

Mwika Lutheran College
and the
Mt. Kilimanjaro Retreat Center

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Mwika Lutheran College is located on the eastern slope of Mt. Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. The college was founded and built by the Augustana Lutheran Synod in 1953. Mwika Lutheran College has educated and sent out many thousand evangelists, church musicians, parish workers, African church leaders and pastoral candidates.

Over the past 10 – 15 years, unrelated events occurred simultaneously resulting in severe negative implications to the College:

- 1) Synod mergers in U.S. Lutheran churches. Funds in support of Mwika were lost in the shuffle.
- 2) The market price of Tanzania coffee dropped precipitously. Sales of coffee beans had been the primary source of income for parents of Mwika students.

The results of these events have put serious financial strain on Mwika College. Mwika College, its leaders, administrators, instructors and students NEED OUR HELP!

Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Lafayette, California, has an opportunity to immediately enhance an existing source of revenue at Mwika – The Mt. Kilimanjaro Retreat Center. The Center has nine bedrooms, each with a private, American style bathroom, a large dining room and when the cloud cover lifts, unparalleled views of Mt. Kilimanjaro! The Center accommodates up to 18 persons.

The guests that utilize this non-marketed/promoted Center are visitors from the U.S., Germany and Finland. Pastors, their spouses and former students who attend workshops and conferences at Mwika also use the accommodations at the Retreat Center.

Although only twenty minutes from the trailhead to Mt. Kilimanjaro, Kilimanjaro Retreat Center has never been marketed to local Safari companies or travel agencies around the world. It has not been promoted as a spiritual retreat center to Tanzanian Lutherans or Christians anywhere. The potential of this facility to provide rest and respite to travelers, spiritual renewal to the weary plus revenue to the college is huge.

In July, 2004, a third factor occurred that is having immediate, negative financial effects on the College. And, this is where OSLC can offer it's assistance. Janeth Shoo, Mwika Home Economics instructor and Manager of the Retreat center for the past eight years moved from Mwika to Moshi. Her husband, Dr. Frederick Shoo, Principal at Mwika was appointed Assistant Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tanzania. His office is at the Lutheran Center in Moshi and a daily commute to Mwika is very difficult.

Because she was on the college staff as the Home Economics instructor, Janeth received minimal compensation as the Retreat Center Manager. The grant and matching funds received from OSLC will be used to 1) employ an experienced hostel/guest house manager for the Center; 2) purchase kitchen and laundry equipment; 3) update the dining room; 4) purchase patio furniture; and 5) purchase additional bed and bath linens.

Marketing for the Kilimanjaro Retreat Center will be done on a volunteer basis by me.

It is with great enthusiasm and anticipation that I look forward to helping welcome a contingent of OSLC "Working Safari" guests to the Kilimanjaro Retreat Center in the very near future.