

Charity Spotlight: Give a Heart to Africa



After a three-month volunteer stint in Tanzania back in 2007, Czech-born Canadian Monika Fox, 36, was determined to be more than just one of the many fleeting aid workers that pass through the impoverished country. So last May, she quit her job at a non-profit, packed up her things and returned to Moshi, Tanzania—in the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro—where she is now based, running [Give a Heart to Africa](#), which offers training in administrative, business and computing skills to locals so that they can land well-paying jobs. The coolest part of the program? American volunteers looking to spend their vacations doing something more productive than tanning in the Caribbean can actually teach at the camp in Tanzania.

Marie Claire's **Sally Lauckner** spoke with Fox about how you can get involved.

MC: Why did you start Give a Heart to Africa?

MF: When I was volunteering in Tanzania in 2007, I consulted women about starting their own small businesses. But what I learned was that many of them were already doing this—they just needed help making their ventures sustainable and profitable.

MC: So how does the program work?

MF: Four days a week, volunteers teach a variety of subjects, like English, business development, and computer training. Right now, we have 32 students—60 percent of them are women, but we help men, too! In the afternoons, we shift our focus to teaching local children.

MC: Any success stories?

MF: Two of the women who graduated from the program started a coffee business. Their husbands had left them, they were struggling to take care of their children, and they each only had an elementary-level education. After the course, and with the help of donations, they were able to start their own business together. We purchase the coffee for them, and they are responsible for roasting it and selling at the local market.

MC: So how can someone get involved in Give a Heart to Africa works?

MF: Since the program is free for students, we rely solely on local and international volunteers, who pay \$280 per week for accommodations that we provide. That money goes directly to the school or to the students' businesses. We require a three-week minimum for volunteers, but some stay as long as three months.

MC: What about donations?

MF: For those who can't come to Tanzania to volunteer, we always need supplies, like workbooks and pencils. These donations go a long way.

MC: You also have an Adopt-a-Family program. How does that work?

MF: We started this program because so many of our students are in need of services that extend beyond what we can do with the volunteer fees alone. On our [site](#), we feature students who are most in need of additional assistance. Anyone can donate directly to one of these families. Through this program, we've been able to send one of the student's daughters to high school—a cost that many families simply can't afford.

Want to help Give a Heart to Africa? Go to giveahearttoafrica.org to learn more.

<http://www.marieclaire.com/world-reports/opinion/give-a-heart-to-africa>