



# MAASAI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

## Fall 2021 NEWSLETTER

**MEF #GivingTuesday Matching Fundraiser, Nov. 30, 2021**

**DONATE NOV. 30 @ 8AM EST TO POTENTIALLY DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!**



**Message from Theo, MEF Board Chairperson:** It has been an incredible year for MEF in spite of COVID-19 and I would like to summarize our accomplishments to date. Greater detail is provided in the rest of the newsletter.

- So far in 2021:
  - Our incredible donors have donated \$133,954 to MEF. Our goal for the year was \$110,775.
  - We sent \$135,090 to Tanzania for student sponsorships and construction of the new girl's dormitory.
  - We had \$359 in non-program expenses (postage, bank and eBay fees, etc.) so 99.73% of your donations go directly to Tanzania. Possible because we are 100% volunteer run and spend next to nothing on advertising unlike most charities.
- Our 143 children at the Engaruka English Medium Primary School (EEMPS) are thriving and excelling academically. Our 25 4<sup>th</sup> graders just completed their first national exams for private schools and EEMPS ranked in the upper 29% nationally. This is our first real and independent measure of the school's success.
- Our new 120 bed girl's dormitory is nearing completion and will house all our girls starting in January. Fundraising for a boy's dormitory will start next year with construction beginning in late 2022 or early 2023.
- The school now has a cellular modem and connection to the internet. It has facilitated Zoom video conferencing between the US and the school for volunteer reading sessions with students, sponsor-sponsored student chats, and science lessons.
- Service with Borders cancelled their 2021 service-learning trip to EEMPS and instead provided funding to start a computer lab at the school to facilitate remote learning. They started the volunteer reading program with EEMPS students.
- Our #GivingTuesday Matching Fundraiser starts at the end of the month. We hope to raise \$30,000 for student sponsorships and \$20,000 to construct a new water supply pipeline for the school. As the school has grown our water supply has become inadequate.
- Two of our supporting families selected MEF to receive memorial donations after their loved ones passed away. These memorials resulted in donations and pledges of \$31,730. MEF gratefully thanks these families.
- We are also grateful to the Crane Family of Columbus, Ohio. They donated \$17,500 to fund a wing of the new girl's dormitory, which we will name in their honor. This is the Crane Family's 2<sup>nd</sup> major donation to the school.
- Our 2021 Mid-Year Matching Fundraiser was a huge success! Our goal was to raise \$24,000: \$17,000 for a new girl's dormitory wing and \$7,000 in sponsorship/operating funds. We received a total of \$32,040 in donations and \$13,550 in matching funds or \$17,000 for the dormitory and \$28,590 in sponsorship/operating funds for the school. A HUGE THANK YOU to our 1st Mid-Year Matching Fundraiser donors!

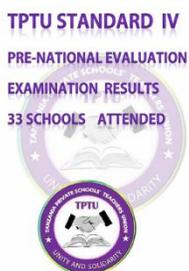
### **#GivingTuesday Matching Fundraiser, Nov. 30 to Dec 31, 2021 – Double your impact!**

Our biggest fundraiser of the year starts on November 30, 2021, 8AM EST and runs through the month of December. Our goal for the fundraiser is to raise \$30,000 in 2022 sponsorship/operating funds for the school and \$20,000 to fund a new water pipeline to the school to supply desperately needed water. See the Water Supply Pipeline article elsewhere in the newsletter for more details. Our generous donors are currently supporting 43 primary school students and \$30,000 is required to fund these students again in 2022. In addition, there are approximately 100 other students from poor families that need support. The cost to sponsor a boarding student for the 11 months that they are at the school each year is again \$700. This pays for their tuition, room and board, school uniforms, medical care, etc. If you donate within a second or two after 8AM CST on November 30 via credit card on Facebook, there is a possibility that Facebook will match 100% of the donation. We received \$13,000 in matching funds from Facebook in 2019 but only \$1,300 in 2020, so you must be quick! In addition, we currently have pledges for an additional \$11,000 in matching funds for when the 2021 Facebook match

runs out and more is expected. The first \$30,000 in donations will go towards sponsorships and donations over \$30,000 and matching funds will go towards the new water supply pipeline for the school. To donate via Facebook you just go to <https://www.facebook.com/MaasaiEducationFoundation/> and click on the blue DONATE button. You can also donate via credit card through the MEF PayPal Giving Fund link at: <https://paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/2457198>. Donations from either Facebook or PayPal Giving Fund are eligible for the MEF match depending upon the time they are submitted with first come, first serve. We will also accept donations via check. Please help us make this fundraiser a success. More info and advice on how to optimize your chances of a Facebook match will be emailed to you a week before the fundraiser if we have your email address. You can also donate by mailing checks payable to Maasai Education Foundation, 345 Woods Ln, Newport, VA 24128. If a corporate match is possible for your donation, please email [maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com) and we will work with you on options.

