



# 2019

---

# ANNUAL REPORT



**Tanzania**  
Development Support

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Project Updates

- More than 5,000 books were delivered to the Library in Nyegina
  - 3,500 of the books were published in Swahili
- A dedicated internet connection was installed at the LCRC, bringing reliable internet service to the facility
- The LCRC hired its first two full-time employees and expanded hours of operation
- Two open-source software platforms were installed at the LCRC
  - Koha: Library Management Tool
  - Kolibri: Digital Education Content Library
- 376 students were enrolled in 4H Career Pathways clubs in 7 schools
  - Profitable "enterprise" projects have been launched in all three secondary schools
- The first cohort of Willmann scholarship recipients completed Form 1 in good standing
  - Some girls finished with top marks!
- Safe Water Mugango begins shifting towards independent operation

## Organization Updates

- A new strategic plan was adopted that prioritized building the operational capacity of the LCRC and developing a self-sustaining financial model
- The TDS Mission Statement was updated to:
  - Our mission is to support community identified educational improvements for youth, especially girls, in the Mara region as a way to escape poverty
- A third group of volunteers successfully reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro and raised \$42,562

## Financial Summary

Beginning Balance: \$50,578

Total Revenue: \$117,097

Total Expenses: \$146,495

Year End Balance: \$21,180

Change in Net Position: (\$29,398)



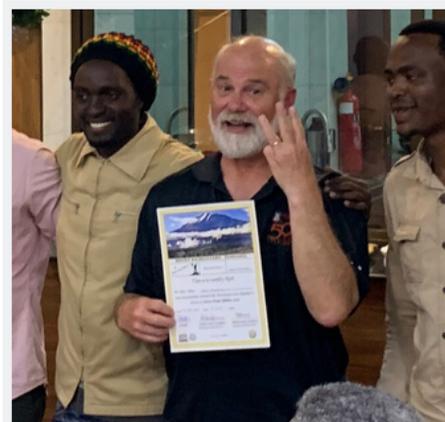
4H Career Pathways Club at Mkirira Primary

# Letter from the President

## Hamjambo Marafiki,

In June of 2019, our third group of dedicated volunteers successfully reached Uhuru Peak, the top of Mount Kilimanjaro and highest point in Africa. As I reflect back on the year and the progress that has been made with our projects in the Mara region, the experience of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro is a perfect analog. It was my third time climbing the mountain, and the most important thing that I have learned about making it to the top is this:

**"Pole, pole. Kidogo, kidogo."**



The Swahili mantra translates to “Slowly, slowly. Little by little.” A slow methodical pace, along with a lot of persistence, is the best way up the mountain. Not only is this great advice for ascending to 19,341 feet, it is also applicable to our work in the Mara region. Although we had a minor setback in our attempt to install a dedicated internet connection to the LCRC this year, a radio tower was eventually constructed. The impact was immediate and reminded us that patience and persistence is the best way to reach new heights.

Connecting the LCRC to the internet was certainly a highlight, but it was not the only one in 2019. We also saw the delivery of more than 5,000 books to the LCRC, carefully curated to benefit all ages and interests. The collection of books is now one of the largest in the country, especially for a private community library!

Additionally, the LCRC hired its first full-time Librarian (Moses Deogratus) and IT Technician (John Odongo). With Moses managing the Library, the LCRC was able to extend its hours of operation to benefit more students and families, and John has successfully installed open-source software to manage the library and expand its digital content.

The Mara region was not the only area where we saw progress, though. Our capacity as an organization also grew in 2019. We adopted a new strategic plan that emphasizes sustainability through stakeholder engagement and updated our mission statement to reflect our belief that education transcends the classroom and involves the whole community. We also gained three new board members who bring years of experience and expertise to the table.

As we enter into a new decade, we remain focused on our goal of ensuring that the LCRC resources are available to the tens of thousands of people living in the villages in the Musoma Rural District. In order to ensure that the facility is viable for years to come, it will be critical that we continue to grow the TDS community. We ask that you help us in this effort by sharing our stories and inviting your friends, family, and colleagues to join our efforts to improve access to quality education for youth in the Mara region.

