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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



Michelle and David Graves

PO Box 12714
Kampala, UGANDA
EAST AFRICA

Contact information

Email:
MichelleG@RafikiFoundation.org
DavidGr@RafikiFoundation.org
Missionary #252

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Dear friends and mission partners,

We have now been in Uganda for more than three years. That does not seem possible—and each day is so full of countless tasks that we often lose sight of the fruit of the Rafiki mission, although it does make clear that “apart from [Christ] we can do nothing.” Nonetheless, through Christ Rafiki is bearing much fruit here.

Kasozi

Kasozi grew up at Rafiki and was in our first A-level class. He began university when classes resumed after the COVID lockdown and completed his coursework in May of this year. At university he led a group using the Rafiki Bible Study and a team that won the Certified Financial Analyst Equity Research Challenge in the Spring 2024 semester. Although his course work is done, he will not actually receive his Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Makerere University Business School until their formal graduation in January 2025.

“Some great news. My results came back after so much waiting and I thank God I’m on the graduation list and I’m set to graduate with a second-class upper degree,” he told us yesterday. “Once again thank you for everything you did for me while pursuing this degree.”

Kasozi is currently working for an advisory firm focused on early-stage technology.

Spelling Bee

On July 27, fifteen primary students from our school set out early in the morning for the Wakiso District Spelling Bee. After a grueling day, many smiles, and a few tears, the team returned at 7 p.m. with two finalists from grade level five who qualified for the National Spelling Bee to be held later this year.



Rafiki student Mishaal competes at the Wakiso District Spelling Bee

Mary

As our residents complete A-level classes and go off to university, their places are being taken by day students from the community, now over 400 of them. Thanks to the Lord’s provision and your generosity these students pay only about thirteen percent of the total cost of educating them. This, in turn, makes it possible for us to help students who would otherwise have dropped out of school. One of these is Mary.

Mary has dreamed of being a teacher since she was a little girl; however, when she reached A-level (completion of which is required to take the National Exam to determine university entrance), her mother could no longer afford to pay her school fees and Mary had to leave school.

We were contacted about her by someone who had heard of Rafiki through our Bible and Bible study distribution efforts. She brought Mary to visit. Because of our low school fees, she was able to help sponsor Mary and the next week Mary was in the first year of our A-Level course. Mary is now one of our best students.

University Scholarship Students

In addition to Kasozi, four other former residents completed university studies in May (Uganda's first group to do so). They will be awarded their diplomas at ceremonies between October and January. *Please pray with us for them to have success as they begin to look for jobs.*

In August, our ten former residents who completed A-level studies last December began university in degree programs in fields including law, finance, library science, tourism, education, and nursing. Another ten are in their second year. By God's grace, we have been able to fund scholarships for all of them.

Rafiki Teachers Institute (Uganda's RICE Program)

With the help of countless wonderful folks both here and at the Home Office in Florida, we continue to progress towards full accreditation of our institute and our degree programs. We recently resubmitted a substantially revised application with additional supporting documents. We are praying that this will be submitted for final approval at the next sitting of the National Council for Higher Education later this year.

In the meantime, our enrollment continues to grow. In addition to our full-time program, our intensive holiday program that meets during primary/secondary school term breaks filled up for both the January and August start dates. Most of these students have had little or no exposure to reading and appreciating literature, so much of what we ask of them is a real struggle, but then the light breaks through. This term, Michelle has been reading out loud each day from Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Farmer Boy*. Nobody seemed to be getting it—until a few days ago when she read the chapter in which the family feeds a stray dog who winds up chasing off an intruder. The gasps of pleasure and appreciation make up for hours of struggle.

Short Term Missionaries

Since May, we have enjoyed a record number (for us, at least) of short-term missionaries: 10 in all, some new to the field, some old hands. They have helped us with PE, reading, childcare, music, resident scrap books, and more. With online missions training through the Home Office available several times over the fall, winter, and spring, it has never been easier to prepare to come for a life-changing experience. And it does not matter what your skills are—we have something you can help us with. Summer is a great time to come as school is in session from late May until the end of August.



Primary students learn about shopkeeping at a local market in Wakiso on an August 21 field trip



Melody Club members William and Mercy talk about singing at a club's exhibition



Students performing at the Term 2 Recitation on August 23



Residents arm wrestling at Term 2 Field Day on August 22



Rafiki student Tendo fights for the ball in a netball tournament at Legacy Academy in Luwero

In closing

We are privileged to be here and thank God for each of you and for your prayers and financial support. We will be in Houston the week before Christmas and in the New York City/Washington, D.C. areas the following week. We would love to meet with any of you who are around to tell you more about what God is doing in Uganda.

Please pray for

- Full financial support for us to continue serving in Uganda (<https://RafikiFoundation.org/missionary/michelle-and-david-graves-252>).
- Rafiki to grow to seventy missionaries on the field in 2025.
- All Rafiki teachers' institutes—particularly ours here in Uganda—to be filled up and complete the accreditation process.
- Completion of the primary curriculum accreditation process (final changes under review as this is written).
- Rafiki Foundation to attain full funding of 3,500 Rafiki students and orphans by end of this year.
- All of our children and students to come to know God early and become godly contributors.
- 100 schools in Africa to be using our Bible study and curriculum.
- The Rafiki Classical Academy in Eustis, Florida, to continue to grow and be a model for other schools and for training new missionaries.
- Wisdom as we steward all the resources God has given us and that the distribution of every Bible, Rafiki Bible Study, and the curriculum would bear much fruit.
- Continued safety and protection for the Uganda Village from criminal gangs and threats of Islamic terrorism.
- Awakening in the church around the world.

In Christ,

Michelle and David Graves

