

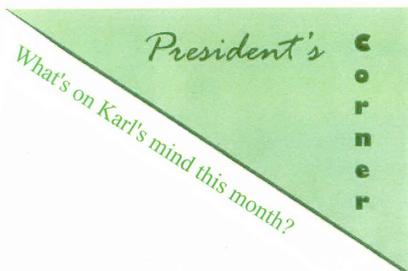
# THE RWANDA SCHOOL PROJECT

... WHERE EDUCATION IS FOR LIFE

Volume III, No. 2

The Rwamagana Lutheran School Newsletter

December 2013



## KARL SMITH, PRESIDENT

Now, in 2013, we are celebrating our fifth year offering education to Rwandan students. You have helped us build a ten-classroom building, a girls' dormitory, and we have added water tanks and a biogas digester. We have 83 students and next year we hope to add another 7th grade class which means that at least two dozen more students will come to our school.



Success brings with it new challenges. The government school licensing body will approve the addition of another grade level when there are adequate facilities for meal preparation and dining. So now, our most pressing need is to fund the construction of a kitchen and cafeteria. Our current kitchen is a makeshift mud brick house  
*See PRESIDENT on page 2.*

## 2014 TUITION INCREASE

For the last three years a full sponsorship of \$1,200 provided for one student to attend school.



Moreover, even students who pay tuition require a subsidy because the tuition we can charge to the parents in Rwanda still does not cover the cost to educate that student for a year. We have just raised tuition. A Rwanda family pays the equivalent of \$500/yr tuition for day students and \$1,040/yr tuition for

boarding students even though our actual cost averages \$1,481/student.

Some of you have inquired as to why we don't charge different sponsorship amounts for boarding and nonboarding students. The simple fact is, the tracking, assigning, and bookkeeping for such a system would be unduly complicated. It is our desire to keep the accounting as simple as possible. Full sponsorships have been \$100/mo for the past three years.

Starting in 2014, sponsorships will be \$120/month or \$1,040/yr. Our plan is to keep these sponsorship amounts for at least three years. We also offer 1/2, 1/4, and 1/10 sponsorships at \$60/mo, \$30/mo, and \$12/mo, respectively.

## STUDENT STORIES!

Here is a letter that we received from a student who has transferred from our school to another school in Rwanda:

*"Dear Robin,  
It is JMV. I am very glad to communicate you again. I think it is been long time. How is the school? I am very curious to visit it because it was my preference one even if I was not lucky to continue my studies from there, due to section or subject that I most needed to follow. But I am now highly appreciating your quality education*

*which I found that it is great different than the ones of other schools. We saw this together with my colleges who are in different schools. In these days we are being the heart of our classes with high scored due to back ground knowledge. Even our teachers are being surprised, asking us where we have been studying because of our participation of helping each other in class. Receive this wish, 'No weapon against you will prosper.' With the help of God as well as you listen to others problems.*

*Thanks, JMV."*

**DECADES AGO IT WAS DANGEROUS JUST TO EXIST.  
NOW THEY HAVE A CHANCE TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE.**

Rwanda School Project \* Tax Id #: 20-3545455 \* 501(c)(3) a nonprofit corp

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without electricity, no running water, and no storage space. The students take their meals from the kitchen to a house nearby that has been gutted and made into a temporary canteen. The cooking



area is too small and very smoky because of poor ventilation, and our biogas digester is currently sufficient to cook for only about an hour a day. The completion of a kitchen and cafeteria will enable us to continue with construction of dormitories, so that waiting students can come to our school.



**Used Car Donation Tips**



We can accept gifts of cars, boats, or other vehicles. Call 866 244-8464. The name of the organization that will be picking up your car is Auction Donations. After you give them information about your donation, you will be asked about the charity to which you wish to donate. It is **THE RWANDA SCHOOL PROJECT.**

**SPONSORSHIP 101: EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW**

As a sponsor, you are changing lives, one student at a time. You have empowered, encouraged, and offered an exemplary education to a student who otherwise may not even be in school. Your sponsorship [literally] means the world to them.

For \$120/mo, your student's needs are completely covered: tuition, uniforms, meals, and housing. Boarding schools are highly desired for secondary students as they create greater opportunities for studying with peers, accessing teachers after school, and building a positive school culture.



Not all students at Rwamagana Lutheran School are sponsored. As more parents understand the need for rigorous and high-quality education, many go to great lengths to provide for their child's tuition. Some pay full tuition, while others are given partial sponsorships based on financial need. Almost every family is required to contribute something toward their child's education, as we believe it is crucial to promoting sustainability in Rwanda.

Full sponsorships are given to students facing extreme financial hardship who otherwise would not be able to attend school and to talented students who are unable to afford a higher-quality education. Sponsorships are also given to families with multiple children attending RLS. In addition, two students per year receive academic scholarships, which cover full tuition for those recognized as having outstanding academic achievement.



We do our best to make sure sponsors receive at least two letters a year, along with updated photos and information about their student. While writing to your sponsored student is not required, your letters are greatly treasured.

We discourage sponsors from sending gifts to students that are valued over \$10. We want our students to appreciate your significant contribution toward education as well as ensure no hard feelings arise among students.

If you are interested in sponsoring a student or have other questions, please contact us!

