



sparkventures

THE EDUCATOR EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE

building global partnerships between US-based teachers
and Hope Community School in Twapia, Zambia



for more information, please contact

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included in this proposal package

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MR. DAVID'S EDUCATOR EMPOWERMENT EXPERIENCE

In January 2018, I went on a life-changing trip to Zambia with Spark Ventures as part of Lincoln Park Preschool & Kindergarten (LPP's) *Vacation with a Purpose* program. I hesitate when I say life-changing because the phrase is often overused. But **it was, in fact, a life-changing journey.**

Before departing, I was told about all of the resources Hope Community School (Hope School) didn't have. I heard about the minimal number of books and manipulatives in the classrooms, the lack of running water and the modest amount of food available at lunchtime. I also listened to stories about how community members treated each other with an enormous amount of respect, empathy, and kindness.

As I packed, I thought about all of the teaching tips and tricks I have learned in the past 13 years as an educator that I could share with the teachers in Zambia. I remember thinking about how I could teach the teachers to incorporate more literacy into lesson planning. I compiled a list of books I thought would be great resources, printed off a 100-page guided reading packet that I thought would be helpful, and I broke down a year's worth of Kindergarten lesson plans to give to the teachers.

On my first day at Hope School, I was immediately taken aback by the number of talented teachers and engaged students. The children were eager to soak up new information because the teachers were incredibly engaging and thoughtful with their planning. At that point, I threw away my lists and packets and changed my focus. Across the board, classrooms were heavily reliant on memorization, repetition, and other rote memory techniques. The children memorized sentences in English to greet us just as they memorized times tables and spelling. Mid-week, the travelers were given the opportunity to plan and organize a lesson for the children in our reading groups. Here, we modeled more meaningful and open-ended learning techniques. The Zambian teachers seemed to be inspired to bring these methods back to their classrooms. I was humbled and honored to be a part of this process.

Next, it was my turn to learn.

As I spent time in the Pre-K classroom, I quickly picked up on the warmth and gentleness in the atmosphere. The teachers, however, were not the sole providers of this good will. The children dispensed copious amounts of their own kindness and created stronger bonds than I have ever seen in a classroom in the US. I watched as one little boy fell asleep on the carpet during free play time. I've seen this happen many times in my own classroom. I instinctively knew this child only had a matter of minutes before he would be poked, jumped on, and woken up by his classmates. I kept a watchful eye on another little boy who was walking toward the little napper. I got up with the intention to intervene when I was stopped in my tracks as I watched the second little boy take off the sleeping boy's shoes and peacefully place them next to him. Situations like this continued to happen throughout the week. I am now convinced the world would be a much better place if only kindness was a form of currency.

I wouldn't trade that trip for anything. I thought I was going to go to a new place to teach them what I know, show off my teaching skills, brush off my hands, and return to my life. That happened to an extent, but since I returned from Zambia (over a year ago), **I continue to think about how the tiniest gestures can mean so much and how my attitude and outlook can either positively or negatively affect the culture of a classroom, school, community, etc.** Teaching social emotional skills to Kindergarteners is no longer secondary to academics in my classroom. It is now and forever will be of equal importance thanks to my trip to Hope School in Twapia, Zambia.





SEEKING ADVENTUROUS TEACHERS

We are looking for adventurous teachers like Mr. David to travel to Zambia to share teaching methods and to develop connections between students in the United States and at Hope Community School. It only takes one trip to Zambia to become part of the Hope family, drawn in by the energetic singing and dancing and the obvious joy that seems like it should be impossible in the face of the profound poverty.

Spark Ventures plans to create partnerships between educators and classrooms in the United States with each of the primary grades at Hope, improving educational opportunities as well as encouraging understanding and bonds of friendship across the world.

Since 2017, thanks to the generosity and expertise of LPP in Chicago, Hope School boasts a vibrant hands-on preschool program (for 40 students). LPP also funded the all-school library (for 400 students) which opened in the summer of 2019. LPP teachers visit Hope School twice each year to share methods and deepen the connections.

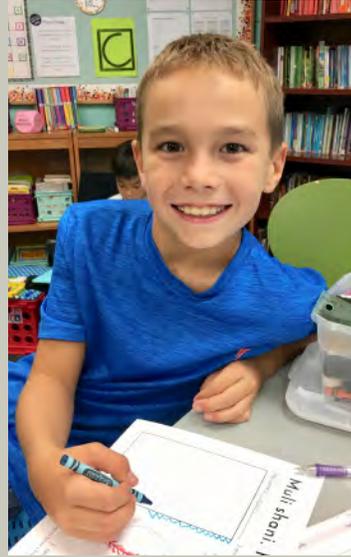
Spark now seeks to enhance the opportunities available to the students at Hope in Grades 1 thru 7 by fostering personal connections with teachers and students in the United States. Spark seeks teachers/classrooms to partner with Hope, and funders to support these educational partnerships.



