HELEN KELLER AND HER LEGACY

Helen Keller
Helen Keller was born on June 27, 1880 in Tuscumbia, Alabama. At 19 months she contracted a fever that left her deaf and blind. Thanks to her own perseverance and the commitment of her teacher and companion Annie Sullivan, she learned to communicate. In 1888, she attended the Perkins School for the Blind and graduated cum laude from Radcliffe College in 1904, making her the first blind-deaf person to graduate from college.

During her lifetime, **Helen Keller dedicated herself to the service of humanity**. She championed women’s and workers’ rights and became a world crusader for the underprivileged, especially the blind. She also received scores of distinguished awards, including the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Helen Keller International
In **1915**, Helen Keller joined George Kessler, a survivor of the sinking of the Lusitania, to establish an organization to help soldiers blinded in World War I. **This organization has evolved to become Helen Keller International**. In 1959, the organization established *The Spirit of Helen Keller Award* to commemorate her unique contribution and express appreciation for her role as a founder, trustee and staff member. Helen Keller remained a trustee and traveled around the world to promote the work of the organization until her death in 1968.

**Mission of Helen Keller International**
Helen Keller International’s (HKI) mission, **to save the sight and lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the world**, is truly the legacy of Helen Keller’s work. HKI’s programs are active in 21 countries in Africa and Asia, as well as in the United States.

In underserved areas of the world, blindness has enormous personal, social, and economic consequences that often condemn otherwise healthy individuals to lives of poverty and dependence. Pervasive malnutrition perpetuates the cycle of poverty; every year, millions of children die needlessly from malnutrition-related diseases. These problems are being conquered through **HKI’s programs that prevent blindness, restore sight, and establish life-changing nutrition and health solutions for millions of children and adults**.

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“Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.”
--Helen Keller