



Mildred Amimoh is a tenth grader at KGSA and has attended the school for two years. She lives in the slums near the school. The article below appeared in Issue 2 of SHEDDERS, KGSA's student-run magazine, released in the spring of 2010.

The Challenges in Education

By Mildred Amimoh

We as girls have many more challenges in life to face than men do during our education or trying to get an education. One of the challenges that we face is that parents do not believe in us the way they believe in boys. They believe that boys can do better than we can. I believe what a boy can do, a girl can do it too. Parents give more opportunities to their boys than they do to their girls because they still believe that boys are better than girls.

When a girl comes from school, she gets a lot of house chores that will not enable her to have even a glimpse of what the homework contained. These make her fail to do her homework while teachers do not understand the reasons why she did not complete her homework. The teacher ends up giving her punishments and she finds it hard to catch up with others. Apart from house chores, these girls lack persons to assist them in buying better uniforms, books, and even sanitary towels. Lavender, a form 2 student at KGSA said, "I wash clothes in the nearby estates in order to get money to buy the books I need for school. It sometimes is difficult because I am young and the clothes may be many and the cost is low."

The lack of sanitary towels makes some of these girls misuse their body. This has been the most sorrowful and worrisome problem because they end up dropping out of school to engage in prostitution to get money. Some become pregnant which generally leads to abortion or early marriages for these girls. This makes their life turn sour because they cannot feed and take care of their young families. When I find out that young women have to prostitute their selves I feel hurt. I feel for them because they feel they don't have any other option to survive.

My story is about us young girls who are in the slums, girls who are orphaned and craving to drink education to better their life in the future. Girls who have been hoping to get into class but fail due to these botherings in life. It is even harder to have something to fill their stomachs because they cannot engage in jobs, unlike the young men in Kibera. Young men can transport people's luggage for money, dig latrines and pits, cut wood and sell it, and women cannot do these jobs because people do not hire women. These girls need to fill their thirst for education but it becomes difficult.

This is a real story in this so-called new generation or modern life. It has been happening and is still happening. This story is



important because it will make other people aware and help in bringing some assistance to the girls. It will shed light to those others to wake up and help the craving girls. We need to join hands and come up with the solution to better this state.

Probably women do not have fine options apart from those who engage in small businesses to provide the daily bread. Today, without education, people end up desperately suffering and married in early years which is a very wrong choice for their life. Life is all about education since it is the key to our future life.

I would like to leave an advice to my fellow girls by saying that let's have faith to fight the challenges and just hope that we will make it. Remember, confidence is courage at ease.

Kibera Girls Soccer Academy is a small all girls' school in Kibera, near Nairobi, Kenya. Kibera is the second largest slum in the world, and the girls who live there often are in danger of being raped, forced into prostitution, drugs and diseases. The school first opened as a girls soccer team in 2002 and became a school in 2006, the first in the area for girls. Much like Pacific Ridge, KGSA is a new and small school, with a little over 130 students.

KGSA publishes its own magazine SHEDDERS, which features students' perspectives on current events, entertainment, sports, and more. KGSA accepts international volunteers who can teach English, computer and business skills, health, and other subjects. All proceeds from the Global Journal Project will benefit KGSA.



THE TAFT SCHOOL

Tae Young Woo is a junior at Taft. Although he is a South Korean citizen by birth, all of his grandparents escaped North Korea in 1950 to the south. He developed an interest in the relationship among North Korea, South Korea, and other nations as tensions increased due to North Korea's nuclear activity. This is an excerpt from his article that was published in Taft's GLOBAL JOURNAL in the fall of 2009.

Reunions After 60 Years: Is it Beneficial?

By Tae Young Woo

Families who have relatives across the Korean Demilitarized Zone in both North and South Korea have not been in contact with each other for the past 60 years. The Korean War, triggered by the North's invasion on June 25, 1950, separated millions of families as residents in the north fled south.

