



Marianne Center

Newsletter Marianne Center Foundation

"Volunteering at Marianne Center"

My name is Laura van den Heuvel and I am a student from International Hospitality Management in the Netherlands. In my third year I did a minor Humanitarian Management. In order to complete the minor, a 10 week internship should be done in either South-Africa, The Netherlands or Kenya. I preferred Kenya because the country and the project interested me.

I went to Kenya in April 2009 for 10 weeks to assist the management team of Marianne Center. I lived with a host family, which helped me to understand more about the Kenyan culture and to experience the African way of life. My time at Marianne Center was interesting and informative. I worked on 3 specific issues; sponsor a student project; income generating activities and fund raising. My contribution consisted mainly out of paperwork, because the activities at Marianne Center were not yet started. Organizing a fund raising activity was really a challenge.

My overall experience is really positive. Within these 10 weeks I learned a lot about culture, dealing with challenging situations and I met many new interesting people. Marianne Center is an important initiative, since there is so much need for it in Kenya and Africa. It was great to cooperate with a group of people who work with so much love for Marianne Center.

Laura van den Heuvel, Intern



The new look of Marianne Center

We started offering our activities to the first four students in October 2009. In the beginning of this year we welcome more students and expand our activities and with that officially open the doors of Marianne Center. Because we are entering a new phase, our promotion materials got a new look. The result is our new website and our new brochures, which are made by a Dutch software company Weev. Our sponsor-a-student programme is also integrated into our website.

Enjoy our new and refreshing look!

Opening

The vocational center officially opened on the 5th of January 2010 for the first term and we have already admitted 12 students. The students are drawn from the local community and we have both boys and girls. The first term will be running till the end of March when the students will break for one month to be with their parents/care givers. During the vacation the students will be monitored to ensure that they are able to put into practice the knowledge they shall have acquired while in the center.

Marianne Center Foundation in Holland

Marianne Center Foundation has since this month a sister foundation in Holland. This foundation, named Stichting Marianne Center, supports Marianne Center financially and through expertise. This foundation will also be involved in establishing and maintaining relationships with Dutch donors and partners and in making Dutch people aware about the situation with mentally handicapped people in Kenya through media attention.





Project activities

The following activities are already ongoing in the vocational center;

Farm work: the agricultural activities are already going on and the students are being given the skills and knowledge that they will be able to apply after they come out of the center and join their families. These activities are aimed at empowering the students as they will be expected to initiate income generating activities. Some of the crops include: vegetables, maize, beans, and potatoes. The crops are also being used to subsidize the food budget for the students.



Harvesting potatoes



Harvesting beans

Catering: The cateress prepares every day lunch for our mentally handicapped students. All the students have had a medical test in case of food allergies. If it is determined that they need to have a special diet, the meals will be adjusted to their needs.

Teaching: the school is in progress and the students are being given basic life skills, catering, ornament making, class work and dress making. The students are expected after graduating to be able to put into practice the knowledge they have acquired while in the center.



Beads made by our students



Pattern work products



Sponsor a student

95% of students at Marianne Center are from very poor family backgrounds, including a few total orphans. They are not able to pay any fees or even have basic necessities like clothes and toiletries.

This has attracted the attention of the area Member of Parliament who has already sponsored 6 of our students by paying their tuition fees. We thank God for him. More sponsorship is welcome as these students need uniforms and other basic necessities.



Staff

The center has got a team of six full time staff members who have the responsibility to nurture the students in their daily lives as they continue to gain skills that will eventually assist them in their lives. We have two special education teachers, a matron/cook, a gardener, and two watchmen. We have a part-time tutor for tailoring. The staff members are guided and supported by the Marianne center team that supports the staff members in their daily activities in the center. All these people work hand in hand to enhance and promote the process of assisting these members of the society to be part of the development process of their families and communities at large.



Teachers and students enjoying themselves during break time



The cateress



Awareness

The awareness program is ongoing in the local churches and the Kiambu and Limuru district special education offices. We shall also be having our annual Ngong hills hike in June this year. This helps us to raise some funds to support the lunch program.



Welcome to our new donors and partners

In the previous months new donors and partners have been welcomed by Marianne Center. Our partners support us in the set up of our modules and methods, in giving advice and in exchanging experiences in coaching of the people with a mental disability. Our partners will also name Marianne Center in their promotional activities. Our donors support us in a financial way and focus mainly on supporting our educational and income generating activities.

We like to welcome our new donors and partners and sincerely thank them for their support!

Our donors:



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Stichting Winters van den Speulhof

Thank to all of you who contribute in any way to Marianne Center!

Bank account 89 11 426 Barclays Bank Queensway, Nairobi

