

Newsletter no.7: big ANNOUNCEMENT: GRANT APPROVED!!!

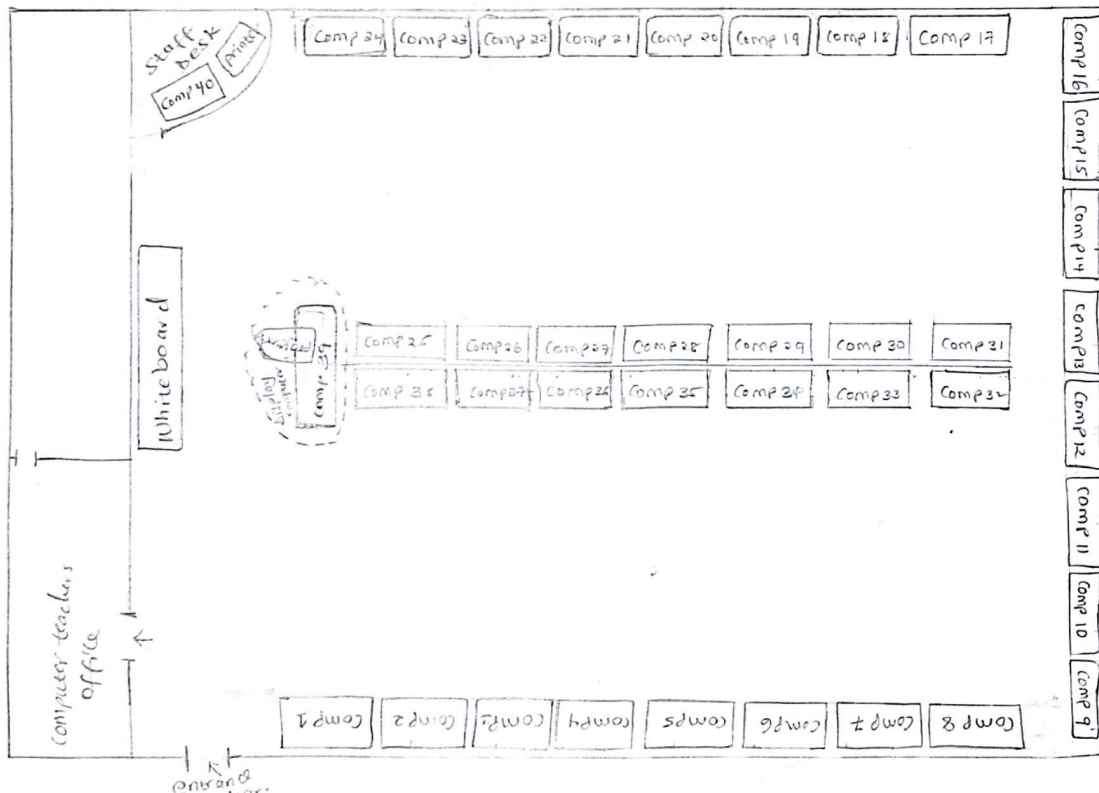
Hello hello all,

It's been too long! Sorry for not writing sooner! Normally I would start this newsletter with a goofy photoshop, but, as the title suggests, MY GRANT GOT APPROVED Yippee! So I'm starting this newsletter on a serious note and the goofy stuff is later. (Interested in my original opening for newsletter no.7? See *The Drunk Crossing Guard* section.) First is the main course: grant info. Then a small side of vegetables: Ki-Swahili lesson. And we finish with lots and lots of desserts and digestifs: weird photos and random stories. Bon appétit! (Disclaimer: I just figured out you can insert emojis here so expect a ton!)

