

My name is Paul Jacob Cone II and I am an attorney practicing law in Charleston South Carolina. I am directly acquainted with the Tanzanian Education Foundation (TEF) having worked closely with Erica Oblinger and Nicole Miller since before its inception in 2006. Since I had traveled to Africa and was already involved in an existing African charity Nicole and Erica approached me for advice.

I personally witnessed Nicole and Erica take an idea to help educate orphaned children in Tanzania to a thriving charity making a real difference on the ground in Tanzania. They deserve recognition in the education category for their hard work, total dedication and concrete results. Specifically, they have already raised money and put it to use in a school in the Mount Meru area of Tanzania thereby improving the education opportunity and general well-being of numerous young Tanzanian children. They took money raised in the US to Tanzania and put it to use by rebuilding a school, providing school supplies (including backpacks), nutrition and health care for orphaned children and helping many attend school who otherwise would not be able to attend.

I saw Erica and Nicole devote all their time and effort into building this charity. Initially, they traveled to Tanzania and purchased numerous paintings from local artists to be auctioned back in the United States to raise money to return to Tanzania and educate young children. The very act of buying so many paintings from local artists had a tremendous economic benefit to the villages where they purchased these paintings. These artists used the money they obtained from Erica and Nicole to help support their village. In Charleston the TEF held numerous fundraising events from auctioning Tanzanian paintings and jewelry to sponsoring musical festivals, golf tournaments, paint ball outings and Spa days. These events not only raised money but also raised awareness of the charity and the cause. The money raised was returned to Tanzania to rebuild the school, provide educational supplies and help educate young children.

I cannot say enough positive things about the TEF and what they are doing to educate children in Tanzania. I have traveled to Tanzania and seen the poverty. Education in Tanzania is a privilege and especially out of reach of orphans. Education is one of the very few ways a child can raise his or herself out of abject poverty. However, through the efforts of the TEF many lives will be saved by giving them access to education they would otherwise not receive. Thank you for this opportunity to give my input on such a worthy charity.

Paul (Jay) Jacob Cone II

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