

So much to be thankful for and look forward to!

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Hawthorne Scribner High School, Bududa- A dream school for many



Help a child in Uganda REACH for a better future

Greetings!

As 2025 winds down, we remain thankful for the remarkable progress we have made in Uganda, for the great things that have happened this year, and for the promise of the future that is sure to come.

The year began with the opening of Hawthorne-Scribner High School (HSHS). In February, we welcomed 155 students for the 2025 school year. These dedicated students speak to the hunger for quality education that exist in our region. They will remain forever in our archives as the pioneers who chose the future over the past, believed in our dreams, and helped set education in Bududa and eastern Uganda on a new trajectory. We shall always remember those early days when the dormitories had no water, when food was cooked in a makeshift cardboard kitchen, and when no laboratories or library existed. On such foundations are great monuments built. By the time we held an official opening celebration in July, with a massive American delegation in attendance, the prospects for HSHS were already well established.

In many ways, 2025 remains a foundational year. There were some severe hardships, including a lack of basic science supplies and computer resources. The clinics especially faced challenges as USAID-funded supplies disappeared, leaving them without adequate malaria and ARV medications and children's vaccines. Without dedicated funding, outreach activities were severely curtailed. Despite all this, we finished the year well. We closed the year with 104 staff and over 1,200 students in our Ugandan programs. We paid all staff salaries on time each month. Our HSHS staff travelled to Daraja Academy in Kenya, courtesy of our partner, the Gupta Family Foundation, for a cross-learning experience and visited our Nairobi-based partner, She's the First. HSHS students visited Queen Elizabeth Park in northern Uganda, while AJS students visited Kampala and, for the first time, saw airplanes land and take off at Entebbe International Airport. The students continue to marvel at the experiences from their field trips.



For our staff, they couldn't be in a better place. They have computers and access to the internet at all three schools. The two libraries at AJS, HSHS, and MJS are the only working libraries in their respective districts of Bududa and Namisindwa, offering some of the best learning opportunities imaginable. Despite the shortages, the medical clinics continued to serve the communities of Matuwa and Bududa, and are on course to expand their services in 2026, with new dental services proposed for the clinic in Matuwa. And in Bududa, we plan to continue the growth of HSHS over the next few years. Our fundraising campaigns in 2026 will seek funding for sports fields that can also be used by the community, multi-purpose and general administration buildings, and expansions of our water and solar resources. In good time, we hope to build a commercial center, a professional village, and ultimately, a new vocational center that will train hospitality, culinary, pharmacy, nursing, bakery, and computer specialists. That is the promise of tomorrow. We ask that you continue to be part of it.

Sangala Learning Innovation Initiative Launched

A REACH for Uganda team visited the University of Virginia (UVA) early in December and met with Stephanie Rowley, Dean of the School of Education and

Human Development (EHD), and Glen Bull, Professor of Instructional Technology in the school, to launch the Sangala Learning Innovation Initiative, a collaboration between the **Hawthorne Scribner High School** and **UVA**. During the spring and summer, students at HSHS collaborated with the EHD Make to Learn Laboratory to learn Computer Assisted Design (CAD). The students, led by their instructor, Isaac Matsanga, successfully fabricated a 3D-printed microscope developed in the Make to Learn Lab using a Bambu A1 Mini 3D printer. Harry McWreath, a UVA alumnus (class of '71), took the 3D printer contributed by the Make to Learn Lab to Bududa and assisted in its setup and calibration.



Pictured above: Glen Bull, Joyce Wanda, Benjamin Schoenbrun, Dean Stephanie Rowley, and John Wanda.

The University of Virginia Center for Global Inquiry and Innovation (CGII), directed by Brian Owensby, has now provided a seed grant that will enable the establishment of a microscopy network among five schools in the region. The open-source, Internet-connected microscope, Netscope, will be used in science classes and to address community needs. These needs include the improvement of community health by monitoring groundwater contamination with the microscopes and support of local agriculture by identifying crop pathogens and harmful soil microorganisms to improve farming practices and crop yields. The Center for Sustainable Rural Living (CSRL) at Iowa State University is also a partner in this endeavor.

The group also met with Rich Nguyen, a professor of Computer Science who teaches machine learning courses at the University of Virginia. His students, Matthew Lucia and Annie Bai, are developing an application programming interface (API) that will enable images of micro-organisms captured with the microscope to be shared via the cloud using iNaturalist. This open-source citizen science database has been used in the publication of more than 6,000 peer-reviewed scientific articles thus far. Soon, students participating in the Sangala initiative will begin contributing to this database. The CS students at UVA are also developing software that utilizes artificial intelligence and machine learning for image classification captured through the

microscopy network, *MicroNet*. Mike Searson, editor of the *Journal of AI Enhanced Learning*, said, “It will be marvelous to see students learning about artificial intelligence and contributing to this type of citizen science endeavor in the Bududa region in Uganda.”



Students at Hathorne-Scribner Assemble a 3D-printed Microscope

The long-term goals of the initiative include developing engineering capacity by enabling teachers and students to gain hands-on experience in creating innovations that address community needs. This will include joint development of a three-course engineering education curriculum in collaboration with the University of Virginia and the International Technology and Engineering Education Association (ITEEA). The UVA Center for Global Innovation and Inquiry has provided funds that will make it possible to support four students who will become Sangala Scholars and an engineering teacher who will be the first Sangala Teacher.

