

PASSPORTS *with* PURPOSE

★ ZAMBIA 2011 ★

We believe in the power of travel to change the world. Join us.

PASSPORTS WITH PURPOSE UNITES MORE THAN 100 TRAVEL BLOGGERS TO SUPPORT EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES IN ZAMBIA

Fourth Annual Online Fundraiser Leverages Social Media and Raises \$89,699 for Room to Read

SEATTLE, WA – February 1, 2012 – **Passports with Purpose** (PwP), the annual travel bloggers' community fundraiser, raised USD \$89,699, almost \$10,000 more than its original goal of \$80,000 to build two libraries in southern and eastern Zambia through a partnership with Room to Read. The philanthropic effort was held on November 30, 2011 through December 16, 2011 on www.PassportsWithPurpose.org.

The goal of Room to Read's library program is to promote literacy and a habit of reading among children in developing countries. In order to address the continuing challenge of overcrowded schools and the need for more classroom space in Zambia, Room to Read began constructing libraries in 2009. The Room to Read team constructs the building in collaboration with the community and then fills the room with child-friendly books and materials, and provides librarian training and professional development opportunities to integrate the library and its resources into the classrooms.

More than 135 travel bloggers around the world participated in Passports with Purpose by either posting a description of their procured prize on their own blogs or writing blog post about Passports with Purpose's mission. There were almost 1,000 donors for the 2011 fundraiser, more than all previous years combined and 54 percent of the total funds came from those individual donors. For each \$10 tax-deductible donation on the Passports with Purpose site, a person was entered to win a prize of their choice. These included vacation packages, electronics and gear and amazing travel experiences.

The groundwork building up to establishing the two libraries is well underway. The libraries will be located next to the Masulwe Basic School (Grades 1-7) and Chilileka Basic School (Grades 1-9). The Chilileka Basic School and Masulwe Basic School did not have a library room. The libraries will not only serve the students (321 at Masulwe and 370 at Chilileka Basic School), but also the entire community. Each library will consist of two rooms, a larger room dedicated to library activities and a smaller storage room.

Top: Community contributing materials and labor to library next to Chilileka Basic School.
Bottom: The library walls go up next to Chilileka Basic School

“An estimated 34 percent of children in Zambia who are primary school age do not attend school; this number jumps to an abysmal 76 percent for secondary school. If a school or children's library does exist in a



community, it typically has very few books or educational materials,” said Erin Ganju, CEO and Co-Founder of Room to Read. “Thanks to support from Passports with Purpose, hundreds of children will now have access to a dedicated library staffed by a trained librarian and filled with colorful, age-appropriate books in their own language. Together, we are creating a more stimulating, literate environment where children are encouraged to explore and achieve their potential.”

Top: Community members at the site of the new library at Masulwe Basic School. Bottom: Building the walls of the library next to the Masulwe Basic School.



“We raised significantly more money than previous years in a very short time. The participating bloggers really should get the kudos for getting the prizes secured and sharing information on their social media networks and circles,” said Debbie Dubrow, co-founder of Passports with Purpose. “Our biggest referrers were Twitter and Facebook, reflecting the power that social media had in helping raise funds.”

“We love that Passports with Purpose takes everything we do - traveling, telling stories, blogging, social media, making connections around the world - and creates something that makes the world a better place. Those libraries in Zambia, they are a lasting gift to those who will learn to read and write and share their own stories and make their own connections,” said Pam Mandel of Passports with Purpose.



“We’re anticipating great things for our fifth year anniversary in 2012,” said Passports with Purpose co-founder Beth Whitman. “With that comes great responsibility and expectations, but if the last four years have taught us anything it is that we can use the power of travel to do amazing things.”

Passports with Purpose’s 2011 platinum sponsor was Round the World with Us; silver sponsor was Travellerspoint; and bronze sponsor was HomeAway. Each of these companies has supported Passports with Purpose for two or more years.

About Passports with Purpose

In 2008, Debbie Dubrow, Michelle Duffy, Pam Mandel, and Beth Whitman, the bloggers behind Delicious Baby, WanderMom, Nerd’s Eye View and Wanderlust and Lipstick, respectively, began a travel-inspired initiative to raise money online. Passports with Purpose also filled the need to do long-lasting good for people in the places travelers visit by uniting an online community and leveraging the social media platforms of more than 100 travel bloggers around the world. PwP initiatives benefited Heifer International; the Passports School with American Assistance for Cambodia and a village in Tamil Nadu, India for 25 Dalit families with Land for Tillers’ Freedom. In 2011, funds were raised to build two libraries in Zambia with Room to Read. For more information about Passports with Purpose visit, www.PassportswithPurpose.org, www.Facebook.com/PassportswithPurpose or www.Twitter.com/PassportPurpose.

Media contact: Meg Paynor, meg@paynorpr.com, 206.913.3848.

###