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2011 MEDIA NOTES – I AM THE FIRST TO ...

ABOUT SHE'S THE FIRST:

She's the First is a not-for-profit that sponsors girls' education in the developing world. We encourage young people to creatively fundraise for girls' sponsorships with their online and offline social networks. For sponsors, She's the First provides community, leadership opportunities, and a sense of global citizenship. For underprivileged girls, the impact of a sponsorship is life-changing: Most will be the first in their families to graduate.

She's the First partners with charitable NGOs (non-governmental organizations), as seen in its Directory, that run the sponsorship programs in third-world countries. The She's the First leadership and research team extensively interviews all partners before admitting them into the Directory and maintains a close relationship with program directors year-round, posting their first-hand updates on the girls to www.shesthefirst.org/blog.

SECOND FOR FAR TOO LONG:

Statistics from the Girl Effect campaign of the Nike Foundation, supported by the United Nations Foundation and the Coalition for Adolescent Girls, reveal that approximately 25 percent of girls in developing countries are not in school. The gender gap is astounding: Out of the world's 130 million out-of-school youth, 70 percent are girls.

WHY EDUCATE GIRLS?

- They'll live longer and stronger lives, preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases, as educated women are better informed to protect their health.
- They'll be less likely to take abuse, empowered to stand up for themselves.
- They'll have smaller, healthier families, as educated women delay childbearing and have fewer children. As a result, they are more likely to have problem-free births and can better provide for their families.
- They'll earn higher wages, and since women tend to reinvest more of their income into the family and community than men do, they'll stimulate economic development. The former chief economist of the World Bank, Lawrence Summers, said the "investment in girls' education may well be the highest return investment available in the developing world" for this reason.

THE SHE'S THE FIRST STORY:

Tammy Tibbetts dreamed up the idea for She's the First when she was a prom web site editor for Hearst Magazines by day, volunteering by night as director of a foundation that supports children in Liberia. Upon launching DonateMyDress.org, a directory of prom dress drives, she wondered whether there could be a directory of education sponsorship

programs for girls in the developing world. More donors could then be attracted to help girls all around the globe become the first woman presidents of their countries, the first female doctors of their villages, or even the first in their family to graduate. Tammy had received financial aid for college from a New York Women in Communications scholarship given in the memory of legendary *Glamour* editor-in-chief Ruth Whitney. Inspired by Ruth Whitney's mantra of "style and substance," and fascinated by the power of media, Tammy then posted her interest in helping girls on Facebook.

It was a response from **Christen Brandt**, now Executive Director/Vice President of She's the First, which started to put the momentum behind She's the First. Christen, Tammy, and a group of their peers launched shesthefirst.org as a campaign on November 1, 2009. Less than one year later, She's the First became an incorporated organization filing for 501c3 status, forming a Board of Directors, and expanding its volunteer team. In November 2010, former First Daughter Chelsea Clinton recognized She's the First on stage at Carnegie Hall, at the event coincidentally created under Ruth Whitney's leadership: the *Glamour* Women of the Year Awards. And this is just the beginning.

2010 IN REVIEW:

She's the First finished its first full year by sponsoring 37 girls and raising more than \$13,000 for girls' tuition from two marquee events, **GIRLS WHO ROCK** and the **She's the First Soiree**, and independent grassroots fundraisers. Both of the major events in New York City had national reach due to social media activity and brought together members of the non-profit, music, fashion, tech, and media world to affordably fundraise for education sponsorships.

GIRLS WHO ROCK, a featured event of Internet Week New York, showcased major recording artists Kat DeLuna, Shontelle, Lenka, MoZella, and Vita Chambers, and built a coalition of 21 media partners to cross-promote the event, attracting 400 attendees. Six thousand dollars was raised to sponsor three Tanzanian girls, with whom the organization maintains an ongoing email correspondence. Photos, video, and letters are published on the She's the First blog and create a yearlong storytelling project unfolding over its social networks. The concert returns in June 2011.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT FOR A NEW GENERATION:

As a Millennial-led non-profit, the She's the First target demographic is college students and young professionals. The donations coming from this age group are smaller, since they have lower incomes, but are usually earned by the activity of a group, rather than by one individual swiftly writing a check. As a result, the money Millennials raise creates a deep sense of community and shared achievement among them, giving them a lasting bond to She's the First and the girl they sponsor.

At Notre Dame, for example, members of the NCAA Women's Soccer championship team raised nearly \$1,000 for Maggie Doyne's Kopila Valley Children's Home and School in Nepal by selling tie-dye cupcakes in the dorms. Two seniors from Northeastern University raised more than \$700 with a back-to-school fundraiser among friends in their apartment, sponsoring seven girls in the Haiti Outreach Program.

SHE'S THE FIRST CHAPTERS:

Students can now start their own She's the First group at schools, committing to social media efforts, monthly acts of awareness, and one fundraiser a semester for girls'

sponsorships in partner programs within the She's the First Directory. The work of the campus chapters is cross-promoted on She's the First's national social media outlets. In a similar fashion, city branches have also begun to form; the first is in Los Angeles. These branches are volunteer-run, web-based, and independently organize their own events while keeping the New York leadership team informed.

SHAPING WHAT'S TO COME:

She's the First President Tammy Tibbetts was selected as one of 10 ambassadors for the Levi's Shape What's to Come campaign, representing expertise in social change and education. Tammy inspires discussion on www.shapewhatstocome.com, participates in social media action that promotes mentoring among women, and records monthly video updates about the She's the First team. Shape What's to Come launched with an extensive global study that found women value independence, the freedom to pursue their passion, and peer mentorship above all, of which Tammy and the She's the First supporters are true testaments.

PARTNERSHIP WITH JOJO:

She's the First teamed up with Billboard Top 40 artist **JoJo** and Atlanta-based designer **Asha Patel** to launch a signature bracelet that went on sale in October 2010. The hand-assembled She's the First bracelets, made of brass and leather, are available for order via shesthefirst.org/gifts for \$20 each. Twenty percent of each sale is donated to sponsorships. JoJo has also been in two video PSAs for the cause and regularly tweets to more than 180,000 fans about She's the First.

FLIP-PING OUT:

Flip Cameras have become increasingly popular in the age of user-generated online content. With that in mind, She's the First designed six branded Flip Video cameras, with a portion of the proceeds going to AfricAid, which helps send girls to secondary school in Tanzania. The She's the First Flip Video cams can be ordered here: <http://is.gd/kco0x>

SHE'S THE FIRST 360:

She's the First provides a platform for young people who take their own voluntourism trips to publish blog posts, photos, and videos reporting on girls' education, particularly in countries where She's the First Directory partners are located. Thus far, She's the First 360 volunteers have traveled to Peru, Haiti, and Guatemala, turning their personal experience into an educational opportunity for all.