**Message from Martha, EEMPS Manager:** On behalf of EEMPS, our students and the Maasai people of the Engaruka region, we express thanks to MEF community and their donors, individual sponsors of the EEMPS children and Service Without Borders for their moral, technical and mostly financial support. Through your financial support we expect to complete the construction of the new 120 bed girl's dormitory by January when the 2022 school year starts. Much appreciation to the EEMPS education committee, management team, and teaching and non-teaching staff for their commitment and work towards the transformation of our children and the community as whole. Their dedication has helped the school move to another level and we have together accomplished the following:

- Construction of the new 120 bed girl's dormitory, which will provide a supportive educational and living environment for the 120 girls and their matron.
- Accepted 33 new pre-school students from less privileged families for the 2021 school year.
- Recruited two additional teachers for a total of nine (three male and six female) for our pre-school and grades 1-4.
- Established school reading and science clubs and strengthened the existing art club. Since last spring, the reading club has been supported by Virginia Tech's Service without Borders (SWB), who provided the school with cellular internet access, two laptop computers, a large smart TV, satellite TV access. Using this equipment and Zoom, our students, Virginia Tech students and other MEF volunteers were able to read together a couple of dozen times and the program continues. The science club was supported by Dhruv Khurjekar, a rising high school senior from New Jersey who did science experiments and activities with the science club twice per week via Zoom over the summer.
- Our first national examinations! On October 28 and 29, 2021 our grade four student took the school's first national exams after a prolonged period of coaching, extra classes and practice and other exams. We expect them to do well because they scored in the upper third of the pre-national examination for private school students.
- Student health is improving as we take more precautions for various infectious diseases, malaria and skin allergies that are mostly brought from home when students return from holidays. We have had no COVID-19 to our knowledge.



**National Standardized Test Results:** Thirty-five private Tanzania schools participated in the Pre-National Examination for Private Schools. National exams start in the 4th grade, and this was our first opportunity to compare ourselves with our peer primary schools to see how our educational program compares. Our school did exceedingly well given that the school is only four years old and that the vast majority of our children come from poor pastoralist families. Results of the exam are shown in the following table. We hope/expect to do even better on the standardized national exam that all 4th graders took at the end of October. Results of that exam are expected by the end of the year.

Overall School Scores									
School	School Score	School Grade	Individual EEMPS Student Scores					School Rank	School Percentile
			A	B	C	D	E		
EEMPS	239.04	B	12	13	0	0	0	10	71%
EEMPS Subject Matter Scores									
Subject	School Score	School Grade	Individual EEMPS Student Scores					School Rank	School Percentile
			A	B	C	D	E		
Math	39.84	B	10	15	0	0	0	12	66%
English	39.68	B	11	14	0	0	0	7	80%
Kiswahili	40.96	B	14	11	0	0	0	11	69%
Science	40.16	B	12	13	0	0	0	13	63%
Social Studies	39.6	B	11	14	0	0	0	9	74%

**Crane Family Donation:** The Crane Family of Columbus, Ohio donated \$17,500 last spring to fund the construction of a wing of the new girl's dormitory. This is their second major donation to the school and we hope they will be represented by a family member or two at the school next summer when the building is dedicated and a wing is named in their honor.



**Science Club Experience by Dhruv Khurjekar:** Working and connecting with the students from EEMPS this past summer was a terrific experience. From my very first day as an instructor, I could already see their shared passion for learning science, a subject that I have been lucky to learn extensively over the years. They were all inquisitive, actively engaged, and more adept at biology and ecology than any other third to fifth graders I have known. When I realized their inner drive to learn, I introduced them to advanced middle school and high school scientific concepts, and it was truly no surprise to me how quickly they learned the material. While I had prepared presentations and diagrams, the most enriching aspect of our virtual classes was the discussion between the students, the thoughtful questions they asked, and their amazing smiles. The teachers on site were also very helpful in engaging them and quickly grappling with tech issues. What warmed my heart the most was when one of the younger students told me he wanted to be a scientific researcher when he grew up. Though they were the ones who learned these challenging science topics from cell biology to ecosystems and biomes, I loved the fact that we were both inspired by the time it came to the last class. Thank you for this amazing opportunity. I hope to stay in touch and work with the students again soon!