The first reunion of separated families occurred in 2000, followed by a few other occasions until 2007. After a two-year hiatus, on September 26, 2009, 97 families were reunited at a resort on Mount Keumgang in the North Korean territory along the border.

Most in attendance ranged 60 to 90 in age. At the event, families met again after 60 years. As heartwarming as this may sound, the real question is whether reunion will benefit the families and the two countries in the long run.

The main benefit is the assurance that one's relatives are alive and well on the other side of the border. Another key advantage of the reunions is the collaboration between the two countries, as they cooperated for a humanitarian cause.

These reunions also brought difficulties and problems. Families were allowed to be together for only three days—the joy of being with one's family was quickly overshadowed by the grief of not knowing when one might again see blood relatives. Also, whenever the international relationships became rocky, the reunions stopped indefinitely.

The Taft School, in Watertown, CT is a co-educational boarding and day school with 588 students. Taft joined the Global Journal Project to keep students informed and interested in global events, to share experiences with different cultures and countries. Taft also publishes its own Global Journal on campus after students "felt that Taft lacked a medium through which global ideas and events around the world could be shared," according to founding member Andrew Yoo. It is also a medium through which international students to share their own cultures and experiences as exchange students.

Students at Taft saw the Global Journal Project with PRS and KGSA as a chance to reach more members of its community and to "allow people to broaden their horizon and appreciate the variety of ideas and beliefs that we encounter day to day," said Sophia Garrow, another founding member.

For example, North Korea abruptly suspended the reunions in late 2007, when South Korea called its missile tests "unwise."

The monetary costs of the reunions cannot be ignored. Approximately \$900,000 is spent for one person to reunite with her family members. According to Asiatoday.co.kr, about \$1.5 billion was spent on reuniting hundreds of families between 2000 and 2007.

The two governments also have made mistakes in matching relatives. In one incident, two individuals at the reunion thought that they found their brothers, who turned out to be people who shared the same name. This clearly illustrated the government's careless research done before uniting families.

How can these problems be addressed? The governments of both North and South Korea need to put more effort into finding and confirming the identities of separated family members before allowing them to unite with their. Long-term and monitored communications need to be created to connect people after 60 years.

Despite possible solutions, there will not be a concrete resolution until the two governments fully collaborate in order to help the separated families overcome the geographical barrier of the 38th parallel.





PACIFIC RIDGE SCHOOL

Steven Le is an English teacher and co-director of Upper-School Service Learning at PRS. He spent eight weeks this past summer working at the LEAP School, the only private school for black students from townships, in Cape Town, South Africa. He was a fellow with Teach with Africa. The following is an excerpt from his blog: www.stevedl321.wordpress.com.

A World Without a Cup

*Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too*

Saturday school at LEAP School, in Cape Town, South Africa is casual: no uniforms, rotating teacher schedule, and flexibility in types of learning activity. For weaker students, the half-day session can provide much-needed targeted tutoring. For most, it is a chance to get extra instruction.

My host teacher, Cathy, gave the guideline of doing something fun and educative. Her grade 9 students need more exposure to English syntax and practice in comprehension. South Africa has 11 official languages, and for all black students English comes as a second language.

I suggested an exercise that my eighth grade teacher, Claudette Burk, used to teach language comprehension in my eighth-grade ESL (English as a second language) class. She played popular songs, and we filled in blanks on the lyrics sheet, doing our best not to ask her to stop the music.

Cathy liked the idea and chose John Lennon's "Imagine" to start the class after I told her that I remembered it specifically from Mrs. Burk's class. Cathy asked that I took the lead in the lesson, and in my mind I was hoping to make Mrs. Burk proud.

It did not occur to us until just before the students arrived that we had an opportunity for a interesting discussion about some of the lyrics in "Imagine." We decided to have an open-ended discussion about the lyrics, which, for a largely religious student body, could be confrontational. Cathy admitted that she would not have thought to conduct such a discussion, but that she was eager to see an "outsider" engage her students that way.