**Sincerely,**

Kurt Thurmaier - Founder, President, and Donor

# AN UPDATED MISSION AND STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2019, the TDS Board of Directors adopted a new mission statement and strategic plan that prioritizes the operations and sustainability of the LCRC. The plan also sees the LCRC as a hub and begins to fold in existing and future projects as outreach components of the facility.



2019 Willmann Scholars in computer lesson

In February of 2019, the TDS Board of Directors convened a strategic planning session to review the organization's mission, vision, and plot a path forward with its first executive director. With new faces on the board since the last strategic plan was adopted, it was an important step to coalesce as a group and begin moving forward together.

The results of the strategic planning sessions were an update to the organization's mission statement, and the adoption of a series of outcomes that will drive future consideration for new projects. The combination of the outcomes, and the new mission statement are a reflection of the board's strong belief that educating girls is a key to fighting poverty, and education is a holistic environment that includes students, teachers, families, the government, and the community as a whole.

## Previous Mission Statement

To improve the quality of life for youth, especially girls, in the Mara region of Tanzania by supporting primary and secondary school improvements and other community-identified priorities.

## New Mission Statement

Our mission is to support community-identified educational improvements for youth, especially girls, in the Mara region as a way to escape poverty.

In addition to developing a framework for analyzing new project opportunities in the Mara region, the board also took stock of current projects. We determined that highest priority was ensuring the LCRC was fully operational and on a path towards sustainability. This resulted in us developing a transition plan with our partners that would lead to the LCRC having a self-sustaining funding model and no longer rely on permanent external financial support after five years.

Beyond ensuring that the LCRC can keep its doors open without external financial support in the future, the board also wishes to continue supporting 4H Career Pathways by folding it into the LCRC operations as an outreach program. The LCRC will become a hub with resources (books, equipment, computers, etc.) that would be brought to different schools and village centers to conduct a wide range of educational programming.



# 2019 KILIMANJARO CLIMB

5,895 Meters to Support Young Readers



Sunrise during final approach to Stella's Point.

In June, our third group of volunteer adventure fundraisers set out to summit Africa's tallest peak and raise money to support the LCRC in Nyegina. The group was made up of 11 Americans, and 4 Tanzanians. There were some new faces, and some familiar ones, including three NIU study abroad alumni (Frank Turner '11, Rachel McBride, '13, and Jason Michnick '15). The group was also joined once again by Madaraka Nyerere who summited for his tenth time; Vitales Mlungwana, an English teacher at Nyegina Secondary; Miriam Mton Manyaki, a Form 3 student at Nyegina; and Romara Mwita, a Form 2 student at Nyegina.

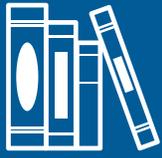
We are happy to report that all 15 climbers were successful in reaching Uhuru Peak! Not only did the group successfully summit, they were also able to collectively raise \$42,562! Thanks to their hard work and generous friends and family, the LCRC was able to hire its first full-time librarian and IT technician and expand the hours that the library is open in the evenings. Many thanks to our guides at Trek 2 Kili for taking us all up the mountain safely, and thanks again to this group of volunteer adventure fundraisers for their impressive feat.



Top: Volunteers pose at the top of Uhuru Peak  
Bottom: Volunteers trekking across Shira Plateau



Right: Group picture after reaching the top of the "breakfast wall"



# REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

AT THE LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY  
RESOURCE CENTER



Students viewing a Khan Academy video on Trigonometry

## A Collection of Books to Brag About

At the end of 2018, an order for more than 5,000 books was placed through East African publishers, including more than 3,500 copies of books that are published in Tanzania's national language of Swahili. The content of the books ranged in topics and were carefully chosen by our Tanzanian partners at Soma Book Cafe to benefit community members of all ages and backgrounds.

