**J. KIRBY SIMON FOREIGN SERVICE TRUST**

***GRANTS AWARDED IN 2000***

*The J. Kirby Simon Foreign Service Trust is a charitable fund established in the memory of Kirby Simon, a Foreign Service Officer who died in 1995 while serving in Taiwan. The Trust is committed to expanding the opportunities for professional and community service and personal well-being of active Foreign Service Officers and their families. The Trust has been funded with contributions from Kirby Simon's colleagues, friends and relatives and other persons interested in the purposes of the Trust. The Trustees are present or former members of the Foreign Service - State Department community and Kirby Simon's parents.*

In the Fall of 1999, following the pattern established in the three previous years, the Trust invited proposals for the support of projects initiated and carried out by Foreign Service personnel or members of their families, or by other U.S. Government employees employed at American diplomatic posts abroad. In response to this invitation, the Trust received 50 proposals from 35 countries. The very modest size of the Trust permitted funding of only 26 of the proposals - and, in many cases, at less than the requested levels. The 26 grants range in amount from $500 to $3300, for a total of $47,350; they support projects conducted in 23 countries.

There follows a description of the projects receiving grants from the Trust in 2000. (Material in quotation marks comes from the texts of the proposals received by the Trust.)

**Bangladesh - Satkhira:** Literacy and basic life skills training for 150 young Rishi Hindu (Untouchable) girls, a project coordinated by Community Liaison Office Coordinator Jo Ellen Fuller, a professional educator and spouse of a Foreign Service Officer.

"The outcaste (the so-called Untouchables) are the downtrodden of society, and outcaste women are worst downtrodden of all. Rishi women have to face every kind of oppression and discrimination…..The best way to help them to revolt against the oppressive social structures is to provide them with basic education and training." A small nonprofit organization operates "10 small schools in 10 selected outcast villages," aimed at helping "these adolescent girls attain a basic literacy level, and at the same time acquire skills for a better life." The instruction, directed by other Rishi females who have managed to achieve a basic education, includes "literacy, sanitation, nutrition, human rights, income generating activities, and issues of environmental concern." With support from the Trust, Ms. Fuller is arranging to provide the schools with books, supplies and teacher training salaries.

**Botswana - Gaborone:** Textile-painting materials and training workshops for residents of the Women's Shelter in Gaborone, organized by former Embassy Self-Help Coordinator Sibo Bopp (spouse of a U.S. public health official), with the cooperation of Lisa Michael, Embassy Nurse, and Ethleen Lloyd, Public Health Advisor.

"In Botswana, as in many countries of the world, domestic violence is rampant…The women who stay in the shelter often have very low self-esteem and lack skills that would enable them to leave their partner whom they are financially dependent on." Ms. Bopp and other volunteers at the Women's Shelter are receiving training in fabric-painting and, in turn, are instructing residents of the shelter who attend the workshops. The workshops seek to "provide skills to women so that they can support themselves after leaving the shelter" and to produce goods that can be sold to defray running costs. The Trust's grant supports purchase of materials and stipends for some of the local personnel who assist with the training.

**Brazil - Rio de Janeiro:** Computer components for a program of computer instruction for children living in the Romão de Mattos Duarte Orphanage, organized by Kendall Moss, a Foreign Service Officer at the U.S. Consulate General.

The orphanage currently supports more than 300 children of all ages. "The older orphans are the least likely to be placed in adoptive homes and the most likely to suffer acute alienation in Brazilian society." The computer program gives the orphans "the opportunity to interact with an adult tutor" as well as "build their confidence by teaching them a new skill that has obvious implications for their future educational opportunities and employment potential." Members of the Consulate staff have volunteered to teach the computer classes. With Trust funding, Mr. Moss is procuring components to refurbish the orphanage's antiquated computers.

**Burma - Rangoon:** Three-day excursion to the ocean for 80 street children participating in World Vision's Street Children Project, organized by Laura Rumpf, spouse of an Embassy staff member.

