



"Supporting African Solutions to African Problems"

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An IRS approved 501(c)(3) non-profit organization



Dear Friend,

Hello friends! It's been a while since you last heard from us, but we haven't forgotten you or our shared interest in helping Africa. Since the start of last year and throughout the pandemic, we've continued to work on several initiatives to support our African brothers and sisters. And as we enter the season of giving and receiving, we'd like to start by sharing with you an inspiring story of an ambitious young man and his unique partnership with I Want To Help Africa and Zimbabwe.

Our organization loves working together with other nonprofits to share in efforts to help Africa. One of our favorites we've joined forces with is Books 4 Zimbabwe. It's run by a high school student, Wyatt Shipp, in Washington State. Wyatt initially became interested in Africa through I Want To Help Africa and its decades-long committed work on the continent. In hearing the many different ways small efforts can have huge impacts in Africa, he wanted to get involved and make a difference. We want to share Wyatt's story and about I Want To Help Africa's partnership with him.

Greetings from all of us at I Want To Help Africa!

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Wyatt Shipp: Helping to Increase Literacy in Zimbabwe

By Mary D. Sanford, Ph.D.



Wyatt Shipp, 17, a 12th grade student at Sehome High School in Bellingham, Washington is not your ordinary teenager. For one thing, he is in the Discovery Bound National Leadership Council, a highly competitive service-based leadership program for aspiring US teens. He loves academics, is currently enrolled in 4 Advanced Placement classes at his school (Spanish, European History, English Literature and Environmental Science), and maintains a 4.0 grade point average. He plays piano and is a member of the varsity swim team as well as his high school golf team. If that's not enough, this talented young man has his own nonprofit, focusing on literacy opportunities for children in Zimbabwe.

Leadership In Action

Four years ago, Wyatt decided to work towards a Gold Medal level Congressional Award for Young Americans with a focus on voluntary leadership and community service. One of the program's many rigorous requirements was for Wyatt to perform a minimum of 400 hours of volunteer public service. Wyatt was eager to create a meaningful project that would have a significant impact on others. He wasn't interested in simply completing the time requirement.

In talking with different members of I Want To Help Africa, particularly its Board members, Wyatt learned there are hundreds of schools throughout Zimbabwe that don't have any books – and never have. Wyatt decided he wanted to address that issue. So I Want To Help Africa introduced him to Robert Simbini, a teacher in rural Zimbabwe. In an email exchange, Robert confirmed that even though there were approximately 500 kids in his school, Zangama Secondary School, the school had absolutely no books – for students or teachers. "It floored me," Wyatt said. "Schools that have no books!" Zimbabwe used to be considered to be the educational capital of Africa. But with severe economic woes and extreme inflation, most Zimbabwean schools and libraries completely lost any budgets they may have had for books. So Wyatt decided he wanted to do something to help remedy this problem.

Through further discussions with I Want To Help Africa, Wyatt learned this nonprofit could give him the guidance and direct support that he needed to guarantee the delivery of any books he could collect for Zimbabwean schools and students. With a long history of so many different projects over the years, involving the distribution of food, books, school supplies, clothes, shoes, and other necessities, I Want To Help Africa has always been able to guarantee the delivery of goods to proper recipients in Africa without them being stolen, confiscated, or misdirected to people who don't need them.

The Birth of Books 4 Zimbabwe

In June of 2017, Books 4 Zimbabwe was formed in Bellingham, Washington, approximately 2 hours north of Seattle. IRS tax law enables new nonprofit organizations to legally operate under the 501(c)(3) tax exempt status of other established nonprofits. So I Want To Help Africa has been allowing Wyatt's Books 4 Zimbabwe to operate as a separate nonprofit under I Want To Help Africa's tax exempt status. Thus far Wyatt has procured over 10,000 books. After sorting through these donations, he determines which are appropriate to send to Africa. He then fills in the gaps by purchasing new or used books, primarily with revenue that he raises from selling some of the donated books that weren't a good match for Africa. Of the nearly 1,000 books already sent, 91 series such as *The Hardy Boys*, *Nancy Drew*, *Paddington Bear*, and *The Wizard of Oz* have been included. As of November 2019, Wyatt has raised \$4,371 to purchase and ship books.