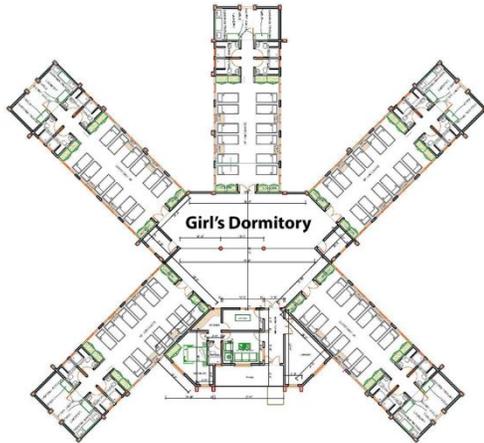


**Service Without Borders (SWB) Update:** SWB is a student organization at Virginia Tech that engages students in service-learning activities in communities around the world. Working with MEF, SWB has travelled to Tanzania each summer since 2017 to volunteer at the school (until COVID-19 hit). In 2017 they help build the first classroom building. In 2018 they funded a photovoltaic system for the school that provides 24/7 electricity at the school and helped build a guest house and paint the classroom building. In 2019 they funded and constructed the school playground. In 2000 and 2021, their trips to the school were cancelled because of COVID but that did not stop their support for the school. In 2020 and 2021 they supplied the school with a cellular modem for internet access at

the school, laptop computers, a satellite TV connection and a large screen smart TV that with the cellular modem and laptop computers could be used for Zoom conferencing. Once all this hardware was in place in early 2021, they started a reading program with the school's Reading Club and SWB students and other volunteers would read to/with EEMPS students every two weeks. This continued through the summer of 2021 and this fall. SWB is planning to return to Tanzania in the summer of 2022 to maintain and add to the playground and to equip the computer lab with 13 more laptops and an LCD projector for teaching and conferencing. A short video of SWB reading session is available at: <https://youtu.be/RApCMF3KksY>.

**Sponsor/Sponsored Student Zoom Meetings:** Because of the success of the SWB reading program, we decided to try to expand the program to allow reading sessions and or Zoom chats between students and their sponsors. Nina Tarr, our newest Board member and a participant on two SWB trips to Tanzania coordinates this program. Three or four sponsors took us up on the offer and were very positive about the experience and I quote one family's report: "This was a wonderful idea! We really enjoyed talking with Papa. Leighton is begging to visit and go running with him!" If you are interested in setting up a meeting with your sponsored student, please email [maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com).

**Girl's Dormitory Construction Progress:** Our new girl's dormitory is nearing completion and it is fully funded. It will house 120 girls and a matron and provide quality living and study space. The new dormitory will free up two classrooms where the girls currently live as one of these classrooms will be needed in January as we add 5th grade to the school. The new dormitory has a central hub with matron's quarters and a study area and five wings that house 24 girls as shown in the figure below. As this newsletter goes to press, one wing is nearly complete with roof, windows, and doors; roofs are going on three of the dormitory's wings; and bricks to complete the fifth wing are being fired onsite as we only had half the bricks required for the fifth wing's walls. Windows, doors, plumbing, and electrical wiring are in process for the whole dormitory. The dormitory will be formally dedicated next summer and wings will be named in honor of various individuals.



*Brian Benham and Doug Belcik with local water manager inspecting Engaruka Dam during 2018 survey of the proposed waterline route.*

**Water System Improvement Project:** When the school opened, its water supply was a shared 1-inch community waterline from the Engaruka River. For the first three years when we only had 111 students plus staff and the boys lived with local families, the existing water supply was adequate. However, in 2021 when boys began living in unused classrooms, 33 pre-school students were added and additional water was needed for construction of the girl's dormitory, the school began to experience significant water shortages. Conservation measures were put in place but sometimes the shared pipeline ran dry and the school's emergency water storage tanks had to be used and water use for personal hygiene was restricted. With the addition of approximately 30 new pre-schoolers this coming January, the situation is expected to get worse. To address the problem, the school obtained permission from the local

government to run a new pipeline from the small government dam on the Engaruka River (more of a stream to us in the US) to the school for the sole use of the school. The pipeline will consist of approximately 2 ¼ miles of 2- and 4-inch pipe. The dam is approximately 400 ft higher than the school and it is all downhill from the dam to the school so no pumps will be required. Improvements to the water system will be in three phases. Phase I, which we hope to start in January, will cost \$47,000 and will involve the construction of the pipeline from the dam to the school. The school and MEF have already raised about \$27,000 for the pipeline so an additional \$20,000 is needed to start construction. Construction should proceed quickly as all that is involved is trenching from the dam to the school, connecting the pipeline sections and hooking the new pipeline into the existing school water system. This will immediately eliminate the water crisis. Phases II will consist of the construction of a large emergency water storage tank at the school at a cost of \$23,000 and Phase III will add a slow sand filtration treatment system that will ensure that the water is safe to drink. We do not have an estimated cost for the slow sand filtration system, but it will probably be less than \$20,000. Phase III may go before Phase II if waterborne diseases become an issue at the school.



