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## SMS Students Sponsor Nepali Girl's Education

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tappahannock (October 28, 2002) - They live a world apart in more ways than one, but that kept students at St. Margaret's School from building a relationship with a 13-year-old girl in Nepal. Through their participation in the Bahini Fund, which supports the education of girls in the Himalayas, SMS ninth-graders are opening new doors of possibility for Nagina.



◀ Photo left: St. Margaret's School student Lynne Leonard presents Bahini Fund funds to founder Trevor Patzer with a check on behalf of the school's ninth-grade class. Their donation supports the education of a 13-year-old Nagina, a Nepali girl who would otherwise have the opportunity to attend school.

"It's been a real eye-opener for our students," said School Counselor Mary Williams. "Through the Bahini Fund, we have learned how much Nagina appreciates their sponsorship. It has made them realize how many privileges we enjoy."

The entire school came to that conclusion at a recent assembly featuring Bahini Fund founder Trevor Patzer. Girls gasped in surprise as he told them that if they lived in Nepal, harsh

economic realities dictate that some of them would have been abandoned by their families or sold into prostitution. Half of them would be married by age 14 and three-quarters of them would be unable to read.

Patzer's sobering facts were a sharp contrast to the colorful photos of lively, happy Bahini Fund girls that he displayed. Students giggled in recognition as Patzer described one Nepali girl's misadventure, oohed at slides of tiny six-year-old Bahinis dressed in their finest clothes for a cultural performance, and listened attentively to his stories of lives transformed by the power of education.

SMS ninth-graders raised nearly \$200 for the Bahini Fund at a car wash last spring. Participants included Megan Burton of Montross, Erin Martin of Callao, Sarah Reilly of Walkerton, Kate Turnage of Gloucester, boarding students Sojin Lee, Jennie Lynne Leonard and Drenika Mosby; and faculty sponsors Tom Farmer of Miller's Tavern, Susan Stephenson of Tappahannock and Mary Williams of Gloucester.

Details about the Bahini Fund can be found at [bahinifund.org](http://bahinifund.org)

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