

Summary:

This past December 1st was World AIDS Day, which was the 21st year since beginning in 1988 and it was the 4th year that Jerry Hughes & the Hughes Foundation has led an HIV/AIDS Project to Namibia. Located right above South Africa on the West Coast of Africa, it is home to diamonds, to one of the largest deserts in the world, and to every 4th person infected with HIV/AIDS.

With nearly 40 million people worldwide infected with HIV/AIDS and a new infection every 5 seconds, which is about 17,280 new infections of HIV every day, it could appear that there is no hope left.

However, Jerry uses his story for this exact reason in Namibia – to bring hope. Behind every statistic Jerry sees a soul, a smile, a need – a person. He uses his story of shortcomings, challenges, and his own HIV diagnosis as a platform to speak life into millions of people throughout all of Africa.

How does and did this happen in 2009:

- Every television and radio station, newspaper, magazine and corporation has Jerry share his story as a means to spread hope and to educate people how HIV is transmitted and how to remain HIV-free.
- Hughes Foundation partners with local organizations such as the German Embassy, NABCOA, His People Christian Church, Women in Business, Leading Lodges of Africa and more.

What else does Hughes Foundation do in Namibia?

- Hughes Foundation is partnering with an orphanage called Dolan Children's Home, where there are 21 orphans, of which 7 are living with HIV/AIDS. We are working to begin an after-school program in 2010 and to make sure that the children's food and clothing needs are met.



Jerry with a HIV+ baby who had been left by his mother at the orphanage.



Jerry with orphans.



Jerry speaking on Radio Channel 7 which airs to more than 5 million homes.

Results of Hughes Foundation Work:

- Early diagnosis of HIV is key in living a long and healthy life, but because of fear many people refuse to get tested and as a result die to AIDS. However, HIV testing immediately after Jerry speaks increases by nearly 106%.
- Thousands of people have reported that after hearing Jerry speak they were able to gain strength to live and not commit suicide. Many revert to suicide instead of facing possible discrimination, sickness, loss of family and job.
- Millions receive the basic information on how HIV is transmitted and are equipped to remain HIV-free.
- For the 1 in 4 people living with HIV/AIDS in Namibia they receive the hope they need to change their death mentality to a life mentality and are reaching out for help to local HIV/AIDS organizations.
- Churches over the past years are working more closely together because of Hughes Foundation influence vs. being divided. Along with the churches, many corporations have Jerry speak to educate employees on HIV/AIDS and to promote corporate unity and support for employees living with HIV/AIDS.

Testimonials from 2009:

"I was raped and I did not want my child, I wanted to kill my baby. After hearing Jerry's story and hearing that his Mother was able to make it, I decided to raise my baby and not kill my baby and I realized that my baby has meaning and so do I." (A woman from Channel 7 Radio)

"I was going to stop taking my HIV medication so I could die from AIDS. I was depressed, lonely and had no one to talk to. I heard Jerry share this story on Channel 7 Radio and decided to look for a job, start taking my medication and I have learned that my life does have meaning and purpose." Jacob, 18 years old, Windhoek, Namibia

"Thank you Hughes Foundation for your help at our orphanage. Your support has helped me get the schooling I need to stay off the streets and thank you Jerry for helping me believe in myself and that despite my parents dying from AIDS, I can make it." Joseph, 13 years old, Windhoek, Namibia

Looking ahead to 2010:

- Hughes Foundation will be working with their partner orphanage to start the After School Program to keep the children educated and up to educational standards so they will graduate on time.
- Hughes Foundation is going to partner with local corporations, media, musicians and churches to launch a large-scale event December 3, 2010, called "Night of Hope," which will fill 15,000 seats at the local Soccer Stadium and be a night of music, testimonials, speaking and theater. It will also be an event that will offer free HIV testing and counseling on site. There will also be break-out sessions that people can sign up for to go deeper into HIV/AIDS as it relates to their personal situation.





Many babies are left at the orphanage by HIV/AIDS-infected mothers who no longer can care for them.



Youth With A Mission is a group that Hughes Foundation partners with to promote healthy living and thinking.



Jerry speaking at the GTZ World AIDS Day Event, which is sponsored by the German Embassy.



Jerry has personally helped many kids over the past 4 years – supporting their schooling and basic living needs.



Jerry speaking at a branch of First Namibian Bank Employees.



Cemetery for children who died from AIDS.



Group picture at our partner orphanage.



The orphans opening their Christmas presents.



A pizza party brought smiles to the kids and let them forget about living with HIV/AIDS for a moment!



Jerry speaking to employees at a large company on World AIDS Day.



Jerry spoke at the NABCOA World AIDS Day Event with attendees from the United Nations and around the world.



Jerry speaking at a World AIDS Day Hip Hop Event for youth.