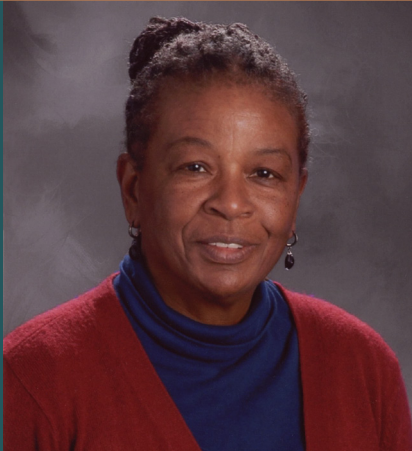


APRIL 2024

RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



May Nealey

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Missionary #259

Dear friends and family,

I arrived in Lilongwe, Malawi on March 19 in the late afternoon. My plane was a little late so I did not really get to enjoy the countryside as I traveled by car six hours to Mzuzu, my destination. Malawi is on the southern side of the equator so it is technically winter here so the days are shorter. I have noticed that at 5:30 a.m. it is daylight and dark before 6:00 p.m. I am slowly adjusting to the early morning light but the darkness still catches me by surprise during my evening walk. But no worries, I have the next three years to get acclimated. I love walking around the Rafiki Village because this place is truly beautiful. The mountains and African villages that I see in the distance as I walk around the perimeter of our Village are astoundingly beautiful against the backdrop of the blue sky. My phone camera and picture taking expertise is not good enough to record the variation of the landscape. It saddens me that I cannot share the view with you. Every sunset is a marvel. The Village is also beautiful with rolling green lawns and beautiful vegetation, that includes many fruit trees as well as corn and sweet potatoes. As I travel throughout the area I notice that nearly everyone here has their own vegetable garden. There are many stands where they sell beautiful fruits and vegetables. The weather feels and looks like early spring in my hometown of Houston, Texas. Enjoy the pictures below of my views around campus.



Apart from the landscape, I also received a very warm welcome from all the Village occupants which include missionaries, day and resident students, Rafiki Mamas, and national employees. Even the people I see as I walk around the perimeter of the Village are very friendly, especially the children. I arrived at the end of the term so I did not get to spend a lot of time with the students. A few days after my arrival, a three week school-wide break began. The resident students will be back in a couple of days but for now, they are staying with relatives. I look forward to seeing them and getting to know them better soon. In the meantime, I have been able to meet some of the employees and become acquainted with my fellow missionaries. I am grateful to Jay and Maureen for the grace and instruction that I received from them concerning the OrphanCare and human resource departments. They will be leaving in a couple of weeks so they are giving me some much needed advice and instruction before their departure. Anna Leibing will be taking over as the new Village Administrator. She was in the States at Enrichment and training at the Home Office when I arrived, but has assured me that she will help me get into the routine of the workings of the Village upon her return. Joan Hoadley, a previous Long-term Rafiki Missionary that has returned to Malawi to lend a helping hand, is also here as the RICE Dean. Thanks to them I have confidence that with their help and the Lord's grace I will be able to succeed in my new ministry in Malawi.

Martha Shaba, the Assistant OrphanCare Administrator, has been so gracious and helpful sharing her expertise with me since I am the new OrphanCare Administrator. I have been able to meet all the Rafiki Mamas here in Malawi and I can see they do a great job of nurturing the residents. I met the very polite and respectful young ladies and gentlemen they are rearing. I had a chance to join some of them for devotions before they left for break. I have also met a few of the previous graduates. Martha is teaching me how to support them in all areas of their lives including how to handle the scholarship and funding that Rafiki supplies to its graduates.

I have only been here a couple of weeks but I am gradually beginning to feel like I am a part of the Village. I have learned so much in these few days but I know that with the Lord and my colleagues I will be able to minister with excellence and integrity. I love and miss my Liberian friends but I am looking forward to developing new relationships in Malawi. My prayer requests have not changed. *Please pray that I develop relationships with my team members, national staff, and children that promote fellowship which evolves into unity and trust. Also pray that I trust the Lord to give me the wisdom and courage I need to manage the ministry He has given me with excellence and integrity.* I also extend a special thank you to my sponsors and prayer partners.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "May".

May Nealey