GRANT INFO - We're Building a Computer Lab! (aka please consider donating 🙏):

Over Kenya's "summer" break, which takes place in November and December I undertook the grueling grant approval process. After months of collaborative writing with my counterparts and back-and-forth revisions with Peace Corps Kenya and Peace Corps HQ in DC my grant proposal was finally approved. Now it's time to pester you yes you specifically reading this right now for a small donation. Some of you may have already seen an email from the Peace Corps telling you about my grant it's legit! Not a phishing email. If you don't feel like searching your inbox the link is here: [Donation Link](#)

You can read the official grant summary at the following .gov website: [Donation Link](#) But here's a quick breakdown. For Kenya our school is fairly large we have about 800 students and the average class size is about 50 students. This leads to overcrowding in our cramped computer lab 4 to 5 students gather around one machine and active learning is inhibited. That's why my counterpart came up with the idea to expand and move the computer lab to a larger room. There is a building on campus with an empty room that is perfect for our new computer lab. Currently, it's being used for storage. This grant will fund the finishing of this room and the procurement of new machines. Below is a floor plan proposal drawn up by my counterpart and our school's computer teacher Mr. Anunda:



Below are some photos. On the far left, the man in bright yellow, is St. Monica's computer teacher and my counterpart Mr. Anunda. Mr. Anunda is in charge of designing the new lab and procuring the lab's new hardware. In the middle, the man in pale yellow, is our school's principal Dr. Echessa. Dr. Echessa is in charge of hiring and managing the fundis (aka specialized laborers more on fundis later.) Lastly, the white mzungu, the man in Costanza brown, is me Trevor COX. I will be in charge of bookkeeping and accounting. (What's the difference between bookkeeping and accounting? I have no clue! I just need it to seem like I'm doing a lot of work.) Then we have two photos of the space that will become the computer lab. Right now it is being used for bike storage. What a waste!



Once the grant is fully funded I will receive the money and construction will begin. I will keep you all frequently updated on the lab's progress. Once complete you will all see photos from the unveiling ceremony and the new spacious lab. Here's the link again: **[Donation Link.](#)** Okay on to the rest of the newsletter! SWAG SWAG SWAG.

Ki-Swahili Lesson 🤖:

Oooo here's a great opportunity to explore the Ki-Swahili word: fundi. Fundi basically translates to worker or technician (according to google) It is an umbrella term that covers a variety of jobs. Here's a table that covers just a few of the translations

<u>Ki-Swahili</u>	<u>Direct Translation</u>	<u>English</u>
Fundi ya jenga	Technician of building	Construction Worker
Fundi ya maji	Technician of water	Plumber
Fundi ya stima	Technician of electricity	Electrician
Fundi ya gari	Technician of car	Mechanic
Fundi ya simu	Technician of phone	Cellphone technician
Fundi ya pikipiki	Technician of motorcycle	Motorcycle Mechanic
Fundi ya chuma	Technician of metal	Welder
Fundi ya mti	Technician of tree	Woodcutter/LumberJack
Fundii ya darisha	Technician of window	Window fitter
Fundi ya mbao	Technician of wood	Carpenter
Fundi ya nguo	Technician of clothes	Tailor/Seamstress
Fudi ya viatu	Technician of shoes	Cobbler

It's My Birthday so I know you want to Ri-i-ide Out:

In other news, I celebrated my lit 27th birthday the theme was: *27 Club: Time to Die*. It was sweet. Here's a photo of the mural I made for the festivities: (This is the only photo I feel comfortable sharing)



Yes! All these people are in the 27 club ± 1 year. (Why is Morrissey there you ask? The Smiths broke up when he was 27 obviously!)

WAIT A SECOND! Did you forget to give me a birthday present? Or wish me a happy birthday? That's okay I'm not that mad. Do you want to make it up to me? Okay great. You can donate to my grant! :D \$50, \$100, \$200 any amount is appreciated. Also, you can write off that donation on your taxes! That sounds like a win-win situation to me. (Ask your accountant for help with the write-off). Here's the link again: **Donation Link**. Thank you in advance for that beautiful birthday present. 🙏

Kenyan Products 🍿 ⛽ 🚫 🟢 🟠 🟡 🟠 🚫 🐒 💡 🧀 🇰🇪 🇸🇩 🇱🇮 🎤 :

Here's a collage of random photos. They mostly feature Kenyan products. We're going clockwise starting from the top left with Baltimore Orioles branded popcorns; NBC gasoline; cool urinal ball cakes; a "DANGER HOT WORKS IN PROGRESS" sign; gold & ebony monkey light fixtures; some *Everyday Cheese*; and lastly portraits inside a tuktuk featuring Tupac, Rick Ross, Saddam Hussein, Muammar Gaddafi, and the Notorious B.I.G. Funny dialog about those portraits:

The tuktuk driver said, "Hey mzungu do you like these pictures?"

