



TOP LEFT: Megan Kelly and Jessica Roy. ABOVE: Children in South Africa model their new school uniforms, courtesy of Tailored for Education. LEFT: In Kenya, where uniforms are mandatory, this girl will now be able to attend school for the first time.

A Dress Code, Indeed

HEDGE FUND TRADERS AND BEST FRIENDS **megan Kelly** AND **Jessica Roy** INVEST IN TAILORED FOR EDUCATION AND SEND 10,000 CHILDREN TO SCHOOL. BY REBECCA M. KNIGHT

A couple of years ago, getting an education seemed an impossible wish for Jane Achieng, a 14-year-old orphan from Siaya, Kenya. Achieng's aunt, with whom she lives, works as a maid and couldn't afford to buy her a uniform, which is mandatory for children attending school there. "We had no money," says Achieng, who has twinkly, deep-set eyes.

Yet thanks to Tailored for Education, a nonprofit that improves school attendance in developing countries by providing children with uniforms, Achieng is finishing the seventh grade.

"I am very grateful," she says. "Now I have a uniform and a good dress to attend school."

Founded in 2011 by Megan Kelly and Jessica Roy, Tailored for Education has donated more than 15,000 school uniforms to kids in 11 countries, including Uganda, Malawi, and Honduras. All of the schools that the organization works with have seen a sharp decrease in student absences and dropout rates, while literacy rates and test scores have improved.

"Education is the best way to break the cycle of poverty that exists in these countries today," says Kelly. A school

uniform, she adds, is a symbol of both upward mobility and self-worth. "For a lot of the kids, this uniform is the first time they've ever had anything new of their own."

School attendance in emerging countries is an intractable problem. Many families can't afford school fees, so instead their children either work to supplement the household income or do chores at home. The issue is particularly acute for girls. According to Unicef, nearly one of every five girls who starts primary school in the developing world does not complete it.

"OUR JOBS WERE SO CONCENTRATED ON MAKING MONEY; WE WANTED TO USE DIFFERENT PARTS OF OUR BRAIN."

—JESSICA ROY

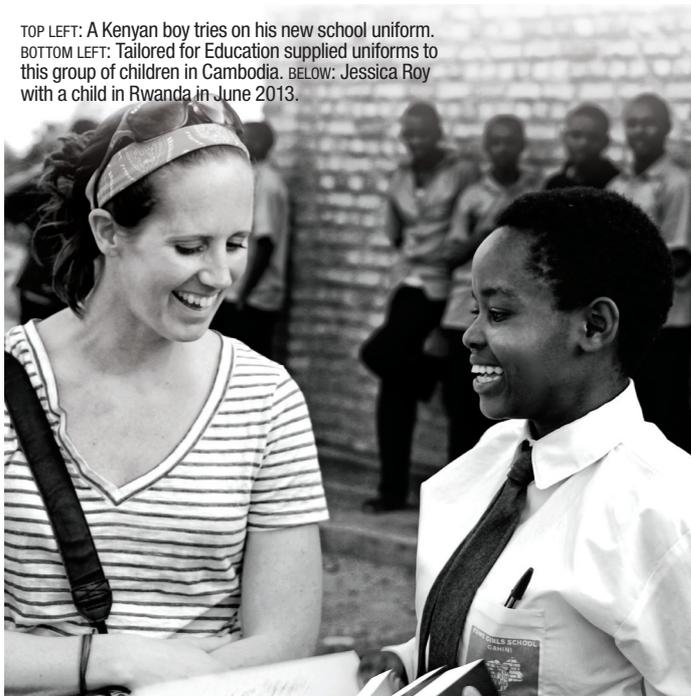
Kelly and Roy have been friends for years. Roy, 32, grew up in northern Massachusetts. Kelly, 30, is from Nashville, Tennessee. They met in their early 20s at Baupost, a Back Bay-based

hedge fund. At night they both attended business school at Boston College. "After we graduated we thought, 'Let's do something that's not just for us,'" recalls Roy.

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TOP LEFT: A Kenyan boy tries on his new school uniform. BOTTOM LEFT: Tailored for Education supplied uniforms to this group of children in Cambodia. BELOW: Jessica Roy with a child in Rwanda in June 2013.