It was an exciting day in May when the books were delivered. Over the next few weeks, the books were cataloged and made their way onto the shelves of the LCRC. The new additions to the library's collection have dramatically broadened the availability of books for both the young and old. Dozens of new picture books in both English and Swahili are now available for primary children that all run to the library during their daily breaks from class at Nyegina Primary. They all huddle around the table in the children's area and enthusiastically read with one another. There is also a new section of nonfiction books in Swahili that cover topics around business and farming that is tailored for adults that are farming the land in the hills above Lake Victoria.



5,000 books arrive at the LCRC in Nyegina



A sample of new books headed for the shelves



## A New Digital Frontier



Mounting a section of the relay tower for LCRC internet

tower that would “bounce” the internet signal between the hills that were normally blocking Nyegina from a reliable signal.

Luckily, we have some friends at Lake Victoria Disability Center that have experience with fabricating and constructing a radio tower. A location between Musoma and Nyegina was chosen for the tower, and the sections of the 100 foot radio tower were quickly fabricated. Just as the foundation was being installed, a dispute broke out about the location of the tower and the project was halted.

Our friends in Musoma and Nyegina spent days in meetings with officials trying to come to agreeable terms to move the project forward. Several months passed as we waited for a resolution from local government officials. Just when it seemed that there was no end in sight, an alternative location was found on private land and the project resumed. It was a reminder of the challenges of development work in a country that is 8,000 miles away.

In November, the final pieces of the radio tower were installed, and the switch was turned on bringing a dedicated internet signal to the LCRC in Nyegina! Immediately, the impact of the internet was evident. Teachers and students began to fill the small computer lab to participate in lessons and watch educational videos in the evenings. The positive feedback that we have received since the internet was connected was certainly worth the wait.

Just like a library is not much of a library without a good selection of books, a 21st century center for learning isn't complete without the right technology, especially the internet. During the initial years of being open, the LCRC computers were only connected to the internet using unreliable dongles (USB modem) with overpriced and disruptive service. This made it very challenging for teachers, students and staff to conduct research or view online educational content.

A significant investment was made throughout Tanzania to install fiber optic cable and build a robust telecommunications network over the past few years. However, due to Nyegina's location and surrounding terrain, connectivity was weak at best. After consulting with the national telecommunications company, we were able to devise a plan to build a relay



Students gather in the evening to watch a video on English grammar and pronunciation

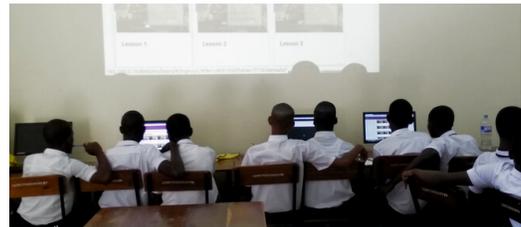
In addition to the LCRC being connected to the internet, there were also technological gains through new software being installed. The two new systems, Koha and Kolibri, are both open-source platforms meaning that they are free to use and continuously improved via a global community of volunteers.

Koha is a library management software that is being used by library staff to track book circulation, membership, and other important elements of the library. We thank Esther Ngamba, a librarian in the College of Business at the University of Dar es Salaam, who traveled all the way to Nyegina to conduct a week-long training with LCRC staff, advisors, and Nyegina teachers on using Koha and developing community outreach programs.

One of the most exciting things about Koha is that John Odongo was also able to also install the software at the Musoma Regional Library. With the software installed at both locations, and the internet connected in Nyegina, we will be able to connect the two systems and create an inter-library loan program!

We are equally excited about the installation of Kolibri as well. Kolibri is a platform that was designed for the distribution of educational materials in remote areas with limited internet connectivity. In June, we delivered an external hard drive with more than 100 gigabytes of videos, e-books, and other content to the LCRC. The content was then uploaded to a local server and Kolibri allows other devices to access that local server through a web browser (we can even access it from the US!).

