

HEART INTERN PROGRAM ENJOYS SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEARS

This past summer I had the privilege of serving as the Intern Coordinator for HEART. This opportunity proved to be both challenging and rewarding in so many ways. This was the first summer that we have had a group of interns and it was a great success. Having completed a three month internship in 2007, I was thrilled at the opportunity to journey with other people as they volunteered their time and discovered so much about the way they were created.

We were blessed to have three interns serve at various times throughout the summer months. Each intern took on different projects according to their desire and the current needs of HEART. Here are just a few of the highlights!

- Assisted in building a house for one of our “Kids for School” orphans and his grandmother.
- Composed a grant for HEART’s WEEP program.
- Served in orphanages through youth programs and sports.
- Assisted in health seminars and medical camps in rural Kenya.
- Implemented income generating projects for the continued development of our WEEP ladies.
- Completed HEART postcards with pictures of our projects for marketing and exposure.
- Assisted the HEART lodge staff with various needs around the compound.

As you can see, many amazing accomplishments took place this past summer. Personally, I grew so much through this experience in terms of leadership, adaptation, and spiritual development. My highlight was the opportunity to take on a challenge that was bigger than me with an eternal impact for the Kingdom. I look forward to the continued development of the HEART internship program as I know this is just the beginning! Please read on for further success stories from other interns.

Steve Sacher

HEART Intern Coordinator



After spending a month in Kenya serving at HEART in the winter of 2007, I knew that my journey in Kenya was not over- it was only beginning. I waited and prayed for the right time and opportunity. Joining the internship program for the summer of 2008 seemed a perfect fit.

I find it difficult to sum up 3 months in Kenya. It was challenging, uncomfortable, confusing and the most fulfilling way I could possibly spend my time. No two days were alike. New cultural and personal differences were faced consistently. I was stripped of my American independence and pushed outside of my safe little box. In short, the internship on a very personal level was a time of growing pains but even in the midst of it, I knew that its purpose was for my good.



Imagine standing on railroad tracks with me. When you look to the left you see a wall and just past the wall a golf course. Then your eyes scan to the right and you see one of the world’s largest slums. Kibera slum is home to a couple of million people living in great poverty. They are squished together in 10x10 dirt floor huts with few jobs, little money for food and no clean drinking water. Doesn’t make you feel like golfing does it? The next day you visit the children’s cancer ward at Kenyatta Hospital. There are about 30 children living at the hospital while seeking treatment. One little girl catches your attention. Her name is Duplantis and she is about 4 years old. Not only does Duplantis have cancer, she also is HIV+ and blind. You have the privilege that day to sit with her on your lap, color a picture with her and hold her hand. When you come back again she won’t be there anymore. Doesn’t quite make sense, does it? In the midst of struggling to understand, you continue to be faced with new challenges, new tragedies, and new forms of poverty. It all seems rather hopeless.

This is why the work of HEART and more importantly Jesus’ call to live out the gospel generously is so important. God has a plan. His plan is all of us! In James 1:27, the call is simple “visit orphans and widows in their distress...”

The hope that we as believers Christ carry is the same hope slum as it is for little Duplantis. to this challenge and always ways to meet the physical and



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and followers of for all of Kibera HEART is rising looking for new spiritual needs of people of Kenya. bringing truth light to a dark

place. It is a rock in a big pond causing ripples of change. These ripples are growing stronger and beginning to make waves. If you were to visit Kibera, William, HEART’s driver / teacher / cultural consultant, might take you to see the golf course but he would for sure take you to the WEEP Center. The center is a HEART project but run by William and his wife, Gladys, who is also a nurse and mother of 4. They would introduce you to Jane. Jane is HIV+ but doesn’t let that stop her. She sews school uniforms for orphan children, is a landlord and runs a small business on the side. The best part about Jane is that her joy overflows. She loves to dance and sing and visitors can’t help themselves but join her. Jane is making waves in her community. She is an example of how it is possible to live a full life, even with a disease that wants to destroy her. But her influence goes even further, because when she lovingly crafts a school uniform together, it is then sent to an orphan child in rural Kenya, giving them the opportunity to attend school. Children like Joseph who lives with his grandmother because both of his parents have passed away.

Through HEART’s Kids for School program, Joseph was given a uniform and a goat. The uniform not only allows him to continue his education, but also to fit in with the other children. The goat is going to have kids that will hopefully grow into a little herd that Joseph can sell to raise the fees for high school. Doctors are brought to check Joseph’s health and due to the horrible condition of his home, Joseph also now lives in the first house built by HEART staff, a HEART team and Joseph’s neighbors and friends. The ripples continue. Hope spreads.

Hope for Duplantis came in a different way. I have to believe that those who visited her and held her little hand comforted her heart or distract her from the stress of the destruction happening in her small body. By most peoples standard her life was a tragedy. To me, it was an inspiration. Duplantis trusted and loved in the simplest and purest way. Then Hope came to take her home.



of everyone doing his or her part. One person can make a difference, but it is so much greater when it is as part of a team. My family and friends joined the team through their prayers and finances, I joined the team by seeing, taking pictures and bringing the stories home, the HEART staff lives as part of the team by daily seeking to meet the needs of their people. All of this combined gives Jane and Joseph the opportunity to make a difference in their community. The difference they make will affect generations to come. I can't imagine any greater joy or anything more fulfilling than spending time doing this Kingdom work. It would be an honor if the Father called me to spend more of my life working with HEART.

Looking Forward...



Lisa Van Sistine

HEART Intern 2008

What can I say about the best experience of my life? It's not joke, interning with HEART in Kenya has by far been the most memorable two month... ever! For starters how many college students get to intern in Africa and second how many get to have the freedom to develop and explore projects that really interest them? When it finally hit me that I was about to pack my bags for a two month journey to Kenya I began to wonder what in the world I had gotten myself into, but it only took a couple of days at HEART to realize I might have just made the best decision of my life. Daily activities were anything but routine, but were more rewarding than any high paying position I could have ever wanted in Corporate America. Some things included working in the HEART office helping with administrative work or helping write a grant to support an expansion of the WEEP program. My favorite days though were the ones spent in the field. Whether it be a weekend trip "up country" to help with a medical camp and learning about the culture of the Massai tribe, or spending the day in Kibera slums talking to WEEP ladies figuring out a way to start micro enterprises.

While in Kenya I was able to finish two major projects of mine. One of those projects was helping the HEART team write and submit a grant proposal to help gain funding for the WEEP program. In addition I helped develop a soap making program where WEEP ladies could learn how to make soap and sell it in daily markets to earn additional income.

There is no doubt that I grew in many ways during the internship opportunity, but I would say overall it has helped open my eyes. We all know of the problems Kenya and other African nations face everyday like HIV/AIDs, water, sanitation, and malaria but the most amazing thing is these things will not hold back Kenya from succeeding and becoming a developed nation, they just need a mentor. I am so honored to know what is really going on in Kenya, not just what CNN and BBC want to tell me. I know Kenya isn't looking for a handout, just a helping hand.

I am trying to return to Kenya, sooner rather than later, and would love the opportunity to live and work there. Right now I am looking at careers in Kenya with the United States government and if that doesn't work out I know I will be back to visit and lend a helping hand.

Melissa L. Diaz-Hovanec

HEART INTERN 2008

