

Changing
the world
one
child
at a time

MAKENA Musings

Newsletter of MAKENA Children's Foundation, Inc.

Fall 2017 Vol. 18, No. 2

JAMBO



A Message from the President

Anne Batzer

Inspired.

That is how I hope each of you reading these words will feel when you finish the stories in this newsletter.

Our students are graduating and maturing into remarkable young women and men. They've come so far and to suggest that the glass ceiling—or even the sky—limits them seems naïve.

Of course we know they will face great challenges. The world never seems to become less complicated. And, like all countries, Kenya holds particular difficulties.

Our graduates will face widespread unemployment. But, as reflected in our Internship story, a mentor can help them have every opportunity to find employment.

Our graduates will face widespread poverty. But, as reflected in our Sunshine story, our kids have used their own experiences with want to develop empathy.

Our graduates will face widespread political tension. But, as reflected in our Graduation story, their excellent educations have prepared them to participate in their young democracy.

I'm inspired by our amazing sponsors who have taught our students the power of love and the value of persistence. From them, our students have learned that just one person can make a remarkable difference. This lesson will serve them well in both their personal and professional lives.

The articles in this newsletter tell just a part of the Makena Children's Foundation story. Much is yet to be written. Please consider sponsoring a new young life, just waiting for the transformative experience education can provide.

From all of us at the Makena Children's Foundation: **Happy Holidays!**

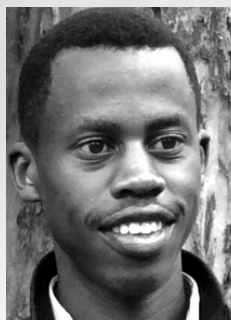
Happy COLLEGE Graduation!

We are bursting with pride that five of our students will successfully complete their educational journeys by the end of the year. All of them will don cap-and-gown and walk in graduation ceremonies in the next few months.

In a country where there are still an estimated one million children who never attend school, receiving a college diploma is a remarkable achievement. Fortunately, this does not mean the end of our relationship with these young adults. All are active in the Makena Alumni Club. Each has earned our respect, our admiration and our undying loyalty and love. We celebrate them!



Mary Gatuku has earned her Nursing degree from Kenya Medical Technical College. Mary's boundless curiosity, her creative approach to problem-solving and her graceful social skills will serve her well as she enters her profession.



Joseph Kairuki graduates with a Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Nairobi. Joseph's keen intellect and his global perspective have many wondering if he will one day enter politics. For now, Joseph has already started his own wholesale business. He's selling products to Kenyan beauty salons.



Samson Machohi is graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology from Multi-Media University. Samson's engaging warmth, resilience and communication skills are just three of his many outstanding qualities. He has already secured a paid internship at Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization.



Mary Muthoni will receive her cap-and-gown in Statistics and Programming from Machakos University. Mary's extraordinary leadership skills are apparent in her ability to hold an interesting conversation and maintain close personal relationships with people of all ages and races.



Rachel Njeri graduates with a Nursing degree from Kenya Medical Technical College. Rachel has a beautiful, highly developed social conscience. She is committed to using her degree to improve the lives of women and girls throughout the world. She has already secured a job in a long-term care facility.

Supporting Sunshine Home

By Mary Jo Baich

Besides providing an education, one of the primary goals of Makena Children’s Foundation (MCF) is to teach the students that as you receive, so must you learn to give to others. This lesson has been learned beautifully by the members of the Makena Alumni Club (MAC)!

The first of October, nine members of MAC completed their second annual community service project. MAC members take on these community service projects as a way of paying forward the help they have received from their American sponsors.

Boys and girls from the MAC club visited the 70 boys who reside at the Sunshine Home, an orphanage for homeless boys, who previously lived on the streets of Naivasha. Sunshine home is mainly funded by Australians, through their churches.

Under the leadership of Chair Mary Muthoni and Treasurer Mary Gatuku, MAC members raised the funds to donate a trailer load of rice, posho (white corn flour) cooking oil, biscuits, juice and soap. It was a joyous time for everyone as evidenced by the emails we received from Alice Njoki and Mary Muthoni and the pictures from Kenyan Manager Charles Karanja. A steady rain canceled the MAC members’ plan of playing outdoor games with the Sunshine boys, so the group adjourned to the dining hall and spent their time dancing and singing together in their lively Kenyan tradition.

