

OPPORTUNITY EDUCATION

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UPCOMING

February

- Nebraska Gifted Conference (Omaha, NE)
- National Conference on Education (San Francisco, CA)

March

- ASCD (Orlando, FL)

April

- NAEP (New Orleans, LA)
- NCEA (Anaheim, CA)

May

- IRA (Minneapolis, MN)



Opportunity Education®

Newsletter

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Making a Difference in a World So Far Away

St. James/ Seton in Omaha, Nebraska, was the 2008 winner of the Opportunity Education drawing for an all-expense paid trip to Uganda. St. James/ Seton's sister school is Uganda Martyrs Primary School Kitakyusa, so the location of that school determined the destination of the trip.

In June, 2008, Terry Crum, St. James/Seton Principal and his wife, Pat, two teachers from St. James/Seton, teachers participating in the Sister School Program, and representatives of Opportunity Education traveled to Africa to visit Uganda Martyrs and a number of other Ugandan schools. One of the goals for the teachers was to find out what it really means to be a Sister School.

Terry Crum highlights the trip in these words: "I could spend hours discussing what we saw and experienced on this incredible journey. I will attempt however to key in on a few of the main points: The journey reinforced the first major reason that I felt our school needed to be part of the Opportunity Education Sister School program. I truly believe our students cannot get this type of education any other way, not through textbooks, videos, or lectures. To be able to read what the children from Uganda write is an education in itself. It was even more of a bonus for the four of us to be able to add to that education with our first hand stories of

their country, their school and their words of welcome and thankfulness.

Another key thing we realized is that actually the most precious result for our Sister School parents, teachers, and children is the knowledge that someone in the United States knows they exist and cares about them. The people of Uganda have, and yet want, so very little. It's a simplistic life to say the least. Yet, the people we encountered were friendly, extremely gracious and very happy".

Terry summarizes St. James/ Seton's participation in the Sister School program: "Many memories have been created in this short year that St. James/Seton has been involved in the Sister School Program. Two statements stand out the most and sum it up the best. One made by Fr. Gerald, a parish priest and now a good friend, who helps with Uganda Martyrs School, sent us a note upon our return to America that stated: 'Thank you so much for loving us'. The second statement came from an 8th grade girl at St. James/Seton School who wrote: 'I wanted to let you know I was very moved by your generosity to the school in Africa. I am so thankful for this loving school and staff. When I heard what St. James/ Seton was doing, it made me happy that I was a part of it. I

love knowing that I am making a difference in the world. I think this is the nicest thing that St. James/Seton has done. I am happy to be a part of it in my last year at this school. May God bless you, St. James/Seton and our new school family in Africa.'"

Terry concludes, "In a world that can often times become self-absorbing, we can teach our children how to make a difference in a completely different part of the world, making a difference simply by just taking a little time to write, and more importantly to care."

There are currently 450 schools in the developed world participating in the Sister School program and soon there will be 1,000 schools in the developing world participating in the Opportunity Education program. Our goal is to have every school in the developing world partnered with a school in the developed world. Please share this exciting program with anyone you believe would be interested. Additional information can be found on the website: www.opportunityeducation.org or by contacting Patty Duncan, Sister School Coordinator at pattyduncan@opportunityeducation.org or 402-250-7168.

Every Sister School participant will receive an entry to the drawing for the expense-paid trip to a Sister School location to be taken in the summer of 2009.

“Thank you for twinning us with a Sister School, from which we expect to share and learn a lot.”

St. Agnes Catholic Girls' Primary School
Naggalama, Uganda

“We are excited about this new friendship across the ocean.”

Metro Christian Academy
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Sister Schools Resources

In your introductory packet you received a list of resources which can be used to supplement lessons related to the Sister School program. Please add these resources to your list:

www.africanculturalcenter.org

This is a U.S. based non-profit organization that has developed an excellent site for each of the five national geography themes.

www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html

This site allows students to

research specific countries and gives very accurate information and statistics on every country in the world.

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index.shtml

Another great site that provides an excellent history of Africa along with timelines and audio clips.

www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions

This site was formerly part of the Marco Polo project so teachers may be familiar with the excellent lesson

plans here for all of the national geography standards. Teachers can search by content, subject, and grade level. Opportunity Education is now partnering with National Geographic and will soon be sending some of these excellent materials to schools in the developing world. Check it out!

If you have a resource that you think is particularly useful, please forward the information to pattyduncan@opportunityeducation.org to share it with the rest of the participants in upcoming newsletters.

Sister School Trip

The drawing for an expense-paid trip to the Sister School of the winner will be held in March, 2009. The exact location is yet to be determined. The winner will notified immediately by phone and email.

There is an opportunity for a limited number of Sister School participants to go on the Sister School trip during the summer of 2009. Details are not available until after the drawing. The trip will be at the expense of the participants. Please contact Jim Ricketts at jimricketts@opportunityeducation.org for more information.

Opportunity Education Sister School Website Information Request

Information about your school and pictures which can be posted on the website are needed as soon as possible. This is one more way that students and teachers in the developing world can learn about your school. Please send this information to: pattyduncan@opportunityeducation.org.

For questions or comments regarding the Sister School Program, please contact Patty Duncan, Sister School Coordinator pattyduncan@opportunityeducation.org; patricia_a_duncan@msn.org; or 402-250-7168.

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