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www.UgandaPartners.org

Investing in One is Investing in Many!

by UCU Alum Gloria Kiconco

When there are so many basic needs in Uganda, why are we raising money for University education? Because we are convinced that University education is empowering bright and faithful Ugandans to address the basic needs in their communities—with relevant aid, sustainable practices, enduring compassion, and a commitment to give back to the communities that have raised them.

Let us tell you the story of one such graduate making this kind of sustaining impact in rural Uganda, in his homeplace--Lwengo District, southwestern Uganda.

A Story of Peter and his Dream— WOSO (Widows and Orphans Support Organization)

Peter Kitayimbwa founded WOSO, a community based organization in October 2012 before he graduated with an honors degree in Social Work and Social Administration from Uganda Christian University (UCU) in July 2013.

He had the idea of helping out widows and orphans when he was a young teenager, soon after losing his father. "I lost my dad in 2004. So it was really a struggle in my family. I was born in a family of five where I am the only one who had access to secondary education," Kitayimbwa said.

He got the opportunity to study at UCU through Compassion International. He began on his goal to support widows and orphans even when he still had very meager resources. Through his Compassion scholarship, Peter received pocket money intended for personal needs. With this small amount of discretionary money, Peter began to support two young orphans

in his home place.

But Peter had a dream bigger than just personally supporting widows and orphans. He wanted to develop a community project that would be holistic in providing for the community—education, micro-finance, sanitation, and community care. He discussed his dream with his lecturer, Dr. Judy Shepherd, who was at UCU on a Fulbright fellowship. In October 2013, he went with Shepherd and his mentor, Isaac Nkoyoyo, to visit the families of the two girls he was sponsoring. "I just went out to learn about the area and landless widows, which I didn't know about. I right away felt the need and I thought they [Peter and Isaac] were committed and capable," Dr. Shepherd said.

Their first goal, after establishing the WOSO board, was to begin work on a secondary school to enable children and families to have a nearby, quality education.

It takes a village. . .

A friend of Shepherd, offered to buy 11.5 acres of land near Lwengo trading centre, making it easily accessible for many families. The team organized community members to help clear the land. They dug down the anthills that provided dirt for the 70,000 bricks used to build the latrines, kitchen, and most of the school blocks with the exception of the clay bricks at the foundation.

[Continued page 2](#)



WOSO continued

On 2 February, 2015, WOSO's secondary school, Shepherd College School, opened with 83 students. Ritah Kukundakwe explained the impact of having a secondary school in her community. "The school that I was supposed to go to was very far from my home. My mother could not afford the fees. Now with WOSO's help, and a nearby school, I am able to attend a quality school in my community."

Shepherd College School falls under one of three branches of WOSO activities, the Child Cognitive Program, which looks at the whole development of the child and is directed by another UCU graduate, Deo Kyakuwa.

Strategic, Relevant Community Development

The second branch of the WOSO program is the micro-lending program, in which WOSO gives small loans (ranging from 100,000 to 200,000) to vulnerable widows who want to start small businesses like selling charcoal, opening small restaurants, or managing a produce stand.

This micro-lending program developed when the leadership at WOSO realized that though it was helping young students, they could only target one child per family (many families have 6 or more children). By giving the mothers, many of them widows, the means to start their own businesses, WOSO is enabling mothers to provide for the whole family.

The third branch of WOSO is the health program. It emphasizes HIV testing and counseling. This program also has the model home project that educates and provides accountability for the beneficiaries of the program to maintain hygienic conditions in their home—greatly improving the public health of the families and the community.

While this story is primarily a testimony to Peter and at least three other UCU graduates who are working to fulfill this vision, it is also a testimony to the type of training and discipleship happening at UCU.

In every profession, in every pocket of Uganda, in myriads of manifestations, your generosity is an investment in an educated generation who is transforming the country for Christ.

Justice Week 2015:

by Brian Dennison

What does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8) As Christians we serve a God who loves justice. Moreover, God calls us to be a part of bringing about His justice on this earth.

Uganda is a place where injustices abound and justice can be hard won. Part of the mission of Uganda Christian University is to train African leaders that will help bring justice to their nations and their communities.

At UCU, God's call for justice came to the forefront during Justice Week 2015 which featured messages from the pulpit about justice. Uganda's Director of Public Prosecutions, Mike Chibita, launched Justice Week with two Sunday morning sermons about bringing justice to "the least of these" from Matthew 25.

Justice Week included service elements. Law students and a team from International Justice Mission offered training to

the community on how to write wills, including a follow-up where they assisted in writing wills with interested individuals. Wills might not seem like a major element in bringing justice to communities, but for local Ugandans, having a written will is an important way to avoid future conflicts over land. In another form of service, a team of students visited a home for children with disabilities in order to share God's love with children facing difficult challenges.