“FOR A LOT OF THE KIDS, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THEY’VE EVER HAD ANYTHING NEW OF THEIR OWN.”

—MEGAN KELLY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 132... Tailored for Education came together one evening after Kelly dined with friends who had recently vacationed in Tanzania. Children there must wear a uniform to school, but many families can’t afford to buy one. (A school uniform there costs about \$17; Tanzania’s average per capita income is \$570.) “We did more research and realized that over 100 million children around the world are not enrolled in school—and for some it’s because they don’t have the money for a uniform,” says Roy, now a stay-at-home mom.

The pair’s first venture—purchasing 200 uniforms for children in La Vallee, Haiti—was funded with \$5,000 of their personal savings. Later they teamed up with 15 “giving partners”—including organizations like Catholic Relief Services and Partners in Health—that were already working with schools or orphanages. The partners screen the schools, measure the children for uniforms, and research local manufacturers to ensure the best price on materials.

Kelly and Roy travel regularly to meet the children who benefit from the group’s work. Last year they toured the selective Fawe Girls School in Rwanda. “The girls told us about what they want to do with their education,” says Kelly, who still works full-time at Baupost. “Some want to be doctors; others want to be teachers so they can help kids in their community.”

To date, Tailored for Education has raised a little more than \$700,000, mostly through social media, word of mouth, and private events. On October 15, to honor the United Nations’ International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, the organization will host a fundraiser at the Dome Room of the Lenox Hotel. The women have also introduced a “buy one/give one” philanthropic strategy: For every “Woven in Hope” scarf that Tailored for Education sells for \$55, it donates a uniform to a child in need.

For now, Kelly and Roy run Tailored for Education from their homes. It takes a lot of weekend hours and late-night conference calls. And yet, “It’s all worth it,” says Roy. “We just want to keep enrolling more children in school.”

tailoredforeducation.org **BC**

INSIGHT:

WHAT:
Tailored for Education’s fall fundraiser

WHEN:
October 15, 7 PM–10 PM

WHERE:
The Dome Room of the Lenox Hotel, 61 Exeter St.

INFO:
Call Kristen Daly at 617-834-9481

CHARITY REGISTER
Opportunities to Give.

BOSTON CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

The Milagros para Niños gala celebrates the local Latino community, with proceeds benefiting Boston Children’s Hospital’s Latino patients and their families. Chaired by Carolina Alarco, Albie Alvarez, Cristina Bozaa, Marcel Quiroga, and Monica Neuman, this year’s event will include a silent auction during the cocktail hour—in which a doctor and a nurse will be honored and a patient’s story highlighted—followed by dinner and dancing. Last year’s gala raised more than \$567,000. childrenshospital.org

When: September 12, 6 PM

Where: The Westin Boston Waterfront, 425 Summer St.

DANA-FARBER CANCER INSTITUTE

An Evening with Champions presents performances by world-class figure skaters to benefit the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. The event will feature Boston’s own Yasmin Siraj, the 2010 US Junior silver medalist and a competitor in the 2013 World Junior Championships, and two-time Olympic champions Ludmila and Oleg Protopopov, among others. Now in its 44th year, An Evening with Champions has raised more than \$2.7 million. aneveningwithchampions.org

When: September 19 and 20

Where: Harvard Athletics Complex and Bright Hockey Center, 65 N. Harvard St.

ESPLANADE ASSOCIATION

Dance under the stars on the Charles River Esplanade at The Moondance Gala. Past Esplanade Association events have raised more than \$800,000 to fund important park improvements and community enrichment programs. This year’s gala, led by cochairs Jim and Audrey Foster, will help fund the restoration of the Hatch Shell Oval. esplanadeassociation.org

When: September 20, 6:30 PM

Where: Charles River Esplanade, Fiedler Field

BOSTON LYRIC OPERA

As it begins its 38th season, Boston Lyric Opera will host its second annual Opera Gala, chaired by Lynn Dale. Last year the event raised approximately \$650,000 to support BLO’s onstage programming and community projects, as well as its work with emerging artists. Guests will enjoy a new production of Verdi’s La Traviata and an opportunity to mingle with cast members at a Champagne and dessert celebration. blo.org

When: October 10, 5:30 PM

Where: Citi Performing Arts Center and Wang and Shubert Theatres, 270 Tremont St. and 265 Tremont St.