

Violet

“If I don’t make it to college I am sure I would be doomed and be a nobody. It would be very sad, but I promise my resort can’t be getting married and bearing many hopeless children or selling anything by the roadside. My greatest worry is being a failure in life and making mistakes without correcting them. My hopes and dreams are to become successful in life and influence other people in the society.”

- Violet Akinyi



Violet was born September 26, 1994. She grew up in the central province of Kenya, up to sixth grade. She walked 5 kilometers each way to and from school. In Kenya, girl children are degraded and viewed as rarely doing well academically. Girls are required to do all the chores like washing dishes, fetching firewood and water, and doing the laundry and cooking.

Violet’s father was a mason and her mother picked tea leaves. These are back-breaking, low-paying jobs. It was not unusual for Violet’s family to go without food. That was before disaster struck.

In 2007, tribal violence erupted after the elections. Some 600,000 people were internally displaced. Many people were maimed or killed. On the night the election winner was declared, young men from a rival tribe broke into the single-room house of Violet, her parents and three siblings and ordered them to get out. Violet sought refuge in a friend’s house. Violet’s mother and youngest brother hid in a maize farm and spent the night in the cold in heavy rain. They never went back to their house and later learned that it had been set on fire. The family was separated from her father. They were taken to a police station where they stayed for a week, living in tents. The government then ferried them in trucks to their historic homeland near Kisumu, where they were strangers.

Due to the disruption, Violet missed a lot of school and was forced to repeat the sixth grade. Because of her excellent grades, Violet was accepted at a provincial secondary school, but due to financial difficulties she attended a district school, which is smaller and less desirable. In Kenya, there are fees for attending secondary school and students who can’t pay the fees are sent home. After they were displaced, her father could not find work and her mother generated what income she could by doing farm work.

Violet was frequently sent home from school for lack of fees. At one point, she was stuck at home for a whole month and had given up going back to school. Despite the interruptions, Violet was the top student and well behaved. The principal could no longer abide seeing her talent go to waste, so he got her back in school and let her stay despite the outstanding fees.



About her role as student leader in secondary school, Violet says: "I promise I left a legacy."
(Center, at the start of senior year).

Violet was selected the overall student leader in the school. Her geography teacher encouraged and advised her, and provided her personal effects like soap, body oil and sanitary towels. (This last item sounds too personal, but the practical reality is that lack of same poses a huge impediment to consistent school attendance for girls in Africa). Her teachers also provided support that allowed her to sit for national exams at the conclusion of secondary school. She still owes substantial fees that will have to be paid to obtain her secondary school certificate and proceed to college.

Violet did very well on her national exams, and qualifies for a spot in college. Violet's favorite subjects are mathematics and sciences. She wants to be an engineer. Her long-term ambition is to help the less fortunate: the poor, the orphans and the aged. She wants to build a children's home and a home for the aged.

Change Violet's Life, and She Will Change Yours

Kenya has many wonderful young people who are smart, energetic, and ambitious, and who have much to contribute to their communities and the world. An opportunity to use their talent and pursue their dreams transforms their life.

My travels in Kenya have given me the opportunity to meet terrific young people, and to enrich my life immeasurably by becoming involved in their lives as a sponsor, mentor and friend.

We first met Violet when she was a freshman, and have seen her grow throughout her high school years. I will envy whoever embraces Violet.

February 2011



January 2015



Why is this Special?

I know you are besieged with requests for contributions and donations. This is an opportunity to get directly involved and change a remarkable young woman's life. Making college possible for Violet and guiding her through this transformative part of her life will be an experience that provides you amazing satisfaction, perspective, inspiration and personal enrichment. Violet will be an excellent correspondent who values your advice and mentorship.

What Can You Expect?

Violet will be given a college assignment or menu of assignments by the Kenyan educational system. She will need funding. Far beyond that, she is an excellent communicator, with good English skills and access to the internet and phone contact. Anyone who sponsors Violet can establish their own level of contact, interest, encouragement and moral support with her. If your experience is anything like mine has been, you are in for an amazing time.

The cost of Violet's education and related expenses is likely to be in the range of \$5,000 per year over the next four years. This is a substantial commitment, and will probably require teamwork. You are welcome to participate at any level.

Logistics

I can assist with arrangements for the wire transfer of funds to Violet's school or to Violet herself. Through the graciousness of Summit Bank and Trust, I can send the funds without an outgoing wire fee. I am glad to coordinate partial sponsors and help with any issues that arise.



If you can participate in sending Violet to college, or if you have questions, please contact me at:

303-870-6214 or

jim@cederberglaw.com.

I guarantee this will be one of the most rewarding things you have ever done.