are agriculture and business. I really love agriculture cause it involves land farming and factors concerning the environment. I also love business cause when I grow up I would like to be a business lady and an Engineer.” In line with these aspirations, Triza's highest ranking subject is Business, where she ranked is tenth out of 110 students. In Kenya, where much of the economy is notoriously inefficient, Triza could easily leverage her education and drive into business success.

Villitracia draws strength from her two caring parents. They are clearly important to her:

“My mom is a hardworking woman. I love her so very much because whatever little she has she appreciates it. She is also kind and friendly and she does everything with determination. My dad does casual work and he is also a hard working man, he is also a determined person and very friendly. They are my role models.”

Above all, the letters from the girls are full of gratitude for the opportunity to attend this school. Peris wrote, “First I would like to thank you for your generosity. I have never experienced the kindness that you have shown us before. You are God's angels in spite of you not knowing who we really are. “

Triza said,

“I really love this school. I love its buildings, its furniture and also its school equipment. I'm really thankful for bringing me to this school and may God bless you with more than a thousand blessings.”

In her last letter of the year, Villitracia wrote, “I want to thank you for the whole year, it has been such a beautiful year thanks to you and the other donors, I love you all.”

Thank you to all of our donors. You have done a wonderful thing, giving these girls a beautiful year.

Students' complete letters and report cards are available on our website, www.WorldScholarshipInitiative.org/awarded-students

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER



Patrick Wanjohi

Sponsored students Paul and Gidraf began their first year at Loreto Nakuru Secondary School in January, 2014. Guest Contributor Patrick Wanjohi writes about his time as a student at the school. He graduated in 2010 and is currently a student of Journalism and Communication at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATING GIRLS

In Kenya, as other countries, girls face many obstacles to receiving education, so that by the time they finish primary school, girls on average score much lower than boys. Yet, research shows that educating girls has large benefits for their communities. Greg Mortenson, author of Three Cups of Tea and founder of Central Asia Institute, has worked in international development for two decades. In a recent magazine article, he said, "the most powerful force of change, and the best investment one can make in a developing society, is girls' education." He gave some examples of the effect of educating girls:

- Women with more education are more likely to have smaller, healthier, and better-education families
- Educated women have higher incomes and contribute to their national economy
- Educated women are more likely to stand up for themselves, to participate in politics, and to resist violence
- Educated women direct more of their resources to their children's health and education than men
- Children of educated women study harder and receive more education themselves

World Scholarship Initiative awards scholarships based partly on a desire to ensure that girls have an opportunity for education alongside boys. Currently, three of the five students we sponsor are girls and we are dedicated to ensuring that at least half of our sponsored students are girls.

For more information and fact citations, see *Why is Girls' Education So Important?* by Greg Mortenson in Fall 2013 edition of *Journey of Hope* magazine, available at <https://www.ikat.org/publications/2013JOH.pdf>

'I am my brother's keeper,' these are the words that have been embedded in my heart and of those of my brothers with whom I studied at Loreto Nakuru School in Kenya. A school where we came in as little boys, and came out as young men ready to face the world. The experience in the unsung haven was tremendous; everyday within the four walls had an interesting story that was more or less a lesson essential for our lives. I had always wanted to join a Catholic founded secondary institution, due to their discipline and my thirst to acquire a well-molded character.

At school, guidance to better our best academically was paramount. With the availability of professional teachers, group and personal academic challenges were effectively addressed. Frequent practicals in the well equipped science laboratories and enough land for agricultural classes made learning seem more interesting and real. Also the frequent academic trips and symposiums plus interaction with members of other well performing institutions, were part and parcel of learning and I must say they came in handy.

Loreto Nakuru School is a talent hub. With students being gifted in various fields such as sports and performing arts, the school encouraged the exploitation of

"We came in as little boys, and came out as young men ready to face the world."

everyone's talents by forming and supporting clubs and societies in school in which everyone had a place in. In sports and other co-curricular fields we always performed well and qualified to compete in super levels with others.

