

The Protea

Elizabeth Bowers Zambia Education Fund

Vol. I, No. 1

An education scholarship program for Zambian girls and women

June 2006

Beth's Girls Update

The Elizabeth Bowers Zambia Education Fund currently sponsors 63 young women in grades 8 through 12, with 14 at Mwinilunga High School and 49 at Lumwana West Basic School. Lacking access to textbooks and materials, many of Beth's Girls have struggled to pass the required exams in the 9th and 12th grades. Last year, as is common in rural Zambia, none of the 9th graders passed into 10th grade.

Our scholarship is responding by providing textbooks and tutoring for grades 9 and 12. Also we are encouraging students to repeat one grade if necessary. We hope this will make a difference in the academic success of Beth's Girls.



Lumwana West Basic School 2006

We are also hoping to send Beth's Girls on to the colleges of their choice if we can afford to do so. This year's juniors and seniors have rich dreams for their futures. They want to become nurses and teachers, doctors and accountants. We are currently researching college

connections for EBZEF in preparation for this year's graduates. We will work to confirm those connections during our visit to Zambia this August. 🌿

Graduation Congratulations to Mary

Mary Lundeba, Beth's Peace Corps fisheries trainer and recipient of an EBZEF scholarship, graduated with a Master's degree in Aquaculture and Fisheries Science from the University of Malawi in August of 2005.

Her high quality work has earned Mary a full tuition scholarship to Penn State for a PhD. This year she has been continuing her research at Lake Malawi while also teaching at the University of Malawi. Mary will arrive in the US in August 2006 to begin her candidacy.



She tells us "I am proud to be one of the beneficiaries of this project and so I will always try to do my best as Beth did.

I just have to inherit her hard-working spirit." EBZEF is proud of Mary's accomplishments. She is a wonderful role model for Beth's Girls. 🌿

Student Highlights

EBZEF celebrates Diana Masumba who has been selected as the Deputy Head Girl for Mwinilunga High School. Such a position calls for excellence in many areas, including educational performance and behavior. Congratulations to Lucy Mutambo who has been chosen as a prefect as well as a house captain at MHS.

Young women in Zambia face many challenges and obstacles hindering their academic success. EBZEF wishes to acknowledge and encourage Helen Samakayi and Eunice Kanema who, determined to achieve their diplomas, have re-enrolled in grade 12 to pass their examinations for graduation. In addition, Gift Chilomba has worked hard to become accepted second term into 10th grade at MHS.

As Eunice, one of eight children born to subsistence farmers, insists, "I shall not give up as I'm following Beth's model of working hard and going on to college. My aim is to finish my education and come back to help others." Her spirit personifies the mission of EBZEF. 🌿

Thank you

to our generous donors who make it possible for EBZEF to support the education of Beth's Girls. You can see here what effect your dollars are having.

Lumwana West Report

Lumwana West is the village where Beth served as a Peace Corps volunteer. It is the home of Beth's Girls, many of whom knew her as a member of their community. Fordson Kafweku, EBZEF Board Member from Lusaka, visited Lumwana West in April of 2006. His report was eye-opening.

"Lumwana West has an estimated population of just over 5,000 households with an average number of people per household of 6-7, though some households can have more than 13 children.

"The people of Lumwana are predominantly peasant farmers who earn their living through small-scale farming. The main crops are

"Apart from schools being sparsely spread, fewer and being spanned by long distances, they are poorly maintained and grossly under-staffed. The result is that the motivation for school among many families is low. Even if a child starts school, he is not likely to go further than the upper primary grades."

Lumwana West Basic School has a total of 710 students in grades 1-9 and was scheduled to be upgraded to include grade 10 in 2006. However, it could not meet the minimum standards of the Ministry of Education because it does not have enough classrooms and teachers. Thus, high school students will continue to have to go to boarding school. Since many cannot afford to do so, they end up

"If you educate me, you educate my family." Fordson

cassava, maize, groundnuts and beans. The harvest is mainly consumed as household food with very little if any for sale. The situation is actually that of hand to mouth."

Fordson commented on the challenges the Lunda people face. "Many of the people have no economic muscle to fight the woes of widespread poverty. As a result, many of the families find themselves locked into general deprivation and a poverty trap. One major reason is because many rural families cannot afford to educate their children beyond upper primary level."

dropping out of school and often marry at a very young age.

Thus, Fordson sees EBZEF as a "lifeline" for the girls of Lumwana West. There is clearly much work ahead for us to support the education of Beth's girls. 🌿



Education is a route out of poverty. It empowers girls and women to improve their lives and the lives of their families. They are less likely to become HIV positive. Their children are more likely to survive infancy and to be healthy. Women who receive a basic education are better equipped to support themselves and their families.

