

W.E.E.P. for Southern Sudan

### Progress Report #1

Since detailing my project within my jury project proposal, I have attempted to move forward, taking steps to carry my project into realization and completion.

Fundamental to this progress has been my decision to surround myself with others who are interested and committed to my cause. Thus, I have initiated the formation of the beginnings of my student organization and have held three meetings to date. During these meetings, composed mainly of members of the Baptist Campus Ministry with attendance ranging from about ten to fifteen students, I have attempted to move our organization forward, adhering to the desired goals detailed in the schedule portion of my proposal.

Specifically, I have achieved the goal of forming a small student base from which to launch a larger student group. Within this student base, I have selected seven individuals with which to form an Executive Board. Together, we have hashed out the individual needs of the student group and have assigned offices to meet these needs. Offices for Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations/Advertising, Liaison Coordinator, and Communications positions have been formed and filled. Each person has been made aware of the specific obligations of his/her position, and has been given an approximate timetable to gauge when they need to have completed individual responsibilities for the group. Details concerning the responsibilities of each office are found within a student constitution, which includes offices and details of how the group will function, such as defining active membership, the purpose of the group, the process of holding elections, etc. Together with assigning offices and very recently writing a constitution, I have filled out the appropriate

paperwork for forming a student group, and will submit it within the next week in order to officially become a student group.

In order to further expand the group beyond my small student base, I will speak with several contacts, given to me by my jurors, Karen Slaymaker and Jay Ingram, who oversee all other student groups on campus as well as those who are in charge of all religious organizations on campus in order to glean from them ideas for expansion. I have also informed my Public Relations/Advertising chair that she needs to attempt to find and form connections with other groups who champion similar causes, such as Displace Me, an organization committed to bringing awareness to the genocide occurring within Sudan. All board members have been instructed to, and are in the process of, contacting those individuals at Murray State who have positions relatable to their own in order to gain an idea of what they need to do to help the group function. They have also been encouraged to go beyond or deviate from what has been implemented by the Murray State group; they have been told to look for potential weaknesses in order to assess and critique Murray State's group, so as to expand and enhance our own group.

As a board, we have also discussed the businesses and churches we will target for sponsorship (including Immanuel Baptist, Calvary Baptist, the UK Medical Center, etc.) as well as the methods by which we will present our "pitch" for sponsorship. These methods include using the documentary filmed by students at Murray State University, as well as pamphlets and brochures they have created. After we have established a basis for sponsorship and have completed a trip to Sudan ourselves, we will use our own materials, created by members of the board, in order to further our basis for funding. We are agreed, however, that we, as a separate organization, want to create our own website

(responsibility of the Communications chair) and that we wish to also establish ourselves as a separate non-profit organization, both of which we are in the process of doing.

What continues to stand in our way of moving forward beyond formation of the student group is that we have little information on how Murray's group conducts funding. We believe that in order to pitch our idea to businesses, the terms for handling money must go beyond simply handing it to the friend of someone who used to live in Sudan who has taken on the responsibility of caring for the girls' education. Therefore, we must politely and delicately attempt to sort out Murray's method of funding; we may then decide to establish our own system for donating money that is not entirely relationally based. In order to overcome this particular hurdle, the Vice Chairperson and myself, along with the group's treasurer, intend to visit Murray State over the Christmas Break. I also will attempt to meet with Gabriel in order to better understand his methods of communicating with his friends in Sudan. Moving forward therefore depends on sorting out the money issue since we do not feel comfortable presenting our group to churches and businesses without an established knowledge of a visibly secure method of transferring money.