The school chaplain and the guidance and counseling department, on a personal basis encouraged our spiritual, mental and emotional growth. Socially we interacted as brothers and we had positive solidarity. They say when you want to go fast go alone, but when you want to go far go together; we all knew that it was the togetherness that was going to help us make it in school and even outside, because we all preached unity knowing we all had a moral responsibility to take care of each other and everyone else we met in the societies we went to.

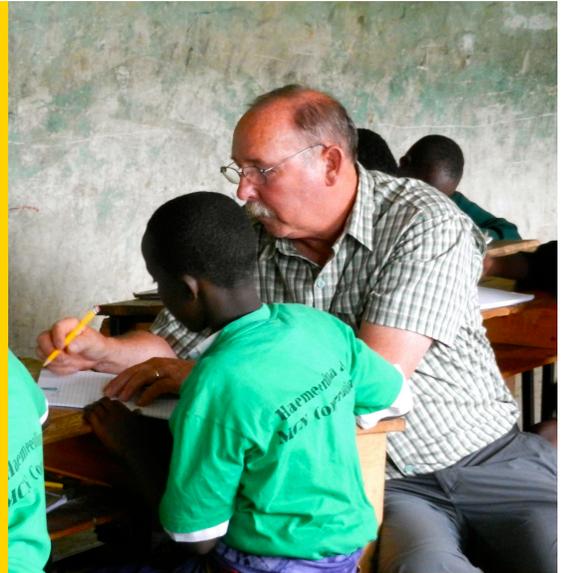
Even up to now, four years after leaving school, we still keep in touch with each other and keep supporting one another in every way. I am proud to say that most of the alumni of the school are well placed all around the globe and in Kenya chasing their dreams. It is because of Loreto that I joined Makerere University Kampala, the fourth best University in Africa, to pursue a degree in journalism and communication. Even when I go back to visit everything is either the same or changed in a good way. I am proud to be a Loretian and I carry that emblem in my heart as a responsible citizen knowing that 'I am my brother's keeper.'

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

By Tom Bode

Do you want to go to Kenya? All WSI donors are welcome to join me in traveling to Kenya in the second half of 2016. The trip could include meeting the students whose education you support, a behind-the-scenes look at Kenyan culture that most tourists do not see, and of course all of the exciting tourist activities that Kenya offers: wildlife safaris, beautiful landscapes, tropical beaches, and wonderful people. I will arrange the trip and be our tour guide. If you are interested, get in touch and we will talk about it!

Finally, thank you to all the donors and supporters of WSI who have made our first two years a success! We couldn't do it without you.



*WSI SUPPORTER BEN M. VISITED
KENYA WITH US IN 2013*

STATIONARY FOR SALE: HANDMADE IN KENYA NOTE CARDS

Purchase Handmade in Kenya note cards and support World Scholarship Initiative. These cards are painted by street artists in Nakuru, Kenya, and depict African animals or scenes of Kenyan tribal life. Each card is hand painted with some incorporating bits of cloth. They are colorful, vibrant, and a unique way to send a note to a friend. For special occasions, you can be sure that your card will stand out from all the Hallmark cards.

Purchase cards for \$2 each, plus \$2 per order for shipping or buy at least 10 and shipping is free. Cards measure approximately 3" x 5" and come with envelopes. Your cards will be similar, but not identical, to those pictured here. All proceeds benefit the sponsored students of World Scholarship Initiative. Return the enclosed purchase coupon or visit our website at www.WorldScholarshipInitiative.org/cards.



WORLD SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE GRANTED 501(C)(3) TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

World Scholarship Initiative is now treated as a 501c3 tax-exempt public charity. We submitted our application to the IRS in October 2013 and while it is pending, our organization is treated as tax exempt, per IRS policy. From now on, we will issue receipts for donations that identify our organization as a 501c3 organization.

This newsletter produced by World Scholarship Initiative, 9120 SW Quint Terrace, Beaverton Oregon 97008.

World Scholarship Initiative is a registered not-for-profit corporation with the State of Oregon.

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