

Operation  
Bootstrap  
Africa

# *Dignity*

Fall 2016

## **New Nurses for Tanzania!**

The first students have graduated from the new Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre School of Nursing in Arusha, Tanzania. This school was the dream of many and your gifts made it a reality! Each one of these young people had the cost of their training reduced by a \$1,000 annual OBA scholarship. These new nurses will provide patient care in hospitals, dispensaries and clinics across Tanzania, helping to meet the critical shortage of nurses in the country.





# Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre School of Nursing

## First Graduation - August 20, 2016



What a wonderful and blessed day we had on the very first graduation of our ALMC School of Nursing. It was an amazing and historic event as the first graduation included three separate classes.

The festivities were honored by our Bishop, Rev. Solomon Massangwa, serving as guest of honor. Dr. Kibira, the director of the ALMC Training Centre, welcomed the crowd and Prof. Jacobson shared the history of the dream and the miracles of the school coming into being.

There were three classes; the first class of 19 which had begun in March of 2014, the second class of 22 which started in September of 2014, and a third class which undertook a one-year course in Community Health Technician training and graduated 37 students.

The complete set of exam results was only available for the first class who had an amazing success rate of 99.9% in the exams!

While we wait for national comparisons to arrive, we are confident that we will be one of the top nursing schools in the country. We are so very pleased that 11 of the first graduates will join ALMC for employment and five will join Selian Lutheran Hospital starting September 1.

Many thanks to all who have made this dream a reality – the Diocese leadership, our School of Nursing staff and volunteers, our generous supporters at Operation Bootstrap and to Helen and Richard Kraft for their amazing support.

Gloria Deo!

Dr. Mark Jacobson, Medical Director, Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre



Care and Compassion



Members of the first nursing class who were graduates of the MaaSAE Girls School (back row) pose with School of Nursing staff, ALMC staff and ELCT North Central Diocese staff

## A Young Nurse's Journey



“My name is **Napir Saip Mokoro**. I’m a second year student nurse at Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre School of Nursing in Tanzania. I started in March 2014. I was born in 1995 at Kitumbeine village in a rural Maasai area. According to our family history, our mother delivered all of us babies

with traditional birth attendants. We are eight children from our birth mother, although my father has a second wife who has six children.

In our Maasai tradition, we female children don’t have the opportunity to go to school. Rather, we are to be married and whether we want to or not, we are married off as our father receives a dowry long before we are married. So when you reach about 15 years you will be married. But I thank God who made us all, that some other people of God consider us who are born in such poverty and have given us the opportunity to alleviate our poverty through education.

I thank God that the government insists all children of school age to go to primary school. As a result, our local leader visited each house and identified children who were supposed to start primary school in 2002. So I got the chance to start primary school and completed that in 2008.

God gave me another opportunity to join MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School through sponsorship from Operation Bootstrap Africa (OBA). We were allowed to stay in school even during our annual leave so that I didn’t go back home where my father would force me to be married with aged man like himself which is much painful.

After completing secondary school, I got an opportunity to join the School of Nursing. This is my dream come true.

Growing up, I liked nursing as I saw traditional birth attendants from our village caring and loving the women of the village. Once, when I was in secondary school, I fell ill and attended Monduli District Hospital with malaria. I liked the way nurses treated me and other people with love. Then I prayed to God and said I wish one day to be a nurse and then my dream will have come true. Now that has happened.

I want to serve and care for people with compassion and love, according to knowledge and skills which I’m receiving at the ALMC School of Nursing. I will provide quality care for sick people and also preventive measures for the health of the community. I want to provide health education to the people of my community to teach them the importance of education for their children. Nursing is from my heart. I love it! After I graduate and get employment, I will help to educate my young sister and hope she too will be a nurse and help our community. “



**This is Napir Saip today, a nurse employed by the Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre!**

**Your gifts make a difference! Please support the ALMC School of Nursing with a donation to the Eunice Simonson Nursing Scholarship Fund at Operation Bootstrap Africa.**



## Making an Impact —

### *One hundred graduates of the MaaSAE Girls School have now received bachelor's degrees!*

This year marks an amazing achievement by graduates of the MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School (MGLSS). Next month a graduate of the school, Sang'ai Mambai (pictured at right), will become the 100<sup>th</sup> graduate to be awarded a bachelor's degree. This achievement is even more incredible when one understands the short history of MGLSS.



