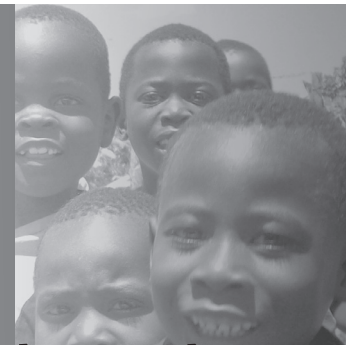




*fosters economic and social
development through education*



November 2009 Vol. 17 No. 02

More than chance...

Karen Ford writes from on-the-ground in Kenya (September 2009) where she is currently the ACCES representative:

"It was just by chance that I was born in Canada, a country where choices are available, where I was able to live a full and healthy life, get a free education, have access to free health-care, and live in a country with a government that helps those in need. And it's just by chance that Kenyans are born in a country where all of these opportunities are not available and where, because of extreme poverty, they have little or no choice."

As the newest member of the ACCES Board, Karen is learning first-hand about grinding poverty and its compounding effects on Kenyan youth, most of whom once thought that attending school was an unreachable dream. In one of her recent blog posts, Karen expresses her deep feelings of guilt, unfairness and gratitude as well as her commitment to help more Kenyan students obtain an education.



Eager learners waiting to enter classes

While Karen, with her friend Candace McLellan, provided volunteer support for our Kenyan staff in Kakamega, the ACCES Board of Directors reviewed the society's central purposes. They re-affirmed ACCES' values and clarified broad goals during their drafting of a new strategic plan. Throughout the planning day, there was a strong recognition that although food, water, medicine and crop development are essential life needs, ACCES must "stick to its knitting." We were reminded that ACCES is about long-term development and sustainability, rather than aid. Its strength is education and it has, for 16 years, successfully established programs to educate post-secondary students as well as primary and secondary youth.

The Directors of both the ACCES Society and ACCES Foundation were ably guided through the September 16th planning day by two skilled volunteer facilitators from Vancity, Anthony Okuchi and Nasreen Dhanji. By the end of a day of intense discussion, the members had established a clear direction for the upcoming three years and identified specific action steps.

Three over-arching goals have been drafted:

- to re-focus and refine ACCES programs
- to position ACCES in the market and broaden the revenue base
- to maintain a solid foundation while staying adaptable

The complete strategic

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plan will be posted on the website in the late fall.

In some programs, a change of focus was considered necessary, i.e. a reduction in the construction of school buildings, which will enable us to increase the number of destitute primary students that we can educate. The ACCES goal is to find increased avenues to support more impoverished but able students, without increasing the financial burden of building and operating costs. Heavy primary school staff costs decrease the adaptability of ACCES, particularly in times of fluctuating revenue. For example, we expect to substantially increase the number of students that ACCES is sponsoring or mainstreaming (currently 200 students) in government public schools by supporting them with supplies, uniforms and the necessities required for them to remain in school.

The central focus of ACCES will be to continue to seek financial support to educate Kenyans to assist them in overcoming poverty so they, in the future, can also assist others. As well, more partners will be sought to support students and programs. At times these will be ancillary partners who will enable us to invest in unique services to our student communities. Such current partners include Rotary clubs who

have constructed much-needed wells, and KARI (Kenya Agricultural Research Institute) which has contributed indigenous seeds and agricultural training.

Since 1993, it is through the lifeline of education, not chance—that dedicated ACCES supporters have been transforming lives. And although ACCES has broadened its outreach, its vision remains unchanged. From its inception, Beth Scott writes in her captivating memoir *Pinch Me* (2009, p. 143), “all of us knew what we were going to do—alleviate poverty through education—” This vision has been strengthened with time.



Today, Kenya remains our focus and education our mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be Albert Einstein's.

“All that is important in society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded the individual.”
Albert Einstein

In Memoriam



Ron Grantham
C.C., B.A. Sc., P. Eng.

It is with the deepest regret that ACCES announces the passing of Ron Grantham who died peacefully on September 16, 2009.

Mr. Grantham was born in Vancouver and studied civil engineering at the University of British Columbia. He served as a director on the boards of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce and the Science Council of Canada as well as many other organizations. He was appointed to the Order of Canada in 2002.

Ron was a long-term board member and a true champion for ACCES in Alberta, where he worked hard to ensure that grants from the Edmonton

Rotary, Wild Rose Foundation and others were made available to ACCES.

