



42/22: Humanity Through Baseball Foundation, Inc.
1755 Deer Valley Rd.
Boulder, CO 80305
303-870-6214
www.42-22.org

September 17, 2013

Dear Friends and Family,

After returning in late January from my fourth humanitarian trip to Kenya, somebody asked me how long it takes for things to get back to normal. The answer is, after this experience, things never get back to normal. The world never looks the same.

Now is the time prepare in earnest to return to Kenya on January 9, 2014.

Many of you read my lengthy report of our January 2012 trip and shared kind comments. Each trip takes on a life of its own, but there are many similarities, of course. One of my main reactions on the way home this year was a strong desire to share the actual experience with more volunteers. It is a shame that this adventure is wasted on just a few of us.

We made intensive use of our time. In two weeks, we visited slum families in Nairobi, played baseball with secondary school students at 17 different schools, interacted with scores of administrators and teachers, and shared laughs with many hundreds of primary school students. We also found a little time to visit a rain forest and to see incredible wildlife on the Masai Mara.

Amazingly, the experience starts with playing a little baseball, which directly affects hundreds of kids and is great fun. From there, the common qualities and experiences as human beings that we, the kids and adults we encounter all share seem to take over.

Among the highlights of the 2013 trip were visits with young people whom our participants have sponsored to further their education. Spending time with these talented and courageous young people is as uplifting an experience one can imagine. The down side of that experience is all the other deserving kids who need help that we cannot afford to provide.

One of our participants, who has been extremely generous in sponsoring high school students, spoke during the trip of the heartbreak of not being able to help even more

children. Indeed, this can be overwhelming, and I tried to encourage him by emphasizing that we need to focus on and realize the value of the help we do provide.

One young woman whom we sponsor studies in downtown Kisumu. Her dormitory room was a 5-plus-person room at the YWCA hostel. The ten blocks between the university and the hostel are navigated by a sidewalk that consists partly of collapsing concrete panels over an open sewer. The area is surrounded by a bustling open-air market.

Everyone to whom this letter is addressed is a valuable and generous member of your community. We all find satisfaction in being useful beyond our own enrichment. As I struggled with the financial commitment required for this project, I received this message from the young woman described above:

Words fail me to express my gratitude to you- I mean I just do not seem to know the best way to do it or maybe I am yet to find one, but please always know that I am sincerely very grateful, even when I don't mention it. Thank you too for turning my gloom into glitter. You see, for me life as a young girl was very painful and many a times when I think about it, comparing it with my life today, and that bright future I hope for, it is like a dream, and I cannot help the tears that flow even as I tell you this. I'm sorry it sounds rather sad, but there is one good thing about it-actually it really drives me to help young girls, women and even children who go through the same.

If it gets any better than that, I would love to see it.

This particular note really hit home for me because it reminded me of where my passion comes from. Not that many years ago (OK, maybe it was that many years ago), I was a skinny kid from Pennsylvania with a dream of going to college, becoming a lawyer, raising a family, and seeing the world. It is fascinating how much we are the same. My dreams came true, and then some. Now it is time to pass it on. Many of you have similar stories. But vivid reminders like that above provide invaluable perspective.

This is the experience I would love to share with you. The ultimate experience is going on the trip. Talk about immersion! The trip does require being in good physical condition and tolerance to heat and rough roads. It costs about \$5,000. A "no whining" rule is ruthlessly enforced. Sending someone else on the trip would be a wonderful gift that will truly help shape one's life.

Another way to share the experience is to sponsor a particular student in Kenya. This is rewarding because it is very personal. Here is another message from the young lady described above that stopped me in my tracks:

I have never felt so cared for before like I now do. Thanks for being really caring.

Imagine that just knowing someone cares means so much. I think she has put her finger on what it is that causes all the kids we encounter to treat us like rock stars. When you go to a place like Kenya, it is apparent that most of the world doesn't care. There may not even be any parents to care. Caring is such a simple gift to give. Unfortunately, it sets us apart from much of the society in which we live.

I receive many requests for help from deserving, promising young people whom I meet. I have a list of individuals with amazing stories of persistence in circumstances we cannot imagine. Many of these kids have access to the internet and love to exchange email messages. I have photos to share. I would love to match you up with a particular student.

If you would be interested in sponsoring or helping to sponsor a particular student, please contact me and we can find you a good match. We can make logistical arrangements for payments (Summit Bank waives wire transfer fees), and arrange payments directly to schools. Sponsorships for particular students who are not orphans are not tax deductible.

Of course, we continue to need donations of funds and baseball equipment for our visits to Kenya and support of orphans. If you have a connection with anyone who has access to new or used baseball gear, especially gloves, by all means put us in touch with them.

For the time being, we have had to scale back our current subsistence payments for orphan children because of some issues with the adults with whom we deal. This was a gut-wrenching decision, because we believe the majority of the funds we sent did feed hungry kids. We hope to increase this support in the future, but we need to cultivate responsible intermediaries over the long term. Development of trustworthy, competent adult caretakers is one of the desired outcomes of soliciting individual sponsorships of promising students. Contributions to 42/22: Humanity Through Baseball Foundation, Inc. are tax deductible.

Photos from our recent trip are enclosed. I hope you enjoy sharing them. There are more photos and stories on our web site, and photos on our Facebook page.

Our next trip is January 9 through 25, 2014. Please include Humanity Through Baseball and the kids of Kenya in your dreams.

Sincerely,

Jim Cederberg
President, 42/22: Humanity Through Baseball Foundation, Inc.
1755 Deer Valley Road, Boulder CO 80305
www.humanitythroughbaseball.org
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