"World Vision has been operating a drop-in center for street children living and working on the streets of Rangoon since June 1997." With help from U.S. Embassy staff, the center provides meals, basic health care, shelter and a number of other services for nearly 100 children, many of whom are from poor and abusive backgrounds. The excursion, funded by the Trust, offers "an opportunity to approximately 80 children at the center to spend three days and two nights at Chaungtha Beach….For nearly all of the children, this trip [is] the very first (and possibly only) opportunity to see the ocean in their lives. It also provides the children with a rare and wonderful environment in which to engage in group games and excursions that…build children's confidence, trust in one another and cooperation skills."

**Chile - Santiago:** Generator for a bus used in an outreach program for at-risk youth living in the streets -- a project (entitled SENAMÓVIL) for which Catherine Higgins, spouse of a Foreign Service Officer, has served as Acting Director, joined by Lisa Dietrich and Julie Olivier, members of the Embassy community.

"According to various studies including an UNICEF report, Santiago, Chile hosts thousands of homeless youth involved in child labor activities ranging from panhandling to prostitution. Many are engaged in the sale or consumption of drugs." SENAMÓVIL seeks to "enable youth to take steps toward resolving their crisis through rehabilitation, housing alternatives, medical and psychological care, and supportive relationships." To this end, SENAMÓVIL is touring the streets in a former city bus that has been converted in order to facilitate both individual and group counseling by a multidisciplinary intervention team. The Trust is providing funds for the purchase of a generator to provide electric power for much-needed heating and air-conditioning for the winter and summer months, respectively.

**China - Beijing:** English-language books and library materials for the establishment of a children's library for the U.S. Embassy "and the American community at large," a project administered by Alice Quan, spouse of an Embassy staff member.

"Aside from a few coloring books, used children's magazines, and simple cartoon books, the selection [of books at the Embassy has been] limited to adult materials….A children's library would be beneficial to foreign service children," especially younger ones aged two to five, "who are…restricted from using the international school libraries." With Trust support, Ms. Quan is purchasing books for the establishment of a children's library housed in the American Community Preschool. She is also recruiting volunteers to staff the library.

**Ecuador - Guayaquil:** New computer server for the automation of medical records at the dispensaries operated by the Women of the Consular Corps Foundation (WCCF) - a project coordinated by Denise Rotta Dunn, spouse of the U.S. Consul General.

The poor health care system in Ecuador has led the low-income population in Guayaquil to rely heavily upon two dispensaries founded by the WCCF to provide inexpensive basic care to the city's residents. The resulting accumulation of medical records - many of which are inactive - has led to an enormous waste of time and effort and to "doctors never hav[ing] the entire medical history of the patient." Ms. Dunn, who serves as the Volunteer Coordinator of the WCCF, is engaged in the installation of a new computer system server, as well as a connection between the server and workstations, acquired with funding from the Trust. The new equipment is intended greatly to enlarge the capacity for data storage and also significantly to improve the accuracy of patients' records, enabling the dispensaries' doctors to deliver better treatment.

**Haiti - Port-au-Prince:** Restoration and repair of a large dormitory for imprisoned adolescent Haitian boys, organized by USAID employees Margaret R. Alexander, Ernst Paultre, Carol Payne-Flavell, and Garth Vant Hul.

"Under Haitian law, it is illegal to arrest and detain minors unless they may be housed in an appropriate juvenile detention center." However, for lack of adequate quarters, Haitian boys have been imprisoned in a tiny room located within a women's prison - a room "about 15 x 25 feet in size with small, barred windows and a single, foul toilet. There is no furniture, no place for the boys to store any few possessions. There were, at the last visit, 4 or 5 mattresses shared by all. At any given time, this room may house 25 to 60 adolescent boys up to 17 years old." To address this problem, the organizers, contributing their own funds and using a Trust grant, and working closely with the Red Cross, are renovating a larger dormitory with adequate space and facilities, more light and air and increased security as well.

**India - Calcutta:** Construction of a daycare shelter and school for children of squatters displaced from the Majerhat Bridge area, a project organized by U.S. Consulate personnel Tony Singh in cooperation with Cause for Caring, a local nonprofit organization.

