





*"English is the international language and all student exams are in english so it is essential that [students] become comfortable speaking, hearing, reading and writing it. Books are the foundation to getting this exposure and increasing literacy. This is a national issue!"* -Caitlin Newcamp, Peace Corps Volunteer, Kenya

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Books For Africa is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving as the world's largest shipper of donated text and library books to the African continent. Since 1988, Books For Africa has shipped over 29 million primary, secondary, post-secondary, and community library books to 49 African countries. Books For Africa has received the highest ratings from Charity Navigator and the Minnesota Charities Review Council. BFA's mission is simple: to end the book famine in Africa.



## BFA Shipments 2012-2013

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Nigeria	39	•	Kenya	5
The Gambia	18	•	Rwanda	4
Ethiopia	12	•	Botswana	3
Tanzania	10	•	Burundi	2
Somalia	7	•	Madagascar	2
Cameroon	6	•	Mali	2
Ghana	6	•	Namibia	2
Liberia	6	•	Swaziland	2
Sierra Leone	6	•	Zambia	2
South Africa	6	•	Gabon	1
Uganda	6	•		
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Containers: 147

Computers: 775

Countries: 21

Total Value: \$22.8 million

Books: 1.5 million



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**Fall 2013 Newsletter**

## Friends of BFA Gathered for Celebration at the 25th Anniversary Silver Jubilee Gala

On September 20, 2013, Books For Africa celebrated 25 years and more than 29 million books at the BFA 25th Anniversary Silver Jubilee Gala. We hosted this big event to celebrate the people and projects that have helped us over the years in our mission.

We kicked off the event with a VIP Reception at Windows on the River at the Crowne Plaza St. Paul Riverfront Hotel (St. Paul, MN, U.S.A.), where St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and a number of our VIPs addressed the audience, including the Ethiopian Ambassador to the U.S., the Tanzanian Ambassador to the U.S., and former First Lady of Tanzania, Anna Mkapa.

Then our guests made their way downstairs to join other BFA supporters for our pre-gala festivities, including music from KFAI African Rhythms and a fashion show with designs by Yvonne Johnson of Milu Milu Couture.

Nearly 500 glowing supporters enjoyed an African-themed dinner featuring an address from U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN); words from Books For Africa board members, founder, and volunteers; a special song written just for the anniversary event; a live auction; and a keynote address from Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, World YWCA General Secretary. We were joined by a number of VIPs from across the African continent including Principal Secretary Responsible for Basic and Secondary Education in Malawi Dr. Anjimile Mtila Oponyo, Ghanaian film personality Majid Michel, and a delegation from the Office of Executive Governor Amaechi of Rivers State, Nigeria.

The following day, we hosted the annual Books For Africa Warehouse Party/Braai at our new St. Paul warehouse. With so many folks in town for the anniversary, the Warehouse Party was a great success!

We hosted two bands: Black Market Brass, a local Afro-jazz band, and the one and only Books For Africa Warehouse Band, made up of musical members of our St. Paul and Georgia warehouse staffs.

Guests enjoyed free wine, beer, and South African BBQ from Amara Wines, owned by BFA Board Member Bob Marx and a major in-kind donor for the BFA 25th Anniversary Year. The Cave Café food truck was there as well to offer up Afro-Italiano fusion food throughout the evening. People danced, ate, drank, and were merry.

It was a lovely celebration of 25 years of work, and an inspiration for the next leg of the journey as we continue our mission to end the book famine in Africa.



Many guests wore traditional African attire, making for a colorful evening! Credit: Loren Swanson



Though unable to join us, Representative Betty McCollum had a flag flown at the U.S. Capitol in honor of BFA and submit an official statement to the U.S. Congressional Record "Honoring the 25th Anniversary of Books For Africa."



Keynote speaker Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, General Secretary of the World YWCA, and Tom Warth, founder of BFA, share a special moment of celebration for the wondrous work of BFA. Credit: Loren Swanson

## Books For Africa 25th Anniversary Sponsors



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## You Do the Honors!

