

By: Kathryn Salamone

Foundation Dedicated to AIDS Orphans Hosts Fundraiser
Second Annual Event Urges Monthly Giving for AIDS relief

Haledon, NJ... Throughout the world, more than 42 million people suffer from AIDS, with 14,000 people newly infected each day. In 2006 alone, three million people will die of AIDS; 500,000 will be children. By 2020, 70 million will have died, making the AIDS pandemic worse than the Black Plague of the 14th century.

In the East African nation of Kenya alone, more than 500,000 children have already died of the disease. In both cities and rural districts, millions more children, orphaned as their parents become AIDS fatalities, are being raised by grandparents and other relatives.

To help improve the circumstances of children whose lives have been so tragically altered, Kenyan native, George Nyeki, and nine other friends established the Youthful Faces Foundation (YFF) in 2002, with the mission of "making a difference, one child at a time."

At its second annual fundraising dinner recently, YFF continued to seek financial support to give hope, health care, and educational advantages to 15 children in various parts of Kenya, ranging in age from 2 to 13. Two of these children are HIV positive and are undergoing anti-retroviral therapy under qualified clinical surveillance provided through YFF.

Nyeki, chairman of YFF and an information technology specialist at Chilton Memorial Hospital in Pompton Plains, New Jersey, travels to Kenya each year to visit with the children who live in rural districts located a full day's drive the capital of Nairobi.

"Sub Saharan Africa is fast becoming a land of orphans," Nyeki told the dinner attendees. He further explained that many of these children are simply left to somehow survive on their own or must look to family members to provide for them, noting that "a ten percent adult infection rate still represents a human tragedy of immense proportions and less than five percent of African children effected by AIDS receive any help from national governments or international agencies."

Yet, Nyeki has seen that these children live each day with a sense of hope that their lives can be better. "It is this hope that compels me, and also propels the mission of YFF," said Nyeki, who is broadening the base of the fundraising for YFF by urging generous supporters to consider monthly donations to the YFF cause. "The funds we raise here at this annual dinner go a long way in Kenya. But, having a steady stream of funding from month to month will help us to be more successful and consistent in our efforts," he said.

Nyeki's hopes of being able to help a total of 15 children in 2006 came to fruition and he is committed to expand the reach of YFF to still more children in Kenya.

Since its founding in 2002, Youthful Faces Foundation has met the nutritional needs, provided affordable and sustainable quality healthcare, and furthered the education of children in various

parts of Kenya by raising a total of \$40,000. At a cost of just \$50 per month per child, YFF funds make a dramatic difference in improving the lives of the children it helps.

In addition to the funds raised through the annual dinner event and from monthly donations, Nyeki, also makes a significant personal financial contribution. As a published poet, Nyeki donates the proceeds of his book, The Tearless Cry, to the YFF cause. Published by 1st Books, the second edition was published in December 2005. Described as “a journey into the heart, mind and soul of a man as he goes on a quest in the pursuit of truth through questions and answers,” the book is available at major book store chains and also online at Amazon.com.

To learn more about Youthful Faces Foundation, visit its website, www.youthfulfaces.com. One-time donations or monthly donations to YFF efforts can be sent to Youthful Faces Foundation, P.O. Box 8101, Haledon, NJ 07538.