

ACU STUDENTS COMBINE BUSINESS & MISSIONS THROUGH WORLD WIDE WITNESS EXPERIENCE

BY: LEXI KOON AND CASEY MCMULLIN

This summer, we had the privilege of traveling to Tanzania, Africa where we served as interns for a non-profit called Neema House Inc. to implement a program called MAP, which stands for “Mothers Against Poverty”. We spent nearly 8 weeks working along-side Tanzanian mothers and our amazing mentors, Dorris and Michael Fortson, the founders of Neema.

Neema House is a ministry giving 50 abandoned or at-risk babies a second chance at life. Our job as a finance major and an accounting major was to help start a micro-finance program with the intention of empowering local mothers to start their own small businesses. Neema believes that by helping mothers there will not be as many abandoned babies separated from their families who do not have enough resources to care for them. The goal was to provide



a loan service so that mothers would be able to start a business, such as selling eggs or sewing. In order to promote sustainability, the mothers set up payment schedules to pay the principal off over time. The payments go back into the program to help another mother start her own business.

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The first task was to learn the daily functions of Neema’s main office. With over 40 employees, Neema functions just like any other business with had payroll, daily cash flows, and even account balances to manage throughout each month. By learning the accounting, and the daily operations of a non-profit, we were able to carry that knowledge over and implement it towards the MAP program. Our main focus during the duration of our 8-week internship was to establish the proper forms and procedures so that this program would become self-sustainable.

Towards the end of our journey, the program had five different mothers with five different business ideas. Right before our departure, we were able to help Bertha Joel start her chicken business, officially making her the first mother in the MAP program, where she will now be able to triple her daily income. Taking everything into consideration, one page of writing could never do this experience justice. The people, the places, and the



unforgettable memories will always have a special place in our hearts. All we can say is, it was the most eye opening, impactful 2 months of our lives.

In the end, without the preparation we received from ACU none of this would have been possible. The knowledge

and confidence that our courses and professors in the College of Business have provided truly shaped us into the determined business students we are today. We are so thankful to have had the WorldWide Witness program and the Halbert Center faculty and staff guiding us through this process and preparing us missionally, culturally and spiritually. Going to Tanzania was an amazing experience, and although our purpose was to change lives, it was our lives that were forever changed. Now we hope that other students will take the skills ACU has helped to harvest, into the world to learn about each other, furthering the Kingdom as we serve one another in love and in humility through the work God called us to do.

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