"Approximately 70 families migrated to Calcutta from Andhra Pradesh state about 20 years ago. They squatted - illegally" and have recently been evicted, leaving them homeless. "They are trying to rebuild their homes on land provided by the Calcutta Municipality," but the lack of sanitation, school, and play facilities, coupled with the long workdays of the parents, leave the children unattended and vulnerable. Cause for Caring, with the help of Mr. Singh, is constructing and operating a daycare shelter for these children, in addition to providing routine health support. The Trust is providing funds for the construction and establishment of a daycare center and community toilet and bathing facilities, as well as the procurement of necessary educational and medical supplies.

**India - Mumbai:** Playground equipment for the construction of an outdoor recreation area for Consulate children, a project organized by Consul General David P. Good.

"Safe and attractive playground equipment would go a long way toward improving the lives of Consulate children." Lacking Consulate or Embassy Recreation Association funding, the Consulate has had to rely on inadequate private and corporate funds. In response, the Trust is providing funds for the purpose of purchasing "a basic playground set, to include swings, slides and several climbing pieces for children of a wide age range for the Consulate compound and a simple swing set and slide for the housing compound."

**Kenya - Nairobi:** Furnishing of a new classroom at the Thomas Barnardo House (Barnardo's), an orphanage that supports over 120 children - a project coordinated by Deborah R. Postel, Office Management Specialist for the State Department.

"Barnardo's currently has five classrooms, three nursery and two primary," but is working to eventually build an entire school. Because of "limited funding opportunities, the school will be built one classroom at a time." The Trust is supplying funds to furnish the first classroom. Ms. Postel, who has been providing after-school activities for the children as a volunteer, is assisting Barnardo's to procure and arrange desks, chairs, bookshelves, and other furnishings for the classroom.

**Korea - Seoul:** Replacement of unsafe playground equipment at the American Embassy -- a project coordinated by Camille Sailer, Commercial Counselor at the Embassy.

Two playgrounds "were erected in the late 1950's, and the equipment, built to the modest standards and specifications of that time, [has] never been up-graded, replaced, or even properly maintained." Lacking Embassy funds, the Foreign Service community has raised a substantial amount of donations but not enough to replace the old, unsafe equipment. The Trust's grant is intended to close the gap, so that "these new playgrounds will not only significantly boost the morale and quality of life of mission families, but also serve as a magnet for better cross-cultural exchanges through our children playing together."

**Macedonia - Skopje:** Establishment of a seed-fund for purchase of toys and crafts to be sold at an annual International Christmas Bazaar -- a project managed by Lori Stonecipher and Cindy Smith, spouses of Embassy Foreign Service Officers.

Members of the American Embassy volunteer for the American table at the annual International Christmas Bazaar fund-raiser for Macedonian children. The past two years, it has been crowded by customers hoping to purchase homemade baked food items, American-brand toys, American candy and holiday food specialties and small token gift items. With trust support, Ms. Stonecipher and Ms. Smith are establishing a start-up seed-fund for the purpose of purchasing the necessary craft materials and American products. "Each year, the seed-fund [is to] be reimbursed after the event, and the remaining funds…given to the Christmas Bazaar. Members of the American community [will] continue to contribute their time and money to the event as well."

**Madagascar - Antananarivo:** Large freezer for an orphanage in Androhibe and desks and benches for a school in Isotry, both operated by the Missionaries of Charity - a project administered by Linda L. Wood, Office Management Specialist to the Deputy Chief of Mission and an orphanage volunteer.

The Missionaries of Charity (founded by Mother Teresa of Calcutta) coordinate a number of different projects, including the orphanage in Androhibe and the school in Isotry. The freezer provided by the Trust permits storage of "large quantities of meat, fish and poultry to be used for preparation of food" for the nearly 60 children at the Androhibe orphanage; "being able to buy items in larger quantities and freezing them…also helps reduce expenses." At the Isotry school, "basic reading and writing skills are taught to 300-325 children, many of whom live on the streets." They lack desks and benches, which are being funded by the Trust. Ms. Wood "monitor[s] the purchase of lumber and construction of desks and benches."

