



"...make a difference in the lives of the people around you, share what you have learned with those less fortunate than you. Always help those in need...Always stand up for what you believe; that you know in your heart is right."

*Anne Heyman, Founder of Agahozo Shalom Youth Village*

Dear Friends,

This summer I will be travelling to Rwanda with a small group of adults, along with a few High School students from the [Snowden International High School](#) and [Madison Park](#) high schools in Boston, as representatives from The Kerry Jon Walker Fund. The Kerry Fund ([www.thekerryfund.org](http://www.thekerryfund.org)) provides opportunities for financially challenged teens to participate in such trips and help with the mission.

We will be headed to The Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village in Rwanda as part of an amazing journey of good will, education and charity. The Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village was founded by Anne Heyman and her husband Seth Merrin in response to the lingering problem of orphaned children in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide in 1994. ASYV continues to service about 500 residential students today. Here is just a part of their story:

"The Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village (ASYV) is a residential community in rural Rwanda. Its 144 acres are home to youth orphaned during and after the Genocide of 1994. Designed to heal and nurture these young people, the Village is a place of hope, where "tears are dried" (signified by the Kinyarwanda word "agahozo") and students can live in peace (from the Hebrew "shalom"). The union of these two languages and concepts reminds us of the success of similar efforts in Israel, where a significant youth population recovered from the trauma of the Holocaust.

A safe and loving community serves as the backdrop for programs designed to help our students grow emotionally and intellectually, transforming vulnerable young people into healthy, self-sufficient, and engaged change-makers. The experiences they accumulate in the Village will help them at every level of their future development.

In addition to healing oneself, Agahozo-Shalom teaches the principle and practice of healing one's community, and encourages students to mend the world around them."

"Each of ASYV's programs and services are designed around two guiding principles: *Tikkun Halev*, or healing the heart, and *Tikkun Olam*, the healing that comes from helping others."

Please visit [www.ASYV.org](http://www.ASYV.org) for the full Agahozo-Shalom story!

**This is where I need your help!**

**As part of this mission trip, each volunteer will be allowed to bring 3 very large suitcases filled with much needed items to be donated to the residents of ASYV. Approximately 100 lbs. worth of goods!**

**Please consider donating any of the items on the list below to help fill my “Donation Suitcases”.**

- **I will begin collecting donations at the Mitzvah Day event at Congregation Sha’aray Shalom on Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup> from 8:45am to 1pm. If you can’t make it on May 7<sup>th</sup>, donations marked for ASYV may be dropped off at CSS from now until June 10<sup>th</sup>. Monetary Donations may also be made to ASYV through the Kerry Fund website: [www.thekerryfund.org](http://www.thekerryfund.org). Please be sure to note that the donation should be directed to ASYV.**

**Please contact me with any questions at [annetteski3@aol.com](mailto:annetteski3@aol.com)**

**We will be collecting:**

- **Spring/Summer or Fall Clothing for teens girls. Please make sure these items are in new or nearly new condition. Rwandan dress is modest, so no short shorts, halter or tank tops etc. please.**
- **Cotton Sweaters and sweat shirts, t-shirts, blouses, pants, skirts, dresses, shoes, sandals, sneakers and soccer cleats.**
- **Sports equipment and apparel for mainly soccer, basketball and track. i.e. Socks, shirts, shorts, deflated soccer & basketballs (small ball pumps), sneakers, cleats**
- **School supplies – notebooks, backpacks, pens, pencils, markers, highlighters, calculators, paper, journals, art supplies.**
- **Bedding for twin beds - Sheets, pillow cases, light blankets, & towels**
- **Toiletries – soap, shampoo, conditioner, manicure/nailcare kits, toothbrushes, paste and floss.**

**Thank you so much for your generosity. Every single donation goes to making a world of difference!**

**With warmest regards and appreciation,**

**Annette**

**Annette L’Heureux**

### **Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village Mission:**

**To enable orphaned and vulnerable youth to realize their potential by providing a safe and secure living environment, health care, education and necessary life skills. Through these efforts, it is our vision to create socially responsible citizens in Rwanda and, eventually, around the world.**