*This holiday season, send books to a community in Africa in honor of someone special.*



- \$50 provides 100 books, enough for a classroom.
- \$75 provides a new atlas or 200 student dictionaries.
- \$200 provides a new encyclopedia set.
- \$220 provides a refurbished computer for a classroom.

Your honoree will receive a handwritten thank you note letting him or her know that books were sent to fill the empty shelves of a library on his or her behalf.

To donate online, scan this QR code or visit [www.booksforafrica.org](http://www.booksforafrica.org), or send cash or a check to Books For Africa. Make sure to give us the name of and contact info for your honoree so that we can let him or her know that books were sent to students in Africa on his or her behalf.



*“Our school is located in the rural area which is far away from the district headquarter town and even the city. This makes it difficult for our staff and pupils to access any library and make research. This good gesture will therefore be of immense benefit to the parents, researchers, staff, and more specifically to our school going pupils.”*

-Foday Mannah Kamara, Assistant Principal of Samu Baptist Senior Secondary School

His school received books from longtime BFA partner, the Sierra Leone Book Trust, an organization that works to distribute books to schools and community libraries in rural Sierra Leone.



## Age Ain't Nothing But a Number!

Each week, hundreds of volunteers come through our Georgia warehouse to help us pack and sort the books that we ship to African schools and libraries. We could never ship so many books without all this help!

In September we had an especially exciting visit from a group of 80 AARP employees. The volunteers showed up bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, ready to help. They had such a great time that they will soon be coming back for more!

BFA is passionate about books and education. Our cause engages people from all age groups and backgrounds. We are really excited to work with a group that supports active seniors and retirees. Our founder, Tom Warth, is a prime example of how folks can stay engaged in their community and their health and fitness in later years. Just last spring, Tom completed a 68 mile walk to raise awareness for our cause at the age of 77.



James Hall of the BFA Georgia Warehouse staff shows volunteers from AARP how to sort our books to make sure each one is high-quality and relevant for the African learner.





## Lucky Number Seven: BFA Earns a 4-Star Rating for Seventh Year Running

Books For Africa is proud to be named a 4-star Charity by Charity Navigator for the seventh consecutive year! This is the highest rating an organization can receive from Charity Navigator, the nation's largest and most-widely used evaluator of charities.

### Why does Books For Africa receive such a great rating each year?

Charity Navigator carefully reviews non-profit organizations to help people like you find the best places to give your time, talent, and treasure. According to Ken Berger, President & Chief Executive Officer of Charity Navigator, "Receiving four out of a possible four stars indicates that your organization adheres to good governance and other best practices that minimize the chance of unethical activities and consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way."

Not only was Books For Africa named a four-star charity, but we were also ranked the number one charity in the United States in terms of efficiency for a charity relying on private funds. What a great compliment for our organization.

## Back to the Very Beginning: 22,000 More Books to the BFA's First Library Partner



During our 25th Anniversary year, Books For Africa proudly shipped 22,000 more books to the first library in Africa to receive BFA books in Jinja, Uganda.

Books For Africa was created 25 years ago after our founder, Tom Warth, took an adventurous trip off the beaten path to visit Loy Zabasajja in Jinja, Uganda. A teacher, Loy took Tom to the Jinja Public Library as they were exploring the town. Much to

his dismay, Tom saw that there were hardly any books on the shelves of the library. The few that he picked up were very old and tattered, not suitable for fostering learning the way a library should.

Upon his return to the United States, Tom gathered a group of book-lovers together to form Books For Africa. This team gathered thousands of books to fill a large sea-container and ship it to the Jinja Public Library to fill the once empty shelves.

Now, 25 years after that first shipment arrived in Jinja, Books For Africa has shipped more than 29 million books to 49 African countries. We are now the largest shipper of donated text and library books to the continent in the world all because of one great idea that came out of Jinja, Uganda.



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