

Teens Tackle Global Poverty Through WomensTrust

At Livingston High School in Livingston, New Jersey, a group of rather remarkable teens gathered to talk about one of the biggest social issues of our time: poverty. This meeting is not out of the ordinary- in fact it's the norm for the high school's Teens Against Poverty Club (TAP), which aims to educate students about the different ways to fight poverty through empowerment and put these methods into practice to make real change happen.

The Club facilitates education, awareness, and discussion in the community, and emphasizes such poverty-fighting strategies as microfinance, mentorship, early children's education, financial literacy, and others.

In looking for a group on which to focus, the Club found a non-profit called WomensTrust, a microfinance organization based in New London, New Hampshire. They are committed to action in Pokuase, Ghana.

TAP was excited to learn through WomensTrust educational programs, they could send a Ghanaian girl to junior secondary school for only \$125. WomensTrust believes that poverty stems from a lack of education, and this lack of education is especially seen among young girls who are often taken out of school to help with chores and family life. TAP realized that if they could send just one girl to school, it would make an irrefutable difference for her, her family, and even her community. One educated Ghanaian girl might possibly grow up to be an educated Ghanaian woman who campaigns for women's rights in Ghana, a doctor who saves hundreds of lives, or a champion of alleviating world hunger.

The local branch of California Pizza Kitchen, a pizza franchise, was just as eager to help empower Ghanaian schoolgirls and transform their lives, so they agreed to host a fundraiser. Twenty percent of the revenue earned on all meals purchased when presenting a special flyer was donated to TAP. Eager to attract as many people to the event as possible, many teens spent weeks handing out flyers, advertising the event on their school's morning announcements, sending Facebook messages to friends, and contacting local restaurants and stores. In the end these efforts paid off. Teens Against Poverty raised \$375 for WomensTrust, enough to send THREE Ghanaian girls to school!

However, Ghana wasn't the only place that lives were impacted. According to the Club's organizer: "When we saw how many of our fellow classmates and Livingstonians came to the fundraiser, we realized that we had made a fundamental impact on our school and community and not only fueled change, but also promoted awareness."

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(from a TAP press release)