



## **AmericaShare Partners with Lacrosse Unites to Host the First Lacrosse League in Kenya**

Prior to June 2014, children attending the many schools throughout the Mukuru slum outside of Nairobi had never seen a lacrosse stick. Now hundreds of students are practicing daily and playing lacrosse games every week.

It started when Ian Macleod, then a High School Junior at IMG Academy and an ardent lacrosse player, held a fundraiser that culminated in donations of lacrosse equipment and a trip to Nairobi to hold introductory lacrosse lessons and kick off the first ever lacrosse league in Kenya.



Ian received the support of the International Lacrosse Federation (ILF), helping him to deliver equipment including lacrosse sticks, balls, helmets, safety pads and uniforms. The ILF features Ian's project on their website and Lacrosse Magazine has given special notice to Ian's project (see attached).

When Ian arrived in Nairobi in June 2014, accompanied by his mom Jennifer, his cousin Bryce Franck and his friend James Hammer, he was greeted by thousands of children eager to learn. 100 children from two neighboring schools were selected to attend three days of intense introductory lacrosse training. The new coach, an AmericaShare School Sponsorship graduate, was trained at the same time.





Daily lacrosse practice commenced with games held every Friday afternoon. Supplemental instruction has included training sessions by the Captain of Team Uganda, and in January Jon Rathouser spent the day with the players. Jon graduated from McGill University (Canada) where he captained the varsity lacrosse team to their first national championship in school history, and today, he continues to compete with the Israeli National Lacrosse. (Jon's reflections on his visit are attached.)

The Mukuru lacrosse league has grown to include 200 students from two primary schools and three high schools. Many more students are on a waiting list.



The impact on the players extends well beyond learning skills and practicing drills. Margaret, a Class 8 student at Kwa Njenga Primary School, put it this way: ***"The game has changed me. I used to stay home with my friends who take drugs. Now I play lacrosse and I left that group."***

Building upon the experience the players are gaining in teamwork and leadership, AmericaShare plans to

implement a 10-week life skills programme to round out the students' experience. The sessions will be held once a week at the start of lacrosse practice and will be conducted by trained Youth Facilitators. The sessions will cover topics such as SRH, HIV/AIDS prevention, life skills, self-esteem and decision making.

For more information about AmericaShare and Lacrosse Unites:

Websites

[www.AmericaShare.org](http://www.AmericaShare.org)

[www.LacrosseUnites.org](http://www.LacrosseUnites.org)

Lacrosse Video

<https://docs.google.com/file/d/OB7rHLh-gUAFpeS0weWNsVETzcmc/edit>

