

## Deep River and District Hospital Connecting with Tanzania, Africa

Two staff members from the Deep River and District Hospital are heading for Shirati, Tanzania in Africa for three weeks to volunteer their time and experience to the local healthcare facility, Kilema Hospital. Stacey Mortson, DRDH's Chief Financial Officer and Garry Hartlin, the Information Technology Manager, will be travelling with a group of five others who are from Pembroke and Brampton, Ontario. The organization through which this volunteer opportunity has been created is the Canada Africa Community Health Alliance (CACHA).

Three months ago, two 40 foot containers full of materials and supplies were shipped to the African Hospital. Contents included 24 computers configured by Mr. Hartlin, hospital equipment, clothing, school supplies, and toys and books for the more than 400 orphans and vulnerable children living in the area who have been affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Stacey Mortson, DRDH's CFO, hopes her time in the country will expand her cross-cultural understanding and communication. Her professional goal is to help the Hospital's accountant to have a working budget template, a finance application, and some useful reports available. "I will be working with the hospital accountant to help him develop some reports that will provide meaningful information to help hospital management make appropriate decisions. Right now, they have little idea about what their different programs are costing them. It's always been a dream of mine to visit Africa, and provide some kind of help and with this trip I'll be able to do just that," says Mortson of the upcoming trip.

In addition to Mortson's work with the Hospital accountant, Garry will be installing a new computer network, setting up the accounting system electronically in addition to repairing some existing solar panels and a windmill the community has in place.

The group is looking forward to experiencing a completely different lifestyle and will be billeting with local families so they will have the opportunity to get a taste of what life is really like in Africa. "The people of Tanzania are amazingly poor, but very happy, and I'd like to find the key to that. Someone that we would see as being in absolute poverty could be solidly middle class over there. I think we could all use a reality check about how good we have it," says Mortson of what she expects to learn while over there.

The team leaves the first week of October and is returning on the 21<sup>st</sup>. For more information on the project please contact Stacey Mortson, 613-584-1266 ext. 162 or Garry Hartlin at ext. 306 or visit [www.cacha.ca](http://www.cacha.ca) for more information on the organization.