

11th Annual Benefit for the Schools of Africa Project

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This year, the Westchester Chapter of WFWP New York was very excited to have our annual benefit for the Schools of Africa Project at the beautiful and modern Eileen Fisher Hall in Irvington, New York, down by the Hudson River. (The Eileen Fisher events hall is part of the Eileen Fisher Fortune 500 company. Eileen Fisher is a very distinguished fashion designer.)



Our emcee, Ms. Johil Ross, opened the program and introduced our first speaker, Mrs. Angelika Selle, President WFWP USA. Our chapter was delighted to have our president give the introduction to WFWP. No one else could have done a better job! To end her introduction on a high note, Mrs. Selle called Ms. Charmaine Singer to the front, to honor and appreciate her dedication for the past 10 years and more of international volunteer service work, especially in support of the Schools of Africa.

Charmaine was moved to tears to receive this honor. We are all deeply grateful to her for continually giving so much of her time, effort, and heart to the Schools of Africa Project for so many years.

Then our hearts were warmed by a beautiful song, "Circle of Life," sung by Mr. Raoul Joseph.

Next, it was time for a sumptuous lunch, deliciously prepared by our two fine ladies, Mrs. Kanae Holt and her sister Mrs. Chiharu Kellar. There was an amazing display of California rolls, shrimp cocktail,

sandwiches, chicken, vegetables, cheese and crackers, cut-up fruit, and mouth-watering desserts. Everything was professionally prepared, and artfully displayed.



Lunch with WFWP USA President Angelika Selle

After lunch, Mrs. Lara Sawamukai presented a pictorial report of the successes of the Schools of Africa Project. The many photos of the happy African children at our schools warmed our hearts, and we could visualize how our dollars truly are changing the lives of these beautiful children.

Now it was once more Mr. Joseph's turn to grace us with a beautiful song by Josh Groban called "Believe,"

Our keynote speaker was Ms. Luziela de Jesus Gaspar Martins, who is an Angolan Diplomat in Washington, D.C., and the daughter to the UN Ambassador of Angola. Her topic was "Education for Development." She shared some poignant examples of how education opens up a world of possibilities for poor, rural children in Africa.

It was quite humorous that in the middle of her talk, her dad called to see how she was doing! It was touching that she made a point of thanking her mother (who was present), and her father (who was present for a minute on the phone), for providing her with the great opportunities and advantages of a loving home and a good education. She wants, as we all want, the same for every child, everywhere.

The event not only raised funds to promote the education of African youth but raised our hope and determination as women dedicated to peace and the well-being of others.

Ms. Kristi Mas, who has attended and supported many of our events, made this comment: "I thought this year's Schools of Africa event went so well. It was the best ever. The products look good. The space was perfect. The food was made with love. It was well organized. I am very impressed with everyone's effort and I want to congratulate you all on a successful event. Great job!"

Thank you to all of the 65 people, 17 of whom were guests, who attended and helped to make our benefit a great success!