



## HOPE FOR AFRICA

University of Florida Students Organize to Assist Medical Ministry in Africa

HOPE, a student-run organization at the University of Florida in Gainesville, was founded in 2007 by a small group of students seeking to have a life-changing impact in some small corner of the world. A phone call to AIM provided that corner – Magambua, Tanzania, where AIM missionaries Jon and Melissa Eager serve in a small rural medical clinic. Josh Meyer, HOPE’s founder, was impacted by the biography of Dr. Paul Farmer, a medical doctor who served in a Haitian slum, eventually ridding it of tuberculosis. “The Lord brought to my attention how much of a difference one individual could make if he or she went to some semi-isolated community and poured into that single focus,” said Meyer, who plans to enter medical ministry. He and three other students dedicated themselves to raising funds to support the Magambua clinic. In their first year the group raised about \$1,500 through a dodgeball tournament and a powderpuff football tournament. Five students later spent 10 weeks at the clinic through AIM’s short-term program. “This trip redefined HOPE,” says Meyer. “Before the trip we were raising funds for a clinic and a people we had heard about, but after the trip we were raising funds

for those we had seen with our own eyes, touched with our own hands, and fallen in love with with our own hearts. That made all the difference.”

HOPE’s membership now stands at 20, and their fundraising efforts delve the depths of creativity. “The wackiest idea we had this year was Christmas Caroling,” says Josh Wu, the group’s president. “I don’t believe many of our members are particularly gifted at singing, but they had a great time and the community enjoyed their holiday spirit.” Local businesses have supported the groups efforts, partnering with them in fundraisers and sharing up to 20% of their proceeds to support the cause. HOPE also sold gift certificates donated by local businesses and Tanzanian crafts and at a recent silent auction fundraiser.

Wu encourages other college campuses and even highschools to take on a need somewhere in the world. “It is definitely an eye-opening experience,” he says, “and a testament to God’s mighty ways.”

“As I have shadowed Jon this week and a half, I have come to one major realization: God is definitely calling me to be a doctor in Africa”.

– Josh Meyer in an email written during a short-term ministry assignment at a rural medical clinic in Magambua, Tanzania, where he assisted AIM doctor Jon Eager.



Photographs courtesy of HOPE

As one of their fundraising events to benefit the Magambua clinic, students held a silent auction, selling items obtained during their short-term trip to Tanzania.



## LESSONS LEARNED

Former short-term missionary Jenn Radbourne shared a few lessons she picked up along the way in Africa

1. When a man asks you how many cows your father wants he is not offering your family a steak dinner but rather asking for your hand in marriage.
2. Our skin is like a big onion. It doesn't matter how many times you burn and peel, there is always another layer underneath.
3. Snakes 15 feet long and as wide as a person are not just found in encyclopedias.
4. While teaching, do not be alarmed if a goat enters the classroom and begins nibbling on your dress.
5. And the biggy...

God is in control!