



# Best Hope Learning Center

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## GLOBAL ORGANIZATION

### LOCATION: MOSHI, TANZANIA

- Tanzania is situated on the east coast of Africa along the Indian Ocean, with lands that stretch to the second largest fresh water lake in the world, Lake Victoria, and the world's tallest free standing mountain, Mt. Kilimanjaro at 19,341 ft.
- Total population in 2015: 53,470,000
- Home to extravagant wildlife and cultural diversity, offering cultural immersion, exploration, and adventure.
- Life Expectancy: 60 (Males) / 64 (females)
- More than half of the total population still live on less than \$1.25 dollars a day
- Moshi is a town just at the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro with a population of about 200,000 with most people residing in and around the community belonging to mainly the Maasai and Chagga tribes.
- Languages: Swahili, English, and many tribal languages

My global field experience was with an organization called **Cross-Cultural Solutions (CCS)** in Moshi, Tanzania. CCS's mission is to operate volunteer programs around the world in partnership with sustainable community initiatives, bringing people together to work side-by-side while sharing perspectives and fostering cultural understanding. Volunteers are able to make a difference by offering attention and support to students who have few opportunities for special one-on-one connections.

#### Primary Placement: Best Hope Learning Center

- Provides nursery school education including reading, writing, counting, songs, and other activities for around 30 children ranging from ages 3 to 6.

#### Typical CCS volunteer activities:

- Teach English and basic mathematic skills (counting, addition, subtraction)
- Teach sports, games, songs, and arts and crafts.
- Assess the development and the progress of the students by helping to create testing procedures and standards.
- Work with the teacher to develop pre-school activities and materials to use throughout the year

\* Aside from voluntary placement, I had the opportunity to learn about Tanzanian culture and history, learn Swahili, cook traditional dishes, and engage in weekend excursions including a safari, visit to the hot spring, and a day hike on the mountain.

### CONNECTIONS

- Classroom Connection: I learned about the interaction between environmental risk factors, protective factors, and developmental factors while working with children and how those factors impact their lives.
- Career Connections: Developed an awareness of cultural sensitivity by immersing myself into Tanzanian culture and challenging my privilege and identity. In addition, I gained practical experience in a global setting through working internationally with local organizations that can be transferred into my career as a social worker.

### SKILLS DEVELOPED

- Increased flexibility in unpredictable situations
- Increased ability in verbal and nonverbal communication
- Learned Swahili language basics
- Increased self-awareness



*"Traveling: it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller." - Ibn Battuta*

#### Acknowledgements

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### ADVICE

- Embrace the unknown
- Learn to laugh at yourself
- Go in with an open mind
- Explore the surrounding community and build relationships with community members
- And just like the Lion King... "Hakuna Matata"

\*Any further questions, please feel free to email me at [azzaretn@umich.edu](mailto:azzaretn@umich.edu)