**Mexico - Guadalajara:** Construction of library facilities, as well as books and teaching materials for poor and homeless children -- a project administered by Daniel Bezol, Claudia Valverde Foote, Lowell D. Long and Patricia Muvdi-Rodriguez, spouses of Foreign Service or other U.S. Government personnel at the U.S. Consulate.

For several years, Mother Ana Luz Pufleau, an independent Catholic nun, has struggled to hold classes outdoors with children from "families who are too poor to afford to send them to public school or…are homeless children who live on the streets." To aid her in this endeavor, Ms. Foote and Ms. Muvdi-Rodriguez organized a group of volunteers within the Consulate to construct two small buildings to shelter the classes from the rain; they then enlisted the cooperation of Messrs. Bezol and Long to establish a library in the new school. The four are coordinating the construction of a library area supplied with "bookshelves, storage shelves, tables, and chairs." In addition, they are working with Mother Ana "to purchase library books…and an appropriate amount of teaching materials and text books." These expenditures are being defrayed by the Trust.

**Mexico - Sonora:** New mattresses and boxsprings for El Asilo de Ninas Madre Conchita, a home for orphaned girls run by nuns of the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady of Peace - a project coordinated by Renee Savastuk, spouse of a Foreign Service Officer.

"The 22 girls presently living in the Asilo are mainly "from broken families and have been abused and/or abandoned." [T]he Asilo offers these young girls hope." The Asilo, however, "receives no funding from Mexican municipal, state or federal government;" thus, it relies heavily on "contributions from good Samaritans in the community," as well as limited aid from a local church. This support is not sufficient to permit the Asilo to obtain "new mattresses and boxsprings for each of the girls….The current mattresses are not adequate. They are not mattresses as we know [them], but made of a sponge-like material that does not hold up and does not offer sufficient support." The Trust's grant responds to this need.

**Mozambique - Maputo:** Merrow sewing machine, materials, and office supplies for KINDLIMUKA - a nonprofit organization committed to supporting HIV / AIDS patients and which receives volunteer help from Michele Johnson, spouse of a Foreign Service Officer.

"KINDLIMUKA's Income Generating Project is a sewing project which is run by women who…have AIDS [or who] have a family member with the disease. To generate income they produce products such as company workshirts, domestic uniforms, children's clothing and household ware such as aprons," and "they are…looking to train others like themselves to participate in this effort." The purchase of a merrow sewing machine will "improve the quality of produced items, increase their market, and further increase incomes." Ms. Johnson, who has a degree from the Fashion Institute in Los Angeles, advises the women on "how to best improve the quality control over what they produce." In addition, the Trust is also providing funds for the purchase of office supplies, supplementing the used office equipment that has been donated by the USAID office.

**Pakistan - Islamabad:** Video camcorder, 35mm camera, refrigerator and television for the Progressive Women's Association (PWA) - a nonprofit organization providing support to women seeking refuge from domestic violence, which receives volunteer help from Consular Associate Susanne A. Turner.

"For the last 14 years, the association [PWA] has monitored cases of rape, wife battering and incest, providing emotional as well as legal assistance to the victims through close contact with hospitals, doctors, police officials, lawyers, and journalists. According to the PWA, more than four women are murdered daily in Pakistan, victims of karo kari (honor killings). In 1994 the PWA launched its campaign against one of the most extreme examples of such violence to help victims of choola [(stove) burning], women who were doused with kerosene by husbands, in-laws or brothers and set on fire. Between 1994 and 1998 [PWA] collected data on more than 1000 female [choola] victims from [two hospitals]." "In order to document the case[s] as effectively as possible, including [recording the burn areas and] taking dying declarations of the burn victims…, the PWA requires a small video camera….As hospital workers are not always supportive…, the camcorder must be small enough to conceal in a handbag. A 35mm camera…will be used to make slides for use in documenting cases." The Trust's grant defrays these costs as well as the purchase of a refrigerator and television set to furnish a "safe, supportive home," established by PWA, that provides refuge for battered women and their children. Ms. Turner is in charge of procuring this equipment and monitoring its use.

