



**Opportunity**  
**Education**  
Foundation

"Educating Children Around the World"

**August 2013**

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## CONGRATS TO J. JOE RICKETTS

CONGRATULATIONS...

to J. Joe Ricketts,  
Founder & Benefactor of OEF,  
for being awarded the  
2013 Global Educator  
of the Year!

We invite you all to celebrate with OEF and the Malaika Foundation which will be presenting the award to Mr. J. Joe Ricketts at the –  
"Gala Celebration of African Art, Cuisine & Fashion" on Friday September 27, 2013 from 6–9 p.m.



2013 Global Educator Award  
Honoring J. Joe Ricketts

This special event is being co-hosted by the Malaika Foundation and the College of Education and Human Sciences, University of Nebraska–Lincoln at the Quilt House, 1523 N. 33rd St. in Lincoln, NE. Funds raised at the gala will support scholarships and education abroad experiences.

Plan for a fun night including a live and silent auction featuring African paintings, carvings, masks, textiles and costumes from the collection of Natalie Hahn, the founder of Malaika, who served more than 30 years for the United Nations in Africa.

Experience Africa with hors d'oeuvres inspired by African cuisine, a cash bar, live modeling of student fashions showcasing African style and a performance of African dance and drumming by the African Culture Connection led by Charles Ahovissi of Omaha.

We hope you can join us! Tickets are available online at the UNL Marketplace, <http://marketplace.unl.edu/tmfd>

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

I am only one,  
but still I am one.  
I cannot do everything,  
but still  
I can do something;  
and because  
I cannot do everything,  
I will not refuse  
to do something  
that I can do.  
– Helen Keller



### **Opportunity Education Foundation is always asking; what can we do?**

With access to almost 1,400 schools which benefit from our programs and thousands of administrators and teachers in 11 countries— we have the infrastructure and ability to empower other non-profit and service organizations which want to reach hundreds of thousands of students and their communities.

OEF welcomes the opportunity to share our resources to help better the lives of the diverse communities we serve in Africa and Asia.

We were fortunate to share our recent Ghana Education Experience trip with Dr. Steve Maurstad, a dentist who educates on oral health, and the First Sight Foundation that provides vision screens and free eyeglasses.

This was Dr. Maurstad's second trip with OEF, having instructed over 5,000 students during our Uganda trip in 2012. That trip inspired him to volunteer again this year.

OEF further supports the mission by providing a toothbrush to each student after Dr. Maurstad's presentation and reinforcing his instructions in later DVD lessons. To date, OEF has given over 77,000 toothbrushes to kids who treasure their gift.

Dr. Maurstad's dental health presentation not only informs students, but also introduces them to a profession from which most will never benefit. Dentists are very hard to find in rural areas of developing nations. Ghana, with over 25 million people, graduates just 20 dentists per year.

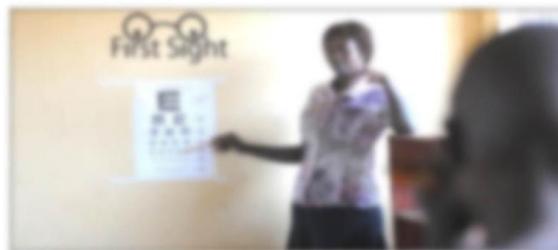
The World Health Organization estimated that as of 2008, there were only 148 dentists in Ghana, with 70% located in urban areas. That is .06 dentists per 10,000 Ghanaians versus 6 dentists per 10,000 Americans.

Dental health is more than just having a beautiful smile, which is common to all Ghanaians.

Studies in the USA indicate that poor dental health can increase the risk of other health conditions including heart disease.

Dr. Maurstad may be the only dentist these students meet, so the pressure is on to give them a lot of information and inspiration to continue their studies and consider entering health professions.

If you have a problem seeing the picture to the right, you are in the company of more than 153,000,000 people throughout the world who suffer from easily corrected vision problems.



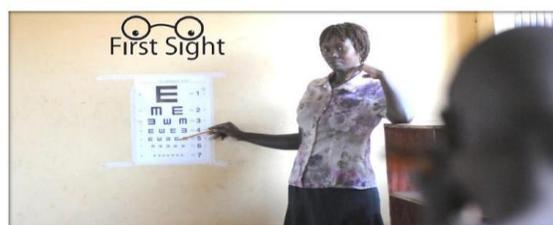
Patient is positioned 20 feet from universal Tumbling E-Chart

This is the most accurate and simple method of diagnosing refractive errors in young and illiterate patients

OEF was excited when Nizar Mamdani, the CEO of First Sight, approached us to offer free vision screening for thousands of OEF students and their extended school communities.

First Sight implements a low-tech, but highly cost-effective process for an eye exam and immediately provides eyeglasses that correct the largest percentage of vision problems – near and far sightedness. In less than 15 minutes and for less than \$5 a pair, this simple process dramatically improves lives.

Better vision means better health, education (for the first time children can see the blackboard clearly!) and job options to support families and build stronger communities.



