



**Mark Okello with Jackson, one of our Jirani Children.**

## Letter From Our Board President

Greetings of the Season,

Whatever you may be celebrating this time of year, I know you will join me in celebrating the successes of The Jirani Project in supporting young people in completing their education and making their way in challenging times. This has been a busy quarter, with our Harambee events on November 18th, the end of the school year in Kenya (including exams and preparation for the annual camp), and the opening of a small but much needed office for Jirani Project in Kenya.

Thank you so much for your continued support of the Jirani Project! We appreciate the response to our second annual Harambee event. Our first online auction included twenty wonderful items donated by Jirani volunteers and supporters from across the US, and was a great success. All in all, "Harambee" events in Phoenix, Madison, and New York yielded nearly \$5,000, and raised awareness of the Jirani Project in these communities.

At this time, your donations are at work and allowing us to continue our mission of providing education and holistic support to all Jirani children. Thanks to the financial backing and collaborative effort of The Crossing (a student volunteer experience based in Madison, Wisconsin), and Crossing Director, Doug Pierce, the Jirani children are once again looking forward to Jirani Camp to start the new year!

I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of our all volunteer Board and various committees that help the Jirani Project in completing its mission. The Jirani Board meets monthly, and committees are comprised of Jirani Board members and community volunteers.

Our Secretary, Dr. Alicia Smith, documents our meetings with great care and has involved many in her family in sponsoring children. Board member Diane Adams has worked hard on our policies and procedures and visits Kenya annually, working with Mark while there.

The Communications Committee - Board members Debria Smith (chair), Deborah Jacobs, and Lacey Peters - creates our quarterly newsletters, Jirani event publicity, and donor communications via web and print media.

Finance Committee member and Jirani Board Vice-President, Mare Schumacher, has recently recruited volunteers to work with us on grant-writing and a development plan.

Our Treasurer, Deborah Jacobs, works collaboratively with Mark online (and two wonderful volunteers in Tempe, AZ) to provide detailed accounting of all contributions and expenses.

We can always use more volunteers – for more information, please visit:

<http://jiraniproject.org/volunteers.html>

In our last newsletter, I shared with an exciting opportunity with you – a "Rafiki Tour" to Kenya in July 2012 for donors/friends of the Jirani Project to meet the children, guardians, and get a better sense of life in Kenya. Stay tuned for details on our website and in the next newsletter.

If you are interested in this trip (tentative dates July 1-10), please email:

[jiraniproject@gmail.com](mailto:jiraniproject@gmail.com)

Have a wonderful holiday season! Our children, guardians, coordinator and volunteer board all thank you for your amazing and sustained support!

With deep appreciation and excitement about the year to come,

- Beth





## Harambee for Jirani 2011

*Many hands prepared great food and we welcomed new and old friends to our Second Annual Harambee ("Pulling Together") for the Jirani Project. This year we held gatherings in Tempe, AZ, Madison, WI, and New York, NY.*

Harambee is a tradition in Kenya that offers an opportunity for family, friends, neighbors and community members to "pull together" to fundraise and provide support needed to fulfill the goals and ambitions of others.

On November 18th the Jirani Project held its second annual **Harambee to benefit the Jirani Project**. The purpose of the event was to bring together Jirani friends, old and new - to not only celebrate our work, but to "pull together" and renew our commitment to the Jirani Project as we look forward to 2012. It was a wonderful time and this year we hosted events in Tempe, AZ, Madison, WI, and New York City. The settings were warm and intimate. We introduced the Jirani Project to new friends in New York, and offered the opportunity to reconnect with both old and new friends in Tempe and Madison. The simultaneous events raised nearly \$5,000, and we are grateful to those who pulled together - in true Harambee spirit - to contribute to the work of the Jirani Project in person and/or online.

### • Tempe

Jirani Board President, Beth Swadener, again opened her home in Tempe, AZ to host the Harambee for Jirani. Wonderful food was prepared by Kenyan friends, children played and the atmosphere was one of warmth and joy.

Presentations offering an overview of the work of the Jirani Project, and a phone call from Jirani Program Coordinator in Kenya, Mark Okello, provided additional information regarding the scope and mission of the Jirani Project organization to the many who attended.

