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Missions at Maxwell

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BY ASHLEIGH JARDINE

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. — Acts 6:4, KJV

Ever since she was a kindergartener, Jessica Stotz knew she'd be a missionary. The physical therapy student at Andrews University made her lifelong dream come true in 2010 when she went to Nairobi, Kenya, for the school year.



Jessica Stotz

Jessica applied for the student missionary position at Maxwell Adventist Academy just months before leaving. The academy was looking for a science tutor, a task Jessica describes as "perfect" for her.

"After I was accepted for the position, I kept thinking, *Okay! I have to get ready,*" she recalls. "As it got closer, I realized that you can't be fully ready for something like that."

Arriving in Nairobi that August, she found the setting wasn't exactly as expected. Jessica says she'll never forget the distinct smoky smell, from the trees burned there, and how people walked everywhere. Even trips into town were memorable.

"We would drive down the road, craning our necks out the windows to see baboons and hyenas," she recalls. "Actually, the area was more of a city than I've ever lived in. It's very packed and populated just outside of Nairobi."

At Maxwell, Jessica helped students in study hall, taught chemistry, biology and physics, and supervised recreations. She also tutored in the girls' dormitory and spent time with the students there. These experiences taught Jessica a lot about witnessing.

"I learned that students respond to different evangelism styles," she says. "God is so multifaceted, and He interacts with people differently. It was really awesome spending time with people who have a different Christian aspect than I do."

At the end of the school year, Jessica returned to Andrews where she stays involved with missions as co-director of Improv Ministry. The group uses drama, spontaneity and humor to tell stories and present Christian perspectives on life.

"Everyone can relate to a story," says Jessica about the ministry. "At the end of each program, we draw out spiritual aspects."

One day, Jessica hopes to return to Kenya as a physical therapist or teacher. Wherever she ends up, she aspires to help people in need.

Ashleigh Jardine is a freelance writer from Berrien Springs, Michigan, where she is majoring in physical therapy at Andrews University.

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