

GAIA AWARDED 1.7 MILLION DOLLAR USAID MATCHING GRANT TO BOLSTER MALAWI NURSING

In September we signed a contract with USAID for the USAID GAIA Malawi Nurse Education Project that will help us boost the number of nurses in the Malawi health care system, and will also increase the skill levels of nurses country-wide.

Malawi struggles with huge health challenges. Over 930,000 of its 15 million people are estimated to be HIV positive. Malawi's maternal mortality ratio is one of the highest in the world, with over 800 mothers dying for every 100,000 live births. One in 10 Malawi children dies before age 5. An obstacle to improving health care is the lack of trained healthcare professionals, particularly nurses.



GAIA Program Manager, Gertrude Chipungu, with a Nursing Scholar

The \$1.77 million grant covers a five-year span within which we will add 40 Malawi young people to the 168 (our on-going annual number) already supported by our nursing scholarship program. This program both “empowers” impoverished young Malawi women and it strengthens the country's health services, of which nurses are the backbone. We believe donors to our Nursing Scholarship Fund will be pleased to have every contributed dollar matched by the USAID grant.

Our scholarships are awarded on a need basis, so many of our students are orphans, and some of these care for younger siblings. An innovative aspect of the program is to

provide each scholar with two pairs of shoes, a blood pressure cuff, a thermometer, a nurse's watch, and a living allowance enabling them to care for themselves and their siblings while going to school. The awardees agree to serve one year in the Malawi government or “mission” hospital system for every year they are on scholarship, which is usually four years.

With this grant GAIA will sub-contract with the UCSF School of Nursing, and partner with the Kamuzu College of Nursing in Malawi and a Malawi organization affiliated with Johns Hopkins University. The consortium will train 400 Malawi nurses in basic emergency obstetrical and neonatal care, HIV counseling, testing, and treatment, and triage. Training in these skills will help to lower a serious maternal death rate in Malawi, and it will respond to a worrisome HIV infection rate as well.

GAIA International Programs Director Ellen Schell, RN, Ph.D. was the prime mover on the grant proposal, working tirelessly on it for over a year. When GAIA



GAIA will add 40 new Nursing Scholars with the help of the USAID grant

President Bill Rankin was in Malawi last month he was told by the acting US Ambassador that she was greatly looking forward to the success of this partnership. So are we.



MICROFINANCE: A SMALL LOAN WITH A BIG RETURN

We were fortunate to be part of a group of staff and donors who went to Malawi this summer. Towards the end of our journey, we visited with a group of some 20 women in GAIA's Microfinance program in Thyolo district, in southern Malawi. This area has been ravaged by AIDS, drought, and hunger.

After being "sung in" to the village in joyful Malawi fashion, and welcomed with exuberant smiles, handshakes and hugs, we entered a simple community center building. One by one the women entrepreneurs, representing three loan groups, stood and proudly described for us the impact these small loans have made upon their lives. The loans total approximately \$70 (US) per recipient and are repaid over the course of six months. The hard work of the GAIA Malawi staff ensures that these women receive the training and support they need to grow their businesses and manage the loan repayment process.

Because of GAIA's microloans, many women could now buy produce at market



GAIA's microloan program has supported over 1200 rural women with loans to support their small businesses

and sell it in their villages. One woman had pigs, and as an added bonus thanks to the organic manure, had a wonderful garden from which she could feed her family. Another woman started a beer-brewing business. We heard the testimony of a grandmother who cares for her orphaned grandchildren and can now afford to pay their school fees. She was able to buy herself a bicycle and rides it proudly to the bank to deposit into her savings account. We heard several stories of women who were able to build stronger houses with good roofs.

Rosina, the Chairperson, spoke to the empowerment of the women when she said, "We feel, as women, (the loans) have helped us because we don't go cup in hand to our husbands to ask for money." In fact, many of the husbands are helping their spouses and working with them in a family enterprise.

In a touching testimonial, a woman said that she had no husband, but that GAIA was her husband. She said that the village women used to think of themselves as useless people, and then GAIA came and loaned money to the useless people.

She was useless no longer. A young woman told us that the money from the loans has helped her to visit the closest hospital and obtain life-saving ARVs (anti-HIV drugs.) Now she is feeling stronger and can grow her business.

Story after story included "pay for my children to go to school" and "able to feed my family, even in the time of drought". When asked what their daughters thought of them, they said, humbly but proudly, that "We are more beautiful to our daughters now."

The income earned is not only empowering the women to care for their families, but by lessening their dependence on men, they may reduce the likelihood of contracting HIV. GAIA's Microfinance program brings a new hope to women in the Thyolo district, strengthening their homes, their families and their smiles. This was an enlightening and uplifting afternoon.

- Nancy Sparks & Nadia Winters, GAIA Staff



Entrepreneur Finest sells groceries and is now able to pay school fees for her orphaned grandchildren

MUSIC IN AID OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST AIDS: JAZZ AT CASTLE GREEN, PASADENA

On September 19 GAIA's invaluable Southern California Resource Group held a benefit event at Pasadena's historic Castle Green. It raised over \$135,000.