"Yea Gaddafi, Saddam, Tupac all legends" I replied.

"What do they all have in common?"

"I don't know?"

"They were all killed by mzungu"

"Well," pointing at Rick Ross, "that guy is definitely still alive."

"Possibly but he will be killed soon. You watch."

The rest of our journey was in silence.



Dispatches from the Guidance and Counseling Committee 🗨️:

Vignette #1

The following quotes come from a talk entitled *Appropriate and Inappropriate Boy-Girl Relations*. Enjoy!

“You should not like hugging that is for girls”

“When you are aroused you become an uncontrollable force and the woman is what they call the immovable object. Isn't it? So what will you do? Well, that is what they say. But you will not do sex. That is a certainty.”

“They say sex makes the girl's boobs and butts bigger. Is that true? No it's not true it is God and God alone.”

“Some of you students have contracted these sexual diseases I'm sure. Please don't share them with your parents!”

“We must expand abstinence not contract. Because when we contract abstinence we contract the STIs! isn't it?”

Vignette #2

Similar to New York's mayor Eric Adams recent quote about planes we had a guest speaker use the plane analogy to describe our school. To refresh your memory here's the Adams' quote:

“I am the pilot, folks, and you are all passengers. Stop praying for me to crash the plane. Pray for me to land the plane because there's no parachutes on this plane, We're all going down together. We're going to land together, or we're going to go down together.”

Here's our guest speakers quote:

“The school is a plane and that plane is what? Is God. The front of the plane is mathematics and languages and the back of the plane is sports and food. Where do you choose to sit? Planes only need the front to operate. They do not need the back. So this year let us focus on the front to achieve.”

Here's a photo from one of our Guidance & Counseling sessions. The man speaking is not the person speaking from either of those vignettes!



The Drunk Crossing Guard 🍷:

Lucky lucky Seagram's 7 here's a terrible attempt at a selfie that I took with my friend called Odhiambo. He's one of the local drunks but also my village's self-appointed crossing guard. Every day at 7 am and 4 pm he helps small children cross the barabara ya China (translation: road of Chinese. This is the name given to any paved road by me) Anyway, Odhiambo, is the bravest hardest working crossing guard I've ever met. He screams, hisses, yells, and sometimes punches any vehicle that does not stop for the children. Seriously any vehicle: a bicycle, a motorcycle, a tuktuk, a car, a matatu, a tractor, or a lorry (aka 18-wheeler). If you do not yield to him you will feel his wraith! Also, you better believe he will remember you the next time you dare pass through our village and drive recklessly. I swear he's more effective than the police who will, for a small price, look the other way for any road infraction. Maybe it's the alcohol that makes him fearless or the cigarettes or the khat or the combination of all three. Regardless, the only thing he cares about is getting children across the dangerous Barabara ya China safely. He would throw himself in front of a vehicle to save a child. I've seen him do it! Odhiambo thank you for your service!



Teaching the New Volunteer Cohort :

Along with my fellow volunteer Big Mike, we helped the Peace Corps staff train the new cohort. We led many sessions. Topics included: safety & security, the Kenyan school system, the public transportation system, and my favorite cooking & nutrition. Below are a few photos from that session. We taught the new volunteers all about macronutrients, micronutrients, vitamins, and minerals. Below you can see a slide of what happens when you don't get enough vitamin C: SCURVY! Yikes. FYI: The no.9 symptom of scurvy is "People don't like you." We ended the session with the Weetabix Challenge. Five new volunteers were tasked with eating three Weetabix biscuits with only 6oz of water to chase. The winner gets a sweet xtra small Peppa Pig X The North Face X GUCCI shirt. SWAG! SWAG! (See bottom right.) The winner was the Australian/lowan man in the center Seamus! Congratulations.



This is the End, Beautiful Friend the End.

Thank you so much for reading this short newsletter! The next newsletter will be sooner than this one I promise! In the next one, I'll update you on my grant status, there's a massive fashion report in the works, might talk about the books I've read so far, and some more random stories. One last time here's the donation link: [Donation Link](#)
HAVE a happy leap February!!!! Don't waste this extra 29th day! Newsletter no.7 over.