The activities for the January 2020 EEI journey were designed by EEI Coordinator Teacher David Feldman with the explicit goal of complementing the existing January science curriculum focus on the parts of a plant. Travelers arrived with suitcases full of supplies, humming the theme-aligned song (a trademark feature of any EEI experience). Integrated into the program is a debrief meeting with Hope's teachers at the end of the EEI, which provided the team with strong praise for the impact of the programming, plus constructive feedback on how to improve for July 2020 and beyond.

FOSTERING GLOBAL FRIENDSHIPS

Our growing pen pal program is an integral part of our plans to establish connections between Hope and more classrooms in the US. We started in 2019 with letters exchanged with two grades at Prairie Elementary in Prairie Village, KS. During the January 2020 EEI, we carried letters, photos and some friendship bracelets from two additional schools (The Burr School in Chicago and University Academy, a charter school in Kansas City, MO). Teachers in each of the US classrooms received photos and updates throughout the EEI program to share with students, and the highlight of the exchange, a Skype call, directly connecting the exchange classrooms.



SPARK VENTURES - ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The mission of Spark Ventures is to build partnerships that lift communities out of poverty by directing human and financial capital via sub-grants and strategic guidance to grassroots partners around the world who provide healthcare, education, and social enterprise. By focusing resources in areas of capacity building, business development, and job creation, Spark seeks to have lasting and sustainable impact.

Spark's first international partnership began more than ten years ago with Hope School in Zambia. Through this partnership, Hope School provides high-impact nutrition, education, and healthcare programming to 400 vulnerable children in Ndola, Zambia.



THE ORIGIN OF SPARK VENTURES

In the summer of 2006, Scott Barbeau, Rich Johnson, and Dan Marcus took a life-changing trip to volunteer at Hope Orphanage in Ndola, Zambia. Hope Orphanage was serving vulnerable children in the Twapia Township of Ndola, Zambia. The founders, Charles and Margaret Mumba, had rented a house and were providing full-time care and a basic education for 70 children whose families were decimated by the AIDS epidemic. Despite these challenging circumstances, the resilient spirit of the children inspired Scott, Rich, and Dan to do something. Upon their return to Chicago, they founded Spark Ventures (in 2007) and formalized a partnership with Hope School.

At the launch of the Spark Ventures partnership, Hope School served 70 children in a rented facility with no paid staff, no supplies, no meals or health services. Today, Hope is a thriving campus serving 400 children and their families year-round. Students often receive their only and best meal of the day here. They are tested and treated for malaria and other diseases, and they are receiving one of the best primary educations in the area. In the past ten years, nearly 600 Spark travelers have helped with leadership training, financial accountability, launched a preschool program, inspired hundreds of children through a reading program, and provided medical care through annual clinics.



SPARK FUNDING AND STRATEGIC SUPPORT HAS HELPED TO CREATE:

- + A thriving primary school with a 100% graduation rate.
- + A two-year preschool / early education program.
- + An alumni program for high school scholarships and mentoring.
- + A meal program feeding 400 students year-round.
- + A bi-annual clinic testing and treating for malaria and other illnesses.
- + A sustainable poultry farm business launched to contribute profits back to the school as well as the creation of agriculture jobs.
- + The installation of a water and sanitation project to provide running water to the entire campus.
- + A new vegetable farm to help feed the children and generate revenue for the school.
- + A new library on campus providing access to quality reading materials.
- + An overall enhanced organizational structure, leadership development and strategic planning.
- + Fifty plus new jobs with job descriptions and reporting structures.

WHAT'S NEXT? TRAVEL TO ZAMBIA WITH SPARK IN 2020 & 2021.

If the primary school is “thriving” what is needed?

Thriving is a relative term. Hope School is located in the Twapia Township of Ndola, Zambia, an area stricken by poverty—where many people live on less than one dollar a day.

While Hope School has among the highest reading proficiency and 7th grade graduation rates in their region, its teachers have relied on chalk, a chalkboard, homemade charts and flashcards, some textbooks and a few books. With the new all-school library that opened in the summer of 2019 and growing prospects to connect online, there are endless opportunities to enhance and improve the education at Hope School for students and teachers. Forming partnerships with teachers and classrooms in the US will offer the promise of cultural and professional exchanges, assuring greater successes for students on both continents.