The MAC members also shared the circumstances of their own lives and the losses they have experienced. However, the promise of an education given to each Makena student has given them a future of great hope. The Sunshine boys responded to this message, as they, too, are offered a primary and secondary education and, with excellent grades, a college education. Seeing the accomplishments of the MAC members brought home the reality that these boys also have a hopeful future.

Mary Muthoni relates that after telling the boys about the many courses she has taken in college for her major, Statistics and Programming, they, too, wanted to take these classes. Mary must be a gifted speaker to make these challenging classes so appealing, don’t you think? Alice Njoki said that she learned that one does not have to be rich to give to others. She said despite the little they have in their lives, sharing what they have with these boys brought joy, happiness and big smiles to all who participated.

Enjoy these photos that prove Alice’s point:



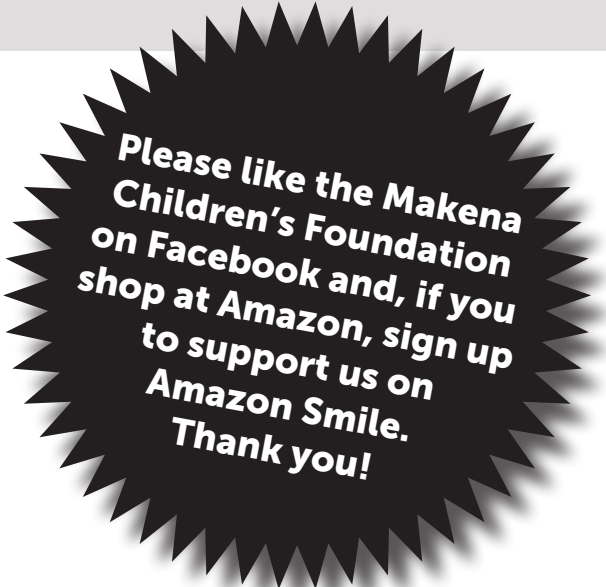
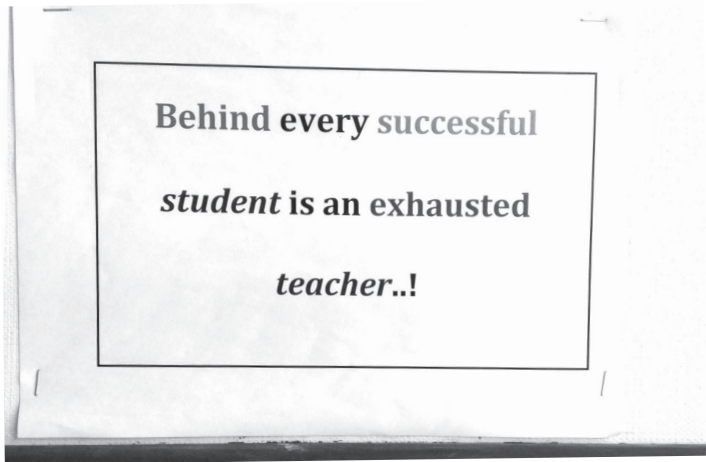
Something to look forward to!

In January, a unique opportunity awaits the members of the Makena Alumni Club. A skilled educator, Susan Reinecke, will provide leadership training to our young adults. A Societal Advancement faculty member for the Center for Creative Leadership, Susan designs and delivers leadership trainings for all age groups. She has over twenty years of experience in the field of education, working with private and public schools, colleges and universities and non-profit organizations across the United States.

In 2015 Susan earned an Educational Masters (EdM) in Human Development and Psychology from Harvard University. This most recent academic achievement is the third Masters degree for Susan, a lifelong learner. Her former graduate degrees include a Masters of Fine Arts (MFA) and a Masters in Education (MEd).

We are so grateful Susan has volunteered to provide not only this training for our alumni, but to participate in all activities and meetings during our annual working trip to Kenya. We know her wealth of experience in both education and innovation will benefit all aspects of the Makena Children’s Foundation. We look forward to sharing Susan’s perspective of her experience in Kenya with you.