The most exciting thing about Kolibri is that it is the foundation for a Mobile Computer Lab that we have envisioned since 2015. We will now be able to use the LCRC as a hub to store content. Then, a small portable server, along with a dozen or so devices, will be taken to schools that do not have electricity or internet and students will be able to access all of the same content!



Top: primary students learning alphabet  
Bottom: Secondary students learning how to access content using Kolibri



Left: LCRC staff and volunteers in lecture on cataloging and community outreach  
Right: LCRC staff learning how to catalog books in Koha



# 4H CAREER PATHWAYS

Learning by doing.  
Earning while learning.



The 4H Career Pathways program continued to show promising potential in its third year, and we are eager to begin developing a strategy to expand it into additional schools when resources allow. In total, 376 students were active club members in seven different schools in 2019. The clubs continued to engage students in career exploration and building important life skills such as self awareness, personal health and hygiene, and financial literacy.

In addition to these foundational lessons, clubs were more active than ever in applied learning. The club mantra, “Learning by doing, earning while learning,” was on full display when we visited the clubs in May. Students at Mkirira Primary school were learning how to plant home gardens and condition soil using fertilizers and manure. Students at Mkirira Secondary showed off their roselle (hibiscus) garden and displayed their skills of making beaded jewelry. Students at Nyegina Secondary shared their skills at silk screening and explained that they were able to manufacture school t-shirts at a lower cost than the current vendor in a neighboring region.

At the time we visited, the area had been suffering from several lackluster rainy seasons that left the ground parched and students unable to plant using traditional methods. Through some ingenuity and direction from local extension officers, students created low-cost drip irrigation systems using recycled plastic water bottles and used fertilizer bags. Their stick-to-itiveness through the drought paid off when the rains returned in the fall and their gardens yielded their best crops yet! Some of the clubs were able to sell the crops to purchase more inputs for the next year, and other clubs gave their vegetables to schools for use in the school lunch programs.



4HCP students tending to their gardens in a bag



## **WILLMANN SCHOLARS THRIVING**

We are happy to report that the first cohort of Willmann Scholars completed their academic year in good standing. Several of the girls even finished with top marks in several subjects! The girls have adjusted to life in Nyegina and are also active outside the classroom. Some of the girls are participating in the 4H Career Pathways clubs and others are on the school's netball team. We continue to wish them great success as they enter into Form Two at Nyegina Secondary.

In addition to the first cohort, we also selected an additional eight girls to receive scholarships as part of a second cohort. Our goal was to have ten girls in each cohort, but we fell short of our sponsorship recruitment goal for the year. We are currently seeking new sponsors for a third cohort of ten girls, as well as six girls that still do not have sponsors, but are being funded through TDS general funds.

The sponsorship is one of the single best investments that one can make. It has been shown that girls who complete their secondary school education can double their annual income through the rest of their lives. They are also more likely to have healthier and better educated families, resulting in generational change for families. Given that these girls are selected because they have high academic potential, and come from homes where there is a higher risk that they may be forced to drop out of school, the positive impact that sponsors can make is significant.

## **SAFE WATER MUGANGO: INDEPENDENT & PROFITABLE**

Now that the Safe Water Mugango project is up and running, we are beginning to phase out our financial support for the women-owned business. It was our goal from the beginning to help the women establish a profitable business that would not rely on external subsidies to operate. The women have improved their skills in manufacturing the filters consistently and have also added other ceramic products such as high-efficiency stoves and chicken egg incubators to their line of products.

One persistent challenge for the women is their customers' ability to afford their products year-round. Due to most families relying on farming for income, their cash flow is seasonal. This means that many families are unable to afford filters during parts of the year when their income is low. One strategy the women began to work on during the year is bringing their products to markets and events where there are more potential customers, including this year's Uhuru Torch events in the Mara region.