A man of many dimensions and interests, one of Ron's greatest passions was classical and organ music. He served as a director of the Edmonton Symphony Society and the Edmonton Opera Association and he was a director and chairman of the Winspear Foundation.

A long-time friend and schoolmate of George Scott, founding member of ACCES, Ron's dedication and caring assistance played a vital role in the lives of young Kenyans desperately seeking a better way of life through education. He will be remembered as someone who never gave up on what he believed in, and who devoted his life to helping others through volunteer work, both in his community and internationally.

Ron Grantham's life was an inspiration to all who knew him and we know that his legacy will live on. He will be greatly missed.



A Life-Changing Experience

By Karen Ford

Volunteering with ACCES as a representative has been a life-changing experience for me, and it has been more than I ever expected or imagined.

The children at the ACCES non-formal education (primary) schools are so amazing with their smiles and excitement for life. When Candace and I visited all nine primary schools, the students were very excited to see us and touch us. These incredible children have really made my experience completely worth while.

The reason I am here in Kenya volunteering for ACCES is to help these very poor and needy children. Normally they would not have any opportunities, but because of ACCES, they are now able to attend school to learn, get nourishment and have a chance at a better future.

Many children's families cannot afford to feed them, so the only food they get all day is at school where ACCES gives them a cup of Uji (a maize/flour/hot water mixture). Without this meal they would not eat at all for the entire day. This meal is the reason why some of the students come to school!

Children are lucky if they have a family, as many of them are AIDS orphans. They have to fend for themselves and even take care of their younger siblings.

Each one has his/her own story, stories that are so unimaginably real to us that they bring tears to our eyes, knowing that at such a young and innocent age, so many children have to deal with extreme realities. At only 8 years old, they should be playing and learning at school and not be burdened with thinking about how hungry they are, and worrying about how they are going to feed their brothers and sisters.

When I was young, my only concerns were my friends at school, my cool clothes, and the hope that I wouldn't be chosen last for our class soccer team. I was picked up from school, had dinner prepared

and made ready for me every single night, all without any thought in my mind that these things were a privilege.

Unlike children in Canada, many, many Kenyan kids have to cope with horrendous problems on a daily basis. It is so sad! These children ought to be depressed, but instead, they are happy and have so much hope and faith for a better future. They go to school and wholeheartedly follow their dreams, that they may be one of the lucky few who can have that better future.

This is why I'm so happy and grateful that non-governmental organizations like ACCES exist to help these kids be what they are, kids - to be given opportunities to survive, to get an education and to help their communities out of poverty.

This experience in Kenya has really put things into perspective for me and makes me feel so very thankful for everything that I have. It also makes me realize how lucky I am to have been born in Canada.

Candace and I were blessed to be here in Kakamega for Thanksgiving Day and so we invited the ACCES office staff for a traditional dinner celebration as Kenyans don't celebrate this holiday.

We couldn't have been at a more perfect place and time to celebrate how thankful we are for everything that we have in our lives. I am also thankful to ACCES for giving me this rare opportunity and for the chance to share my thoughts with you.

Although our time as volunteers for ACCES in Kenya is ending, Candace and I both feel the we are at the beginning of an amazing lifetime journey, working with and supporting the incredibly important work that ACCES does in the community of Kakamega.

It truly has been the experience of a lifetime.

"By virtue of being born to humanity, every human being has the right to the development and fulfillment of his potentialities as a human being."

Ashley Montagu



ACCES to Have a New President



In January, 2010, President-elect Jack Grant will assume the responsibilities of President of ACCES. He was an ACCES representative in Kenya in 2007.

Jack, a retired Assistant-Superintendent of Schools, has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of British Columbia and a M.Ed. (Education Administration) from the University of Victoria. He has had experience both as a teacher and as an administrator in various secondary schools throughout the province. He has many interests including hiking, skiing, reading, music and gardening. He has been President of the Master Gardeners' Association of BC for two years.

Both Jack and his wife, Wendy, became involved in ACCES in 2006, having been convinced that 'Kenyanization' was a unique approach to operating an NGO and that it fulfilled ACCES' goal of "facilitating Kenyan self-reliance". Their four months in Kenya reinforced this belief and working alongside with very dedicated young Kenyans won their hearts!

