

# Kijabe Children's Education Fund



December 2020

Dear KCEF friends and partners:

We are so grateful for the support you are providing! When schools in Kenya closed in March, we committed to doing everything possible to provide food for 1700 KCEF students along with offering alternative learning options. These emergency measures are costing \$68,000 for March through December. With your help, we have received just over \$40,000 toward these extra, out-of-budget expenses.

Now in Advent, a season of hope, we have just been informed that a foundation will COMMIT UP TO \$14,000 TO MATCH EVERYTHING WE CAN RAISE BY DECEMBER 31. A full match would cover our entire balance! This is really good news at a very difficult time.

The past nine months have been hard for all of us, but the lives of the children and families we serve—"the poorest of the poor"—were full of adversity and disappointment even before the pandemic. When we meet the children and hear their stories, we are always amazed by their determination to somehow overcome their bleak circumstances.

Laureen Anyango is 16 and lives with her mother and two siblings in one small room in the depths of the Mathare slum. Her father left many years ago, and her mother (who has never been to school) could only find work washing clothes for a couple of dollars a day. Laureen's brother had to drop out of school because the family could not pay his fees. Her sister did well on the national exam but could not afford secondary school fees. They are both at home and very discouraged. Having been sent home from primary school many times because her fees had not been paid, Laureen had high ambitions but felt there was virtually no hope for her future.



Then in January 2020, she learned that a new school, Gospel Victory Academy, had just opened in her slum neighborhood. As a new partner of KCEF, the school had some scholarship funds available for the poorest students, enabling Laureen to enroll, begin her 8th grade studies and register for the national exam to be given in November. At last there was hope for her plans and dreams.

Then, when the pandemic caused all schools to close in March, it seemed she had been denied the only chance left to her. But her mother was notified that Gospel Victory Academy would help with food for the family and provide ways for students to keep learning away from school. Some lessons were on television, and Laureen found a neighbor with a small TV she could use. Hope was still alive.



In October, she and all other Kenyan 8th graders were allowed to return to school after losing the previous term. She is now registered to take courses and to take the national exam in April 2021. “I am studying very hard,” she says, “because I need to get a good score and win a scholarship to secondary school. I know it won’t be easy but I also know I do not want to let go of my dream.” Laureen’s dream? To attend university and become an IT engineer. A life that would take her worlds away from her slum.

It is a privilege for us to stand with children like Laureen. With your help, KCEF will continue to provide food for her family and support for her fees. We will continue to walk with her—and many others—as they move on to secondary school.

Again and again, the faith and commitment of these children amaze us. They have faced adversity beyond anything we can imagine, and yet they keep on keeping on, with hope and determination.

At this time of Christmas celebration, we invite you to join us again in standing with Laureen and 1700 other children. Please remember that your gift to KCEF will be DOUBLED by the matching grant.

Thank you for all you have done and all you may be able to do. You are bringing hope out of despair, joy out of sorrow.

Gratefully,

*Craig Hammon*

Craig Hammon, for KCEF board

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