Emceed by actress and GAIA supporter Jane Kaczmarek, the program opened with Malawian expatriate and GAIA trustee Eva Banda and friends singing the 150 guests into the ballroom. Vocalist Arnold McCuller and violinist Lesa Terry performed lively music from the



Eva Banda and friends welcomed guests



Jim Dillavou, Founding Volunteer Kitty Dillavou, Event Chair Justin F. McNeill, Jr, and Founding Trustee Cynthia Jones



Violinist Lesa Terry

African Diaspora, from jazz standards to a Brazilian-influenced composition. GAIA's 10th anniversary was commemorated by honoring founding volunteers Kitty Dillavou, Cynthia Jones and Don Thomas.

In addition to participating in a Fund-A-Need auction, guests bid on jewelry donated by Mary Regas and Asanti jewelers, and on hand-carved artworks brought from Malawi by trustee Agnes Grohs. Pasadena vendors donated gourmet appetizers and wine, and volunteers included youth from Polytechnic and Mayfield schools. Justin F. McNeill, Jr., chaired the event committee. Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard was among the special guests.



Actress Jane Kaczmarek was event emcee

EAST BAY FOR AFRICA: DINNER IN ALAMO

At the East Bay for Africa event on Sunday, September 26, Sir Richard G.A. Feachem described the treatment revolution for HIV-positive people in impoverished countries, and how large and small organizations have helped. Sir Richard is the recently named Executive Director of UCSF Global Health Sciences and is a professor in the School of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley. From 2002 to 2007 he served as founding Executive Director of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and Under Secretary General of the United Nations.



Trustee Eva Banda, Sir Richard Feachem, Lady Neelam Feachem

His keynote presentation was preceded by Trustee Eva Banda's description of the impact of AIDS upon her Malawian family. Author Anne Lamott (*Bird by Bird*, *Operating Instructions*) led the night's program and challenged the evening's guests to make meaningful contributions during the Fund-A-Need appeal.

Guests from around the Bay Area included San Francisco's Dr. Charles Wilson and Francie Petrocelli, Oakland's Scott Jackson, KTVU newscaster Tori Campbell and supporters from St. Timothy's Church in Danville. David Gilmour, GAIA trustee and owner of Paradise Foods in Marin County, acted as Event Chair.

Over \$115,000 was raised to conclude GAIA's \$2 million *Village by Village Campaign to Save Lives in Malawi*. This funds our expansion into 40 new rural Malawi villages, backed up by a third mobile health clinic.



Alexis Pelosi, Rose Antonopoulos, Ashley Magargee



John Buselli, Betsy Buselli, Tori Campbell

WHAT'S NEW AT GAIA:

THE GIFT OF HOPE

Give the gift of hope this holiday season. Your donation of \$70 provides a Malawian woman entrepreneur with a loan to start her own business and \$125 funds a scholarship for an orphaned child. A gift in **honor of your loved one** through the Alternative Gift Market (AGM) will benefit GAIA's work to empower and educate communities, build health care capacity and fight poverty and disease. Your donation will be acknowledged in a lovely card or eCard that can be sent directly to your loved one. You can also learn how to involve your congregation or community group in alternative giving. Learn more by going to www.thegaia.org or by calling us at 415.461.7196.



GAIA ELIZABETH TAYLOR MOBILE CLINICS



GAIA's mobile clinics have been re-named The GAIA Elizabeth Taylor Mobile Clinics, in honor of the actress and philanthropist who spearheaded the program through The Elizabeth Taylor HIV/AIDS Foundation. The foundation recently funded a third mobile clinic, which was deployed this summer and is reaching 100 to 200 rural patients a day in remote, highly under-served areas of Malawi.

GAIA Board of Trustees

U.S. Trustees

Marty Arscott, <i>Board Chair</i>	Jennifer Kepner
Kim Baltzell	Miriam P. Kepner
Eva Banda	Daniel King
Susan Brodesser	Carole Levine
Hardie Cobbs	Michael Lockhart
Jocelyn Cortese	Bob McCaskill
Haile Debas, <i>Emeritus</i>	Lisa Park
Etta M. Eskridge	Andy Pflaum
David Gilmour	William W. Rankin
Michael Gottlieb	Ivan Weinberg
Agnes Grohs	Charles B. Wilson, <i>Co-Founder & Chair Emeritus</i>
Virginia Joffe	

Malawi Trustees

Bennett Chavula (*Chair*)
Angela Chimwaza
Jones Laviwa
Barnabas Salaka
Ellen Schell



The Presidio of San Francisco
PO Box 29110
San Francisco, CA 94129-0110
Telephone: (415) 461-7196 • Fax: (415) 461-9681
info@thegaia.org • www.thegaia.org