

2ND ANNUAL GALA SUCCESS

What a great evening! Wonderful speakers, great company, delicious food, beautiful music, delightful African market!!

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH to EVERYONE who so GENEROUSLY CONTRIBUTED, even if you could not attend in person. You were present in our hearts with thanks!



Our two honorees, Mme Monique Misenga Mukuna of Kinshasa, DRC, & Ms. Michele Tuck Ponder of Princeton, NJ, share a happy moment.



The African market was bright with Congo-sewn fabrics, & many kinds of jewelry. Five HS students from Hands Across the Water (HAW) were a great help: Thank you, ladies!



Dining in style, with family, neighbors, new friends.



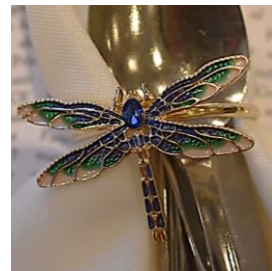
Groups of friends enjoyed getting together for a great photo op with the guests of honor.



The talented deGroot sisters provided great music: Lesly deGroot (Axelrod) sang "Defying Gravity" from Wicked, to the accompaniment of Anna deGroot Preston – & there was a storm of applause!



MC Skitch Matson led a lively Fund-a-Need auction to provide school supplies, food, sewing machines, microloans, & more so everyone had an



opportunity to help our sisters & children in Congo to move forward: they have the courage & vision, we have means. THANK YOU to all who contributed, in person or from afar

Guests took home their lovely dragonfly

napkin rings, a reminder that "Still I Rise."

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE IN CONGO

Surviving War in Goma

The endemic undeclared war in eastern Congo has heated up in recent months, & the M23 militia has surrounded Goma. With the influx of refugees & now cut off from food sources in the region, the situation is beyond desperate; our partners report that dead bodies are found in the streets every day.



Despite these circumstances, our brave Uvira-based CENEDI leader, Innocent Nunda, made a very risky trip to Goma to bring food. He slipped into the city by boat, avoiding road blockades to bring dozens of sacks of corn

& cassava to feed the children & teachers of CCS. See the kids' joy! The families with whom they live will eat!

Surviving Floods, Disease & Disaster

This is what the Uvira region looks like; Kinshasa is similar.



For families in villages near Uvira we have sent food & medicines to fight cholera & flood disaster. The cholera epidemic is finally under control, at a high price, including a brave & unselfish nurse who cared for the sick until she contracted the

disease & died of it. We are helping to support her 4 orphaned children.



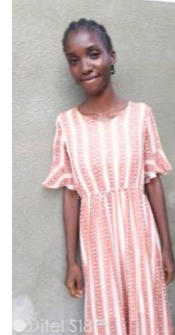
Kinshasa has been hard hit by the floods, & many of the FEBA staff & students have lost all they had. They are very grateful for money to start recovery.



Severe health challenges have also added to the problems. A 16-year old sewing student suffered 2nd



degree burns when a jealous cousin who resented



her mother's adopting the girl poured boiling water on her. The result was 2nd degree burns. After weeks in hospital, she is well on the way to recovery. Another student was diagnosed with TB. Her treatment is progressing well, though she is still very thin. FEBA has saved these two young lives & is pursuing remedial correction for the culprit who caused the burn. Part of the gala funds will pay for medical care.

SIGNS OF HOPE

Farming is the main source of subsistence in Congo.

Despite disaster & the months of hunger, our women partners near Uvira have managed to plant & now have a harvest! Here two women help each other load cassava into back packs to carry home.

The large FEBA farm near Kinshasa was destroyed in the pre-election violence, & will need to be cleared again & the buildings rebuilt & all the equipment bought new. But at least it is safe to begin again & we hope for a harvest next January – though between now & then...