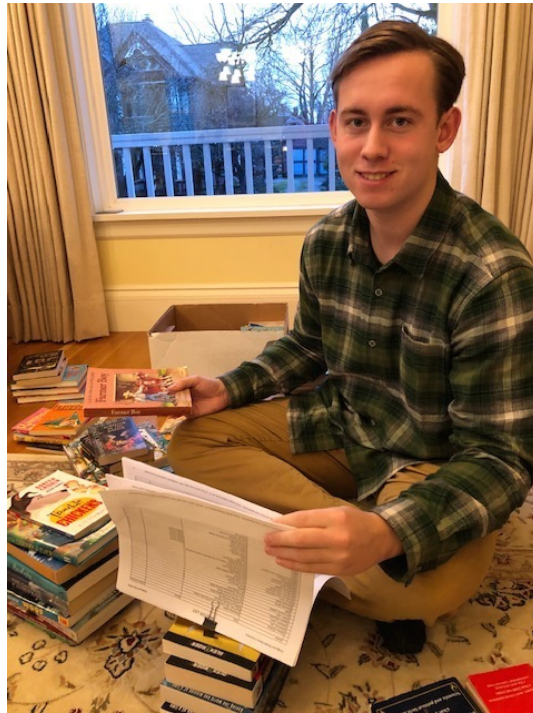
The impact of these books in Zimbabwean classrooms has been awesome!

“Among the students in the Zangama School community where Robert Simbini teaches there has been a 10% increase in pass rates on the national literacy test in just 2 years, going from 25% to 35% of the students,” said Wyatt. “And remember, English is not the native language of these students! It’s amazing how being exposed to good literature can impact literacy rates so quickly. The kids are receiving great titles and it’s wonderful that they get to read books in a series.”

Wyatt is especially grateful for the great local business connections he has made in his hometown as a result of this exemplary project. For example, one local Rotary Club, consisting of business leaders in the community, gave his nonprofit \$2,000. A local library went through a gleaning process and gave him one half of their entire children’s literature collection! In addition, his local bookstore gives him many of their advanced reader copies. Advanced reader copies are new releases by publishers that have not yet been published in their final form.

“So students in Zimbabwe are getting to read books not yet released to the public in the United States,” Wyatt enthused. A recent tour of Wyatt’s basement yielded a treasure trove of books. There were books for beginning readers, all the way up to the level appropriate for high school students. Wyatt has worked hard to include only books that he knows are high quality. In addition to the classics, there are well-loved titles such as *Charlotte’s Web*, *Mr. Popper’s Penguins*, the *A Wrinkle in Time* series, and *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy* among many others.

Book Shipment Logistics



It's mind-boggling to imagine what it takes to get books to a developing country. It's equally amazing to know that a teenager is handling the logistics!

For Wyatt, it's all in a day's work. "Each shipment of books is equal to 100 to 150 pounds of books, or 200 to 300 books," Wyatt explained. As expected, the expense for getting the books to Zimbabwe is nearly prohibitive, due to shipping costs. That's where I Want To Help Africa also has been helpful.

Once Wyatt has collected the books from his community, he has mailed them to an individual from I Want To Help Africa in the U.S. who includes the books as part of his personal luggage on his airline every time he flies to Zimbabwe. After arriving in Zimbabwe, this I Want To Help Africa representative then delivers the books to the very remote, rural Zangama Secondary School community in Buhera Valley where Mr. Simbini teaches.

"So many of these books are not available in Zimbabwe outside the capital city, Harare, and may not even be available there," Wyatt explains. "In the United States we take so much for granted. But the littlest things, like having books to read, can make a profound difference in people's lives."