In the early 1990's it was estimated that fewer than 25 Maasai girls were enrolled in secondary school in Tanzania. That number nearly tripled in 1995 when a class of forty-five students enrolled at MGLSS, the first school for Maasai girls in Tanzania. At the time, it is estimated that the population of Maasai was about 200,000. Due to cultural and financial reasons, only a small percentage of Maasai girls complete a secondary education and early marriage is common.

The girls and their young American teachers met in temporary space until the first classroom was completed on the grounds of the new MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School. In 1999 the first class graduated from Form 4. Now, 21 years later, more than 1,200 girls have studied or are currently studying at the school. The 750<sup>th</sup> student will graduate from Form 4 this year. The majority of these girls are the first in their families to complete secondary school.

Forms 5 and 6 classes were added and the first Form 6 students graduated in 2002. Again, more "firsts" as some of these graduates enrolled in universities in Tanzania and Kenya, and a few were chosen to attend Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota.

Sang'ai Mambai is representative of a typical rural Maasai girl who is selected to attend MGLSS as a scholarship student. In January of 2007 she began Form 1 at the age of 14. This year she will begin her career as a secondary school teacher in Tanzania.



#### Here is Sang'ai's story in her own words.

"My name is Sang'ai Mambai. I'm from Ngereyani village in the Longido District of northern Tanzania. My parents are traditional Maasai pastoralists. Ever since my father passed away we have remained with our mother only. My father had four wives and 22 children. My mother was the third wife and had eight children, four boys and four girls.



I am the first child to study in my family.

This is because when I was young, I was living with my aunt who allowed me to go to school. Soon after completing my primary education I got a chance to join MGLSS. I was so excited because I knew I would be sponsored until I reached my goals.

Sang'ai, on right, with members of her family on a recent visit



Sang'ai Mambai, Form 1, 2007

Once I entered MGLSS I tried my best to follow all the school regulations, and when I was in Form 1 my fellow classmates selected me to be their monitress. I studied hard. We had all the resources we needed at MGLSS; therefore, I had no reason to fail.

Cont. on page 5

In Form 3, I was selected as the vice president of the student body. What was always in my mind was to study hard so that I could reach my goals and fulfill my dreams.

I promised my sponsor, Faith Lutheran Church in Quincy, Massachusetts, that I would study hard in Form 4 in order to pass my national exam. Thanks to God, I passed my Form 4 final exam and continued with advanced level (Forms 5 and 6) at MGLSS. In Form 5, my fellow students gave me the honor to lead them as president of the student body.

After completing my Form 6 education, I was chosen to attend Iringa University in southern Tanzania. My OBA post-secondary sponsors were Ester Onishi (Washington) and Lisa Onishi (California). There in Iringa I took my first degree of education to train as a teacher of English and Kiswahili.



Sang'ai Mambai (in yellow) with Iringa University classmates

My first field work of two months was at Nganza Secondary School and my second field work experience was at Geita Secondary School. In my last year of study I conducted research in the Iringa region concerning the performance of students in single sex education and students in co-education. The most interesting parts of my final exam were assignments by two of our lecturers. One assigned us to write a dictionary for children in two languages, one in your mother tongue and the other in Kiswahili, so I wrote a dictionary for the Maa language and the Kiswahili language. The other lecturer told us to write a novel. The novel I wrote was called MALIKIA WA NGUVU.

My hope is to study even more so that I can reach my goals. My dreams are to be a good teacher so that I can help my society and transmit the knowledge that I have been given at MGLSS and at Iringa University. Finally, I hope one day I will help my Maasai society so that they can overcome all the norms and customs which are not beneficial in our society.

My thanks to OBA! Where I am today is because of OBA. I'm praying for all members of OBA. I wish them *'tobiko naabik ildonyok'*. This is a Maasai saying which means *'live long like the mountains'*. May God bless OBA and MGLSS. Also, my special thanks go to my sponsors, Faith Lutheran Church and Ester and Lisa Onishi. Thanks once again for honoring me as the 100<sup>th</sup> university graduate!"



