

## In the Service of Humanity

Almost everyone says that they want to change the world, to make it better in a way that will leave a lasting impression on many. Unfortunately, few succeed. I, however, have broken this barrier and know that through my multitude of community service, I have impacted the lives of people around the world. I have served as the Vice President of Southview's PEACE Club, which is devoted to "Promoting Ethnic And Cultural Equality." This position allows me to not only contribute to our projects, but also to propose and design them myself. My most important and influential project is Books for Africa, which used the Rotary Four Way Test to help fill the impoverished schools and libraries of Africa.

The first step of the test, which concerns finding the truth, was instrumental in determining the severity of the issue and an effective solution. African libraries and schools are drained of resources due to war and poverty, so books are very rare. Sudan, for example, has some of the lowest rates of education and literacy in the world. I researched organizations that were attempting to end this book famine and found Books for Africa, a reputable organization that adequately and efficiently distributes large quantities of books. I designed the PEACE Club drive so that students could donate books through their English classes.

When I presented this project to the rest of the club, I used the other three steps of the Four Way Test in order to prove that Books for Africa was credible and worthwhile. The drive was definitely fair to all people concerned. All students take an English class, so there was no bias in ability to donate. Books for Africa distributes the books throughout the continent and does not focus on just one area, giving all African students and citizens with access to a library broader opportunities. It builds goodwill by improving the United States' reputation abroad and connecting the impoverished people in African nations to Americans that are more privileged.

Finally, the distribution of books is highly beneficial to all concerned. It gives the recipients more opportunities by improving literacy and overall education. Perhaps even more importantly than this project's immediate effect in Africa is the effect that it had on the Americans that participated in the drive. Projects such as this broaden America's awareness of global issues and encourage Americans to take a stronger role in service that will improve both their local and global communities.

Our Books for Africa drive was incredibly successful; we collected over 250 pounds of books! The Rotary Four Way Test ensured the credibility of our drive and truly led to its success. I hope that the people that participated will continue to use the test to solve other issues that are affecting the world and their personal lives.