When pressed for more details, he shared that in addition to an increase in the pass rate by the students at Zangama School on the national literacy exam, the entire community is now checking out books from the school library – which is made up entirely of the books that Books 4 Zimbabwe has sent there. There are simply no other libraries, schools or even stores anywhere near there that have books available to the public for reading or borrowing.

"All of this has a ripple effect," said Wyatt. "These adults will learn to read English better (one of the official languages of Zimbabwe) and then they will be able to help their children learn English better as well."

Clearly the effect of Books 4 Zimbabwe is far-reaching. Wyatt Shipp and his family have earned the admiration and gratitude of people around the world who have learned of this excellent nonprofit humanitarian work. We deeply applaud his unselfed service to those in need and to Africa.

Wyatt is now in his senior year in high school and is looking forward to college. He is now realizing that he won't be able to devote as much time to this project as he has in the past. So I Want To Help

Africa has offered to help maintain this worthy nonprofit and keep its all-important work continuing during the time that Wyatt needs to be less involved. We would love to see this project expand to helping schools across Africa receive books for their students as Zangama Secondary School has under Wyatt's stewardship of the community in this nonprofit activity. We hope that you will join us in helping to make this dream a reality in the coming years. Any donations towards this project would be greatly appreciated!

Students gathered for assembly and in anticipation of a new arrival of books from Wyatt Shipp in partnership with I Want To Help Africa



Zangama Secondary School students and community joyfully receiving another suitcase delivery full of donated books from Wyatt Shipp in partnership with I Want To Help Africa



Students proudly displaying their new books:



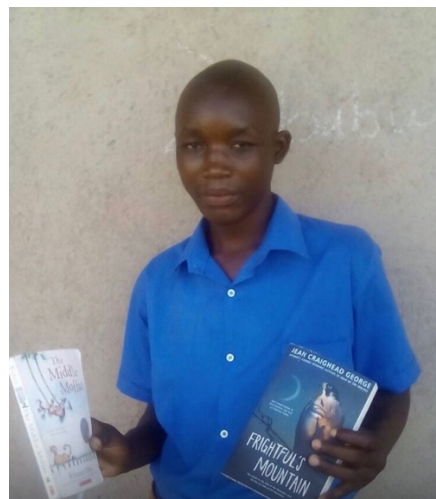
Charity Chimbare

"I would like to be a teacher when I complete my studies."



Natasha Mangongo

"I would like to be a nurse when I finish my studies."



Freeborn Musharu

"I would like to be an accountant or civil engineer when I complete my studies."

**Robert Zimbini, Head of Zangama Secondary School Department of Languages,
and his personal thank you letter**



Zangama Secondary School
Box 29 Muzokomba
Muzambinda
Zimbabwe

18 November 2019

Dear Wyatt

On behalf of Zangama Secondary School pupils, teachers, the community of Buhera and indeed on my own behalf I would like to express our gratitude for the hundreds of books you have been donating to our school for the past three years for our first ever library. Indeed, it is difficult for us to express in words how grateful we are to you and your partners for improving the educational quality of our school and expanding ^{the} mental horizons of our community through the donation of these precious books. We are grateful for this support which is a blessing as a community.

Gratefully yours

Robert Zimbini (Head of Department-Languages)
Zangama Secondary School.

THE DEPUTY HEAD
ZANGAMA SEC SCHOOL
BOX 29
MUZOKOMBA
DATE 18/11/19

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It is such a joy and privilege to know Wyatt Shipp and to share his story with you. This is the type of nonprofit that I Want To Help Africa loves to work together with and support in their efforts to genuinely help Africa and make sure their assistance reaches those who need it.

If you would like to support this activity, your contributions will be gratefully accepted through I Want To Help Africa. You may contribute by clicking below. (If you prefer to contribute by check, please make your check out to "I Want To Help Africa, Inc." and mail to our address below.)



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We are extremely proud that I Want To Help Africa, Inc., a 501(c)(3) IRS approved charitable nonprofit, has earned the GuideStar Gold Seal. You can look us up at www.GuideStar.org



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