

## **THE JOSEPH LAWRENCE CHOW SCHOLARSHIP at Ndanda Secondary School (A Level)**

This scholarship has been created to honor the life of Joseph Lawrence Hai-Sung Chow by helping students who share his values and passions. Joseph died at the age of 23 in a sudden and tragic accident which cut short a life full of promise.

Joseph was a graduate of Fordham Prep School and Amherst College. He planned to attend medical school when he returned home. He was in the final weeks of a two year tour with the Peace Corps of Tanzania, where he was the only math and science teacher at Ndanda Secondary School. The plan was for him to teach only Chemistry (he had no teacher training at all). However, when he got to his school he found that there was nobody to teach advanced math or physics, so he volunteered to teach those classes, too. He won an award from the Tanzanian Government for the amazing improvement in his school's performance in science.

Joseph was a very good musician, and he practiced playing either the piano or the organ for at least an hour every day. He was also a great swimmer, and was on the school team for all four years at both Fordham Prep and Amherst. He was not able to continue swimming with a team in Africa, so he started long-distance running instead. He ran in the Mount Kilimanjaro marathon, passing by many other Peace Corps volunteers who had run for years. When Joseph decided to do something, he gave it his whole heart and mind; whether it was something God had given him natural talent for, like the piano, or something he had to work hard to be good at, like running. As one of his friends wrote, "... although Joe was never the fastest swimmer, he was far and away the most determined. He was a unifying force on the team and his dedication was a critical part of the team's success. Joe's enthusiasm was ubiquitous; he always gave 110% and drove everyone else to do the same."

According to his application to the Peace Corps, Joe's goals were to experience another culture and to make a difference in the world. Within two years he had taught himself Kiswahili. He started an HIV/AIDS awareness club and ran fundraisers. When his family visited he proudly showed them around his village, where he was greeted by all of his neighbors. Then he traveled with his brother and climbed to the highest peak on the continent, Mount Kilimanjaro. The Peace Corps in their press release wrote that "Joseph not only adapted to his new surroundings, he flourished."

Joseph's desire to help others was nurtured by his family, his schooling and his faith. All were fundamental to who he was. The incredible outpouring of affection and respect that followed Joseph's death was awe-inspiring. And this scholarship is a concrete example of that outpouring, since it is funded by donations that were made by more than 350 people. We hope that the scholarship recipients will understand that this benefit results directly from who Joseph was; and that they will strive to live like he did.