**Pakistan - Peshawar:** Supplies and equipment for the creation of an Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy facility for physically and developmentally impaired children, a project organized by Beverly J. McIllwain, spouse of the Political Consul.

Peshawar, located 15 miles from the Kyber Pass, has received a flood of Afghan refugees, including an estimated "six to seven thousand Afghan war-induced amputees…." A "fledgling" Patient Care and Rehabilitation Center seeks to "provides services to the physically disabled of all ages, [but it] it has become increasingly concerned about its pediatric clients. The Center now is striving to to provide more effective…rehabilitation services to [the children]," but it "has lacked the occupational therapy expertise…and the initial funds to furnish pre-designated space with the necessary therapeutic equipment and materials for a 'Children's Therapy Room.'" In response to these needs, Ms. McIllwain, a registered and licensed Occupational Therapist, is providing the requisite occupational therapy program development and oversight for the Center, and the Trust is financing the procurement, under Ms. MicIllwain's supervision, of equipment, furnishings, and materials for a "Children's Therapy Room." In addition to the Trust's grant, American Consulate families have also volunteered to donate supplies and toys to the new facility.

**Poland - Warsaw:** New blankets and books for the children of the Radosc Orphanage, which receives volunteer assistance from Stephanie Eicher, a Foreign Service Specialist, and Melissa Sagun, Community Liaison Officer at the Embassy and spouse of the Agricultural Attache.

Because of recent cuts in government funding, "it is becoming increasingly more difficult to sustain the high standards of care" for the more than 100 children (from 2 to 18 years old) at the Radosc Orphanage. Although personnel at the U.S. Embassy and Marine Security Guard Detachment having been helping the orphanage for many years, in the form of gifts for the children and food for special dinners, Ms. Eicher and Sagun have organized a project to provide a range of additional assistance. Among the greatest needs are new blankets, "as thc winters here are cold and the old buildings are not well insulated," and a library comprising "a wide variety of books and reference materials in Polish." The Trust is funding the purchase of both blankets and books. The children are building the bookshelves and cataloging the books.

**Sri Lanka - Colombo:** Laundry facilities for Lotus Buds Children's Home, which receives volunteer help from the Marine Security Guard Detachment, of which Master Sergeant Duane P. Siegmann has been the Commander.

Lotus Buds Children's Home provides "shelter and support for twenty-two homeless and abused children from the ages of 2 to 17 years of age." Since its founding eight years ago, Lotus Buds has enjoyed strong support from the Marine Detachment; "the Marines, in their off-duty hours and using their personal funds, spend time on weekends with the children teaching sports activities, tutoring the older children in information technology, and generally being "Big Brother[s]." In addition, the Marines, observing that "laundry is currently all done by hand" at the Home, are arranging to provide two washing machines and two dryers; the Trust is providing a grant for this purpose.

**Thailand - Bangkok:** Construction of a play area for children living in a Bangkok orphanage run by the Friends For All Children Foundation (FFAC), at which Diann M. Bimmerle, Secretary to the Deputy Chief of Mission, is a regular volunteer.

"A larger space is needed at the Bangkok orphanage to give very much needed hands-on attention to babies who would otherwise spend their first 12+ months of life in a crib….Bangkok has no lack for volunteers but at [the orphanage] they quickly become discouraged because there is no place to be with the babies….A bigger space is a must if adequate infant stimulation is to be provided." Addressing this problem, Ms. Bimmerle, with the aid of a local construction firm, an architect who has volunteered his services, and the American expatriate community, is working to convert the driveway in front of the building into an enclosed play area. The Trust's grant goes toward a roof, tile floor, and other construction expenses, as well as "baby equipment to enhance motor development."

**Uganda - Kampala:** Capital improvements, fixtures, and furnishings for the Nommo Gallery - Uganda's national art gallery - coordinated by Gregory F. Robison, spouse of a Foreign Service Officer and volunteer development advisor to the gallery.

