

# Northern Magic Fund

Christmas 2016



## HOW TO MAKE A DONATION

To make a secure, online pledge by credit card or PayPal, simply visit our website:

[www.NorthernMagic.ca](http://www.NorthernMagic.ca)

Click on



Proceed by clicking on

"Donate Now"

Please specify your preference in the space provided:

- Sponsor a secondary school student
- Give the gift of a donation
- Donate where most needed

OR

Cheques can be made payable to:

Northern Magic Fund  
P.O. Box 17026  
Ottawa, ON K4A 4W8

## Happy Holidays from our Family to Yours!

With the holiday season just around the corner, we are reminded of all the wonderful things we are grateful for in our lives. The Northern Magic Fund is grateful to you, our donors, whose generosity has provided the gift of a secondary school education to 106 students this year. That's quite a remarkable accomplishment and we hope you feel a sense of pride in what we have been able to do together.

We were pleased to welcome Lutz Tischendorf as a new Director to our Board at our Annual General Meeting in February. Lutz has been a long-time donor and direct sponsor and is committed to improving and maintaining our website and social media presence.

We had made a commitment to our members to have a representative of the Fund visit Kenya once every three years to meet with the school principals, check up on the accounting and visit with our sponsored students. This past summer, Herbert Stuemmer travelled to Kilifi and was accompanied by Lutz.

Lutz recently hosted an intimate gathering for friends and colleagues at a local coffee shop where he shared his impressions of the trip to Kenya. We have asked him to summarize those impressions to share with all our donors and hope you will be as touched by them as we were:

*"This was my first trip to Kenya and to Africa at all. I had heard many accounts and had seen pictures and videos before, but I truly wanted to know for sure so I took this opportunity and joined Herbert. In retrospect, I have to admit that*

*this was perhaps one of the most intense weeks of my life. I cried (alone), I laughed with the students and teachers, I felt welcomed and inexplicably connected to this different world to ours. I quickly realized that my presence in that world would most likely confront me with situations in which the fate of another person would directly depend on my judgement and decision. And this is how our trip started.*



Lutz visits the home of a student and his family

*The first student I met was a 13 year old girl named Purity. She is a partial orphan and her Mom has leprosy. She had been sent away from home to neighbours, had no family and no means to attend secondary school. Although she had applied to the Northern Magic Fund this year with great marks from elementary school, she somehow fell through. Her principal – Madame Kahindi – did not give up on her and expected an explanation from us. We did not have one, except for the fact that we have limited resources. I somehow knew instantly that I would have to 'take her under my wing' and sponsor her. I am happy to report she is now doing well.*

*We also met Susan Chitsaka, who has been volunteering for the Fund in Kilifi for almost two years now. She works at a local copy and print shop in Kilifi and is quite a remarkable, well-organized, smart and efficient woman. We were so impressed with her engagement and enthusiasm that we have extended her mandate in facilitating the annual application process and in checking in on all our schools on a regular basis.*

*I truly enjoyed interviewing the students. What a privilege to have such a direct conversation with those young, motivated and bright kids, whose only hope to escape poverty rests on having access to education. I could feel the genuine gratitude toward all their sponsors in Canada because not only their lives and future, but also those of their families, directly depend on that gift. I have to admit*

*that I found it difficult to imagine how these students really live because the school compounds are a rather civilized environment and the tidy school uniforms mask the underlying poverty. So we visited some of the families in their villages and that was the true eye-opener for me. I realized that poverty really means to have nothing. Literally nothing! Still, those families welcomed us into their straw huts or mud houses and proudly presented us their modest belongings. For one of the students, a solar light was his object of pride! And with that, he was 'ahead' of most of his peers who cannot read or study at home at night. And, by the way, these students walk up to 10 km to school every day, They have*

cont'd...

to be on time, without having a watch or clock and their uniforms have to be clean .. imagine that in our world!

Then George Ouma invited us to Kisumu, where he lives with his wife, Florence, and one year old daughter, Martha. Well, we were impressed with what George had achieved within the last two years. He literally materialized his inspirations from his visit to Ottawa two years ago and turned his life around beyond our keenest expectations. Instead of living the "normal" life matching his and his wife's status as medical doctors, he made sacrifices to his lifestyle and invested heavily in his future and in his family. He bought land, built a greenhouse, dug a well, bought two matatus (taxis) which he rents out, supports his parents and sisters and other Northern Magic Fund students as well. I wonder where he will be in three years from now. I will definitely go back to Kenya, not just to visit George but also the many members of our Northern Magic family.

## The Magic Continues

We are proud that we finally managed to launch our new website at [www.NorthernMagic.ca](http://www.NorthernMagic.ca) and our new Facebook page at [www.Facebook.com/NorthernMagic](http://www.Facebook.com/NorthernMagic) and hope that we can count on you to help us 'Share the Magic'. Please visit the website where you can enjoy a brief YouTube video of the student interviews conducted this summer. We could not help wondering how students here in Canada would have responded to the same questions posed to these young Kenyans.

Another long-time sponsor proudly shared with us that his student, Stanley Mwamuye, had graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering earlier this year. Stanley had recently written to his sponsor to let him know that he had secured a position as a graduate trainee in the engineering department of a grain handling company in Mombasa. His sponsor is justifiably proud and Stanley is so grateful.



Stanley Mwamuye



Herbert with Elizabeth Mzungu

It was with sadness that we learned that Hamisi, one of the young men the Stuemmer family met on the beach in Kilifi on their first visit in 2000, is gravely ill. Herbert visited him in hospital where it appears he may have liver cancer, the result of long-undiagnosed Hepatitis B. Our thoughts are with Hamisi and his young family.

Herbert and Lutz were pleased to have an opportunity to visit with our university student, Elizabeth Mzungu, who is now in her final year of a Bachelor of Commerce program. Herbert had met her on his visit to Kilifi in 2013 so there was a lot of catching up to do. They were invited to Elizabeth's village, where she is a true role model to her younger sisters. She had written to Herbert to tell him about her recent school trip: *"The trip was awesome. It was an academic trip in which all the students were supposed to go. We went East African General Motors, where we were focusing on the processing sector and the strategies they had put in place to capture the market. We also went to the Nairobi Capital market where we learned a lot on how securities and stocks are traded in the market. Being my first time in Nairobi, I was so happy to see our Capital city. Thank you for everything you are doing. I feel much humbled and blessed."*

## Share the Magic!

With so many worthy causes vying for your donation dollars, we are grateful to all of you who have chosen to entrust your donation to the Northern Magic Fund. In order to continue our good work, we need help throughout the year. New donors are few. May we ask your assistance?

When you are with friends, family and colleagues, help us spread the word. Please mention our fund and the great work we are all doing. We appreciate that one of the reasons you support us is that unlike other charities, many with very high administrative costs,

this Fund is wholly volunteer run, and apart from minimal expenses, your donation goes directly to the cause you intended—the education of Kenyan youth.

There are many ways you can help us Share the Magic:

- Directly sponsor a student — your commitment of \$40 per month will give a child the lasting gift of a secondary school education.
- Make a contribution to the Fund for the general pool of students.



- Host a fundraiser
- And most important of all, help us spread the word!

However you choose to help, your donation is greatly appreciated. A tax receipt will be issued for donations of \$25 or more.

## Wishing You and Yours a Magical Christmas!