In order to continue supporting the women through their business, we also created a program where donors are able to purchase their filters on behalf of schools in the Mara region. Donated filters are delivered to public primary and secondary schools, along with information about the importance of clean water. The program is designed not just to help support the women's business, but to also help provide clean water to children while they are in school. It is also a great way to promote the business!

# FINANCIAL

DETAILS - 2019



**Tanzania**  
Development Support

## INCOME

Individual Giving:	\$51,840	44.9%
Organizations:	\$1,255	1.0%
Earned Income:	\$11,212	9.5%
Program Fees:	\$34,180	28.9%
Restricted Donations:	\$18,605	15.7%
TOTAL:	\$117,097	100%

## EXPENSES

Programming:	\$94,772	64.7%
Fundraising:	\$11,600	7.9%
Administration:	\$6,229	4.3%
Travel Program:	\$33,894	23.1%
TOTAL:	\$146,495	100%

## FINANCIAL POSITION

Beginning Balance:	\$50,578
Income:	\$117,097
Expenses	\$146,495
End Balance	\$21,180
Change in Net Position:	(\$29,398)



## FINANCIAL NOTES

- Program Fees are inclusive of all fees charged to volunteers that participated in Kilimanjaro Climb Travel Program
- Project Grants for 2019 include book purchase, internet tower construction, LCRC salaries and expenses, 4H Career Pathways, Willmann Scholarships, an initial payment towards constructing a water well at Mkirira Secondary and UMABU organizational support

# Thank You to All Our 2019 Donors

Your financial support of our mission allowed us to achieve so much in 2019.

We would also like to thank all of our volunteers for donating their valuable time and efforts to our bi-annual yard sale and annual dinner events.

