

## CMC features 'A Thousand Smiles' from Kenya reception, Feb. 2

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**Nine-year-old Vivian Pendo is an intensely bright young girl whom For the Good Period staff and volunteers met and interviewed at Kajiampau Primary School in 2016. As a top student, Vivian helps run the classroom. Though she has yet to hit puberty, she can speak knowledgeably about what menstruation is, due to education she received from For the Good Period and her mother.**

*Kate Lapidès | Special to the Daily |*

### IF YOU GO ...

#### Colorado Mountain College's Women in Philanthropy presents:

"A Thousand Smiles: Girls, Pads & Opportunity in Kenya," featuring photographs of For the Good Period in Kenya by Kate Lapidès.

When: 5:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 2, opening reception and fireside talk; photography exhibit runs through April 9.

Where: Colorado Mountain College, 150 Miller Ranch Road, Edwards.

Cost: Free and open to the public

EDWARDS — For photojournalist Kate Lapidès, sharing positive images of the young African women she has met during the past year and a half has a deeper purpose.

"Much of the documentary imagery depicting Africa focuses on the continent's poverty, conflict and crisis," said Lapidès, who coordinates communications and outreach for a Colorado-based humanitarian organization called For the Good Period.

The group is working to expand opportunity to girls in rural Kenya through education.

"My hope is that sharing the smiles and joys of these girls in Kenya will allow viewers to connect with them as individuals, instead of stereotypes," Lapidès said.

An opening reception and fireside talk for "A Thousand Smiles: Girls, Pads & Opportunity in Kenya" will be held from 5:30 to 7 p.m. today at Colorado Mountain College in Edwards. The event is free and open to the public and is being presented by Colorado Mountain College's Women in Philanthropy.

A photography exhibit featuring the work of For the Good Period is now hanging throughout the campus building. The exhibit will remain on display through April 9.

### DREAMS AND POTENTIAL

Joining Lapidès at today's event, which is free and open to the public, will be Kayce Anderson, of Glenwood Springs, executive director of For the Good Period. After an informal reception in the college's cafe by the fireplace, Anderson will lead a short conversation about the organization's work. The group is addressing barriers to girls' education that are a result of a historically patriarchal culture and extreme poverty. The challenges range from child marriage to a lack of access to sanitary pads for adolescent girls.

According to Lapidès, millions of girls in developing countries worldwide miss as much as six weeks of school each year due to an inadequate understanding of reproductive health.

"Eventually, many drop out completely, failing to realize their potential and their dreams," she said.

For the Good Period is one of numerous organizations seeking solutions to this barrier to girls' education. The nonprofit partners with villages in rural Kenya to create more girl-friendly schools, offering sanitary pads and reproductive health education to girls and their families. Since the organization began in 2015, more than 2,000 Kenyan girls have received education and supplies from For the Good Period.

Lapidès said the goal is to impart knowledge and work with girls, schools and communities in the long term to create sustainable solutions.

"The organization is grounded in the belief that change must be led by the communities themselves," Lapidès said.