

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 23, 2007

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Ten Thousand Villages Education Manager visits artisan partners in East Africa

Unique trade relationship connects Raleigh residents and artisans in Kenya and Uganda

Raleigh, NC – Nancy McMahon, Student Education Coordinator at Ten Thousand Villages, 435 Woodburn Rd., will travel to visit Ten Thousand Villages artisan partners in East Africa next month. This unique opportunity will take McMahon to visit artisans in Kenya and Uganda.

Annual learning tours give Ten Thousand Villages staff the opportunity to visit artisans in their communities and workshops. On March 4, thirteen store managers and staff members from Ft. Collins, Colorado, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Austin, Texas, and Ann Arbor, Michigan Ten Thousand Villages will leave for a 21-day trip to meet artisans in Kenya and Uganda and hear first-hand how fair prices and consistent orders from Ten Thousand Villages have improved their lives.

Highlights of the trip will include visits to Ten Thousand Villages artisan partners in Kenya such as the Bombolulu Jewelry Workshop, where artisans with disabilities receive training and job skills, and the Center for International Market Access, which is a pioneer in the field of sustainable wood certification. Additionally, tour participants will visit Uganda Crafts and NAWOU, basketry workshops in Uganda that provide vital fair income to women who have been widowed as a result of war and the HIV and AIDS epidemic in East Africa.

“Spending time with the artisans that we work with and learning about their cultures and their lives is integral to the mission of Ten Thousand Villages. Learning tours underscore the importance of building long-term trade relationships with our artisan partners. This type of cross-cultural exchange also gives us a unique opportunity to build friendships with our artisan partners that are based on mutual respect and understanding,” says Sarah Pearson, executive director.

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“I can’t wait to travel to Kenya and Uganda,” said McMahon. “By meeting and talking with the people who make the beautiful products I see every day, I will gain a better understanding of how my work here in Raleigh benefits artisans around the world.”

Ten Thousand Villages sells unique home décor and gift items at more than 100 stores throughout the United States and Canada and online at tenthousandvillages.com. For 60 years Ten Thousand Villages, with headquarters in Akron, Pa. and New Hamburg, Ontario, has cultivated an international marketplace where artisans in Asia, Africa and Latin America receive a fair price for their work and consumers in North America have access to distinctive products from around the world.

Ten Thousand Villages in Raleigh is open Monday – Saturday 10-7pm, Sunday 12-5pm. For more information, please contact Caroline Smith, marketing manager, at (919) 821-1100 or visit us on the web at <http://www.villagesofraleigh.org>

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