Taylor Adolphson	Sang Curtis	Alfred Ho	Charles Menifield	Daniel Schewe
Mary Ahlrich-Knueven	Maria D'Agostino	Leslie Hoffman	Stephen Mhina	Tom Schmidt
Susan Allen	Mary D'Aversa	Danielle Hopkins	Greg Michnick	Brian R Scholle
Notburga Alphonse	Sandra Dawson	Roger Hopkins	Jason Michnick	Peter Schram
Matthew Amato	Tricia DeBoo*	Jodi Hoppensteadt	Lisa Michnick	Erika Scoliere
Anna Thurmaier Ames	Michael DeFauw	Melodie Hueber	Kathleen Milldrum	Lois Self
Jeff Ames	DeKalb Co. Com. Found.	Jennie Hueber*	Kristin Miller	Suzanne Serino
Madonna Ames	Dillon Domke	Barb Hulseberg	Lucas Miller	Caroline Sheahan
Andrew Baden	Jennifer Drabant	Jacki James	James Morel	Chuck Shepard
Kim Baker	Phil Driscoll	Katherine Janik	George Mostoller	Brent Smelser
James Banovetz	Melvin Dubnick	Cheryl Jensen	Nina Mounts	Jerry Smith
Audrey Banovetz	Wanda DuCharme	Jewish Community Federation	Raymond Munch	Sonia Smith
Patricia Batcheller	Yvonne DuCharme	Bill Johnson	Bill Murat	Daniel Smith
Geovanna Bejar	Sean Dunlea	Bob Jolls	Kimberly Murphy	Kayla Smith-Zerkle
Victoria Ben	Tim Dunlop	Cecilia Jolls	John Nalbandian	Mary Snieckus
Paul Biedrzycki	Kathleen Dunn	Chris Jones	Carol Nalbandian	Alison Snieckus
Mark Biernacki	Diane Durik	Dinah Justice	Cynthia Nelson	Robert Snieckus
Laura Bird	Cliff Eaton	George Justice	Edith Njuguna*	Martha Snyder
Dave Blado	Barbara Eckblad	Jack Justice	Julia Nyerere	Kathleen Spears
Ben Blazey	Carol Edwards	Jonathan Justice	Julius Nyerere	Richard Stillman
Gerald Blazey	Jen Eng	Paulette Justice	Madaraka Nyerere	Jeff Strack
Jean Blazey	Eduardo Espinoza	Zachary Kalk	Dorothy Olsheski	Mary Lu Strack
Matt Blazey	Patricia Faivre	Sheila Keeley	Peggy Olwell	Amy Stratton
Sam Blazey	Steve Faivre	Dan Kenney	Nancy O'Reilly	Susan Sullivan
Michael Blazey	Rodrigo Fernandez	Paul King	Andrew Otieno	Melba Sullivan
Mary Borecki	Jennifer Fleisleber	Suzanne Kosmas	Michael Pagano	Tracey Swanson
Tom Borecki	Aimee Franklin	Clare Kron	Emily Paull	Michael Syphers
Michol Brower	Lewis Friedman	Jerry Krusinski	Kevin Pearson	Florence Tan
Charles Brown	Kathleen Fruchterman	Michael Kuehne	Lauren Peckham	June Taylor - Wolcott
Marti Brown	Kathy Gabris	Melanie Kuhar	John Perry*	Tavern on Lincoln
Melvin Brucher	Jerry Gabris	Cheri Lang	Marsha Peterson	Sam Teixeira
Eugenia Bryan	Kathy Garvey	Mike Larson	Benjamin Peterson	Kurt Thurmaier*
Kevin Buick	Jean Gastiger	Viola Lee	Steven Peterson	Jeanine Thurmaier
Nancy Burke	Melissa Gates	Garrett Lee	Maalik Phipps	Butiama Tourism
Clarissa Carr	Anna Gellert	LEH Consulting Group, LLC	Mary Ellen Prischman	Sharon Tourville
George Carroll	Carol Genis	Marco Lenis	Anna Quider	Traci Turner
Martha D Carter	Vickie Gillio	Dawn Linder	Edward Ratledge	Riley Turner
David Castro	Jennifer Glasbrenner	Patsy Lundberg	Meg Ray	Frank & Dawn Turner
Marianne Caven	Ray Gonzales	Pamela Macfarlane	Gabriel Recchia	Kathleen Turner
David Changnon	Jan Graefen	Jesse Manygoats	Christopher Reedy	UW-Madison RPCVs
Suzy Changnon	Anna Graham	Barbara Martin	Kay Riley	Jack Vanderzee
Chip Chapman	Edward Graham	Bill Martin	Bruce Rocheleau	Lolly Voss
Stewart Chapman*	Mary Graham	Ellen Martin	Georgette Rocheleau	Leland Ware
Raymond Chasteen	Liam Griffin	Joann Martin	Munna Rubaii	Teresa Wasonga
Roslyn Chavda	Margi Griffith	Luella Martin	Nadia Rubaii	Marcia Watson
Marian Cicoello	Richard Grimley	Mark Martin	Bernadette Ruf	Robin Weaver
Charlie Coe	Amber Gulotta	Priscilla Martin	Sue Russell	Scott Weiner
James Cohen*	Liz Hahn	Ray Martin	Richard Ryan	Denise Weinmann
Lady Cohen	Linda Hahn	Ashley Martinez	Al Ryan	Elizabeth Welch
Bob Colburn	Ashley Hahn	Frank Matthew	Barbara Ryan	Evon Williams
Karen Cook	Michelle Hannah	Brig.Gen. Francis Mbenna	Jessica Sandlund	Rose Marie Willis
Marlys Corneille	Tom Harris	Mike McBride	Catherine Savage	Suzanne Willis
Rena Cotsones	Judy Harris	Jayden McBride	Andrea Sawyer	Miriam Willmann
Barb Cox	Joseph Harris	Rachel McBride	Mark Sawyer	Ernesto Yanez
Timothy Crandall	David Hedin	Kris McClure	Merle Sawyer	Danilo Yanich
Zach Creer	Carolyn Heinrich	Laurel McFarland	Valerie Sawyer	Carol Zar
Amy Crook	Chad Henry	John McNutt	Dan Scanlon	David Zufall

\*TDS Board Member