**History, Mission and Purpose**

Ventures For Good Foundation was established in 2012 in response to a few years of grass-roots volunteering in Uganda. It has continued to this day as a small non-profit whose mission is to serve under-served populations in the US and Africa. Each year we bring lessons and low-cost technology and related 21st century skills to the sub-Saharan region of Africa. Most of the work has been done in Uganda where US educators, in concert with African educators, have brought pedagogically sound, technology integrated lessons to teachers and students at 6 primary schools and one community hospital center. Another major focus has been on project based learning whereby teachers have engaged students in small projects as subjects for constructionist lessons, for example, brick making, bench making, sewing reusable menstrual pads, baking and bee-keeping such that skills as well as theory are taught.

Our mission is to serve the under-served, regardless of religion, race, abilities, or sexual orientation, but especially youth and young girls. We’ve established the Kabagezi Center in Jinja where many of the lessons are provided. This year’s focus is to build a Children’s Park, with children providing the design, brick and bench making as well as plantings and maintenance under the guidance of a seasoned teacher.

**The Need**

We applaud the primary school teachers in these rural towns with whom we work. They have oversized classes, little resources, cramped classrooms and huge lessons to impart. Most of our work has been done in Jinja, a suburb of Kampala with crowded streets, uncontrolled traffic, a population that speaks mostly Lugandan and who are indeed poor, with many not able to afford lunch. The teachers and students, however, are determined and eager to learn. Our motto is “Never give up!”

**The Request For Funding**

We seek funding to step up what can be done on a grass-roots level. One of the most successful primary schools near Kampala is the MST Junior Academy,

( <http://mstjunioracademy.com> ) and upon discovering it and how successful it is in providing project based, skills based, technology enhanced education, the Executive Director of Ventures For Good realized that more children should be educated in this manner. There is a palpable need to set up a secondary school to enhance the learning that Ventures for Good has started. The children learn best by doing, and skills-based education is the most practical and promising avenue of achieving positive growth in the most valuable sector of the country, the youth.

Change and sustainability come from within a country, not from continuing foreign assistance. As in the US, education is the great equalizer and energizer. It is, therefore, imperative that the youth of Uganda be given opportunities to learn and develop employable skills as many young people, now adults, are chronically uneducated and unemployed. We must encourage entrepreneurship, ethics and responsibility. These skills will build Uganda’s place in the global economy with a focus toward stewardship of the planet. One visit to the streets of Jinja, Kampala or Entebbe would show how the absence of pollution-curbing, environment-depleting standards as well as corruption and the notoriously limited access to higher education can cause sickness, poverty and destruction, not just for Uganda’s population but for world at large. The youth, the future leaders, if educated well, can address these problems as they enter the workforce. Change from within.

Ventures For Good is earnestly seeking to join you in a partnership to help build an urgently needed secondary school for Science and Technology in Uganda. As a volunteer in Uganda for the past 9 years, an educational technologist, teacher, professor, online education director, and as Executive Director of Ventures For Good Foundation, it is my pleasure to write on behalf of this organization and to devote my time and energy to such a worthwhile and sorely needed endeavor.

We truly believe that **EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS** exist when each stakeholder supports the other and empowers the recipients of these joint efforts to sustain themselves. We, wholeheartedly, support the idea any request for assistance should support a home-grown solution with locally led leadership and effective partners.

Our local Ugandan partners, Dr. Emma Naluyima and Washington Mugerwa, are Directors of the MST (Math, Science, Technology) Junior Academy and have already established an innovative and successful primary school that Ugandan officials have visited numerous times to study. Our jointly proposed Ventures Secondary School will build further on this agriculturally themed constructionist methodology. In addition, the school curriculum will promote business skills: entrepreneurship, importing and exporting, the study of sustainability methods such as solar power, wind power and information technology. Agriculture has long been the backbone of Uganda’s economy, but adding sustainable energy solutions along with technology and business skills will frame its future through the *education of youth., the most investment worthy and sustaining segment of the population. This junior academy works ---*and developing the extension into a secondary school would be academically and financially sound as well.

I enthusiastically encourage you to listen to the Ted-Talk ( <http://bit.ly/agroschool> ) by Dr. Emma Naluyima, a veterinarian and one of the Directors/Owners of the MST Junior Academy. You will get a glimpse into the kind of learning that takes place at the primary level and why it is essential to build a school with more advanced capabilities for more mature, secondary students. These directors are inspirational. The educated, enterprising children from their school go back to their homes and communities to help their parents farm better and responsibly, not to mention with some shillings to save. Nothing is wasted with their farming methods that, too simply stated, begin with pigs and end with healthy plants in a totally regenerative process. At this school, the directors accept visits from countless community personnel and teach them how the children’s farm and school is maintained and thrives. Their message needs more ambassadors, and a secondary school full of well educated youth can be just that. The communities will also thrive just as Dr. Emma, a model for young girls, explains in the video.

They teach, and will be fortified to teach more, farmers, teachers and students. Our first semester will be a training ground for the teachers we will hire- 5, the first year but expanding to 20 when the school is complete. The need for expansion is great; the rewards epic. Together, we can make this a model for change.

The proposed Ventures Secondary School will take approximately 2 years to build and approximately $600,000. However, it will be built in stages as funding becomes more readily available. We anticipate building the first classrooms with a small Science lab, dining hall and library for commuting students for $250,000 in 2021. Thereafter, a dormitory will be built for $200,000 and finally, a Science and Technology Lab and Library will be built for $150,000. The land will provide the sustainable farming base of operations.

We will operate as ***a self sustaining school****.* As a private school, tuition is charged for those who can pay, but because”we” will “own” half the assets, and Ventures for Good does not, therefore, seek remuneration, we can offer scholarships to those who cannot afford to pay. We will have locally led, locally-owned leadership of 51% of the school. We already have a New York architect/professor (Ms Farzana Ghandi) and a local architect/ builder (Mr. Serge Denys) in place. The Ugandan Agriculture Curriculum writer from National Curriculum Development Center, Mr. Mathias Mulumba, is also an integral partner. The MST Junior Academy will be the working partner.We, at Ventures for Good, believe we can match your aid with charitable donations if we have your support. We share the goals of empowering a generation of youth to bring change to the communities and the country at large ,such that it sustains itself and regenerates with each successive graduating class. We believe these Ugandan partners are extremely intelligent, hard-working, innovative and enterprising. They need financial assistance, surely, but we can provide even more through guidance, advice, curriculum enhancements, private sector engagement and shared educational values. Effective partnerships rely on more than financial assistance. Together, we can make a significant change in the lives of countless students and communities. For a country still struggling with literacy and providing basic education, this effort to raise the quality of education will set an example for what is possible and MAKE IT POSSIBLE. What better way than to invest in the education of youth (young men and women) who, empowered with knowledge and skill, stand at the cusp of achieving their potential?

By completing the building of this school, we will have created a model for success within the school system of Uganda and brought the mission of Ventures for Good to fruition by providing sound pedagogical , technology-infused training to under-served teachers and students in Uganda, thereby growing and sustaining its presence in the global economy.

Thank you for your kind consideration. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

 

Dr. Joanne Clemente

Executive Director