Few secondary schools in Tanzania can match the post-secondary achievements of MGLSS graduates. These achievements have been made possible by the hard work of the graduates and through scholarship funding by OBA sponsors. As more and more MGLSS graduates are moving into the workplace they are making positive changes in the lives of their families and communities.

## We need your help in providing post-secondary scholarships!

In the 2016-2017 academic year there are eighty-five MaaSAE Girls School graduates of Form 4 and Form 6 receiving post-secondary scholarships. Of this number:

- 20 students are enrolled at vocational schools
- 11 students are enrolled at teacher colleges
- 17 students are enrolled in healthcare programs
- 2 students are enrolled in medical school
- 35 students are enrolled at 15 universities

⇒ **Support the scholarship fund with a gift of any amount**

⇒ **Support an individual student annually**

**Donations may be made online or by check payable to OBA, with Post-Secondary Fund on the memo line.**



## Walking for the Children of Olarash

The 18<sup>th</sup> annual Lakes Area Walk took place on September 24<sup>th</sup> in Alexandria, Minnesota, on a beautiful fall day. The walk raised funds for uniforms, school supplies, and textbooks for Olarash Primary School in Tanzania. The school is located several miles up the mountain above MGLSS. Walks in 2014 and 2015 supported the construction of a teacher duplex house and the rebuilding of a water-damaged classroom.



Many children at Olarash Primary School must walk long distances to reach the school, often resulting in poor attendance. There are few roads and no school transportation. Other children do not attend due to lack of required uniforms. Some of the Maasai parents keep children home to tend to cattle, find firewood, or carry water. Since 2014, Olarash children have been receiving uji (corn flour porridge) daily at the school thanks to a generous OBA donor. This simple meal has resulted in greatly improved attendance.

A rural Tanzanian school such as Olarash Primary School receives little help from the government for needed books and supplies. The school will greatly benefit from the support generated by this year's Lake Area Walk. Thanks to all who participated, both walkers and walk sponsors!



## Building Relationships, Investing in People

By Rev. J. David Thomas

When members of the 21-strong traveling team from Cross of Christ Lutheran Church in Bellevue, Washington, were asked by family, friends and fellow church members what they would be building during their trip to Tanzania, the answer was always, “We’re building relationships!”

And that’s just what they did during their time in northern Tanzania in July – building on the foundation of a long-standing relationship with Operation Bootstrap Africa and the MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School in Monduli, as well as partnerships with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, local pastors and congregations, and other Tanzanian organizations.

“Underpinning everything is simply spending time with people,” said Cross of Christ Lead Pastor Dave Thomas, who was a part of the travel team. “We are blessed to be able to share financial resources and prayer support with our partners in Tanzania, but what a special blessing it is to see what happens with our investment in relationships, which is reciprocated many times over by our friends and partners there.”

Among those investments over the years has been support of girls during and beyond their years as students at MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School. Sponsored students have gone on to university, and one will soon begin medical school preparing to serve her country as a doctor.

“In the past, many of these girls were valued primarily for the dowry they could bring when married off as young brides. How transforming it is to see them now bringing new financial blessings to their families and communities as they enter careers open to them with secondary and higher education. They are also helping shape new perspectives about the roles of women in Tanzanian society, especially traditional societies like the Maasai,” Pastor Thomas said.

The group saw this firsthand many times, including when they were invited to visit the traditional home of one of the students at MGLSS. At this



boma (a traditional Maasai cluster of homes and livestock enclosures) team members met the girl's father, an elder with five wives and many children. They asked him about his decision to send his daughter to secondary school, the first of his female children to do so.

“When I was young, our parents did not value school for any of their children, which is why I was not educated,” he said. “But I have learned the importance of education for my children, including my daughters. So I who once thought education was of no importance especially for girls now believe it is the most important thing I can provide for them.”

He went on to say that his daughter, whose name Tumaini means hope, was the first girl in his family to attend secondary school, but he promised she would not be the last.



Pastor Dave with children

“It is honest encounters like this, only possible through investing in relationships, that truly brings us a sense of hope and encouragement,” said Pastor Thomas. “Stories like Tumaini's and her family are why we travel to Tanzania, and why we are so proud to be partners with Operation Bootstrap Africa and MGLSS.”