While the Nommo Gallery "has implemented a number of innovative and socially responsible programs demonstrating how art can contribute to the national dialogue on pressing issues of the day…," it "receives no government funding and has been unable to begin acquiring a national art collection"; this lack deters "the development of a new generation of working artists…" Working toward a national art collection -- "a strong and sustainable national institution" -- requires, first, "a continuing program of exhibitions and activities," in order to undergird "fundraising efforts and credibility with the artistic community, the public and potential donors." An international printmaking show in May 2000 was one such exhibition, and it is being followed by construction of a printmaking studio, representing "a visible, inexpensive, useful and permanent contribution to this art form's development in Uganda." A second prerequisite for a national art collection is the completion of appropriate "storage arrangements for works of art…." Both of these activities -- construction of the printmaking studio and the building of shelves and a secure storage area for art works - are part of a Strategic Plan developed by Mr. Robison and the gallery's director; these activities are being assisted by the Trust's grant.

**Vietnam - Hanoi:** Materials for English-language business classes, offered to disadvantaged college and university students by Dirk Richards, Financial Management Officer at the U.S. Embassy.

Many Vietnamese university students studying business are taught "outdated theory from outdated books with no practical application to the world today. Although [these] students are industrious, at the end of their university studies they are unprepared to contribute to a company or their country." Mr. Richards, seeking to develop strategic and analytical thinking, self-confidence, and better communication skills on the part of business students, is offering a three-month, twice-weekly business course, attended by 20 students who have completed or are about to complete a bachelor's degree in business, but who have "no good job offer" and no "opportunity to study abroad." The students, who pay neither tuition nor other expenses, study cases, develop and initiate business plans, and improve their English proficiency with the goal of obtaining employment in the business sector. The Trust grant defrays the cost of teaching materials and provides capital for two revolving micro-enterprise loans that will be used to finance the students' business plans. (NOTE: After this "Grants Awarded" list was compiled and was about to be distributed, the Trust received word from Mr. Richards that, as a result of a change of station earlier than expected, he would not be able to implement this project in Vietnam at this time.)

**Zambia - Lusaka:** Equipment and materials for a visual arts program at the Fountain of Hope (FOH), a local non-profit that shelters and assists "disadvantaged and vulnerable children" - a project coordinated by Carol Duffy Clay, a volunteer teacher at FOH and spouse of a USAID mission member.

"Zambia, one of the world's poorest countries…, has over 350,000 children that are orphaned because of Aids"; "[o]ver 75,000 children are now living in the streets of Lusaka, or receiving minimal care from extended families." At its facility in Lusaka, FOH provides children with "hot meals, a safe haven where they can sleep, and a community school where they receive a basic education." As a complement to these services, Ms. Clay is developing a "comprehensive community arts program," with thrice-weekly classes, exhibitions and sales of children's artwork, field trips and cooperative activities with Zambian arts organizations. The aim is to "enhance a sense of self-esteem and confidence in the children…, provide a positive outlet for expression…, encourage creativity, problem solving, and independent thinking…and develop useful skills in the arts which enhance self-sufficiency and possible income generation." The Trust's grant defrays such expenses as furniture (easels, work tables, benches), supplies (paints, brushes, paper), and modest honoraria for Zambian art teachers.

**Zimbabwe - Harare:** Lawnmower, playground equipment, and art supplies to improve a crèche that provides meals and schooling to children who are orphaned and HIV positive -- a project coordinated by Embassy secretary Kathy Loken.

The Mashambanzou Care Trust, a nonprofit welfare organization, operates a crèche "in one of the poorest suburbs in Harare" that "currently provides two nutritious meals a day and schooling for approximately 70 children under the age of 6 years, most of whom are orphaned and are HIV positive." Approximately 15-20 Embassy personnel donate money each month that is used for food vouchers for the children; Ms. Loken collects and disburses these funds. The crèche, however, has no funds for other items that will improve the facility and enhance the children's experience, specifically, "a lawnmower for use in the yard attached to the crèche, some playground equipment and art supplies (approximately a one year supply)." The Trust is providing funds for these expenditures, which will be made under Ms. Loken's supervision.