The capstone event of the week was Justice Night. This is an event that UCU's Campus Chapter of International Justice Mission hosted in Nkoyoyo Hall. "Justice Night" featured poetry, art, dance, comedy, music and guest speakers. This year's event also featured a panel discussion about justice and people with disabilities in Uganda.

Soon after the conclusion of "Justice Week" we were reminded about the gravity and challenge of justice when a Ugandan prosecutor was shot down in her car as she was returning from a shopping trip with her children. The prosecutor's name is Joan Kagezi. Joan was a humble and determined Christian who bravely sought justice. Joan was also a friend of UCU, offering to speak with students and serve as a judge at moot court competitions. Joan was shot because she was involved in the prosecution of terrorists. Her passing creates a void.

Through UCU Partners, you are helping to raise future prosecutors, judges, advocates, government officials, law enforcement officers and other leaders that will answer God's call for justice. Answering this call will not be easy. It might be met with entrenched resistance. It may require our graduates to risk everything. But with God all things are possible! Pray that students at UCU will share God's love for justice and continue to pursue justice with their lives and resources.





If you want to walk fast,
walk alone.
If you want to walk far,
walk together.



Top 5 Successes for the first UCU Partners Global 5K!

1. Missional: Helping to fulfill UCU Partners stated mission: Uganda Christian University Partners is a non-profit charitable organization committed to raise public awareness about Uganda Christian University by seeking material and spiritual support for students through sponsorships; and by procuring funds for buildings and other needed projects.

2. Global: We had almost 200 participants, spanning 4 CONTINENTS!

- 17 States, plus Washington DC,
- 4 Countries (Indonesia, Great Britain, US, and Uganda)
- 132 Registrants outside of Uganda
- 50 Registrants in Uganda, many of them Honors College alumni

3. Creative: A great exploration into the world of Facebook and Instagram. Wonderful photos, wonderful faces, wonderful friendships in Uganda and throughout the world with a shared connection to UCU.

4. Relational: One of our favorite things was to see how many USP and UCU alumni were gathered in groups with each other or with friends, in different places, different modes of movement.

5. Financial: \$2,341 profit raised towards an Honours College scholarship. Other money covered the cost of t-shirts and prizes—even these costs still further the mission of spreading news of UCU!

In 2015, we targeted our USP and Honours College base, but we're eager to expand our communication and networks to include all interested donors, supporters, and friends to join us in this creative, global endeavor.

As highlighted in the subtitle, our goal is more communal than competitive! We consider the friendships, creativity, and communications to be the primary means and ends to the Global 5K success!

A special thank you to Louise Mehl and Julia Yoder who helped organize all the communications, logistics, and prizes!



3 Ways to Help a Student Today

- 1 Pray** for UCU and the students, faculty and staff who work tirelessly each day for Uganda's future.
- 2 Give** a donation via the enclosed envelope, or visit www.ugandapartners.org to pay online.
- 3 Go** to Uganda and see this amazing university for yourself! Learn more at www.ugandapartners.org.

Make **Today** the day to impact a student's life by supporting one of the following scholarship funds.

- Full Annual Scholarship:** \$2,500
- Half Annual Scholarship:** \$1,250
- Achievement Award:** \$500
- General Scholarship:** any size donation

Please contact Mrs. Laura Corley, Scholarship Coordinator, for more information.

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University Prayer ALMIGHTY GOD, in whom we live and move and have our being, make this University a real community, and may whatever is just, pure, lovable and gracious abound here. Keep for the University an unspoiled name; develop it for wider usefulness; and may we value it as an instrument for bringing glory to your name: through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

From the Director's Wife



While this is usually a spot saved for Mark's "word to the donors," I decided that I would bump him over and take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Abigail Bartels, married

to the Executive Director, and long term supporter of Uganda Christian University. This coming year, I've committed to volunteering with UCU Partners especially in the area of communications.

We've just returned from UCU, and I wanted to add my two cents about the cover article of this newsletter. I had the opportunity to meet and interview Peter Kitayimbwa when he was meeting with Judy Shepherd, a former Fulbright professor at UCU.

I was moved and encouraged by talking to Peter, both about the WOSO project but also about the impact UCU has made on him. His background was very poor and he would not have reached much formal schooling without Compassion sponsorship.

What inspired me most regarding our role as supporters

of UCU, is how emphatic he was about the key difference his University education made in equipping him to make systemic change in his community, to generate jobs for others, to serve the needs of underprivileged and to actually implement Christian service for the greater good of many.

Because a University education is expensive, many donors and families cannot take their support to that final step. As donors to UCU Partners and as sponsors of various university students, we understand the significance of that commitment. Talking to Peter was an encouraging reminder that for those who can make that sacrifice, the pay-off is exponential—not only for the student's capacity and opportunity but also for the cultures, communities and countries that they will change for Christ.

I trust that as I've been encouraged, you will be encouraged. Your generosity and sacrifice are a strategic and significant investment in the future of Uganda and beyond.

The first time Peter's mother had left the village was to attend his graduation from UCU!

