

The William B. Budd Scholarship Fund

The first five years

2000 - 2004



The William B. Budd Scholarship Fund was founded by Daniel Ritchie to honor the memory of his step-brother, Bill Budd. Dan is a former Peace Corps volunteer in Kenya and longtime admirer of that country. He was in Nairobi when Bill died of cancer in 1999. On the advice of a Kenyan acquaintance, Dan took his idea to the National Council of Churches of Kenya, (NCCCK) where Mary Mugambe enthusiastically agreed to provide administrative support for the fund. Within the next four years the fund assisted 36 secondary students chosen from all regions of Kenya. Though primary school in Kenya is now publicly funded, secondary school is not.

In 2004 the fund was formally incorporated in Washington, D.C. with a board of directors who embarked on an ambitious fundraising campaign to increase the reach of the fund. And following a visit to Kenya in 2005, the board agreed to expand the coverage of the scholarships to university and polytechnic education.

The first six Budd scholars were selected in 2000. Each one had completed Form I (9th grade), many of them having to overcome tremendous obstacles to do so. Comments about the students are supplied by Grace Muthungu, who makes all the selections for the program on behalf of the Kenya Council of Churches.



J. was born in 1982 in the Rift valley, the son of a long-time friend of Dan Ritchie. The decision to fund the program was due in part to these ties, which date back to 1960s. J has had challenges in school, which have been sorted out, and he completed school in 2004. He is determined to pursue tertiary education, which he can manage if given a chance.

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I. was born in 1983 in Nakuru. She and her sister lost both parents in 1994 (father) and 1997 (mother). The girls have been under the care of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa since then. I. joined Menengai High school, a day school, where she managed to score a C+. Although she has completed secondary school education, she is still living with the good Samaritans and has little hope of advancing to college education. She is very optimistic and

encourages the other students in the family to face life with hope.

E. was born in 1983, the last born in a family of nine. The parents are peasant farmers in the semi-arid Makueni District. She went to a local school that does not perform well but she still obtained a pass. She later joined a college to do a secretarial certificate with the hope of pursuing a diploma program later in life. E. does not give up easily and is determined to make a difference in life and among those she interacts with.

J. was born in 1983, the fifth in a family of 8. His parents are peasant farmers. His elder siblings did not manage to complete secondary school due to lack of fees. In spite of the odds that he faced in school, he did not give up in life and received a B. He secured admission to the Kenyatta University to pursue advanced nursing but this proved too costly. He joined Kenya Medical Training Centre in September 2004 to pursue a three-year diploma in medical imaging sciences.

E. was born in 1993 near Mt. Elgon. She is a first born and was born out of wedlock, a situation which is not accepted by her community. She has therefore been an outcast all along and her chances of pursuing secondary education were minimal.

This background affected her self-confidence but she overcame the odds and did well in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) and was admitted to one of the provincial

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schools. She had a lot of challenges but was sure she would pass, and managed to get a C, which enabled her to pursue a teaching career in one of the colleges.

Since completion of her secondary school in 2002, she has been at home and may just end up being married off to one of the old men unless she has something to sustain her economically.

M. is a former student of Kinyoro Primary school in Trans Nzoia and is the seventh born in a family of 13. His father is a polygamist and the family has no land of their own. M. did very well in his class eight exams, but due to financial constraints he could not join a good school. Later he went to a local school and transferred to a slightly better one after he was admitted to the scholarship program. He did his exams in 2003 and obtained a B- in the Kenya Secondary Certificate of Education. This shattered his dreams and he seems to be giving up on life. Currently, M. has gone back to his village and stays there awaiting any opportunity which may come his way so that he could join a college.

