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## Detroit nursing students impact Kenyan girls' education

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Wayne State University College of Nursing has been providing global community health education and experiences for nursing students for 4 years. The targeted global health community is Kenya, where a gender disparity in literacy rates exist, with 86% of literate males as opposed to only 69% literate females. A major barrier to female access to education is menses, which impacts school attendance, educational performance and increased likelihood of dropout. An estimated 2.6 million Kenyan girls require support obtaining menstrual hygiene materials. Kenya has five million girls, ages of 10 and 19, meaning 1 out of every 2 school-age girl needs hygiene supplies. Nine nursing students provided health education about feminine hygiene using reusable menstrual pads. The goal was to empower adolescent Kenyan females with alternative means of managing menses to remain in school and reach their educational potential. In 2017, 12 schools were visited. Outcomes 1,100 kits were delivered to Kenyan girls in 2017. In the past four years, at least 2,400 girls received education and supplies. The influence on the college of nursing students was significant. One student wrote, the experiences gained through the Kenya trip were life-changing and provided a more holistic perspective about what community health means, international trips go beyond the clinical opportunities offered at home, this experience shaped new definition and standard for patient-centered care, participants dissected what it means to be culturally competent and adopt new strategies to meet this aspect of care. I would argue that this trip is important and champion it for future students. Another student independently initiated a fundraising project, with several activities to fund the materials needed to make pads. Faculty plan to measure changes in cultural awareness and humility in the participating nursing students and determine use of the reusable pads by the Kenya girls one year after the educational intervention.

### Biography

Joan T Bickes has taught undergraduate community/public health nursing at Wayne State College of Nursing for 30 years. She is also the Coordinator of the MSN Advanced Public Health Nursing Program at the college. She has published articles and presented posters and papers at national, regional and local meeting. She has taken nursing students and faculty to India, Costa Rica, and Kenya to learn about health care delivery, nursing education, and cultural similarities and differences.

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