

A Single Drop of Water
by Robert Freeman



A story of how a high school
teacher and his students
set out to change the world,
with a dollar

Chapter Eight Student Heroes

Bernadette Lim



Bernadette Lim is a 21-year-old originally from Los Angeles, now at Harvard. She has a passion for youth education, global health and youth activism. She started her own education initiative to help bridge the socioeconomic gap among communities in the greater Boston area. She is a member of the editorial board of the Harvard College Global Health Review, is a blogger for Seventeen Magazine, and a Collegiate Council Ambassador for March of Dimes. In high school, she was a leader in Key Club International as the California-Nevada-Hawaii KIWIN'S District Governor for the 2011–2012 year. In her spare time, she enjoys yoga, blogging, and listening to soul music.

I suspect it was the rush of adrenaline and sense of idealism that I had as a 16-year-old (and still have as an 21-year-old!) that inspired me to undertake a project through One Dollar For Life. Being an active member of KIWIN'S, I always found my tasks of helping others to be limited to my local community: packing lunches for a local homeless shelter; beautifying a local park; or picking up trash at the beach.

As rewarding as this was, I wanted to have an impact beyond these kind of local efforts. After learning of One Dollar For Life this vision began to seem possible. I realized that it was actually rather simple: if I had the willpower to inspire and mobilize thousands of young people in KIWIN'S to join me in a project with One Dollar For Life, we could build a school in a developing country. Thousands of KIWIN'S members could have a real impact in the world.

So, as the 2011-2012 California-Nevada-Hawaii KIWIN'S District Governor, I created Project ONE, an initiative that emphasized the importance of education, both locally and internationally. The international side of Project ONE called for the collaborative fundraising of \$12,000 to build a computer lab at an all-girls school in Kenya. I especially wanted to do this because of my own experience of the benefits of an all-girls education and I hoped to extend these benefits to girls abroad.

In the beginning, I had my share of doubts about the ambition of the project and my ability to lead it. Who was I, a shy high school senior, to lead a tri-state fundraising effort to build a computer lab for a school in Africa? Yet, in spite of these doubts, I believed in my fellow KIWIN'S members and our common cause.

I also believed in the girls at the Mathaithi Girls' School, even though I'd never met them. It was those two beliefs that kept my determination alive. I talked to thousands of KIWIN'S members, both personally and collectively, about my hopes (and belief) that together, as an organization, we could make an international change.

Soon enough, grassroots projects sprung up throughout the district to raise money for the campaign. They ranged from car washes to bake sales to ODFL's Fundraiser-in-a-Box program, even to a talent show that featured KIWIN'S members. At our annual convention, in April, 2012, we had a Project ONE walk that was devoted to finally reaching our fundraising goal. And we made it! We honored each club who fundraised for Project ONE. It was the first successful KIWIN'S endeavor that was student-initiated AND student-run that had had a tangible international impact.



Mathaithi Girl's School Computer Lab

My greatest fulfillment was when we saw the photos of the construction of the school, in July. We were so excited! All of our hopes and plans and efforts were finally coming to fruition! KIWIN'S spans three states but through Project ONE and One Dollar For Life, we became a closer organization with a commitment to service and a determination to change the world—together.

I now know that my seemingly idealistic visions to change the world really aren't that idealistic after all. Two years ago, I was a teenager who had a dream to benefit people beyond my own community. Today, I am an empowered student leader who led my own international education project to benefit young people in the developing world. Even as a college student, I am still inspired by our success. With passion and ambition, with belief and determination to mobilize other young people like myself, I will instigate change in the world. I will motivate others to change the world with me.