

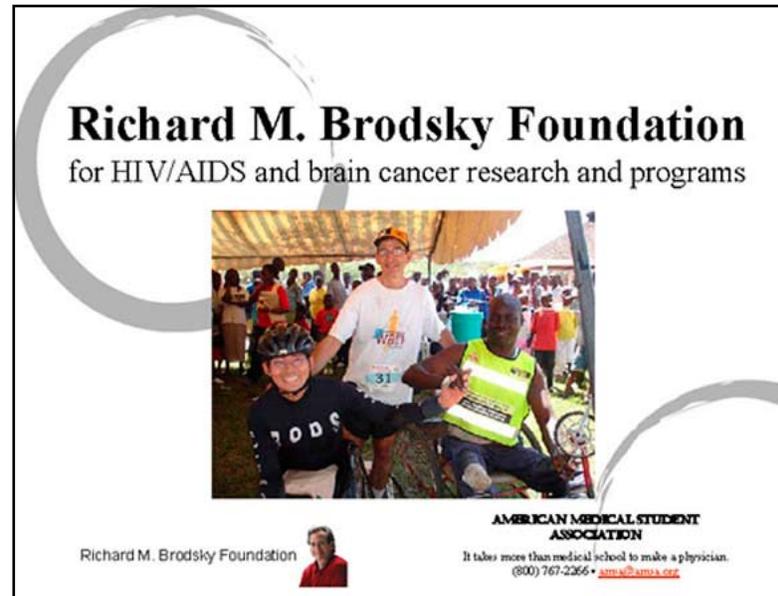
Initiating a Program for Orphans in Kenya and Their Caretakers to Grow Their Own Fruits and Vegetables

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My name is Richard Brodsky and I'm President of the Richard M. Brodsky Foundation, a 501(c)3 public charity. I'm HIV-positive, a brain cancer survivor and a marathon runner. My Foundation co-sponsors the annual World AIDS Marathon, <http://www.worldaidsmarathon.com>, in Kisumu, Kenya, with the Kisumu World AIDS Marathon Group on World AIDS Day. Over the past three years, the Foundation has sponsored four dinners for 1,200 plus orphans on the days preceding the World AIDS Marathon. I've also visited other orphanages and received numerous requests to provide seed so the orphans and caretakers can sow and reap their own fruits and vegetables. I believe this would be an excellent, cost effective, opportunity to provide nourishment for the orphans and caretakers, and maybe they could sell some of the extra fruits and vegetable they grow and use that money towards school fees. Nourish the body; nourish the brain. While we take education for granted in America, high school education in Kenya is not free. Naturally, the orphans and caretakers would need to learn some basic farming skills and be provided with farming tools. It's a win-win situation for everyone as the orphans and caretakers can eat fresh produce grown with their own hands, raise some money for their education, and teach others how to grow their own food.

I have been discussing this project with Ebony Gibbs, Assistant to the Executive Officer for MANRRS, to see if any of the farming colleges which have local chapters of MANRRS would be interested in having Independent Study projects in Africa and / or Student Internships working with the Richard M. Brodsky Foundation.

The success the Richard M. Brodsky Foundation has achieved to date largely has been due to my Kenyan board members who shall we say, 'know the ropes' and know how to get things done in Kenya. I consider myself the dreamer/visionary while my Kenyan board members make my wildest dreams, or what some people consider impossible, become reality. From a personal standpoint, my doctors never thought I would run again after being diagnosed with terminal brain cancer back in 2002. When my wife, Jodi, and I were invited to be on Howard Stern's Radio Show when my book entitled "Jodi, The Greatest Love Story Ever Told" came out and I mentioned to Howard how I was thinking about organizing a World AIDS Marathon in Africa, Howard practically laughed Jodi and me off the air. Then when I mentioned inviting President Obama's grandmother, Mama Sarah, to flag off the 2008 Kisumu Kenya World AIDS Marathon, no one expected this to happen. By an amazing coincidence, one of the Foundation's board members, Joseph Ochieng, lives in the same village as Mama Sarah. The members of the Kisumu World AIDS Marathon Group and my wife and I had a delightful dinner with Mama Sarah and her daughter, Marsat Onyango, the evening before the World AIDS Marathon. Mama Sarah loves children and she also cut the ribbon at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new children's playground at Jomo Kenyatta Sports Stadium in Kisumu. The playground was donated from funds raised from the 2007 World AIDS Marathon.



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What we need at this time is to see if we can get partners to sponsor this Seed for Kenyan Orphans Project. We could start off by funding 10 – 20 orphanages and there would need to be accountability if the project was successful. We would hope to be able to continue funding successful projects and to weed out unsuccessful projects. I could get a list of a few orphanages where we could try to see if this would work and ask which fruits and vegetables the orphans and caretakers would like to grow. If the farming schools advise that the soil needs to be tested, we could find out how and where to test the soil. We are already looking into the feasibility if seed from America can be transported into Kenya legally and if we could get American sponsors to donate seed for potentially feeding all the orphans in Kenya and if the project is successful, we could follow a similar program to help orphans in other countries in Africa.

After doing some preliminary research, I realize this project will be difficult to implement, but not impossible. There are many regulatory and Seed agencies that both can hinder and help us. KEPHIS, www.kephis.org, is the Kenyan regulatory agency for quality control of agricultural input and produce in Kenya. KEPHIS coordinates all matters relating to crop pests and disease control, advises the Director of Agriculture on appropriate seeds and planting materials for export and import. There are other organizations such as the American Trade Seed Association, International Seed Association and MANRRS which would need to be contacted to see if they could help. Kenya does have complex restrictions that seed being brought into Kenya must be certified. People with agricultural expertise, such as students and faculty at farming colleges, seed exporters from America and seed importers from Kenya as well as a new board member for the Richard M. Brodsky Foundation, preferably a PhD who teaches at one of the Agricultural Schools which is a member of MANRRS, would be the ideal candidate, to bring this project to fruition. □