

Nourishing Minds

A Quarterly Newsletter published by the Jifunze Project

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The Jifunze Project works alongside individuals living in under-served parts of rural Tanzania to help them create innovative, empowering and sustainable educational opportunities that will expand their possibilities for livelihood and enrich their lives.

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KitetoCERC.org is Launched!

We are very pleased to announce the opening of a new website that is dedicated solely to the Kiteto CERC and its developments. The site, launched in early September, contains information about the programs, management structure, and staff of the CERC, as well numerous photos and a short video. With the separation of this information from the Jifunze website, we have reached another landmark in our CERC capacity building program.

From Jifunze's inception, CERC sustainability has always been at the forefront of our work. Upon completion of CERC construction in 2003 we initiated a 5 year capacity building program for CERC staff and management partners. By working directly with the local stakeholders, to increase their programming and management expertise, we are confident that in 2008 the Kiteto CERC will be ready to function without direct international support. Thus becoming a truly integrated part of the Kiteto community and serving as a model for rural development throughout Tanzania and the world!

As always our continued success depends on the exceptional support that we receive. If you would like to assist us in reaching our goals, there are multiple options for giving. Please visit our websites, www.jifunze.org and www.kitetocerc.org, where you may read more about our work as well as exploring the various options for giving. Thank you again for your enduring support; it has enabled us to achieve so much great success!

Art Program Encourages Creativity!

The primary and secondary rooms are bustling with energy and creativity as members participate in a series of Saturday art classes. Developed by CERC teachers and Jifunze interns Susan Ketner and Emily Harney, the classes encourage members to think in different ways by experimenting with perspective and observation. Members particularly enjoyed the class in "upside down drawing,"

which helped them observe how the mind can distort what the eye sees. Students overcame the power of their mind's internal editor by copying a drawing placed upside down on the table in front of them. Although a little skeptical at first, the members were surprised to find that their upside down drawings were much more accurate than usual!



Room Coordinator, Judica Kileo, assists a member during a drawing class.

Students also enjoyed the class on free-hand drawing, where they learned close observation techniques and that "mistakes" are a natural part of the learning process. Another high point was a painting class of the primary room. Many of the children had never used paint before and were very excited to try it out!

Exam Time Already!

As students in the U.S. prepare for mid-terms, in Tanzania, students are busily preparing for national examinations. These examinations, normally held in December, are being held in October due to the Tanzanian presidential election. The early exam schedule has students scrambling! As a result the CERC has been filled with students studying into the night.



Two Form IV students studying hard for their upcoming exams

Earlier in the month two CERC members had this to say about their upcoming exams:

Lawrence Wilson – Secondary Room Member

I have been coming to the CERC everyday after school, and even on Saturdays. The CERC teachers are very familiar with the exams and they provide great support. I also enjoy the fact that the center allows me to study as I please, by myself or in discussion with others. When I finish the exam, I plan to continue to higher levels of education and hopefully one day use my education to become a [political] minister, or even the prime minister.

Abimal A. Lori , Adult Room Member

I am currently preparing for the Form IV exam as I was unable to complete Secondary School in my youth. After achieving the Form IV certificate, I hope to go on to receive my Form VI diploma with a focus on science and technology. I am currently a primary school teacher and see it as very important that I continue to develop myself and further my education. I've been coming to the CERC for over a year because I find the resources as well as the quiet and comfortable environment extremely helpful for my studying. I think that the knowledge I gain at the CERC will enable me to be a better leader for both my students and fellow teachers

**Interviews translated from Swahili*

Health Box Provides Challenging Questions

In August 2005, as part of ongoing improvements to the center's health education program, a health question box was placed in the CERC's reading area. The box, which supplements the already vast health resources, encourages members to write anonymous health questions which they may be otherwise embarrassed to ask. CERC members responded to this opportunity with a barrage of questions on subjects ranging from HIV/AIDS to illegal drug use.



A primary school student sketches the digestive system for other CERC members to study from.

Some members phrased their questions as challenges to the community:

"If cigarettes are so dangerous to your health why do they continue to be produced, sold and advertised? What is the government doing to stop this?"

"What is the answer to preventing HIV/AIDS in our families?"

Others sought information about specific diseases, nutrition, or other health issues:

"How do illegal drugs affect the human body and mind?"

"Does using a condom prevent AIDS?"

"How does eating vegetables make you healthy?"

**Questions translated from Kiswahili.*

The questions demonstrated members' strong understanding of current health issues in the community and showed their interest in working to overcome them. CERC teachers will use the members' questions from the health box to create health programs at the center which are more engaging and more closely tailored to needs and desires that the members themselves express.

Save Paper and Postage – Get Nourishing Minds via e-mail

We are happy to announce that a PDF version of our newsletter is now available via e-mail. To subscribe, please e-mail melinda@jifunze.org.

Volunteer Spotlight: Patricia Wanja Gathua



In October 2005, Patricia Wanja Gathua, will celebrate one year of excellent service to the Jifunze Project. Originally from Kenya, Patricia arrived in Kibaya in October 2004 as our IT specialist. Patricia became involved with Jifunze through our partnership with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), an international service and development organization that places volunteers in over 30 countries.

A professional IT Consultant/Trainer, with a B.S. in Information Sciences and over six years of experience in her field, Patricia is an invaluable addition to our team. Since her arrival, she has focused on building the computer skills of CERC staff, by teaching them basic computing, Microsoft Word and other programs. She has also improved the CERC's computer program by developing and editing course manuals, training the Computer Program Coordinator, and teaching courses for CERC members. Additionally Patricia has used her background in database design and management to supervise the reorganization of the CERC's library database and train staff in its proper, thus safeguarding the Center's valuable resources for future members.

In addition to the wonderful work Patricia has completed over the last year, we are very lucky to know she will be working with us for another full year. We very much look forward to her continuing expertise and contributions!

Donor Spotlight: The Flora Family Foundation

In the spring of 2005, we were honored to receive our first grant from the Flora Family Foundation. In January 2005 Mary Malekela, our Management Advisor, and Thomas Robson, our Senior Program Manager, were invited to Arusha to meet with representatives of the foundation who were visiting Tanzania to interview prospective grantees. Mary and Thomas greatly enjoyed the meeting and we feel extremely privileged to have been selected for support.

The foundation, named in honor of Flora Lamson Hewlett, believes that "each individual has an obligation to go beyond the narrow confines of his or her personal interests and be mindful of the broader concerns of humanity." The foundation's support will enable us to cover a portion of our general operating budget over the next two years, ensuring that the Kiteto community continues to have access to what has become a model for educational development in Tanzania.



Blue Gentian, one of Flora Hewlett's favorite flowers. (Taken from FFF Website)