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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



Mollie Mitchell
Missionary #261

Contact information

Mailing address:
PO Box 9459 KIA
Accra, GHANA
WEST AFRICA

Email:
MollieM@RafikiFoundation.org

Dear friends and family,

There is a principle of Christian education that we find ourselves talking about often here: A Christian education is really a partnership between the family, the school, and the church to disciple a child. The parents whose children attend our school chose a Rafiki education for a variety of reasons. A few families are familiar with classical education and want their children to have an education centered around character formation. Other families have heard our school's reputation for strong academics and students of good character, and they want their children to be a part of what is happening here. Many families live in the surrounding community and are grateful for the opportunity to send their children to a school of such high quality that is financially accessible for their family. Across this spectrum of backgrounds, families tell us again and again that they see how Rafiki has impacted their children's character, habits, and interaction with God's Word.



Each school day begins with me leading the school assembly, which includes singing the weekly hymn together.

Throughout this school year, the school staff and I have had the privilege of both encouraging parents in their role of discipleship and inviting parents to see firsthand what discipleship looks like in their children's school day. As all ten Rafiki Villages in Africa see the children who grew up in the Rafiki ChildCare Program launch into adulthood, we see our schools' demographics transition from primarily students in Rafiki's ChildCare Program to predominantly students from families in the surrounding community. This naturally leads us to the importance of ministering to our students' parents and being intentional about partnering with them.

A number of months ago, I realized how important it was going to be for me to be intentional about parent engagement. On the one hand, I knew this is an area that excites me because I so believe in the importance of parents' role in their children's lives, and I love to encourage parents in how much they have to give. On the other hand, I felt a bit intimidated by the prospect of adding new things to plan and execute when I was still learning how to handle the daily responsibilities of overseeing a school. Thankfully, I work with a wonderful school administrator team who help me plan each term's events, understand what will work best within our cultural context, and think through the most effective way to organize events and communicate with parents. Each time we have done something to engage parents, I have been so encouraged to see parents show up and to hear their excitement about being involved. Always, I

hear parents talk about the impact Rafiki is having on their children and how they see this impact at home.

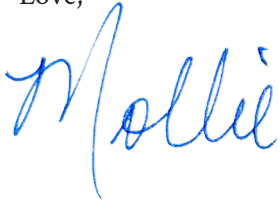
In each of the four school terms, we have hosted a Parents' Day for the parents of one of our grade-level divisions. The parents have the opportunity to sit in a Bible class, and then the headteachers (principals) and I meet with the parents to cast vision for classical Christian education and the parents' discipleship role. In our most recent Parents' Day, we were concerned that the heavy rain would keep the parents home. As the morning continued and the rain became lighter, the parents started coming and kept coming. Each Parents' Day, the highlight for parents is sitting in Bible classes. As parents watch the students singing the weekly hymn; reciting the week's memory verse, doctrinal focus, and catechism question; opening their Bibles and participating in reading the Scripture passage; and engaging in thoughtful discussion; the parents recognize what a treasure their children have each day. After sitting in a Bible class during a recent Parents Day, one mother told me, "Now I get it."

In the second half of the school year, we added a Parent-Teacher Conference Day so that parents and teachers could meet to discuss their students' progress reports. Once again, I doubted if parents would come since there was not a precedent for this type of Parent-Teacher Conference Day, either at our school or in most other Ghanaian schools. Once again, the parents showed up! Fathers came. Mothers came with babies on their backs. At the end of the day, each teacher said that nearly every one of their students had a parent who came for a conference.

Our most recent addition to invite parents into what is already a part of their children's school life was a Hymn Sing. We invited the parents to join us in singing hymns one afternoon at the end of the school day. It was a beautiful picture of the body of Christ as I looked around and saw parents joining their children's sweet voices singing words of truth in praise to our good God.

I know you have been faithfully praying for me and for this school. Thank you! God has sustained me as I continue to be reminded of my reliance on Him for the job before me, and He has given the school staff and me the gift of seeing our students' parents eager to be a part of their children's education and the formation they see happening in their children. We value your continued prayers for us to steward the gift and responsibility of not only discipling our students but ministering to their parents.

Love,



Mollie Mitchell



Madam Maritha teaches her three- and four-year-old students about Isaiah's prophecy of a Savior who is gentle and tender with the weak and hurting: "*A bruised reed he will not break...*" (Isaiah 42:3).



Miss Rhoda meets with the dad of one of her young students during Parent-Teacher Conference Day.



Hymn Sing! This is just a small part of the student section.

Learn more about Rafiki's expanding opportunities.

Visit our newly designed website RafikiFoundation.org to learn how to:

- Purchase the Rafiki Bible Study for small groups for your church or neighborhood
- Serve as a missionary with Rafiki
- Sponsor a child with the Rafiki Foundation to bring God's Word and the best education in the world to some of the neediest children in the world in Africa.

Explore the Rafiki Foundation YouTube channel.

Visit (youtube.com/@RafikiFoundation) for videos from Rafiki children, teaching at our annual Enrichment conferences, and the teaching at our African classical Christian conferences.

Listen to our podcast for current discussions on Rafiki's work in Africa truenorth.fm/show/the-rafiki-foundation-podcast/