When Jack was asked to become the next President of ACCES, he said he felt that *"This is another way that I can contribute. The challenges ahead for ACCES are obvious, and I look forward to helping to develop teamwork and direction with members of the ACCES Board. As well, I welcome meeting and getting to know as many of our loyal and new supporters of the ACCES family as I can."*

The ACCES Board of Directors welcomes Jack, and looks forward to the coming year - a year in which it strives to attain its goal of providing educational opportunities for the children, youth and adults in the Western Province of Kenya.

Please Note: Some renewals are due. If you wish to obtain a tax receipt for 2009, please give this matter your consideration.

2009/2010 Board of Directors

ACCES is pleased to name the following members as the ACCES Board of Directors:

Brian Bennest	David Connop
Karen Ford	Jack Grant
Sandra Harper	Don Larson
Maureen MacDonald	Leigh Sauder
John Sawatzky	Elizabeth Scott
George Scott	John Welsh
Edward Youngberg	Eileen Malova (Kenya)

Brian Bennest will be appointed to the board on January 01, 2010.

"When I approach a child, he inspires in me two sentiments: tenderness for what he is, and respect for what he may become."

Louis Pasteur

New Life

Welcome to Lisa Lesley Tengeye!



Congratulations go to Lucy Tengeye, ACCES Kenya Programs Director, and her husband, Josephat, on the birth of their beautiful daughter, Lisa Lesley.

Lucy plays a vital role in the operation of ACCES, being responsible for all ACCES-sponsored programs in Kenya. Her exceptional organizational skills and well-known efficiency will no doubt stand her in good stead as she juggles the many duties of both work and home.

The ACCES Board of Directors extends its best wishes to the proud parents for many happy and fulfilling years.



Kenyanization in Practice

Recently, the following letter of appreciation was received by Beth and George Scott from Everlyne Musalia who was, for many years, ACCES' dedicated and hard-working secretary in Kakamega.

Dear Beth & George,

Greetings from Kakamega. I am fine and very healthy together with my family. It is a long time since I wrote to you. Last year was a difficult one and we have also been very busy in our programme. I count it a privilege just to have a chance to say "Hi".

I am proud of the work you started with ACCES because it has borne so many fruits. Imagine this! I had a sick mother who I took to the provincial General Hospital. While I was struggling in the line I saw a young man who looked happy and shouted my name. While I was still wondering who it was, I realized that it was Joram Sunguti, an ACCES medical graduate from Moi University, now working at the PGH. He hugged me and took care of my mother.

After the treatment I had to go and buy some drugs from the pharmacy; but the line was too long and my mother told me she was tired and could not wait. I



ACCES grad, Dr. Joram Sunguti

would have to take her home and come back at 2.00 pm to pick up the drugs. I was now in the state of confusion because that made meant that I would have to spend more on transport. I then heard someone calling my name again, and when I looked back I saw Linet Wambia, an ACCES Pharmacy graduate from Eldoret Polytechnic. She served me cheerfully and even the bill for the drugs went down because I was treated as staff.

Oooh! I was so excited and felt proud just to be associated with such a wonderful organization that does so much for so many people

Thank you!

I wish you all the best in all you do.
Everlyne



Honouring Excellence Cappitus Chironga

Cappitus, a 1999 graduate in Economics, writes his recollections of how CHES (Canadian Harambee Education Society) and ACCES (African Canadian Continuing Education Society) assisted him.

If I were a poet, I would write a beautiful poem that reassures many young people with no hope of making it in life, but I am not! If I were a musician, I would compose a beautiful song that captures the aspirations of an African child, but I have no talent in music. If I were an artist I would paint a rare piece of art, the colours of which would capture memories of my past, reflect upon who I am today, and reveal my hopeful future. In spite of my failure to become a historian, an artist, a musician or a painter, the story of my life is recorded and expressed in a beautiful voice and shown in bright colours.

I am currently a successful Financial Economist specialising in Fixed Income Securities at the Central Bank of Kenya. I have grown in my career to become a manager in charge of financial markets intelligence, assisting the Government and corporate firms to

structure and issue bonds and have contributed immensely to market developments in the East African countries.

