

Read all about MGEF's accomplishments in 2013!



December 2013 Update

*Do you know someone
who cares about girls education?*

Click to forward

"I lack the words to appreciate you. Barbara, you gave me life."

- Agnes Resiatio Kitesho, MGEF Earth University Student

Dear Friend,

As the year comes to a close, the Maasai Girls Education Fund both mourns the loss of its Founder and President, Barbara Lee Shaw, [on October 17, 2013](#), and also celebrates the life and legacy of this extraordinary woman. Although she didn't live to see the end of this year or the tributes in her honor in Kenya or the U.S., she would be extremely proud of MGEF's accomplishments in 2013. She would also be proud of her Board of Directors, her family, her personally chosen successor, Zara Bott-Goins, and her Communications Associate, Ruya Norton, who have all worked tirelessly to further MGEF's mission and honor Barbara's vision during this period of transition. Barbara's profound sense of justice and her commitment to creating educated, confident, and independent Maasai women in Kenya remain steadfast in MGEF. With her dedicated team, Barbara's promise to every one

of our students will be kept, and we will continue leading the way for future generations of Maasai women and girls.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we move forward.



A woman needs two things to rise out of poverty: self-esteem and self-reliance.
Education gives her both.

- Barbara Lee Shaw

MGEF's Extraordinary Year

Barbara built a strong and resilient organization, and the last 12 months are a testament to the impact MGEF is having across all age groups and throughout the Maasai community. The number of [girls receiving MGEF scholarships](#) grew 27% this year, bringing 22 new girls into the classroom, and increasing the number of sponsored MGEF students to 103, a record high. In addition, the [MGEF Community Education Program](#) reached a total of 1,802 Maasai girls, women, boys, and men in 2013, creating many new allies who are now committed to ending the harmful practices of early marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). Finally, 60 women completed our comprehensive [Rural Women's Business Training Program](#) and launched 20 successful enterprises, providing themselves with economic independence and their families with increased stability.



Pictured: Emily Kasino (Office Assistant, MGEF Kajiado Office) and Business Trainees.

While powerful, these statistics tell only part of our story. They don't tell you about [Caroline Senteu Kashinin](#), sponsored by MGEF since 2006, who graduated from the Kenya Methodist University School of Nursing in August, and is now considering graduate programs in Public Health in the U.S.

They don't tell you about [Gloria Momeita Kotente](#), who successfully completed her 2nd year of medical education at the University of Nairobi School of Medicine this year, and has been volunteering at MGEF's Mentoring Workshops.

And they don't tell you about [Dorothy Siyiapei Malleon](#), a young Maasai woman who could not afford school after her parents passed away, but who is now defying the odds by earning an advanced degree in Telecommunications from Kenyatta University. In 2013 Dorothy received a prestigious internship at Solomon's Wisdom Academy in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, where she spent six weeks promoting education.

Also, earlier this year [Nancy Moita Koin](#), an MGEF graduate, became an HIV counselor for APHIA-Plus after earning a Diploma in Community Health and a Certificate in HIV Counseling. Others in the healthcare field, like [Simantoi Kilama](#), are also giving back to their communities. This year Simantoi joined MGEF as a Life Skills Workshop Facilitator, lending her unique voice and perspective to the rich fabric of [our in-country team](#).

As we have learned time and again, education is the surest path to economic independence for Maasai girls, enabling them to rise out of poverty, make independent decisions, and raise healthier children. MGEF promises to support the education of our students until they

have the knowledge and skills needed to succeed. The achievements of MGEF graduates demonstrate [the value of their education](#).



Pictured: Simantoi Kilama with Life Skills Workshops participants.

"One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world."
- Malala Yousafzai

Caroline's Visit to the U.S.

One of the most powerful examples of MGEF's impact is Caroline Senteu Kashinin. Caroline embodies the vision we have for every Maasai girl: to be educated, confident, and independent. At the invitation of her MGEF sponsor, Caroline traveled to the U.S. in November to explore graduate programs in Public Health and to honor Barbara, speaking at events in Washington, DC, Philadelphia and Vermont. We invite you below to learn more about Caroline as she shares her memories of Barbara at an MGEF Memorial Reception in Washington, DC on November 15. She is introduced by Barbara's husband and her daughter, newly elected MGEF Board Member, Tracey Pyles.