We were quite happy to find out that none of the students had heard the song before, and they laughed when we told them how old it was. We listened to its entirety the first round, just so they could enjoy the melody. The normally rambunctious group fell to a hush as soon as the music started, startling



Pacific Ridge School's ninth graders had just taken a walking tour of one of the oldest neighborhoods in Chongqing, China. At the end of our tour, three kids from the neighborhood jumped and waved excitedly at us. (Michaela Fisher is a tenth grader at PRS and snapped this shot while in China with her classmates in May.)

me a little. They let out an embarrassed laugh when Lennon hit the first high note before the refrain. By the second verse they were smiling and swaying to the music. And by the third time through the song we all were singing along.

We paused for a discussion about Lennon's proposal of a world without religion, countries, and strife. Initially, all students responded enthusiastically that they indeed could imagine and embrace such a world. Then, I asked them to raise their hand if any of them were religious, knowing that statistically 80% of South Africans describe themselves as so; all of the students raised their hand. When asked what the world would look like without God and church, they responded that "It would be without rules" and that "It's harder now to imagine." One then asserted that he could not imagine not being able to kill to defend his family members, and his comment caused a slight uproar of reactions. Cathy chimed in and suggested that a world without countries probably would not have a need for the World Cup. Arms immediately went up in exasperation and, when the clamoring quieted, most students were willing to throw out Lennon and his silly song.

Partnering with Taft and KGSA, PRS's Global Journal Project is a new club that aims bring global voices to our campus. Along with producing a magazine, the Global Journal Project allows students an opportunity to run a non-profit business. For the first issue, the business side of the Global Journal Project resides at PRS, but the role will rotate among the three partner schools in the future. The 18 members of the Global Journal Club are excited about "having a voice as high school students," "putting together a product," and "working with and learning about other schools."



THE GLOBAL JOURNAL PROJECT

The Global Journal Project is a three-school collaboration and a student-run business under the umbrella of Omprakash, a U.S.-registered nonprofit. The model is simple: three schools form a partnership in which one is an underprivileged school in the developing world. The parent organization Omprakash provides contact with the underprivileged school through its network (www.omprakash.org), and all proceeds from the Project goes to benefit that school. More important, the Project allows for a cross-cultural exchange among the three schools and offers a vehicle for each of those schools to share with its local communities the voices and perspectives from other parts of the world.

This chapter of the Global Journal Project involves Kibera Girls Soccer Academy (Kibera, Kenya), The Taft School (Watertown, CT), and Pacific Ridge School (Carlsbad, CA). All proceeds minus the printing and web-site maintenance costs go to benefit KGSA.

The Global Journal Project seeks to:

- shed light on the range of perspectives and experiences of its member communities
- raise awareness and understanding of global issues
- encourage discussion concerning these issues

We will:

- collect articles from any member of the partner-school communities, including students, faculty, and alumni
- include a broad range of topics
- promote open and mutually and culturally respectful dialogue

We are collecting materials for the inaugural issue from students, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni from all three school communities. If you would like to submit articles or photographs, please contact: for PRS—Steve Le (sle@pacifricridge.org); for Taft—Tom Adams (tomadams@taftschool.org); for KGSA—Caroline Sheahan (caroline.sheahan@gmail.com). The deadline for Issue 1 is November 28, 2010.



Sharing their traditions, the Samburu Tribe greeted me with beads and a song from the women. Then, the men of started hollering and jumping, this was the Samburu traditional warrior dance to show off their jumping ability. (Keane Hindle is a ninth grader at PRS and traveled to Kenya this past summer.)



For four hours, as we sailed the fjords of Sweden, I experienced the breathtaking views of Stockholm's Baltic waters and thousands of islands that are simply picturesque. (Gaby Clarke is a ninth grader at PRS and visited Sweden with her family this past summer; her father, Keith, took this photograph.)