

APU ON TOUR!

In March of 2008, during my visit to Malawi for the official launch of APU, it was clear to Memory and I that we were going to need to boost APU's profile in Canada. With our second intake of 80 additional girls nearly upon us, there was a lot of fundraising to be done, and I knew that having Memory tell the story of this incredible project in person was our best chance of spreading the word. Our donors needed to hear how their money was being spent and they needed to hear Memory herself tell them of the life and death importance of keeping these special young girls in school. We desperately needed to find sponsors for each of our 80 new girls as well as the funding needing to complete the construction of our Phase Two buildings.

The plan was to have Memory and I travel around to as many schools, service clubs, youth groups and fundraising events as possible for the month of November. Memory and her son Teloni made the long journey from Malawi and arrived in Victoria on October 28th. It was wonderful hosting her in my home at Pearson College, where my students and colleagues were more than happy to babysit Teloni and support us in any way they could.

Our APU Board members in both BC and Alberta, had prepared a speaking itinerary that included 19 Rotary Clubs, 20 Schools, 4 Interact Clubs, 5 Community Fundraisers and a Benefit Concert. Our travels took us all over Vancouver Island then headed to Alberta where we went to Lloydminster, Edmonton and finally Dawson Creek.

APU STUDENT HEADS TO CANADA ON SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP!

David Hawley, director of Lester B. Pearson College of The Pacific, has officially offered a full two year scholarship, worth \$35,000 per year, to one of our APU girls! David Hawley heard Memory and Christie speak during International



Affairs on Nov 7th and he made the announcement following a standing ovation given by the student body. Memory and Christie will be selecting a student to come to Pearson College for her last two years of high school.

The chosen student will be coming to Pearson in 2010 and will finish her IB diploma here on Vancouver Island!



"Finally I am growing healthy and strong, they give us regular balance diet. I sleep on a mattress on a bed and everything is in its place. That is why I thank APU because has done good things to developing on my life and also I learn to do work for free as you have done to me my sponsor. Please correct my mistakes as I am still a learner."

Regina Innocent

APU ON TOUR

The highlight of the tour was a Brick By Brick Silent Auction put on by the Dawson Creek Interact Club. This little community has truly been an amazing help to APU with some of our most solid support coming from individual Rotarians, their families, and the local Interact Club. The Brick By Brick Silent Auction alone raised \$40,000!



By the time Memory left in December we had found 60 of our 80 sponsors and it was clear from the letters that were continuing to arrive that we would reach our goal before the girls started school in January. It was an exhausting but exhilarating experience. Memory and I would like to thank the APU board members for their solid support throughout the 6-week tour. Without their help this would not have been possible. In fact, we were so successful that I am already starting preparations for our second annual APU Tour! If you have a school, youth group, service club or church that would like to hear Memory speak on her return visit, please e-mail me at cjohnson@pearsoncollege.ca and I will do my best to make it happen!



Brick by Brick

CANADIAN YOUTH ON THE MOVE SUPPORT MALAWIAN GIRLS ON THE MOVE

There is a special connection developing between young people in Canada and the Malawian girls attending Atsikana Pa Ulendo Secondary School in Malawi. It seems that when our youth hear about how hard it is for girls in Malawi to get an education, they instantly realize that they can actually do something about it! They seem to have a true understanding of their power and



ability to make a difference. The concept of Brick By Brick has taken off, and its working, one child at a time, one dollar at a time, one unique fundraising idea at a time.

Bishop Lloyd Middle School in Lloydminster issued a vow of silence challenge to raise money for the students in Malawi who

can speak out for themselves. The money raised, helped to build one of the classroom blocks.

Sing for a Cure music group from Mount Allison University in New Brunswick gave numerous benefit concerts around their campus throughout the year. They helped to erect three walls in the hostel.

Dawson Creek Interact Club in northern BC held a stunningly successful silent auction. They raised enough funds to bring running water to the school!

Pearson College Students held a spa night in their hostel, offering massages, pedicures and manicures. They plan on sponsoring an APU girl.

Oak Bay High Interact Club in Victoria BC held their own Brick By Brick fundraiser at their high school. This is their third year supporting APU!