It is Tuesday afternoon, 13th October 2009, and I am sitting in my room at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Harare Monomotapa, in Zimbabwe. I have just finished my Candidate Fellows Orientation Programme for Macro-economic & Financial Management of Eastern and Southern Africa (MEFMI), a group of 13 countries. I am among the 16 candidates who were successful in interviews to be trained to become expert consultants in different specialties; I am training to become a Public Debt Strategy Formulation specialist. In March-April 2009, I was nominated with three other people for the International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP) by the U.S Government to tour the United States of America, focusing on Financial Systems. We visited Washington, Texas, California, Chicago and New York.

My thirst for academic excellence saw me obtain a Masters of Science degree in Economics and Finance (2005) from the prestigious Warwick Business School at the University of Warwick in Britain; a Masters of Arts degree (2003) from the University of Nairobi in Kenya, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics, First Class Honours, from University of Nairobi (1999). I plan to resume my PhD studies in order to reach the peak of the academic ladder. I am blessed with a beautiful and very bright wife, Mary, and two sons; Ryan 7 and Augustine 6.

Transformation of my life began on February 13th 1990, when Anne Meyenfeldt, then a teacher of French at Ekambuli Secondary School, offered me an opportunity to attend high school with a scholarship from the Canadian Harambee

Education Society (CHES). I graduated from Kakamega High School in 1995 and was eligible to join the University of Nairobi.

ACCES then offered me the opportunity to obtain the best education possible at the University of Nairobi, graduating with First Class Honours in my Economics class of 1999. This performance earned me two scholarships for a Masters degree at the same university: a University of Nairobi Scholarship and a KAAD Scholarship offered by the German Catholic Academic Exchange. In 2001 while in the first year of my Masters Programme, I got obtained a position with the Central Bank of Kenya as a graduate trainee. I took the job so that I could support my family, especially my siblings who, without my help, were likely to miss out on a high school education. However, I continued with the degree programme but on part-time basis and earned my Masters degree in Economics in May 2003.

I then realised that I needed specialised training in financial economics to acquire skills in fixed income securities markets. In January 2004, I secured admission to the Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, in the United Kingdom. At the same time, I applied for the prestigious Chevening Scholarship under the British Council, and I was successful. With a full scholarship, I took study leave from work and in 2005; I earned my MSc (Econ. & Fin.) from Warwick.

The windows of opportunity provided by CHES and ACCES have enabled me to break the cycle of poverty that my family was facing. They provided me with an education that has enabled me to improve the living standards of my family, ensured that my siblings get excellent education opportunities, and that my parents once again have dignity in their society

From the roots of CHES to the stem of ACCES to the branches of KAAD and Chevening scholarships, I have

A Reminder to our American Donors

American supporters of ACCES can receive tax receipts for any donation made to ACCES. This has been made possible, at no charge, by KESHO, an American-based non-profit organization supporting students in Tanzania and Zambia. 100% of monies designated for ACCES will be forwarded to either ACCES Kenya or ACCES Canada. Donations can be made by making a cheque payable to KESHO and sending it to ACCES.

become one of the best paid professionals in Kenya, now involved not only in supporting my family, but in educating a number of children from poor families by paying their fees. I am also providing decent shelter to very poor people in my rural home.

Every time I tell a story about my past, my present and future plans, my hand wants to keep on typing in recognition of what ACCES and CHES did for me, my family, and for so many young people in Western Kenya.

Hongera, (thank you) CHES! Hongera, ACCES!

Cappitus Chironga,
B.A (Economics) First Class Honours, M.A
(Economics), MSc (Economics and Finance)

Student Profiles



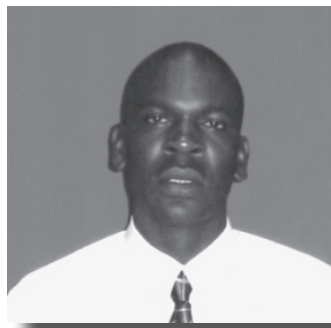
My name is **Murambi Anne Esuchi**. I come from Ikondokhera village in Nambale Township in Busia District. I was born second among five (first born died). I have one sister who is studying at Moi Teacher's Training College Baringo, and two

brothers, one at Maseno school and one at Kosiko boy's primary school.

My mother is a teacher at Emukheyu Primary School. My father died in 2008 leaving us partial orphans and my mother a single parent and sole breadwinner of the family.