Spark's Zambia Journey is truly a life-changing travel experience that combines cultural immersion, community engagement and exploration. Spark travelers not only engage with Hope School and the surrounding community, but also visit Victoria Falls, cruise along the Zambezi River and spend a day on safari in Chobe National Park in Botswana.

Travel with Spark to Zambia. Change your life... change lives.

Fueled by our commitment to action, we are eager to advance the important work of Spark Ventures and Hope School. Doing so has always enriched and enhanced our own lives. Join us.



ZAMBIA JOURNEY - EEI EXPERIENCE

The Educator Empowerment Initiative begins before the Signature Spark Experience. Designed especially with educators in mind, you will spend these days immersed in the Hope classrooms, facilitating educational activities and collaborating with the teachers. You will also visit critical local institutions to give more context to daily life in Twapia, Zambia.

LOCATION & LOGISTICS

Ndola, Zambia (6 days / 5 Nights)

- Custom itinerary with Hope Community
- 4 days of program/project engagement with Hope School
- Visits to learn about education and health systems in Zambia
- Accommodation at Michelangelo Lodge (126 Broadway, Ndola, Zambia)
Comfortable accommodation offering general amenities such as A/C, mosquito nets, laundry service, wifi concentrated in hotel lobby/restaurant

DATES

July 2020 EEI Experience

Tuesday, July 14 - Sunday, July 19

January 2021 EEI Experience

Tuesday, January 12 - Sunday, January 17

July 2021 EEI Experience

Tuesday, July 13 - Sunday, July 18

**EEI Experience ends on Sunday, as the Signature Experience begins*

COST

\$1,850 per person for EEI Experience

assuming double occupancy for lodging (single room upgrade is available for \$500)

Requires a minimum of 4 individuals



TUESDAY

Arrive Ndola, Zambia / Spark Ventures staff will greet you at Ndola Airport (NLA). Settle in and get to know your fellow travelers over group dinner at Michelangelo's Hotel.



WEDNESDAY

Welcome Program + Tour / Learn about Hope School's origin story and impressive growth. Workshop with teachers. Connect with the Hope leadership team over an authentic, home-cooked Zambian meal at one of their homes.



THURSDAY

Hope School Classroom Program with afternoon Community Visits. Dinner at Angelina's Bistro with Hope leadership team. Famous for their pasta dishes, the Italian inspired restaurant offers a casual atmosphere and vegetarian options.



FRIDAY

Hope School Classroom Program with afternoon Community Visits. Hope House Dinner - treat the children of Hope Orphanage to dinner in town.



SATURDAY

Farm Visit with students from Hope School. Afternoon - Women of Worth Program. Group Dinner at a local restaurant (with other early arrivals to Spark Signature Experience).



SUNDAY

Optional: Church Experience with Hope Community. Signature Experience trip arrivals begin Sunday afternoon with full welcome reception at 5pm.



ZAMBIA JOURNEY - SIGNATURE EXPERIENCE

9 life-changing days of cultural immersion in southern Africa

As your immersive EEI experience draws to a close, travelers joining the Spark Signature Experience arrive. You will continue to work closely with the students and teachers at Hope Community School, continuing your curriculum work and assisting with the pen pal program and Skype calls. Participating in the Signature Experience affords you the opportunity to deepen your new friendships and learn more about the rich history and vibrant culture of this peaceful country. Then, cap-off our experience with a visit to the stunning Victoria Falls, a dinner cruise in Zimbabwe, and a full-day safari in Botswana.

LOCATION & LOGISTICS

Ndola, Zambia (6 days / 5 Nights)

- Custom itinerary with Hope Community
- 4 Days of program/project engagement with Hope School
- Visits to learn about the culture and history of Zambia
- Accommodation at Michelangelo Lodge (126 Broadway, Ndola, Zambia)
Comfortable accommodation offering general amenities such as A/C, mosquito nets, laundry service, wifi concentrated in hotel lobby/restaurant.

Livingstone, Zambia (4 days / 3 Nights)

- Flight from Ndola - Livingstone through Lusaka.
- Accommodation at Protea Hotel (2110 Mosi-o-Tunya Road, Livingstone, Zambia)
Comfortable accommodation offering free wifi, tv's, mosquito nets, laundry service, restaurant & bar and outdoor pool on location with a 24-hour concierge.
- Dinner Cruise experience on the Zambezi River.
- Guide-led tour of one of the Natural Wonders of the World, Victoria Falls
- A curated list of optional activities on Saturday and Monday mornings is offered at an additional cost.
- Full day safari experience in Chobe National Park, Botswana.