*Proposed pipeline route*

**MEF Memorial Fundraisers**



*Mary Ann Spori*



*Ted Dillaha Jr*

We would like to acknowledge two 2021 MEF memorial fundraisers that families held in memory of a loved ones. The first was in honor of Mary Ann (Hebenstreit) Spori, who died July 18, 2021. Mary Ann’s husband Robert and daughter Jen organized the fundraiser. Jen is a long-time supporter of MEF. To date this memorial has secured \$25,475 in donations and pledges for MEF. The second memorial fundraiser was for Ted Dillaha Jr. who died on September 25, 2021. Ted was the father of Theo (MEF Board Chairperson) and a father-in-law, grand-father, great-grandfather and friend of many MEF Board members and its supporters. To date this memorial has resulted in \$6,255 in memorial donations. Members of the Dillaha and Spori families will travel together to

Tanzania in the summer of 2022 for the naming of wings of the new girl’s dormitory in Mary Ann’s and Ted’s honor.



**Graduation of Luka Lekide – 1st MEF Sponsored College Graduate:** We are pleased to announce that Luka Lekide will be graduating from St. Augustine University of Tanzania in December after 5 years of study with a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management. Luka was sponsored by the Kibler and Dillaha-Caldwell families, who met Luka on their first trip to Tanzania in 2016. Luka was their bartender at the Moivaro Tented Camp at Lake Natron and was later instrumental in convincing Maria Papaa Kingi’s family to allow her to attend boarding school in Arusha. With MEF support, Luka obtained a two-year Diploma in Accounting and Finance and then his BS degree. Congratulations Luka!

**Safari Anyone?** Assuming that it is safe to travel, MEF plans to organize several trips to Tanzania during the summer of 2022. All visits will include a visit to the school for volunteer work and to meet and interact with our children and see local attractions (the ruins of ancient Engaruka, local Maasai homes, etc.) as well a 5 or more-day safari to some of the premier wildlife parks in Tanzania. Hiking up Kilimanjaro and side trips to see the Mountain Gorillas in Rwanda or Uganda or visit Zanzibar, etc. are also possible. We can help you arrange your own private tour or you can be included with a group of other MEF supporters. Trips are with guides and companies that we have used and trust. For more information, please email [maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com) and we'll arrange a phone or video conference to discuss.



*MEF supporters visiting EEMPS prior to hiking Mt. Kilimanjaro*



**Message from a Student:** I am Tajiri Saruni, from 1<sup>st</sup> grade class, I am 7-years old. I love being at school because I sleep in bed and mattress which I never slept before, I eat well not like home where only drink porridge, I take bath every day, I drink clean water, I have good clothes, mostly I get good time to study because of good environment. At home we don't get all these and I get beaten every time from small mistakes.

**Student Sponsorships:** Interested in sponsoring a child such as Tajiri? A student sponsorship is \$700 per year and supports the child for 11 months and includes their tuition, fees, clothing, room and board. You can also provide partial support for a child. For more info, please email [maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com).

**Teacher Spotlight: Asnath Maliack** obtained her diploma in early childhood education from Sila College in Arusha. After college she taught at the Enalepo English Medium School where she led the early childhood education department for three years. While working at Enalepo, she pursued a bachelor's degree in policy planning and management at the Open University of Tanzania. Asnath was very excited to join EEMPS and to contribute to the efforts of the organization of supporting Maasai children. Asnath is our Deputy Head Teacher and the coordinator of class two. She joined the EEMPS staff in January 2019.



#### HOW TO DONATE

**BY CHECK:** Send checks payable to the Maasai Education Foundation, 345 Woods Lane, Newport, VA 24128.

**BY CREDIT CARD (with no fees):**

<https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/2457198>

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MEF, PLEASE VISIT**

<https://maasaieducationfoundation.org> or  
<https://www.facebook.com/MaasaiEducationFoundation/>  
or Email: [maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com)