Every now and then, something happens that leaves you unexpectedly in awe. Such was the case in October when Kerus Core Team Members, Kenny and Kimberly Hobbs arrived in South Africa bearing arm loads of little plastic baggies - nothing pretentious or spectacular at first glance - just some gifts for our orphans - or so we thought!

Peeking out from each bag, amidst a plethora of fun little goodies, was a picture, a handwritten note and a beautifully decorated paper handprint. As our orphans opened these curious gifts, each one represented a caring friend in the United States who wanted to know them and bless them. In turn, each orphan sent back their own handprint on a heart to complete the handprint to heart connection across the continents. We noticed that the children, upon opening the bags, went straight for the notes and pictures. The candy could wait!! It was such a precious time of loving expression and an appropriate picture of what the work of Kerus is all about!

As we close out another year, we are reminded of the many people that stand with us day by day, year by year, helping us bring life-changing help to very needy communities. And the help comes in such a variety of ways, each meeting a different need and touching lives at a different level. We are grateful and humbled to be blessed with so many committed partners.
In 1994, Drs. Marcia Ball and Jennie Cerullo were asked by Campus Crusade (CRU) to create and lead the educational and training component of CrossRoads, a newly formed HIV/AIDS initiative. The result was a powerful educational curriculum and 4-day training program equipping professionals to lead young people to make choices that would stop the spread of AIDS. In 2000, Drs. Cerullo and Ball left their university positions and Kerus Global Education was founded, allowing for expansion of these life-changing messages to reach an even greater audience. Kerus focused on elevating the ministry impact of worldwide organizations such as Samaritan’s Purse, Willow Creek Community Church, TWR (Trans World Radio), Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), Teen Challenge, World Relief and World Vision. In 2004, Kerus launched the It Takes Courage!™ (ITC!)™ curricula and then, in partnership with TWR, created Grandma’s Village, a wonderfully engaging radio drama series, that is now available in 6 languages and broadcast throughout Africa. So many years later, our combined efforts have reached over 53 nations, providing professional training to over 50,000 adults who have taught curricula authored by Kerus to more than 3 million children around the world!

In 2008, Kerus decided to launch a program to care for orphans and widows impacted by HIV/AIDS. An Orphan Care Center was built and is now serving over 138 children and the 95 homes where they live. This center, located in the township of Soshanguve, South Africa, is known as “the place where people care about you” and is inspiring courageous acts of love and personal decisions that bring life, health and hope to those in need. We are thrilled to have played a role in the reversal of the AIDS epidemic, increasing understanding and compassion for those affected, and improving the quality of education in so many communities. God continues to extend our reach and bring more caring adults to help in tangible ways. We passionately believe the next 15 years will continue to leverage the multiplying efforts of courageous leaders Kerus has inspired and equipped. One thing will never change – our heart, God’s heart, for children! We are grateful beyond words for all those who have stood beside us throughout the years with financial and prayer support, professional expertise and encouragement along the way. We have truly been blessed!
It Takes Courage\textsuperscript{TM} is a more than just a curriculum for teenagers. It is a movement that engages an entire community to change the lives of its youth from the inside out. Grandma's Village puts the ITC\textsuperscript{TM} principles into story form for broadcasting with a facilitator's guide that allows for the same community involvement as the regular ITC\textsuperscript{TM} program.
Giving a Gift that Counts!

Whether it’s those reaching out or those being reached, the Kerus numbers are expanding . . . and we are thrilled! This Christmas season, honor those you love with a gift given to help “the least of these.” It’s a gift that will count far beyond the season!

Send your gift in the envelope provided and enclose a note with the name of the person you wish to honor and the address where the card should be sent. To ensure that your card will arrive by Christmas, please send your request to be received at the Kerus office by December 15th.

In this season of giving,

Mathapelo (Woman of prayer) Tebele

Thank you for Making a Difference

At a recent It Takes Courage!™ training conference in Soshanguve, South Africa, we were privileged to have teachers and principals from elementary and secondary schools, pastors, orphan care workers, students from the Nazarene Theological College and pastors from Ethiopia. It was an amazing conference that changed lives and brought hope. Below are two theological students’ responses to what they received at the conference.

I have never in my life attended a conference like this one. It left me speechless and I now have the courage to stand up for what is right. What stood out for me was the issue of healthy and unhealthy relationships. Most importantly, I learned about the importance of decision making and the bad decisions that I make today can make me sink and drown and paralyze me but even in the midst of my mistakes God is still able to forgive me. So it is wise to make good decisions and if I made a mistake, God changes me and gives me a fresh start. The conference has been life changing and so practical in my life. Thank you so much!!!!

Mathapelo (Woman of prayer) Tebele

It is with great joy and appreciation that I’m writing to you. My vocabulary falls short of expressing my sincere gratitude towards you for making it possible for me to attend such a life-changing conference.

I’ve been asking myself and asking God where to go, what to do and how to start. I know for sure that I’m called to youth ministry, but I’m not quite sure whether I’m equipped for that or not. Well, I’m pleased to boldly say that through this conference, I could see a glimpse of where God is leading me and how He wants to use me. I see this curriculum directly addressing the issues the youth in my context are faced with. I learned that only aiming to impact the spiritual life is not enough. We need to take a holistic approach where we minister to the physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual person. By doing this, we help them recover from the “Big Rock” consequences they may have encountered so that they know that there is light at the end of the tunnel. This will help them build the character that they want to develop because it is chiselled into the whole person and not only one part of the person. As they develop character, I will teach them the good they ought to do (head). As time goes, they will love the good (heart). Then finally do (feet) the good they know and have a passion for.

This is how the curriculum has shaped my dream of having a youth ministry. It would not have been possible without your contribution. God bless.

Makabongwe “Makabee” Vena