



Sakila Sponsorship Program

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Dear Sponsors and Supporters,

February 2017

We're going to fool you this time and put all the announcements at the beginning of the newsletter so you'll be sure to read them even if you don't have time to read this month's story. Here goes...

NOW IS THE TIME FOR RICE DONATIONS. We'll be using the extra gifts you send for the next months to purchase rice for this school year. It will take 21 tons of rice, in addition to 80 tons of corn and 30 tons of beans to feed the children for 2017. But, it takes only \$20 to purchase 50 lbs. We no longer get our rice from here and then ship it to Sakila. Instead we save the shipping and buy from local farmers. That helps the local economy, too. It's a win-win situation!

IMPORTANT CAUTIONARY NOTE: We have been made aware of an online incident involving a person who has masqueraded as a student from our school. This person used Facebook Messenger in an attempt to scam one of our sponsors. If you receive any such messages, no matter how convincing they may seem, please do *not* reply to them — instead immediately report the incident to us. Online contacts from the children are not legitimate. In addition, S.S.P. opposes any direct correspondence between sponsors and the sponsored children except through our office. This is for your protection, and the incident reported is exactly the reason why. Africa is a very poverty-ridden country, and some who are dishonest may try desperate attempts to take advantage of you and the program for personal gain. Please be vigilant.

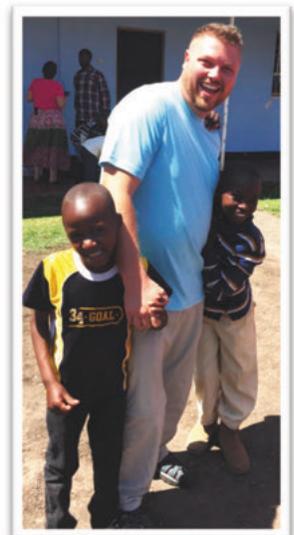
THE ANNUAL POTLUCK for this year is on Saturday, February 4th, at Gateway Fellowship on the corner of 8th and Hostmark in Poulsbo, WA. Godwin and Gene will have the latest news from Sakila. They return from their January trip just a few days prior to the Potluck. If your last name begins with A-L please bring a salad or dessert. If it begins with M-Z please bring a main dish, hot or cold. Looking forward to seeing you at 2:00 PM in the Pearson Fellowship Hall!

Here's a report from Daniel, the son of Bill, whose letter was featured last month. (slightly edited for length) The left photo is his sponsored child, Abigail with her mother receiving a food basket. We have found this to be the best way to bless your child and the family. \$20 buys enough supplemental supplies to last a family of four for a month. The right photo is Daniel having fun at the Orphanage in Arusha.

"The people were amazing. One of the first things that struck me was how friendly they were. Meeting Joshua, Baraka, and Jeff was a breath of fresh air after riding 20 hours in the recycled air of the plane. It was amazing how the people would give you the shirt off their back even after just meeting you. One thing that impressed me is that they would stop whatever they were doing and talk to you for however

long you wanted to talk. This really shocked me because it shows how much they value relationships. It exposes how we Americans are more concerned about work than we are about people. I had so many great times getting to know various people around Sakila, sitting and talking with Baraka or Jeff; watching how they beamed with pride when they talked about their kids. You could tell we had built relationships, despite the language barrier, when we gathered to leave and Baraka, Kisali, Abdul, and Omben all wanted pictures with us.

"We have no idea what poverty really is in this country. Some of the people in Sakila have no idea when or where they are going



to get their next meal. The scale of poverty is widespread and hard to process when it's right there in front of you, let alone try to describe it to someone who has not seen it for themselves. I was blessed by the level of joy the people of Sakila had in spite of their circumstances. It really exposes the façade Americans have bought into that money and possessions will buy you happiness. We get so mesmerized by the lie that things will give you an identity and happiness. We have become enslaved to a stressful, downcast life struggling after things. So many of those we saw were so grateful for all that is being done in Sakila. But---not everyone is thankful. The last day we were there the dark side of poverty raised its ugly head. A man who kept asking for things from the Sponsorship Program met us on the road. As he walked with us around the town, it occurred to me that what we saw is the full display of the carnal nature. I can see how we must seem sometimes to the Lord. Amid all the blessing that he has brought into our lives, we can be focused on only what we want for ourselves. "Godliness with contentment is great gain". Lord, let me heed your word!

"The last thought I have may have been the most impacting. The school is doing a life changing work, and it's not just for the students. When we got to meet with our sponsored students it was an event that I will never forget. We first we went to the home of a young man named Jeremiah. We were all shocked that, to get to his home, we had to make the trek 30 minutes to the bottom of the hills on which Sakila is located. Once we made it to the valley we still had to drive 15 minutes up the highway to turn onto a dirt road to drive back to his house. I say house, but this structure was not even comparable to a chicken coup. I have seen structures that are dilapidating on the Montana countryside that are better built than this. Jeremiah lives in this shanty he calls home with his parents and six siblings. It is one room, maybe 8'x15'. When we met him and his mother they were so thankful for everything that the school had done for them. This young man walks an hour and a half one way up the hillside to attend school. We then went on to meet Abigail, who lived not far from the school. She lives in a brick-built home that looked like it had 2 bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen area. They too were grateful for all the school had done, but I couldn't help but notice the difference in living conditions, the difference in the standard of living. So, we asked...Jeremiah's father worked as a farmer on leased land barely making enough for his family to survive. None of his family had been able to go to school besides him. Abigail's father, on the other hand, was a cook at the school. What hit me right between the eyes when I learned this was that this school is making an impact in this area that I could not have imagined. Just the difference in how the two families lived was night and day, but to see the level of education the students are getting. These children have the opportunity to completely change the lives of not only themselves but also their entire families. I am so excited to see what God has in store for not only these two children that we met, but also the entire schools! They truly have the opportunity to change the nation!"

~ Daniel Turnquist, Executive Pastor-Bethany Church

We can't begin to thank you enough for supporting the work in Sakila. Please accept our gratitude for your sharing. To take something from your own plate and give it to someone you have never even met is a selfless act. We know you are responding to a hope deep within your heart that God will use your sacrifice for good. And, He has. We are so excited to see what has been accomplished because you gave. Thank you so much!

Blessings,



The Sakila Sponsorship Program is a U.S. Federally recognized 501(c)(3) charity. All donations are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to the Sakila Sponsorship Program (S.S.P.) or pay securely using your credit or debit card by going to www.sakilasponsorship.org and clicking on the 'CONTACT INFO & DONATIONS' button.