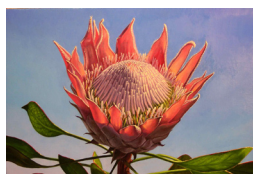


Zambia Trip

Beth's parents, Linda and Gerry Bowers, are planning to visit Zambia in late summer. They hope to meet their Zambian "daughters," to experience Lunda culture for greater cross-cultural understanding, and to dedicate the memorial library in the village of Lumwana West. They also hope to make connections with potential colleges for Beth's Girls. 🌿

The Protea

The logo of the EBZEF newsletter is from a painting by Eric Wert in honor of his cousin Beth. The protea is a hardy, African flower symbolizing the beauty, energy, and spirit of Beth's commitment to global peace and understanding. 🌿



Amounts may vary due to the fluctuating exchange rate between the US\$ and Zambian Kwacha

Future Plans

EBZEF is currently applying to become a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Lawyer Kevin Mayne, to whom we are grateful for working with us pro bono at half the cost, is preparing the complex application. 🌿

Library/Community Learning Center

To support the education of Beth's Girls and to encourage community literacy, EBZEF is working with the Peace Corps Partnership Program to build and supply a library in Lumwana West. Since many students do not pass their senior exams, they come back year after year to try again without the texts and materials necessary to prepare fully. The Elizabeth Bowers Memorial Library plans to stock school texts and reference materials for community and student use.

The library collection will include fiction and nonfiction works by Zambian writers and scholars, which may in turn encourage Lumwana West community members to preserve their own traditions in music, art, and stories, perhaps in both Lunda and in English (Zambia's official language). It may also become a resource for local health care providers and other technical professionals in the area.

In this undeveloped area without

electricity or telephones, EBZEF is especially interested in the current development of solar laptop computers which may become available through the United Nations as early as next year.

Peace Corps Volunteer Bob Wilder, a retired airline pilot serving in Lumwana West, will oversee the construction. As LWBS Head Teacher Mr. Mbongo Njolomba insists, "We are thankful for the assistance and inspiration that Bob Wilder is giving us. Selflessly,

he has thrown himself wholly in the development of our welfare. He is really one of us now, even more." EBZEF is grateful for Bob's tireless efforts on behalf of the memorial library.

The original estimate of the EBM Library was \$20,000. However, since the exchange rate of the dollar against the Zambian Kwacha has fluctuated downward dramatically, the cost is now at \$23,750. Your support will have a major impact on Beth's Girls and the Lumwana West community. 🌿



Fordson Kafweku & Mr. Mbongo Njolomba inspecting the library site

New World Vision Agent

Welcome to Rightwell Soko, the new EBZEF World Vision Zambia agent! WVZ administers the scholarship funds to Beth's Girls in the Mwinilunga Region. Rightwell will be instrumental in maintaining communication between EBZEF and Beth's Girls, in orienting and encouraging the students to sustain Beth's vision, and in maintaining records of students' academic progress. He will also help us to set up the college programs for Beth's Girls. Our thanks to Womba Mayondi, our initial WVZ agent who has helped us to establish the partnership between EBZEF and WVZ. 🌿



Rightwell Soko & MHS Beth's Girls

SPONSORSHIPS

Coming soon!
Sponsor-a-student
Commit to changing a life.

YOU CAN HELP

Share in the work of changing lives and offering hope to the young women of NW Zambia. *A little goes so far:*

- \$10 exam fees
- \$20 Basic School tuition
- \$25 uniforms
- \$35 books or Basic exam tutoring
- \$75 Senior exam tutoring
- \$185 HS tuition, room & board
- \$1,000 two-year college degree
- \$24,000 library/community center

Needed items to take with us to Zambia for the schools:

- A lightweight portable typewriter for the LWBS Head Teacher
- Hand-held solar calculators for Beth's Girls
- Small English Dictionaries for Beth's Girls

We also need a used but up-dated PC to run our QuickBooks for Nonprofits program.

EBZEF is applying for tax-exempt status as a public charity, but cannot guarantee at this time that donations will be tax-deductible.

■ Yes, I want to change a life & impact a family, a village, & a nation by supporting women's education.

☐ I have enclosed a donation of _____

☐ I would like to receive information about the Sponsor-a-Student program.

Name _____

Address _____

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The Elizabeth Bowers Zambia Education Fund

One life made the connection.



Our Mission

The Elizabeth Bowers Zambia Education Fund is a non-profit organization created to provide education to girls from the Lumwana West area in NW Zambia. Elizabeth Rachel Bowers (1979-2002) shared her compassionate spirit with the people of NW Zambia as a Peace Corps volunteer. The Scholarship legacy sustains Beth's vision of service and global awareness by empowering young women to build positive change from within, to become leaders and educators, and to improve the quality of life in their communities.



MBA Student Volunteers

EBZEF participated in the Private, Public and Community Enterprise Program (PaCE) of the Atkinson Graduate School of Management at Willamette University. The PaCE program gives MBA students a working understanding of the operations and contributions of nonprofit organizations while offering the partnering organization the skills of ambitious students backed by

the expertise of their professors.

Five students selected EBZEF's project proposal to work with EBZEF during the 2005-2006 school year. Team members Sneha Goswami, Wes Hare, Jaimi Truhler, Angela Wanak, and Allen Xsiao worked with EBZEF board members to examine our financial program, develop research grants and networking opportunities, create a brochure, and explore a marketing strategy. Everyone learned much through this exchange

of knowledge, experience, and passion for the ideal that education should be available to all.

Angela Wanak continues to work with EBZEF as the current summer intern, designing publication templates, creating the first annual EBZEF newsletter, developing a sponsorship program, researching grants, developing fund-raising materials, and establishing a database. EBZEF is fortunate to have Angela's able assistance.