I started schooling in 1992 in Kisumu. I sat for my KCPE in 2000 and attained a total score of 523 marks. I joined Bunyore Girl's High School in 2001 and when I sat for KCSE I attained a mean grade of A-. I am now in my third year at Kenyatta University where I am studying for a bachelor of Education Special, Chemistry and Mathematics. I'm trusting God to complete my undergraduate degree programme in the academic year 2010/2011.

Melchizedek Harrison O. Onyango writes:



I am aged 24 years and orphaned by both parents with the demise of my father occurring in 1999 and my mother in 2003 respectively. Before succumbing to HIV/AIDS, my parents were merely peasants who worked tirelessly to

see my elder siblings through primary education – the only one they could afford.

Personally, I was lucky. After my father's demise I landed in the hands of church members and well wishers who from class seven through form four jointly worked together, and with generous support, ensured that my thirst for education and excelling was quenched.

Financial constraints have since been a major threat to my dreams and ambitions of becoming a professional educator, since even those well wishers who saw me through part of my primary, entire secondary and part of my university education have now perceived me as an unbearable burden.

Having been brought up in a humble family that values education, I propose to be a role model who will campaign intensively and tirelessly for education for all. Education, I am convinced, is the only method through which the society can be liberated from the web of poverty which has entangled it. As a beneficiary of generous support from well wishers, and now a scholarship from ACCES, I humbly look forward to reaching out to many brilliant children from poor families. For this is the only means to eradicate, or reduce poverty to greater levels.

I hereby express my sincere gratitude to the entire ACCES staff for having considered me for scholarship of which I vow not to disappoint you!

Murambi and Melchizedek are in need of sponsors to finish their degrees. Please contact the ACCES Canada office to learn how you can become a sponsor.

PINCH ME - A LONG WALK FROM THE PRAIRIES

by Beth Rowles Scott

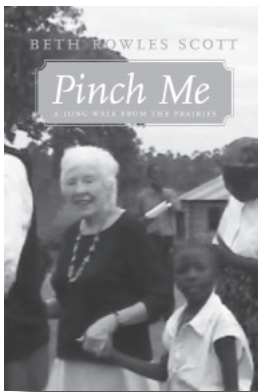
Congratulations to Beth Scott, co-founder of ACCES, who has just had her first book published!

Of **Pinch Me - a Long Walk from the Prairies**, Jerrold Mundis, former editor at the New York Times, writes: *"Beth Rowles Scott writes of her vivid experiences and remarkable accomplishments with passion, wit and grace. Walk with her as she shares her self-discoveries, joys, pains and losses, starting with her near-pioneering childhood on the frozen plains of Saskatchewan and reaching to a fulfilling and fulfilled maturity on the burning plains of Africa. What a wonderful, life-enhancing book this is!"*

Mr. Mundis is the author of *Gerhardt's Children*, *The Dogs* and other books.

Diane Rickards, PhD, psychologist and clinical counselor, founder of Transpersonal Psychology Network writes about Beth's book: *"Beth's search for happiness throughout the stages, transitions and defining moments of her life is inspirational! It gives hope and direction to all of us, regardless of age, gender or situation. What is more, Pinch Me is an enjoyable read."*

Beth's compelling book tells of her childhood in Saskatchewan, the challenges she faced in her career as a successful educator, how she became the co-founder of ACCES, and, underlying it all, her constant search for happiness. In seeking this ever-elusive quality, Beth developed her own formula for living a rich and happy life which she shares in this heart-warming memoir. Read it – it will give you much food for thought!



Pinch Me – A Long Walk From the Prairies can be purchased from:

Beth Scott
Phone: 604-538-7267
Email: acces@shaw.ca

The cost is \$20 per book plus \$3 for mailing costs.

Pinch Me – A Long Walk From the Prairies is also available at book stores, libraries, presentations and readings.

Net proceeds from the sale of *Pinch Me* will be donated to ACCES. Look for your copy at the ACCES Sustainer's Circle Breakfast on Wednesday November 4, 2009.

ACCES Fall Sustainer's Circle Breakfast



ACCES Society's second of two major fund-raising events of the year

Bring your friends and join us for the 4th Annual Sustainer's Circle Breakfast event at Vancouver Club, 915 W. Hastings Street.

Delicious food with a heart warming ACCES presentation.

Wednesday, November 04, 2009, 8:00 to 9:00 am, by reservation only.

There is no cost for this event, it is sponsored by L & L Travel Management.

Phone: 604-688-4880 or 778-895-7577

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