



Inspired by Compassion. Rooted in Community.
LUMAKANDA, KENYA

To create an environment that fosters the holistic development of Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances:

- By providing a safe and nurturing environment
- By opening the door to education, life-long learning, and the fulfillment of one's greatest potential; and,
- By instilling a sense of a higher purpose that includes a love of neighbor.



Okoa Toto boys:
(l to r): Brightson, Michael, Jian, Wesley, Gabriel, Ramsey

Okoa Toto girls:
(l to r): Joy, Faith, Mary, Melvin, Abigail

A Letter from our Board Chair

Dear Friends,

Okoa Toto continues to bring hope and a future filled with promise to our 12 children who came from especially difficult circumstances.

We have had a busy start to 2022, with the children finishing what would have been their 2021 school year in March and beginning their 2022 school year in April. We are so proud of their accomplishments, with all of the children earning high marks and making steady gains in Math, Environmental Studies, Digital Literacy, English, Hygiene, Religious Studies, Contemporary Issues, and Movement and Creative Activities.

As a teacher, it's clear to me the children and staff put a high value on the importance of education as a bridge to future opportunities. In these past two years, where many of our systems have seen unprecedented change and challenges, it is inspiring to see the children continue their love of learning and commitment to growth, with the help of the staff, their teachers, and everyone who has helped support them through financial contributions that allow them to attend a high-quality private school.

We are grateful for your continued support of Okoa Toto. While we are beginning to look toward a "new normal" at home, we hope that you will join our fundraising events this year, whether in person or virtually.

Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution today by sending a check in the enclosed envelope or donating online at www.okoatoto.org. Together, we will continue to make a positive difference in the lives of the children.

On behalf of our Okoa Toto staff and children please accept our sincere gratitude for your ongoing generosity.

Ann Shurte
2022 Board President
ashurte@yahoo.com



In Their Own Words... Reflections from Sponsors and Supporters

"Tammy and I are delighted to support Okoa Toto for many reasons. In addition to trusting that the funds are being used wisely, we know that in so many parts of the world it is the personal, one-one approach that helps alleviate suffering and provide opportunities. We believe that working with Mark and other Kenyans who know the real dynamics of their culture and country will provide the best chance for success and transformation in the lives of these children."

~ Winton & Tammy Boyd -Madison

Welcome New Board Members



Cassie Gamble,
Board Secretary

"Since early on in my life, I have had a passion for learning about and experiencing other cultures

and working with people to make the world a better place. I firmly believe that every child deserves the opportunity to be successful and that safe and stable housing, healthcare, and education are human rights.

My dream is to work with an international organization focused on children and/or human rights. I have a Bachelor's in Human Social Services and a Masters of Sustainable Peacebuilding from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. I have 10+ years of experience working with children and families involved in the child welfare system in Milwaukee, WI. I currently live in the Dominican Republic and teach English online through VIPKid."



Jamie Landry

Jamie graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a Masters in Sustainable Peacebuilding, where much of her studies were focused on providing equitable access to health and wellness. Jamie's educational and work background have been interconnected throughout her professional life, combining her interest and passion in community-based health and wellness. She has significant experience working with community partners in Wisconsin and abroad.

Jamie currently works as the Wellness Specialist at Next Door Foundation, an early childhood education and family focused non-profit in Milwaukee, WI.

UW-Madison Internship Partnership

Okoa Toto has been approved as a study abroad destination through the International Internship Department of UW-Madison! Nine UW-Madison students applied and six were interviewed for two positions we sought to fill for our initial 2022 offering. We look forward to this partnership and the opportunities it presents to our children, staff and the UW students chosen to participate in this experience.



Edith helping Wesley (left) and Jian with their homework.

Thank You!

A variety of projects continue to strengthen our Okoa Toto Project. Through the generosity of several donors, we were able to complete closets and dressers for both the boys and girl’s rooms, an outdoor kitchen (so our children can learn to cook the Kenyan way), and main floor furniture (couches and chairs). We would like to add 5-6 computers so we can enhance the on-line learning opportunities for the children. If you would like to make a financial contribution to fund the computers, please contact Board President Ann Shurte at ashurte@yahoo.com

Photos left to right:

Wesley gardening

Melvin, Faith, Abigael, Rabeca, Mary, Edith and Joy harvesting vegetables from the garden

Rabeca enjoying reading

New children’s closets

Ramsey, Gabriel, Michael, Wesley, Jian, and Brightson relaxing on the new living room furniture.



UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

An Evening with Morrison Muleri, PhD
Thursday, May 19th at 6 PM

Author of **The Stories of Our Lives: The Inspiring Success Stories of Six Men and Women from Africa Through Europe and America**, Dr. Muleri will share his story growing up in Kenya and ultimately becoming Sr. Board Operations Officer and Secretary, Budget Committee at The World Bank.

The presentation will be held via Zoom with an opportunity to ask your questions. Visit www.okoatoto.org to register. Registration fee \$20.00.

2nd Annual Walk, Run, Pedal, Paddle
June 5 – 11th

Special this year! Bring your favorite pet, submit a photo, and enter a chance to win an 8x10 custom watercolor painting of your pet from Emily Marie Watercolors! Your pet can be a dog, cat, bunny, bird or horse! If you don’t have a pet, enter for a certificate and give it as a gift! Registration fee \$25.00 Visit www.okoatoto.org to register.



All fundraising proceeds go directly to support the Okoa Toto children.

Okoa Toto Kenyan Book Club

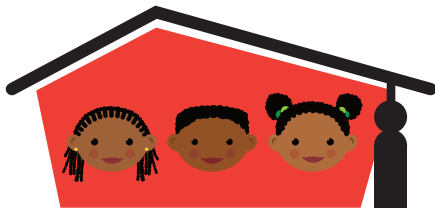
Want to learn more about Kenyan history and culture? Join our Kenyan Book Club focusing on books by Kenyan authors or about Kenya! Some potential books include “The Stories of Our Lives: The Inspiring Success Stories of Six Men and Women from Africa Through Europe and America” by Morrison Muleri, “Thursdays” by Jackson Biko, “The Havoc of Choice” by Wanjiru Koinange, and “The In-Between World of Vikram Lall” by M.G. Vassanji.

Once the group agrees on a book, participants will read a couple of chapters then meet once a month via Zoom to discuss what they’ve learned and how it connects to the Okoa Toto Project.

To join contact Okoa Toto board member Cassie Gamble at Cgamble09@gmail.com. Registration fee \$20.00.



Jian happily boarding the bus to Lumakanda Sunrise Valley Academy.



OKOA TOTO
CHILDREN'S HOME

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