

The Devon Foundation



How an African gem-hunting adventure turned into a serious commitment to help those far less fortunate...

With your support the Devon Foundation will help fund gemology and lapidary scholarships at the Institute of Gemology of Madagascar (IGM) for qualifying students of Madagascar.

Initially our focus will be directed toward scholarships for impoverished women and the disabled who would otherwise not get a chance at a lapidary education.

Change a life today!



We are the Devon Foundation

Dedicated to funding gemology and lapidary scholarships at the Institute of Gemology of Madagascar for qualifying students of Madagascar.

We need you! Your tax-deductible contribution can pave the way to a life-changing career in the gem industry for people of Madagascar.

Contributions are welcome from individuals, businesses, and organizations. Checks should be made payable to: THE DEVON FOUNDATION. We greatly appreciate your generosity!

Contact us to join our efforts and learn more.

Together we can change lives.



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About Madagascar

Located in the Indian Ocean near the southeast coast of Africa, Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world. It boasts geographical diversity, beauty and an abundance of mineral wealth that includes rich gem deposits.

A relative newcomer to gem mining, Madagascar offers the world a wide variety of gems including multi-color sapphires, aquamarine, garnets of all hues, amethyst, citrine, zircon, and even some opals. There are quartzes of all colors and types, and each year more gem surprises are discovered.





IGM Graduate an Inspiration

“While visiting Madagascar and looking for gems, we were introduced to Haji (center in photo above), one of the most gifted graduates of the Institute of Gemology of Madagascar. We visited his humble home, where his beautifully cut gemstones were on display in the front room.

An astute businessman as well as an excellent cutter, Haji launched his own lapidary business from his home in Antsirabe.

Haji’s story, magnificent Madagascar and the Institute of Gemology of Madagascar all helped to inspire the creation of the Devon Foundation. Devon Fine Jewelry and our customers all enjoy and benefit from this country’s marvelous gems. How could we **not** help?”

Nancy Schuring, Devon Fine Jewelry

The value that cutting adds is immeasurable. That \$10 handful of rocks becomes a \$100 handful of gems!



Building the Dream

Founded in 2003 by American gem dealer Tom Cushman, with a grant from the World Bank, the Institute of Gemology of Madagascar is the only institute of its kind in Africa and the Indian Ocean region. This area is rich in gem wealth but poor in educational opportunities. The IGM offers high quality gemology, lapidary, and jewelry-making programs.

Devon Fine Jewelry has created a scholarship fund to support the Institute. Programs range from one week to six months. By American standards, the tuition might seem inexpensive, but it is out of reach for most Malagasy people. For example, the cost is approximately \$500 for a nine-week course in gem-cutting. The average yearly income is less than \$300. Very few students can attend without scholarship aid.

To date, there have been several hundred lapidary graduates from the Institute. Many of these cutters become teachers around the country and the region. It is very gratifying to know that our educational efforts will be multiplied by graduates teaching others.



The Trip of a Lifetime

Nancy Schuring, Debbie Swinney, and Joe Portale of Devon Fine Jewelry traveled to Madagascar in the summer of 2008. They encountered a fascinating country, striking landscapes, rare and endangered flora and fauna and found the incredible gems they were seeking.

The gentle Malagasy people are cheerful and optimistic despite severe poverty. These brave people touched their hearts and helped inspire the Devon Foundation.

“Life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties, passing from one step of success to another, forming new wishes and seeing them gratified.”

Samuel Johnson