

Digging for hope with Ugandan Water Project

By Amanda Seef
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Pass by the table in the Union with bottled water being sold for \$1 and you might see another fundraising opportunity. Below the simple exterior lies a worldwide project and a group of students striving to improve the lives of one country's residents. The Ugandan Water Project has dug deep into the souls of Brockport students, helping to raise more than \$500 toward providing safe, clean drinking water for Ugandans.

The slogan of the campaign, "a campus-wide answer for a worldwide need," has hit home for students choosing to become involved. The program is being executed in a variety of ways, with fundraising efforts culminating April 9, at a concert by Isaiah 6. The band, hosted by BASIC, are the founders of the Ugandan Water Project. In promotion and honor of their visit, the on-campus efforts began.

So far, volunteers have manned a table in the Union since March 11. At the table, bottles of water bearing these efforts will continue until Thursday, April 9, when the concert will be held.

"We can buy water out of a

bottle for \$1," volunteer Carey Schmidt said. "[Ugandans] can't get sanitary water for free."

Other volunteer efforts have included a "dorm storm," where nearly \$200 was collected for the project.

By bringing sanitary water and operating wells to the developing nation, many other feats are accomplished.

"It doesn't just fill a need for water," volunteer Nathan Herbert said. "There's a very wide scope by doing something practical."

One issue helped by a new well is the rate of rape. Many women and children are raped on their journey to wells or to dig deep holes, finding dirty water. Child-birth-related disease and general infection can also taper off, as sanitation improves.

The concert will be held in the Union Ballroom April 9. The band, Isaiah Six, is a worship band based in Rochester. The four members have been playing since 1998, reaching youth in order to share gospel. The band will be both performing and speaking about the Ugandan Water Project.

The band and fundraiser are Christian-based, though the organizer notes that it has only helped.

"I was really surprised, it's ab-

solutely overwhelming," organizer Kerri Phillips said. "No one cares that it's Christian-based. They're just ready to go in and give them water."

After the concert, the Inter-Greek Council will be taking over fundraising efforts.

Most volunteers with the effort have done so without being attached to the sponsoring club.

"My political science background leads me to be inclined to help people prosper and bring about peace in troubled areas, and help people to lead generally happy lives," Herbert said.

Phillips is happy with the support from the campus and volunteers.

"You can see the results," she said. "Each student on their own can feel like they're making a difference. It's empowering to each student. Every group involved can bring their own strengths."

More than 10 clubs, departments and organizations joined with BASIC to plan and execute the fundraiser, including the BSG board of directors, ECOS, SSTEP and Residential Life. Among the others are the Honor's Club, Circle K, Campus Life, Habitat for Humanity, the Social Work Organization, the Military Science Department, Campus Ambassadors and IGC.

"This is a practical need with practical means," Phillips said.

Interested students can contact Phillips at 607-857-3990 or ugandanproject@gmail.com.

**A campus-wide
answer for a worldwide
need.**

— The Ugandan Water Project