It was a very special environment to not only celebrate the work and renew our dedication to the Jirani Project, but to rekindle the personal relationships among those committed to the work in Kenya.

### • Madison

Jirani board member, Diane Adams, hosted and teamed up with Crossing Director (and Jirani Camp sponsor), Doug Pierce to introduce *Harambee for the Jirani Project* to Madison, WI.

As Madison is one of Mark Okello's stops when he comes to the U.S., many Jirani friends and supporters turned out to pull together for Jirani again. As always, we are very grateful for the support of The Crossing and Doug Pierce. He and Diane made this a memorable night and solidified our appreciation for the support of our friends in Wisconsin!

### • New York

We are very thankful to supporters in New York who provided us with the opportunity to bring a small group together to introduce new friends to the Jirani Project through our Harambee event. With the help of Skype, we were able to speak directly to this gathering at the studio of artist Hank Willis Thomas and the Question Bridge project. We anticipate and look forward to this being our "starter" event for future growth in the New York metro area. We welcome the enthusiasm for the work of the Jirani Project demonstrated by those in attendance and anticipate a much larger gathering in 2012 as we springboard from Harambee 2011.

### • Online Auction

We were excited to conduct our first online auction during the Harambee this year. It was not only successful, but a unique and fantastic experience for Jirani supporters and friends from across the U.S. to be able to participate in the Harambee effort.

Twenty wonderful auction items (all sold!) were donated by Jirani friends and board members:

- Bert and Diane Adams
- Barbara Blackmon-Gussak
- Aysegul Ciyer and Ozgur Celik
- Luis Fernandez and Mare Schumacher
- Dawna Holiday
- Susan and Deborah Jacobs
- Kristine Leatherman
- Beth and Daniel Swadener



*Thanks to all for pulling together to make the Second Annual Harambee to benefit the Jirani Project a great success!*

# The **JIRANI** Project Neighbor to Neighbor

## Jirani Project Board of Directors

- President  
Beth Blue Swadener  
Arizona
- Vice-President  
Mare Schumacher  
Arizona
- Secretary  
Alicia Smith  
Arizona
- Treasurer  
Deborah Jacobs  
Arizona
- Member at Large  
Diane Adams  
Wisconsin
- Member at Large  
Lacey Peters  
Arizona
- Member at Large  
Debria Smith  
Arizona
- Ex-Officio Member  
(Past President)  
Stefanie Sidortsova  
Vermont
- Program Coordinator-Kenya  
Mark Okello

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<http://www.jiraniproject.org>

## Become a regular Jirani Donor and enhance the life of a child in need

A little can go a long way and becoming a Jirani donor can enhance the life of a child or family in need in enormous ways.

Giving levels have been established to recognize Jirani Project donors for their annual support. Donations are needed at all levels to strengthen the base of support for all Jirani children.

The levels of giving are:

Rafiki (friend)	Mdhamana (sponsor)	Akida (leader)	Kikombe Jaa (full cup)
\$25 - \$399	\$400 - \$999	\$1,000 - \$4,999	\$5,000 +

*New and continued donors are the lifeline of the Jirani Project. No donation is too small or, for that matter, too large. Each donor and their continued giving is greatly appreciated and honored. If you are willing to step up and commit to assisting our efforts in Kenya, please join us as a donor. Thank you!*

## Monthly Donations Now Accepted Online!



A Monthly Giving payment option is now available online!  
For more information, please visit:

<http://jiraniproject.org/donate.html>

## Neighbor to Neighbor

The specific purposes of the Jirani Project are to enhance the lives of children who are African orphans and other vulnerable children, with emphasis on capacity building. The Jirani Project provides funding for the children's education, health care, and general well being.

To this end, Jirani endeavors to raise funds, recruit sponsors, organize events to raise public awareness regarding vulnerable Kenyan children, and work with other nonprofit organizations to create and implement programs in Kenya that will foster social change.



The Jirani Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and all donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Your gift of any amount will be received with gratitude - *Asante sana!*

We help a few kids in Kenya...



You can too!

[Donate](#)