

Presentation team continues Kenya job

Students, others will assist orphanage

By Sara Cunningham
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While Gary Householder says mission work isn't his calling, the Presentation Academy social studies teacher has been on at least 15 mission trips.

He left Saturday on his third trip with Presentation students to Kenya, where his 13-member team will spend two weeks building a playground for an orphanage, among other projects.

The team includes incoming seniors Camille and Caroline Seger, who are cousins, and four Presentation alumnae: Gwen Gottlieb, Samantha Hawkins, Allyson Ferry and Brittany McGarry.

The rest of the members are volunteers from Hearts4Kenya, a Louisville-based, not-for-profit organization that helps people who live in the poorest areas of Kenya.

For Householder's students, the trip will provide invaluable experience, he said.

In addition to spending time with children at the Rongo orphanage, team members are scheduled to visit students who are about their same age, he said. Team members also will get to see a lot of the area and meet local and regional leaders.

"The projects are important but for them (the students), it's al-



Gwen Gottlieb, a graduate of Presentation Academy, packed boxes of medical supplies and sports and school equipment for the orphanages in Rongo and Oyugis in Kenya. Social studies teacher Gary Householder said the trip will provide invaluable experience.

Courtesy of
Gary Householder

ways about building relationships and trying to understand different cultures and lifestyles," Householder said. "This is not a matter of saying, 'We have so much, so we'll reach down to you.' It's a matter of recognizing we must learn to accept and understand each other as equals."

Caroline Seger, 17, said she heard about the trip from friends who went in previous years.

"I saw the way it affected them, and I want that experience for my-

self too," she said.

Caroline said she has been on service trips to Appalachia but expects to see a different level of poverty in Africa. "I'm a bit sheltered in Louisville, and I want to learn about more than what's around me every day," she said.

Like many of the students, Caroline had to raise \$4,500 to go on the trip. Many of the girls received money from their churches and families.

Other Presentation students

helped by donating money to buy the playground equipment and tools. Each member of the 2009 senior class donated money, and along with outside donor contributions, the playground will be paid for, Householder said.

The trip will have special meaning for Allyson Ferry, 20, who graduated from Presentation in 2007 and went on the Kenya trip in 2005 and 2007. Ferry's mother, Susan Nash, will join the group this time, she said.

"It'll be a good experience to share with her," Ferry said.

Ferry will start her junior year at Earlham College in Richmond, Ind., this fall. She is studying business in nonprofit management, a field she was drawn to because of her service work in Kenya.

"It's funny because I didn't expect a whole lot out of it the first time," she said. "People kept telling me that I would be changed, but I didn't understand that or expect that."

Ferry said that changed on her first trip to Kenya. "It's hard to put it into words other than to tell you that it's constantly on my mind now," she said. "We grow up in a city like Louisville and don't realize there's poverty at that level."

Recent graduate Samantha Hawkins, 18, said this trip will be her first to Kenya.

"I'm very spoiled," she said. "I want this experience to help me change how I understand the world and myself."

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