



Where Are They Now? Dorothy's Scholarship Story

By Mary Grauerholz

Dorothy Bassett has befriended Maasai warriors in Kenya, stood under the lights of the Moulin Rouge in Paris and explored the Waitomo Glow Worm Caves in New Zealand.

What jump-started these jaw-dropping adventures? The degree she earned from UMass Boston.

The dynamic Cape Cod native says her education gave her the knowledge and confidence she needed to explore the world and volunteer in Africa. That education was possible through \$25,000 in scholarships from the Foundation's Daysie Day Scholarship Fund, the Cape Cod Association, our supporting organization, and other local nonprofits.

"Getting an education was really, really important to me," she says. Although college costs presented an enormous roadblock, she had a plan: She enrolled in Cape Cod Community College for her associate's degree and successfully carried all her credits to UMass Boston.

She graduated in 2009 at the height of a recession, took what jobs she could find and traveled for a year, including backpacking through Southeast Asia. She worked as an environmental chemist in Boston for a time, then took a solo trip around the world. Eventually she returned to Africa, bringing food and supplies to orphanages and camps for displaced persons in Kenya.

"When I was traveling and thought of home, I thought of Chatham," Dorothy says of her birthplace. In fact, her ancestors arrived on the Mayflower and helped found her home town.

Today, Dorothy has come back to the Cape and serves as the Director of Operations at the Chatham Marconi Maritime Center, a nonprofit organization that preserves and utilizes the Chatham Marconi site for educational and community enrichment.

Dorothy says she "does everything under the sun" at the Center--from marketing to teaching classes to developing exhibits. The job also gives her the chance to give back by creating new educational opportunities. The Center and five other local nonprofits apply for group grants to further STEM education around the ecosystem and preservation of Pleasant Bay. "It's funny how things come full circle," she says.

Having traveled the world, Dorothy says she appreciates the Cape even more. Her optimistic outlook is due, in great part, to the Cape Cod Foundation. "I know I couldn't have done anything if it wasn't for them."