



RAFIKI

FOUNDATION
MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER

May 2020 – Michelle and David Graves

Dear friends and family,

Last year, Michelle contacted The Rafiki Foundation about teaching at a classical Christian school in Africa after our youngest son graduates high school. David's idea was that he could retire and tag along doing graphic design through the internet, or finally write that Great American novel. God's idea was different. Michelle discovered this was not just a job—it was a missionary opportunity. And Rafiki wanted both of us.

We attended a Missions Training weekend at the Home Office in Eustis, Florida, raised support through God's grace and your amazing generosity, and in June 2019 we found ourselves at the Rafiki Village in Nairobi, Kenya, serving for a month.

The Rafiki Foundation exists to help Africans know God and to train Africans to transform Africa for Christ. Founded in 1985 by Rosemary Jensen, Rafiki operates Villages in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The Villages provide living and educational facilities that support an orphanage, a daily Bible study program, a pre-k through twelfth classical Christian school, the Rafiki Institute of Classical Education (RICE), and a Widow's Training Program.



Michelle with a Rafiki school student



Michelle at morning assembly with the Rafiki Nairobi School

The Villages are constructed on donated land ranging from 26 to 73 acres. The Villages contain residential cottages, school buildings, playing fields, and vegetable gardens. An African Rafiki Mother lives in a cottage with up to ten orphan children, with as many as 100 children in each Village. These children, together with day students from the surrounding area, receive an excellent pre-k through twelfth grade education from African Christian teachers using a classical Christian curriculum written by Rafiki and specifically developed for use in Africa.



Michelle introducing Rafiki students to the Latin language

In addition, the RICE Program trains African high school graduates to become excellent, godly teachers using classical Christian curriculum.

Providing a good Christian education is the best way to effect long lasting change to address the physical and spiritual needs of Africa. Rafiki's goal is to train enough teachers to start 1,000 classical Christian schools in the next ten years.



David with students from the RICE second year cohort

Our month in Kenya was an unbelievable, life-changing experience. We experienced the joy of daily Bible study with Christians of very different backgrounds. We helped with weekly teacher training sessions, coached writing, administered tests, read aloud, tutored, brushed the rust off of our math word problem solving skills, introduced kids to Latin, ate ugali with students, shared in the cottage's evening devotions, and much more. We went to bed exhausted every night.



Nathan and Rafiki boys

And we learned that there are millions of African children without access to a quality education and far too few teachers trained to help them. God is calling Rafiki to help with these needs. When we got back to the U.S., we realized He is calling us to help Rafiki, so we applied for long-term service in Africa with Rafiki and Rafiki has accepted us!

Our hope, if the Lord is willing, is to be trained and ready to go in the summer of 2021 after Nathan graduates from high school and is off to college. We are about to begin an eight-week-long online study course and are scheduled to participate in a two-week-long Survival Camp training in July at the Rafiki Home Office in Florida.

We do not know yet what country we will be assigned or in what capacity, but we hope that our decades of work in classical Christian education will help further God's plan for Rafiki and Africa.

In order for this to happen we need two things:

1. Most importantly, your prayers that God will use us to further His purposes in Africa.
2. Your financial support. You can make donations and pledges at RafikiFoundation.org or contact us directly.

We will be happy to provide more information, visit your church or small group and share the vision and work of The Rafiki Foundation. You can expect regular updates from us as we make preparations over the next year and as we begin this ministry. Thank you in advance for considering the ways that you can partner with us.

A year ago, we did not expect to be serving Him in missions at this stage of our lives. We ask for your prayers as we begin the work that He has prepared for us.

In Christ,

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