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Before the donation from Cynthia Calabrese and Mark Gelfand that made the Dalkoch School Library possible, the room consisted of a few shelves of old storybooks and two bookcases of outdated textbooks. Most of these books were not usable by any of the students due to content and language, even though the dream of the library manager was to have a library that was open to the entire community even on weekends.

The Dalkoch School in Gambela houses grades 2000 students in grades 1-8. A large percentage of the students are from the Nuer Tribe at the border area near Southern Sudan. Many live with relatives in the area so that they can go to school, and they travel home during vacations. Needless to say, given the sacrifice they make to attend school, books and libraries are very important to them. Thankfully, our generous donors met the need for books.



Cynthia Calabrese and Mark Gelfand

Cynthia explained why she sees literacy as such an important cause. "Books and children are my two passions in life. As a little girl my mother introduced me to the Salem Public Library in Salem, Massachusetts, the city where I was born and raised. Her parents as well as my father's parents all emigrated from Poland, they did not speak or read English. My maternal grandmother was working off her passage to America as a 15 year old girl sewing at a lace factory in Ipswich, MA while living in a boarding house. She was coerced by her landlady not to attend the English classes that were held in the evening but to remain with her and sew buttonholes. The landlady knew that my grandmother was very adept at sewing buttonholes and took it upon herself to take advantage of my grandmother's skills. Thus, my grandmother never learned to read, write or speak the English language. So my mother as she grew and had her own children realized the importance of education as well as the power of being able to read and the public library became my personal informational highway."

Cynthia Calabrese and Mark Gelfand also planted the Qwiha Primary School Library in the Tigray Region.

Gambela Town is the capital of the Gambela Region of Ethiopia and has a population of about 10,000. It is located on the Baro River, which defines part of Ethiopia's border with South Sudan. Occupations include shopkeepers, making local



Staff

Who keeps us going?



In your Community

How can you Help?



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Every cent helps



Purchase Books

Need a good book?



Students and Chankuar Dalkoch School

drinks, government workers, and collecting sticks in the bush for cooking purposes. Exports from Gambela include cotton, rice, and other agricultural products.