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STARS AND STRIPES.

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Darmstadt man has made educating girls in poor countries his life's work

By [Jessica Inigo](#), Stars and Stripes
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DARMSTADT, Germany — David Kenneth Waldman believes a better future for the world lies in the education of little girls.

When they are educated, the entire community thrives, he said.

Waldman is hoping to make this happen during his off time as a training and curriculum specialist at the Child Development Center on Lincoln Village. He'll do it through his international educational foundation, To Love Children, which he founded in 2002.

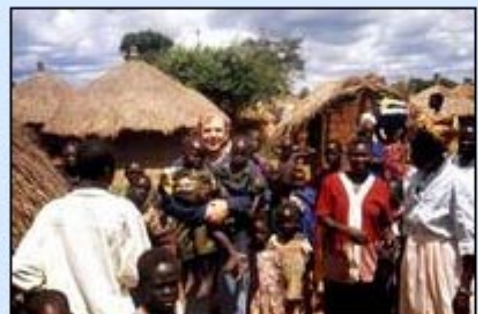
TLC is a nonprofit organization specifically devoted to working for the education of girls in developing countries.

Waldman explained that because girls generally face higher obstacles in getting educated, removing these obstacles is the best way to boost enrolment for all



Courtesy of David Kenneth Waldman

David Kenneth Waldman founded To Love Children, a nonprofit organization specifically devoted to working for the education of girls in developing countries.



Courtesy of David Kenneth Waldman

children. Also, since the benefits of education are passed on from one generation to the next, the futures of those who follow will be much brighter too, he said.

In late November, Waldman, 52, took a trip to the Uganda, Africa, to give homeless children in the northern region more opportunities for education.

“The teachers are the real heroes in this society and, yes, having been a teacher as I started out my career in 1976, I am biased in my reporting perhaps. But I don’t think any objective person seeing the determination that the teachers have under the extreme conditions they teach in. Most are not able to eat for there is no money for food or availability to food,” Waldman wrote in a report of Uganda for TLC once he returned to Germany.

Through the organization he set up a Universal African Resource Center and library in Gulu, which is the first library his organization has set up in a war zone. There are two others, another in Africa and one in India.

“The UARCL serves 200 children per day and, so being, are thousands of children reached by this project when multiplied annually,” said David Lubaale, the African director of Global Child Programs with TLC. He said this would not have been possible without Waldman’s support.

He went on to explain that Waldman didn’t just help with education in Uganda, but also is concerned with the people and their health.

“It’s not just Africa, it’s not just the United States. It’s worldwide,” Waldman said.

“Once you visit Uganda you never leave it,” he said. “There’s hope in places that seem like there could only be despair and smiles in the most unusual places. I loved it.”

Through TLC, Waldman said he is reaching his goal of getting more girls into school, ensuring they stay there and have the basic tools they need to succeed in life.

With arms gliding calmly into the air, Waldman methodically retells how he went from a kid who used to baby-sit in the Bronx to a man with a mission.

David Kenneth Waldman visits the Kamuli District in Uganda, Africa, during his visit in November. The children are orphaned, and many are handicapped or suffering with AIDS/HIV. Waldman helped set up a school in the area that serves 700 children.

In his slightly nasally, relentlessly positive, voice, Waldman retells how when meeting a young Thai girl he was sponsoring he realized his life's work — it was like a light turned on inside him.

“In 1988 I sponsored a girl in Thailand through Plan International. In 1990 I went to visit her, walking down that dirt road in rural Thailand, near the boarder of Laos. When I saw her up on the porch of her house with her grandmother, I knew instinctively, and consciously stopped, and turned to the translator and physically and verbally said that I need to have a moment here. That I now know this is what I'm doing for the rest of my life: create a foundation for children,” Waldman said, who had already been an elementary school teacher and education publisher throughout the 80s.

Waldman got the name of his foundation from a television program he hosted and produced called “To Love Children,” in which he interviewed educators and organizations for blind children in the San Francisco area.

Now, with his international foundation officially founded out of California and set up on a permanent basis in Africa, Waldman hopes the education he helps to provide will help break the cycle of poverty.

For more information, go to www.tolovechildren.org.

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