Patient is positioned 20 feet from universal Tumbling E-Chart

This is the most accurate and simple method of diagnosing refractive errors in young and illiterate patients

Nizar and Tom Windle (Development Director of First Sight) quickly trained several OEF staff to assist in screening nearly 3,000 students plus hundreds of teachers and villagers who sought their help.

It was a whirlwind week, moving long lines of people through the screening process and keeping Dr. Steve on schedule visiting classrooms, but the reward was having the chance to see – all the amazing smiles.



On behalf of all the students, schools and communities served by Opportunity Education Foundation, we offer our deepest gratitude to Dr. Steve Maurstad and the First Sight Foundation.

We also want to recognize Dr. Scott Gordon of The Evergreen Dental Group in Evergreen Colorado, for the generous contributions of dental supplies.

<http://www.evergreendentalgroup.com/>

Opportunity Education Outreach continues to seek potential fundraising and collaboration efforts with other foundations; to bring tangible improvement to the lives of our students, their families, and communities.

Please contact [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org) for more information on how you can get involved.

## START WRITING – RIGHT NOW!

Start your year off right by writing your pen pals!

It's a perfect activity to keep students productive during homeroom/study halls or to integrate letters into lesson plans that we have created to maximize learning through a letter.

[Click Here for Letter Ideas and Resources](#)

[Click Here for Letter Lesson Plans](#)



We also have two options to stay up to date with our international pen pal program.

OPTION 1: To keep up with our "Friends" – we have a Facebook page just for you!

Visit our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/OpportunityEducation>

OPTION 2: Unable to get on Facebook? No worries.

Visit our Pen Pal Blog. <http://opportunityeducation.wordpress.com/>

Both the Pen Pal Blog and Facebook offer interesting ideas, stories, and links to help generate enthusiasm and discussion about education plus lesson plans to integrate pen pal letters into your standard requirements.

## WANTED: A PEN PAL SCHOOL

Africa is not all deserts and jungles. As a matter of fact, Ilasi English Medium School is located in an area around Mbeya, Tanzania, also called the "Scotland of Africa" due the vegetation that looks similar to the colonist homeland.

Africa is also online!

Are you looking for a pen pal school that can also email?

The head teacher at Ilasi, Brown Msowoya Katawa, emails OEF to keep us updated on his school's accomplishments and to eagerly request a great pen pal school.



Ilasi English Medium School Needs Pen Pals!

Pen pal letters are an excellent opportunity to learn more than textbooks or even the internet can offer...just email us and we will put a Welcome Folder in the mail to you today!

Email [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org) and you can start writing today!

If you already have a pen pal, refer a friend to our [OEF Pen Pal](#) link.

If you prefer a different school, simply email us and note what grade/country you would like to write to and we can get you writing, right away!

## WELCOME NEW SCHOOLS

We welcome the following schools to our free, international pen pal program which is a fun and easy way to meet Language Arts, Social Studies and History/Civics standards – [share this link to invite others to join.](#)

St. Mary's Academy, Baldwinsville, NY  
Murphy – Girl Scout Group 1201, Ballwin, MO  
Clear Creek High School, Evergreen, CO  
Taylorsville High School, Taylorsville, UT



## FEATURED SCHOOL & GIFT CERTIFICATE WINNER

Congrats to Clay at Dolores Middle School in Dolores, Colorado!

On behalf of your pen pals from Nepal, thank you for sending letters.

Want to win next month?

Just email [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org) after you mail your letters and you are entered to win!



## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

### Write Your Pen Pals!

Even if it's been a while, now is still the best time to write. The name, address and mailing instructions are available on our website start by [clicking here](#).

You can also email:

[Schools@OpportunityEducation.org](mailto:Schools@OpportunityEducation.org)



### Get Others to Write!

We have 358 schools very eager to have an English speaking pen pal.

Share the following link – and make sure you CC [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org) – to get a gift certificate.

[Click Here to Refer A Friend and Get a Gift Certificate!](#)

### Visit an Opportunity Education school!

Take a life-changing trip to teach, share and learn in an Opportunity Education school in Africa or India.

[Click Here to Learn More.](#)

## THANK YOU OF EDUCATIONAL SUPPLIERS!

OEF is grateful to the expertise and generosity of Lakeshore Learning and Playtime/Schooltime Supplies. We hope that if you are looking to support companies that take good care of teachers and students – all over the world, you will spend your money where it counts!

Lakeshore is dedicated to creating innovative educational materials that spark young imaginations, instill a sense of wonder and foster a lifelong love of learning. With materials for infants and toddlers through the 6th grade, we help children reach developmental milestones and achieve educational goals– while still having fun!



Playtime was started in the late 1950's by two early childhood activist-teachers. The first Playtime catalog debuted in 1960 and incredibly, they still sell some of the same products found in that catalog. They can help find materials not readily available elsewhere as Playtime staff are former teachers whose classroom experience helps educators find the perfect resources they need.

PLAYTIME / SCHOOLTIME

TERESA ROLL  
OUTREACH & SISTER SCHOOL COORDINATOR  
OPPORTUNITY EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
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STAY CONNECTED