SMUS middle and senior school in Victoria are both sponsoring APU girls.

West-Mont Elementary School held bake sales and book sales.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie School in St. Albert sold artwork, held concerts and had the chance to sing the Malawian national anthem to Memory when she visited them!

Cantlon Choirs in Edmonton held a benefit concert, performing APU's school song 'Young Women We'. The money raised helped us complete the construction of the second hostel.



THE APU ROTARY CONNECTION

In the winter of 2000 when I returned from Malawi following the closure of ERGO, the all girls secondary school that I had been teaching at, I was given the chance to speak at my father's Rotary Club. I told the story of my former students and their struggle to complete their education despite the many obstacles holding them back. I talked about Memory Chazeza, the courageous and determined young woman that I met while volunteering at the school. Most of the clubs that I spoke to either sponsored girls themselves, or had members that were willing to sponsor girls. I found that if I told the story well enough and often enough, I could actually change the outcome for these young women. I spoke at schools, churches and service clubs, but it was Rotary that took a special interest in this project.



The Rotary Club of West Shore presenting Memory and Christie with Paul Harris Fellowships.

When Memory told me that she wanted to work together with me to build a secondary school to continue our work with girls on a much larger scale, I knew that I was going to need help. During my presentations I described our dream and found that many of the Rotarians who had been so supportive in the past were willing to step forward and form a committee to help me take this project to the next level. The Rotary Club of Sooke had a society, the Sooke Rotary Community Organization, that was willing and able to handle our finances, wire money to Malawi and provide tax receipts to our donors. Over the years, two committees were formed composed mainly of Rotarians, one in District 5370 where I first began my fundraising, and a second in District 5020 after I had moved to Victoria. Recently, these two committees joined forces under the name APU CANADA FOUNDATION and have taken the first steps required to become a registered charity.



Memory and Christie with their Guardian Angel, Ken Haywood

It has now been nine years since I started fundraising, first to help our 24 ERGO girls complete their secondary education and subsequent training courses, and now to build APU and cover the operating expenses at the school. Rotarians are continuing to play an integral role in the success of this dream, from forming the backbone of our organizational board in Canada, to sponsoring the girls and donating funds for the construction of buildings.

Over half of our 160 girls are being sponsored by Rotary Clubs, Rotarians, and their families. Many of our construction projects have been funded by individual Rotarians, with the Schilds family of Dawson Creek (Rotary Club of Dawson Creek) and the Haywood family of Edmonton (Rotary Club of Edmonton Northeast) being our two most significant contributors.



Left: Tricio Timmermans, David Stocks
Middle Back: Glenys Berry, Larry Johnson, Ric Perron, Brian Davison, Rob Fricker
Middle Front: Christie Johnson, Tim Schilds, Colleen Milne
Right: Carol McGinty, Lori Messer

Atsikana Pa Ulendo (Girls On The Move) Girls Education Project in Malawi thanks the many Rotary Clubs (20 clubs to date), and individual Rotarians who have listened to the stories, believed in the dream, and taken the action required to turn this dream into reality. You really do MAKE DREAMS REAL!



Further more here at APU I learn more things that it will help me in future, some of things that I has learn are: problem solving and

decision making. In the past I was don't know to solve problems and make good decisions. But now am able to do so and other things I have learn are setting goals in life, to be self discipline and assertiveness and also learn that person should be with responsibility, tolerance, and loyalty all this things I was real don't know but because of APU now able to know this things.

Evelyn Jekapu

BUSINESS AS USUAL!

Written By Tricia Timmermans

It's business as usual at APU. Classes are in full swing, there's laughter and song in the air, and the girls are learning eagerly. The sounds are possibly a little different from what one might hear in some North American high schools where "Hey, turn off that Game Boy" "No cell phones in class" are more likely heard. A recent letter from Tiyamike, "my" student at APU, prompted me to ask a 16-year-old BC acquaintance to describe her typical school day.

