

Water Works book generates philanthropic tidal wave

YOUNG AUTHOR'S VISION RAISES MORE THAN \$40,000 FOR CLEAN WATER

Sawyer Anderson is not your typical 10 year old. This spunky girl will be entering fifth grade at Oak Grove Lutheran School this fall and spends most of her time dancing, acting in theater, playing basketball, drumming in a rock band, singing in choir, drawing and playing with her 3-year-old sister. When asked what she does in her “free time,” the answer is not quite what you’d expect. She is, in fact, changing the world.

It all started when her father took a trip to Zambia in 2017 — a poverty-stricken country about the size of Texas in south-central Africa — with Hope Lutheran Church (in conjunction with Wellspring for the World and World Vision). “My dad told me about kids my age who were injured or died trying to get clean water,” Sawyer says. “That’s not fair. Every kid should have water.” It was the story of a young Zambian boy Sawyer’s age named Brian that sent Sawyer into action. His younger sister drowned in a shallow well on a trip to get water with Brian for the family. And he lost his arm a year later due to a snake bite while getting water from that same dirty source.

With a desire to help, Sawyer asked her mother if she could sell cookies and water at her grandmother’s garage sale, with proceeds directed to Wellspring for the World. “My goal was to raise \$50, which represents safe and clean water for one person, for a lifetime. However, I didn’t raise \$50, I raised a whole lot more!” says Sawyer.

This lit a spark in Sawyer. Determined to do more, Sawyer developed an idea to make bags and sell them for \$50 each. Sawyer, in partnership with the children’s ministry program at Hope Lutheran Church, designed the bags from chitenge — African wax fabric that is commonly used to make dresses, bags and infant carriers. About 100 volunteers cut and sewed them. With a sales technique employing her unique “elevator pitch” and direct contact, Sawyer sold more than 300 chitenge bags. Alongside this massive chitenge bag project, Sawyer designed and sewed her very own bag to auction off at the Wellspring for the World – Wine to Water charity event, bringing in an astounding \$6,250.

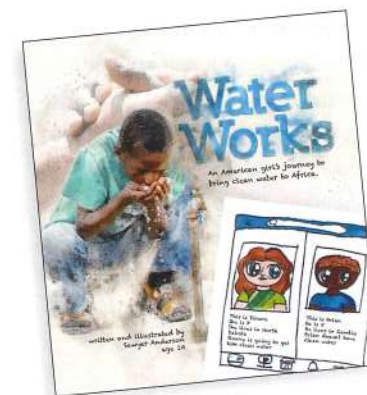
Sawyer was now on fire for this mission. When approached about writing a book about her efforts, she asked “Can I draw the pictures? If so, then, yes!” The talented young artist set to work in December of 2018 and just recently finished and published her first book entitled “Water Works,” written and illustrated by Sawyer.

“Water Works” is a semi-autobiographical children’s book, depicting how extremely difficult it is to access clean water in Africa and how the kid

in all of us can make a difference. Books are on sale now for \$9.99. Proceeds from every book sold will be matched by Wellspring for the World and World Vision (two prominent humanitarian organizations, focused on bringing clean water to all people). With the leverage of these matches, the proceeds from one book becomes \$50 and provides safe, clean water for one person for a lifetime. Sawyer also secured five sponsors (noted in her book and on posters at many locations) to help fund the cost of printing, so all proceeds from the sales of Water Works go to support the mission.

Wellspring for the World president Maureen Bartelt states, “While enthusiasm and an infectious personality are common traits of most children, an intense drive to provide life’s most basic necessity, clean water, to folks on the other side of the world is anything but common. Sawyer Anderson is a ‘water warrior’ in every sense of the word. ‘All kids deserve clean water,’ is her motto in this work, and she lives by the belief that a kid can make a difference. She’s living it and breathing it, inspiring young and old as she carries out her work. And whether she fully understands the extreme transformation opportunities that come with access to clean water or not, she’s paving the way for all ‘kids,’ ages 6 to 106, to join in her quest of bringing clean water to all.”

Since hearing the heartbreaking story of a ten-year-old Zambian boy, Sawyer has raised in excess of \$40,000, which becomes a great deal more, funding 16 new clean water wells and impacting about 5,000 lives. Sawyer lives in West Fargo with her parents and 3-year-old sister.



Sawyer’s elevator pitch? “Buy a book, save a life – it’s an offer you can’t refuse.”

BOOKS CAN BE PURCHASED

online at waterworkssea.com, at Zandbroz Variety, Melberg’s Christian Book and Gift, and at a number of area businesses who are supporting Sawyer in this amazing mission.

[aw]



photo by Ron Lee