

Ryan's Well Foundation

Organization Info:

Name of Organization: Ryan's Well Foundation

Website: www.ryanswell.ca

Address: P.O. Box 1120,
Kemptville, ON,
K0G 1J0

Mission Statement: The Ryan's Well Foundation is a family of people committed to delivering access to safe water and sanitation as an essential way to improve the lives of people in the developing world. We empower citizens of all ages to take action and effect change in the world.

We have two goals – BUILD and EMPOWER.

Contact Person for Questions (name, email, and phone number):

Jane Baird
Executive Director
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Please check the most appropriate issue dealt with by your organization:

Children Elderly Hunger/Homelessness Disaster Relief Animal Welfare
 Health/Wellness Environment Human Rights Families Soldiers/Supporting Troops

About Your Issue Area:

What is the deeper issue behind your organization?

“You are really living proof that one person – and it really doesn't matter how old you are – can really make a difference.”

(Oprah Winfrey – speaking with 9 year-old Ryan in 2001)

What programs or services does your organization offer?

Ryan's Well Foundation has two goals – BUILD and EMPOWER

1. Build water, sanitation and hygiene education projects. Our focus is on isolated communities of East and West Africa and Haiti. To date, we have completed over 700 wells in 16 countries – always in partnership with the local community to ensure sustainability – bringing access to clean water and sanitation to over 736,000 people.
2. Empower others to make a difference. Ryan's story is compelling – not only within the context of the global water and sanitation crisis – but also as motivation for all of

us to take action. Now an undergraduate student, Ryan continues to inspire people of all ages – youth in particular – to make a positive change in the world.

Do you have an interesting story about your organization or clients to share with the students?

My story is really very simple. One day in January 1998, I was sitting in my Grade One classroom. My teacher, Mrs. Prest, explained that people were sick and some were even dying because they didn't have clean water. She told us that some people walked for hours in Africa and sometimes it was just to get dirty water.

All I had to do was take 10 steps from my classroom to get to the drinking fountain and I had clean water. Before that day in school, I figured everyone lived like me. When I found out this wasn't the case, I decided I had to do something about it. So, I went home and begged my mom and dad to help. After a few days, they told me I could do extra chores to earn the \$70 I thought would build a well. I thought that's all it would take to solve the world's water problem. I worked for four months to earn my first \$70. Then I learned that it was actually going to cost \$2,000 to build a well in a place like Uganda. I also learned that the problem was way bigger than I realized.

I started speaking to service clubs, school classes, to anyone who would listen to my story so that I could raise money for my first well at Angolo Primary School in Uganda. That's how my little Grade One project became the Ryan's Well Foundation.

I am now a third year student at the University of King's College in Halifax on the east coast of Canada. I am studying international development and political science but remain involved with the Foundation as a speaker and Board member.

My advice to anyone is that in order to make a positive change in the world, you need to find something you are passionate about and then you need to take steps to act. For me, the issue is water and sanitation.

***Water is essential to all life.** I hope my story is a reminder that we can all make a difference - it applies to each and every one of us.*



How Can Students Help?

How can students help through specific, tangible cash grants? (ex: \$25 feeds 1 dog for 1 month; or specific items/supplies that will benefit your programs)

Join other students and schools in our School Challenge - raising money to build a well at a school or community that does not have access to clean water or sanitation. Schools can pledge any amount they would like because they are working with others to build their well project. Reports and photos will help you track the project from beginning to end.

How can students help through group service projects? (What is useful to your organization

and educational to students?)

Tell friends, family and classmates about the importance of clean water and sanitation to health. Ask them to join you in spreading the word about water conservation or in a fun activity to raise money to build a well for a school or community that does not have access to safe, clean water.

Do you provide individual volunteer opportunities for youth? (If so, what ages, and what types of volunteer opportunities do you provide?)

No

Are there opportunities for students to be recognized by your organization? (A Mention in Newsletter, Site Visit of Facility, Celebration and Mingling with Clients, etc.)

Yes, mention in the Newsletter, published twice a year or mention in the web site "Spotlight" or "School Challenge". Thank you letter and certificate.