She explained how she was woken up around 6:30 every morning, but, as she was usually still tired, she stayed in bed for another 15 minutes until her mother made her get up so that she wouldn't be late for school. She added: "Sometimes I am anyway!" Her routine cereal breakfast was followed by hair and teeth brushing, and then, she said, "I also usually go online and check my e-mail. Most of my e-mail is junk mail - advertisements for things I don't need: home equity loans, free porn, fake college degrees, etc., but some of it is from my friends." She described how her mom usually drove her to school, or she car-pooled with other students. School, which was from 8:30 to 4:00 included French, Math, Chemistry, Theatre, and more. During breaks she worked on homework, talked with friends, attended meetings, and so on. Then, after school, it was homework followed by dinner, chatting with friends on the phone, watching TV, practising violin, then off to bed...and the cycle started all over.

I couldn't help reflect on how so much of her school experience was similar to that of Tiyamike's, but so much of it was so very different. Not necessarily better, nor worse, just very different.

Tiyamike is also 16 and is in Form 2 at APU. According to Henry and Memory, she is "a very hardworking girl who is getting really good results." Tiyamike described her daily activities:

"On Sunday, early in the morning I do clean my room before breakfast. Then I go to the cafeteria for breakfast. It is corn porridge that we normally have. After that I go to church. Church service takes about the maximum of two hours. After church we go straight to the cafeteria for lunch. I do rest for two hours and I normally spend this time chatting with friends. After that I go to SCOM for one



Tiyamike

hour. SCOM is a Christian organisation for students. One joins when she wants to. It is operated by students only. We have a patron who guides us if we need help. After SCOM I go for entertainment where we watch television and sometimes we entertain ourselves by organising a comedy, drama, songs and poems. I usually get involved in drama. After that we go for lunch and the rest of the

time at night is for singing and dancing before bed time.

On Monday, from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm we have our classes. Soon after that we are free until 6:00 pm when we have our studies until 8:00 pm when we go to our rooms and rest. On Tuesday, as usual, classes run from 7:30 to 3:30. From 4:00 to 5:00 we do have sports. 6:00-8:00 is study time. On Wednesday, after classes at 3:30 we do have village/community service from 4:00 to 5:00. Then studies are from 6 to 8 as usual. On Thursday after having classes at 3:30 we are free until study time at 6:00-8:00. On Friday after having classes, from 4:00-5:00 we do have different clubs according to ones choice like wildlife, science and technology, or debate and writing. From 6:00-8:00 is time for study. On Saturday early in the morning we do whatever we wish like laundry, sleeping in, then around 8 am we do have our breakfast. At 9:00 we do have general cleaning. General cleaning takes one hour and thirty minutes. After lunch we do have sports from 2:30 up to 3:30.

This timetable makes us to be active each and every time."

Yes it's a different life - no Game Boys, no junk emails, just solid learning, healthy living, and cheerful socializing. Contributing to Tiyamike's education has been a uniquely rewarding experience. I feel strongly that through education she will gain a powerful tool to help improve her own welfare as well as that of her future children and of Malawi society in general. Let's encourage more sponsors to come on board and enjoy the same experience.

Sponsor A Girl

For \$80 per month or \$1000 per year you could become a sponsor for one of these incredible young girls. We are currently looking for sponsors for our 80 girls who will be starting school in Jan 2010.



BUILT TO LAST

These buildings are being built to last with solid foundations that extend down at least a meter below the level of each building. Foundations consist of sand, clay, broken brick and cement all layered and compacted by hand using handmade tools. The bricks have all been fired from APU soil and fired in makeshift kilns for over 24 hours using firewood that has been placed into holes in the kiln. The cement is also being mixed on site under the watchful eye of Mr. Banda, our site supervisor. At the start of each day Mr. Banda signs each tool out to the hundreds of workers and ensures that each and every item removed from stores does indeed end up in APU buildings. Bags of cement are worth the most money so when they are signed out Mr. Banda accompanies the workers and personally watches the cement being mixed with water to ensure that no cement goes missing.



Classrooms

ELECTRICITY AT APU

APU is incredibly close to being attached to the electrical grid! We have had to pay to have the posts and cables extended from the nearby trading center of Nsalu and now all that is remaining is for a transformer to be brought in. In the absence of electricity we have been using a generator that runs on petrol. It is so expensive to run that it is only used for two hours a day during evening studies so that the girls can see to do their homework and studying. The use of the office computers and photocopier have been limited to evening hours. Bringing electricity to APU will make a huge difference to the operations of the entire school and I expect that there will be quite a celebration once it is finally in place.