"If we are going to see real development in the world,
then our best investment is women."
- Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Kenya Report from Zara Bott-Goins, MGEF Acting Executive Director

This has been a busy time of year for MGEF leadership and students. I recently returned from a month-long trip to Kenya with longtime MGEF Board Members, Charlene Goss and Terese Lilly, where I had the opportunity to work with MGEF staff and students, and met with both government and nonprofit leaders in education. Witnessing first hand the profound impact MGEF is having in the Maasai community was inspiring, and the experience deepened my appreciation for the unique strengths of MGEF and the personal commitment that Barbara made to each of her scholarship students.



Pictured: Acting Executive Director, Zara Bott-Goins with an MGEF student

A day after arriving in Kenya I attended one of MGEF's Life Skills Workshops. These Workshops address the cultural barriers and practices prohibiting girls from continuing their education, such as early marriage and FGM. Led by Maasai facilitators, they provide information to girls and boys to help them make informed life decisions and stay in school. I also attended Elders and Mothers Workshops, in which MGEF promotes dialogue among the adult women and men of these communities about the value of educating girls and the importance of ending the practices of early marriage and FGM. The power of the Workshops is in the frank discussions they generate among the participants and, ultimately, in their outcome: overwhelming agreement that these practices should end.

The MGEF Kenyan Board is a critical, integral part of MGEF's success. The Board worked closely with Barbara for many years, and when I met with them in late November to discuss current business, they shared heartfelt recollections of Barbara, and renewed their deep commitment to continuing Barbara's vision and the future of MGEF.



Pictured: MGEF Kajiado Staff and Board Members

One of the highlights of my trip was meeting with the MGEF Alumni Association. The Association, a group of young MGEF graduates in the workforce and at university, embodies Barbara's vision for MGEF's future: strong, educated Maasai women using their knowledge and resources to give back to their communities and help uplift others. The meeting was filled with teachers, a dentist, a doctor-in-training, and more. It was inspiring to sit among this group of young women sharing the challenges they had encountered and overcome with MGEF's support. They saw Barbara as their mentor and friend, loved her as their "Mum," and they promised to move forward with hope and vigorous commitment to her legacy. To honor her and give back to MGEF, they will mentor the younger girls receiving MGEF scholarships. They also vowed to contribute 5% of their annual income to the MGEF Scholarship Fund. Some of them have already begun fulfilling their promises by volunteering at the MGEF Annual Mentoring Workshop, where they taught sessions on health and career development.



Pictured: Medical Student, Gloria Mumeita Kotente



Pictured: MGEF alumni, college students, and Mentoring Workshop participants

Following the Workshops, MGEF hosted its Annual Student Reception for girls and their families on December 7th. Barbara's husband, Durwood, her daughter, Tracey, and her granddaughters, Cassidy and Hannah, traveled from the U.S. for this important event. MGEF students, family members, and friends gathered to remember Barbara, celebrate her vision, and renew their commitment to MGEF. The video below of MGEF students and graduates joining together in song to honor Barbara is powerful and moving.



More 2013 Highlights

- **March** - MGEF celebrated International Women's Day with the World Innovation Summit for Education, [answering questions from all over the globe](#) about our work as a model organization for advancing girls' education. - Journalist Soraya Chemaly also wrote about MGEF [in an article](#) for International Women's Day.
- **May** - MGEF was [featured in the Huffington Post](#) as a "Top Local Nonprofit" focusing on girls and women.
- **October** - On International Day of the Girl, MGEF spoke on an education panel at American University and participated in a [Google Hangout](#) with Dining for Women, one of our important supporters.
- **November** - After earning an in-kind grant from the Giving Library in February, we saw the fruits of our labor: [a series of short videos](#) that answer the most frequent questions we receive about our unique approach to empowering and educating Maasai girls.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

- Nelson Mandela

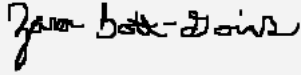
Thank You

On behalf of the Maasai community and the Maasai Girls Education Fund, I would like to thank our many supporters, both individuals and foundations, including those who have made contributions to the [Barbara Lee Shaw Memorial Fund](#). Your generous support and commitment to Maasai girls' education is critical to our success and the continued success

of our students.

With gratitude and best wishes for the holiday season,

Zara Bott-Goins



Acting Executive Director

To donate, please visit our website: <http://www.maasaigirlseducation.org/donate>

[Follow on Twitter](#) | [Like on Facebook](#) | [Forward to Friend](#)

Copyright © 2013 Maasai Girls Education Fund, All rights reserved.



[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [update subscription preferences](#)