**IN MEMORIAM**

In August 2013, a very dear friend and longtime supporter of The Rwanda School Project, Sachiko Kitao, passed away after a truly valiant fight with cancer. It was her wish, before she passed, to donate a significant contribution to launch the construction of our kitchen and cafeteria in Rwamagana. Her donation will make possible the construction of the foundation, elevation, masonry, and roof, more than half of the total construction. It is with a heavy heart that we recognize her passing and her incredibly generous gift to our school.



In remembrance and honor of Sachiko and the new beginning she has given Rwamagana Lutheran School, the building will be named Kitao Hall. With deep gratitude, we thank you Sachiko, may you rest in peace.



**DOUBLE YOUR GIFT BETWEEN NOW AND DECEMBER 31, 2013**

The kitchen and cafeteria will cost about \$100,000 and the initial donation for Kitao Hall was \$50,000. To raise the final \$50,000, each member of the U.S. Board of Directors has personally pledged matching funds (up to a total of \$25,000) to all donors who will help us complete the building by our January deadline.



We now have walls and funds to complete the roof, windows, and doors. If we can raise the final \$25,000 by the end of this year, we will have our kitchen and cafeteria for the school year beginning in January. Please help us by sending your contribution to get “two-for-one” bang for your buck. That is, each dollar you give will be **DOUBLED** by this matching grant! Please designate your donation "kitchen project”.



**RUN FOR RWANDA**



The *Run for Rwanda* is a community event for people with a passion for running and passion for giving back to the world. In 2012 we raised \$2,000 and sponsored a student named Gloria for her first year in secondary school. This year, 2013, we raised \$3,500 and continued to sponsor Gloria as well as provide partial sponsorships for other students. In 2014, we will host our third annual run on April 6th in Santa Rosa, CA. Our goal for this year is to spread the word about Rwamagana Lutheran School and our amazing students.

We would love to have runs for Rwanda all over the world on April 6th. Please email [ziabia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ziabia@sbcglobal.net) for more information about how to start your own run!

**THRIVENT CHOICE**

If you are a Thrivent member, you can direct your Thrivent Choice Dollars to The Rwanda School Project. The ID number is 515067584.



## RWANDA ECONOMY

You might be interested in an article on the Rwandan economy taken from HighBeam Research.

“The economy of Rwanda is overwhelmingly agricultural, with most of the workers engaged in subsistence farming. Economic development in Rwanda is hindered by the needs of its large population and by its lack of easy access to the sea (and thus to foreign markets). The chief food crops are bananas, legumes, sorghum, and potatoes. The principal cash crops are coffee, tea, and pyrethrum. Large numbers of cattle, goats, and sheep are raised. Food must be imported, as domestic production has fallen below subsistence levels. Food shortages were exacerbated by the civil strife and severe refugee problems of the early 1990s, and exports were devastated. However, by the early 2000s the economy had revived to pre-1994 levels.

“Cassiterite and wolframite are mined in significant quantities, and natural gas is produced at Lake Kivu. Rwanda's industries are limited to food processing, brewing, and small factories that manufacture furniture, footwear, plastic goods, textiles, and cigarettes. The country has a good road network but no railroads. Kigali has an international airport.”

*Read more:* Rwanda: Economy | Infoplease.com  
<http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/world/rwanda-economy.html#ixzz2kovuza>

## What is The Rwanda School Project?

In 1994, Rwanda was engulfed in a genocide in which 1,000,000 people were killed in 90 days under a Nazi-like regime. The world stood by.

Today, Rwanda's government has expressed a need for secondary education, citing it as one of the top five priorities in the next ten years, but lacking the needed funds. There is a call for leadership by young people with strong critical thinking skills, sound academic and moral training, good science and math ability and a good understanding of teamwork and self-discipline.

Our Jr-Sr High School is in Rwamagana, eastern Rwanda, where we educate girls and boys, with classes in English.

The school strives to maintain a diverse population of students and teachers. They represent Rwanda's population and the international community while accommodating low and high incomes. Some students may continue to a university but those who wish to finish their education with a high school diploma or trade school are also encouraged to attend.

### EMAIL ADDRESS NEEDED

Will you share your email address with us? We could save printing and postage costs by emailing you this newsletter, as well as keeping you informed about what is happening at our school. We will never share or sell your information. Please send us an email at:

[smithkjs@gmail.com](mailto:smithkjs@gmail.com)

## Contributions

The Rwanda School Project has 501(C)3 status so all contributions are tax deductible. Contributions can be made by sending a check to:

**The Rwanda School Project  
 1300 St. Francis Road  
 Santa Rosa, CA 95409**

Credit card contributions can be made online at:

[www.rwandaschoolproject.org](http://www.rwandaschoolproject.org)

At the left, click on the “You Can Help” link and then go to the secure link.

**PLEASE DONATE NOW**

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

Robin Strickler, Program Director  
[robinrutsi@gmail.com](mailto:robinrutsi@gmail.com)  
 PO Box 82  
 Rwamagana, Rwanda  
 Tel: +250 (0)78-856-9212

Karl Smith, Editor, President  
[smithkjs@gmail.com](mailto:smithkjs@gmail.com)  
 1300 St. Francis Road  
 Santa Rosa, CA 95409  
 (707) 829-0606