The word *Sangala* means joy in the Lumasaba or Lugisu language. We aspire for students to find joy in learning through innovations that improve their communities. Because joy broadens learners’ thinking and encourages curiosity, it becomes a catalyst for the creative insight and problem-solving that drive innovation. A team from the University of Virginia that includes Frackson Mumba, a professor of science education, Natasha Heny, a professor of education who leads the EHD Artificial Intelligence committee, and Jo Watts, manager of the EHD Make to Learn Lab, will travel to Bududa in the spring to collaborate on the project. Elizabeth Edmondson, a professor of science education at Virginia Commonwealth University who specializes in life sciences, will also participate in the visit, in her capacity as a representative of the Association for Science Teacher Education (ASTE).

Congratulations to our graduates!

Class of 2025

UNIVERSITY & VOCATIONAL GRADUATES



Emily Hillary Mukoya
Bachelor of Engineering in
Environmental Engineering
& Management

Sponsored by
Megan Wernke



Phiona Nabwire
Bachelor of Science in
Physical Education



Bruno Noah Wamono
Bachelor of Science
in Agriculture

Sponsored by
JoAn Willis & Chip Kahn



Patience Namwano
Certificate in
Nursing & Midwifery

Sponsored by
Patricia Perry



Margaret Nandutu
Certificate in Catering
and Hotel Management

Sponsored by
Susan & Jim Arnold



Sarah Nakato & Joy Halayi
Certificate in Airline Cabin
Crew Management

Sponsored by
John & Joyce Wanda

We are thrilled to congratulate all students, who graduated this year, and their sponsors on the journey they have travelled for many years from primary school all the way to university.

Our students became part of your families over the years. It is rewarding to see the connections formed through letter exchanges and the commitments and inspiration formed along the way. Thank you for being a child sponsor and for changing the direction of these students' lives.

Among the students who graduated this year are Bruno Noah Wamono and Emily Hillary Mukoya. Bruno was the first AAH student to participate in an internship in Israel. He is grateful for the opportunity he was given through REACH. He speaks on behalf of others when he says thank you for the opportunity this program affords them. Emily is our first female Environmental Engineer.

We congratulate our students and their sponsors for giving them this amazing opportunity. The future is bound to be bright for these young stars. We are so proud of these students for their achievements and of everyone who supported them.

Welcome Our New Board Members!

We are thrilled to announce our newest Board members. Read their full bios by clicking on their names here - [Jane Larimer](#), [Marlice Johnson](#), [Elise Conelli](#) and [Tricia Kennedy](#). They each bring diverse backgrounds and experiences that will

strengthen the work of REACH. Many thanks to all the out going board members for all their contributions.

MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Jane Larimer



Marlice Johnson



Elise Conelli



Tricia Kennedy

Sign up to join our trips next year

Each year, REACH offers opportunities for supporters to travel to Uganda with us to visit our programs and volunteer at Arlington and Matuwa Junior schools and at the Beatrice Tierney health clinics. Traveling with REACH to Uganda is an opportunity to explore and stay in Africa at a relatively low cost and to contribute your talents to a meaningful program. Learn more [here](#) and **secure your spot.**

Marymount and REACH Teacher Trip
3/25/26 - 4/04/26
Led by Marymount University Prof.
Dr. Nicci Dowd
ndowd@marymount.edu

Adult and Family Trip
6/27/26 - 7/11/26
Led by REACH President Dick Burk & Carole Burk
dick@reachforuganda.org

Teen Service Trip
7/13/26 - 8/3/26
Led by APS Teacher Abigail Willard
abigail@reachforuganda.org

Join us Dec 29 at 6:00 PM
for general trip information session.
Email us to get a zoom link at
info@reachforuganda.org

More information can be found here:
<https://reachforuganda.org/getinvolved/trips/>

Sponsor A Student



Fundraiser with Judy Rosenthal and Roy Kahn

We are grateful to all our donors for supporting REACH and especially those of you who put on events and invite others to support REACH. Judy



RAIS project up and running globally

President Dick Burk and his wife Carole and John and Joyce Wanda, joined former REACH board member Donald Ainsworth in Washington, DC, on



Thank you to all our volunteers

We are grateful to the many volunteers who support REACH in Uganda and in the US. Every year, volunteers travel to work with our students and staff in Uganda while others work with us in the office and various committees. Thank you!

and Roy just did that. **They created an online fundraiser** and gathered their extended family members, neighbors and friends at the Takoma Park Library in Maryland to share their story and their support of REACH. They are planning to return to Uganda in January, where they hope to spend three months teaching at REACH schools.

If you would like to start a campaign of your own, you can do so **here**.

December 11th, 2025, to launch the **RAIS together**. The app connects compassionate lenders with hardworking borrowers through interest free microloans. This platform was piloted in Bududa, Uganda with the support of REACH, and is now accessible globally. Proud of Don and his team at RAIS.

Have you recently moved and changed addresses? If so, please **login here** to update your contact information.



Happy holidays to you all

We wish all our donors and supporters a very happy holiday season. Thank you all for your support in 2025.

If you have not donated this year, there's still time to do so.

[Learn More](#)



Off for Third term holidays

Our students and staff in Uganda are off for the December holidays. The new school year will resume in February 2026 when students get promoted to new grades.

[Learn More](#)

www.reachforuganda.org

Did you know? You can leave money to REACH for Uganda in your will

Make your legacy count and felt for generations. **Contact us** to learn about including REACH for Uganda in your will, or making REACH a beneficiary of your retirement fund or life insurance policy.

[Learn about other ways to give here.](#)

Thank you for all your support!

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