Spark Ventures' Journeys to Zambia are managed by our travel partner, Ignite. The Ignite team will ensure every detail is in place, allowing you to focus on the powerful relationships you are building rather than worrying about logistics. This includes a comprehensive handbook of information and packing advice, assistance with travel arrangements, tips on cultural customs, and a go-to point of contact you can reach out to at any point during the planning process.

DATES

July 2020

Sunday, July 19 -
Monday, July 27

January 2021

Sunday, January 17 -
Monday, January 25

July 2021

Sunday, July 18 -
Monday, July 26

COST

\$4,300 per person

assuming double occupancy
for lodging (single room
upgrade is available for \$800)

*Cost inclusive of all ground
transportation, in-country flights,
accommodation, Ignite staff
leaders, all meals: breakfast,
lunch and dinner (alcoholic
beverages are additional).*

Requires a minimum of 8 individuals

estimated additional expenses

international flights: \$2,000

visa: \$80

vaccinations/malaria
medications: \$350

miscellaneous spending
money: \$100-\$150

optional activities in
Livingstone: \$35-\$400



ZAMBIA JOURNEY - SIGNATURE EXPERIENCE ITINERARY



SUNDAY

Arrive Ndola, Zambia / Spark Ventures staff will greet you at Ndola Airport (NLA). Settle in and get to know your fellow travelers over group dinner at Michelangelo's Hotel.



MONDAY

Continue Hope School classroom programs. Enjoy a welcome reception presented by the students of Hope. Help serve lunch and pair up with a student for our reading program. Leaders from Hope will host you for dinner in their home.



TUESDAY

Continue Hope School classroom programs. Serve lunch, participate in the reading program and support other hands-on activities. Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.



WEDNESDAY

Spend the morning visiting two local markets. Return to Hope to serve lunch, participate in the reading program, and support hands-on activities with the kids. Dine again with leaders from our local partner.



THURSDAY

Visit the home of one of the children benefited by attending Hope Community School and learn more about their story of transformation and impact. Serve lunch, participate in the reading program, and support hands-on activities. Farewell dinner with local hosts.



FRIDAY

Travel from Ndola to Livingstone. Enjoy some free time and a sunset dinner cruise on the Zambezi River.



SATURDAY

Start the morning with optional tours. Enjoy a group lunch and tour Victoria Falls. Dine at a local restaurant.



SUNDAY

Journey to Chobe National Park in Botswana. Spend the first half of the day on a boat cruise. After lunch, you'll climb into land-rovers and head out across the park in search of wildlife. Return to Livingstone for a final group dinner.



MONDAY

Breakfast in Livingstone and transportation to the Livingstone International Airport (LVI) for your flight home.

** Itinerary details subject to change.*

TESTIMONIALS OF IMPACT



“On our first day at Hope, Ba Charles gave us a tour and it was evident that Hope is accomplishing a great deal through their partnership with Spark. There is a strong passion and commitment to do the best they possibly can to serve and educate the children and families in their community. The strides that they have already made, and their unwavering commitment to continue investing in the education of their children is impressive. We know that education is a form of sustainability; that it will create opportunities for each of these children, and the community at large, to stand on their own two feet and provide hope to a brighter future.”

Alyson Marguerat

Director, Lincoln Park Preschool & Kindergarten

“I was so impressed on my first visit to Hope and with each return visit, the level of respect I have for the leaders at Hope continues to increase. I have been particularly impressed with the head teacher, Teacher Ngoma. He is a very intelligent man with a gentle spirit who supports and guides the teachers and students at Hope with an unwavering commitment to excellence. His compassion for each and every child along with a deep understanding of the challenges they face each day are critical components for their success. I am so grateful that I have been able to get to know him in the past few years. With Teacher Ngoma in charge, it’s no surprise that Hope School offers one of the best primary school educations in the area with a 100% graduation rate since the school began.”

Kristin Schrepferman

Executive Director, Spark Ventures



“The relationship between Spark Ventures and Hope School is based on the values of social justice and equity - two inter-related visions for the common good. The visiting teachers are a wonderful part of that relationship. They truly help elevate our work with the children. As the African proverb states, *It takes the whole village to raise a child*. This is very true. Only that in this case it is a global village.”

Chimfwembe Ngoma

Head Teacher, Hope Community School