Construction of Pathways

Name a building after a loved one

Donate more than half of the cost of one of our Phase Three Buildings and have the building named after your family or someone you love. We are currently fundraising for our kitchen/cafeteria, our third classroom block, and our third staff duplex.

LEARNING TO GIVE – THE LESSON OF A LIFETIME

Milicah Njelesa

One of the lessons that the girls at APU are being taught is not in the Malawian curriculum. In fact this lesson makes APU very different from other schools in the country.

These girls are all in school because someone else that they don't even know is giving something to them. In this case it is school fees that are being given. As a result, these young girls are being given an education that far exceeds that of the girls and boys at the local government day school just down the road from APU.

APU girls feel lucky to attend school at all, let alone a school that has text books, science equipment, good food, comfortable beds with mosquito nets, teachers that are highly trained and hardworking and a female Director who loves them and takes a personal interest in each and every one of them. From having nothing and being at the very bottom of the power structure, these girls all of a sudden have it made. That is IF they take advantage of this chance that they have been given.

Now it is their turn to give. APU girls are being taught that

they too have something to give. They are healthy and strong, with arms that can lift and hands that can carry and minds that can think and solve problems. They are, all of a sudden, in a position where they can, and should be helping others. This lesson in volunteerism is very foreign to what is usually taught in schools in Malawi, and in truth, it is foreign to many schools in Canada as well.

APU girls spend one afternoon a week heading out into the community to pick up trash at the local market, go into the homes of the elderly and help with cooking and cleaning, work on construction at the APU site, and help out at the local clinic. In addition, children in primary schools within walking distance of APU are being invited to APU for free tutoring. The little girls that come to APU leave their tutoring sessions with renewed energy for their own education. They have the hope that one day, they too might be able to attend Secondary School at APU. And APU girls are discovering that they

have skills that are unique and needed by their community. They can give. They have something to give. And most importantly, they should give of themselves freely.

I also learn useful skills here like on Wednesday we go out to help other people like at the hospital or at the market. I learn these at APU. This is very opposite from other schools. They prepare me to help my parents when we will close school. These also teach us to be able to take care of others not my relations only. I am very jovial learning here because of many things that are helpful to me.



QUOTES FROM APU GIRLS



Now its our responsibility to choose good thing that it can help us in future. We should just work hard and follow rules and regulations that in future we improve our country and help our parents and other people and also I just thanks teachers the way they're doing to us. Thank them and anyone in this country and also in Canada where people not our relatives are paying for us though they don't know us.

Beatrice Tsokonombwe



I need to work hard in order to help my parents relatives and also to help our country because we are poor. We need the education to live a better life. APU has done something for me. After my education I want to become a nurse because many people die because of shortage of doctors and nurses so I want to improve that problem but I am sure that I should do it when God allows me to live a long time. I'm hopeful that all things I want to do in future I will do them. I know this due to Madam Memory she tells us that your dream can come true and I see this is the truth in my life. This is my first time in my life to dream about future.

Agness Ludzu



At APU I enjoy because we sleep good hostel. In our hostel there is a bed we sleep on mattresses that place its very good and soft and warm and its very enough space. Also our food its good because we are not eating same food every day but we change while other school they don't have good place for sleep that they can get disease. At APU we stay healthy and clean and learn to love one another not just jealous and gossip. APU it's the best school I enjoy so thanks to those paying my fees it's a wondrous thing to my life.

Promise Malinga



I imagine a girl to walk 4 kilometers each and every day this is not good you can go in the class room while you're already tired and also you can just sleeping in the classroom because of the jobs at home because at home you need to do the work before you go at school so its really bad to me. At APU there is time for reading and learning and studying each and every day. I just thank Madam Chazeza to helped to develop Malawi. Also I thank you my sponsor because of the good things you're doing to me it's really very good to pay school fees for me. I am Mirriam Katswiri. To you my sponsor in Canada Bye!

Mirriam Katswiri



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**For more information
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