

From: "William B. Fischer" <fischerw@pdx.edu>
Subject: 0770 Katie – education in Tanzania
Date: January 25, 2010 8:16:08 PM PST
To: "William B. Fischer" <fischerw@pdx.edu>

Begin forwarded message:

From:
Date: January 23, 2010 12:11:44 AM PST
To: "William B. Fischer" <fischerw@pdx.edu>
Subject: Re: Changing Travel Plans

Dad,

Thanks for the support and vote of confidence in my travel plans...

I enjoyed your reminiscing of childhood. Lacy and I were talking the other day (as we spent a few minutes relaxing by coloring with color crayons) about how much we each enjoyed our childhoods and therefore can still enjoy childish activities as adults. I feel especially blessed that in addition to my memories of baking, hiking and picnics at the park, I have memories of other countries (Mexico though remote, Europe, Canada, Japan), helping others (making sandwiches in the kitchen at the old house for church), and the ever present general learning of the world around me. All reasons for which I feel drawn back to Tanzania, and want to take advantage of the opportunity to explore Greece. My guidebook reminds me I have the Greeks to thank for Democracy, thermometers, geometry, umbrellas, and more recently, the Pap-smear. I think, though, that it will be especially interesting to contrast education in Tanzania with that in Greece. Liv has told me the Tanzanian government's educational curriculum includes Organic Chemistry in high school and that 95% of students fail the government's benchmark tests. Most students are failing so miserably after primary school that they lose motivation to work hard, have difficulty with rote memorization let alone analysis and higher levels of information processing, and therefore don't take school seriously. This leads to disrespect of teachers, which in turn leads to situations like one Liv encountered last week where the teachers beat all 600 students for poor test scores. Quite a contrast to Greek civilization and the development of geometry, astronomy, public school systems and a policy the keep historical sites and museums cheap to encourage students to visit and learn. I think I'll get quite a different picture of Tanzania this time around.

That's exciting that you might get to travel to East Africa...

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