Seen on a bulletin board at Lizar School in Naivasha:



Will You Sponsor a New Makena Student?

Our sponsors give financial support and so much more! Like sponsor Lindsay Berryman who traveled to Kenya to spend time with her sponsored student and our families, all of our sponsors supply hope, opportunity, expectation, warmth, humor, nurturing and joy. A one word description of what each of our sponsors share is love.



So many Kenyan children are waiting. Waiting for the opportunity to get decent nutrition. Waiting for the opportunity to go to a good school. Waiting to do their part to climb out of poverty. Waiting to realize their potential.

Will you please be the one to make a difference in the life of a child with an open heart and a willing mind who is waiting?

Make your tax-deductible donation TODAY, payable to Makena Children's Foundation, Inc.,
711 Medford Center, #117, Medford, OR 97504.



- ☐ I wish to sponsor a Makena student with a gift of \$2,000 annually.
- ☐ I wish to lend a hand to the smooth operation of the Makena Children's Foundation with a gift of:
☐\$50 ☐\$100 ☐\$200 ☐\$400 ☐\$600 ☐\$1,000
- ☐ You have permission to mention my support in your publication(s).
- ☐ I prefer to make my gift anonymously.
- ☐ I am unable to contribute now, but please keep me informed about the work of Makena Children's Foundation.
- ☐ I would like to share my story relating to Africa or my sponsored child.
Please contact me by phone ☐ or by e-mail ☐.

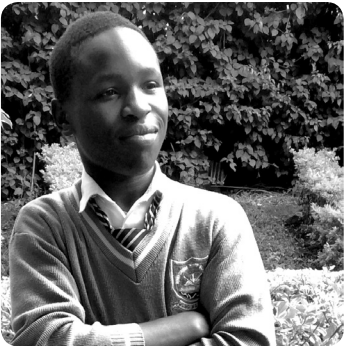
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Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ e-mail _____

“It’s good to feel what it’s like to be a member of the working class!”

That’s what Alice Njoki (shown at right) said after her internship with APA insurance company in Naivasha. One of the strengths of a Kenyan university education is that most students are required to spend time in an internship (called an “attachment” in Kenya). Mary Muthoni (at left), spent her internship time at Kenya’s National Bureau of Statistics. Still, with the unemployment rate in Kenya hovering at around 39%, jobs are difficult to find. Our Kenyan Director Francis Karanja has offered to find mentors for each of our college graduates. These mentors, professionals in the graduates’ fields, will help each young person bridge the tricky waters from leaving school to finding a job in their field.



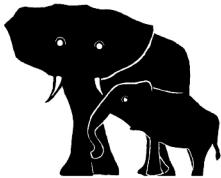
Congratulations, John!

Congratulations to John Muirui, our most recent secondary school graduate! John graduated from Elite School in Nyahururu last winter. Like all of our high school graduates, he spent two months at a computer school while he anxiously awaited learning his test scores. Fortunately, John was invited to attend Chuka University where he is studying Hospitality and Tourism. John brings not only academic skills, but a love of music and his stunning musical talent, along with him to his university experience.



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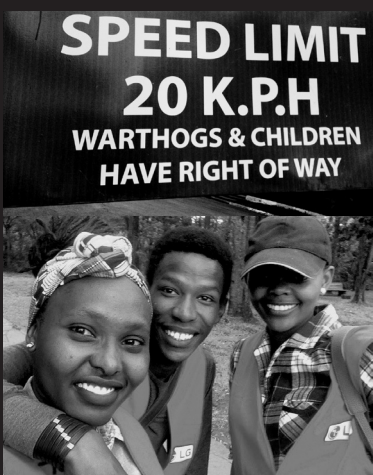


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If you’d like to help bring the priceless gift of education to deserving children, please complete the form inside and send your donation TODAY.

Yield to Warthogs!

In June, Makena University student Simon Mwangi volunteered for the annual Clean-up Day at Nairobi National Park. (Simon is pictured here with two friends who joined him in giving their time to maintain this important, historic site.) Simon also shares a photo of a sign prominently displayed at the entrance to the park (one you won’t see in America!) and one of the ubiquitous warthogs who trot about—making the sign necessary.



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