At right, David Thomas works with an MGLSS student



At left, Matt Pohle and other members of the team greeting students at MGLSS



This was the third time Cross of Christ members have traveled to Tanzania to invest in transformational relationships, which is the focus of Cross of Christ's missional connections in Africa. Following teams in 2008 and 2012, this year's group spent a little more than two weeks in country. Half of the team members focused on the Girls School, leading Bible studies, facilitating English language and cultural exchange conversation groups, attending twice-daily chapel services, supporting teachers and staff, and working on upgrades in the computer lab. Other team members traveled to more remote areas visiting schools, churches, orphanages, and health facilities.

While members of the traveling team funded their own travel costs, a very successful auction raised more than \$80,000 that Cross of Christ funnels to OBA and other partner agencies in Tanzania.



Cross of Christ team members with students at the MaaSAE Girls School



## MaaSAE Girls School Graduate Addresses Sponsors in Minneapolis



On August 8, MGLSS graduate Neema Landey spoke to a gathering of OBA student sponsors at Becketwood in Minneapolis. Neema was in the United States as a recipient of the Mandela Washington Young African Leaders Initiative fellowship. She spent six weeks studying at Duquesne University in Pittsburg and

later joined other fellowship recipients in Washington, D.C. where she had a chance to meet President Obama.

Neema then traveled to Minnesota for a week's visit before returning home to Tanzania. It was an especially meaningful trip for Neema as she was able to spend time with her OBA sponsor Jean Ekern, who passed away a few weeks later at the age of 91.

At the OBA event, Neema told about her educational journey beginning as a MaaSAE Girls School Form 1 student in 1998 and graduating from Form 6 in 2004. After finishing a bachelor's degree in Tanzania, she completed a Master's Degree in Public Health in the Netherlands. Neema (pictured below on right) is employed with the YWCA-Tanzania as a project director, educating girls in rural areas about legal rights, gender violence, and sexual and reproductive issues.



Neema spoke compassionately about the continued need for girls' education in Tanzania. She thanked OBA sponsors for helping Maasai girls like herself reach their academic potential.

We look forward to hearing what this accomplished young woman will be achieving in the future!



## Form 6 Graduation at the MaaSAE Girls School

The May 2016 Form 6 class was the largest in the history of school with 30 graduates! This was the fifteenth Form 6 class.



The Form 6 graduates spent June through August performing their required Tanzanian military service. They are now receiving their post-secondary assignments by the government and will soon begin classes. Many of the students were science majors and are receiving placements in health care programs, such as a clinical lab technician course and clinical officer course. Thank you to the OBA sponsors of these new graduates!



## We Need Sponsors!

### New Pre-form One Students

An enthusiastic new class of 70 students will be entering MGLSS! These include both paying and scholarship students. The students will spend a few months brushing up on their academic skills prior to the school start in January of 2017.

### Would you like to make a difference in the life of a young girl by becoming a sponsor?

A full sponsorship is \$1,000 annually and a half sponsorship is \$500. You may donate in one or multiple payments over the school year. You may donate by check made payable to OBA or online on our website. When we receive your donation, we will assign you a student and send you information about her.

The sponsorship covers all costs for the student, including tuition, fees, uniform, books, and room and board.

We always need sponsors! There are incoming students as well as students in upper forms who need sponsoring.

We hope you will continue to support your student annually through her years at MGLSS.



### Do you wish to support MGLSS, but not be a sponsor?

General donations for MGLSS are always welcomed and needed! This support assists the school with costs not covered by sponsorships such as exam fees, laboratory supplies, maintenance expenses, field trips, and internet access costs. You may donate by check made payable to OBA and mailed to the OBA in the envelope provided in this newsletter.

Deserving young girls like these need sponsors like you!



Elizabeth Donasian



Nemsungu Kamaika



Angel Evarest

## Galatians 6:9 New International Version

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

### Dear OBA Family,

**Thank you for not becoming weary in doing good!** This year is truly a time to give thanks for all that your gifts have accomplished in Tanzania and Madagascar. It is not only your financial gifts we are thankful for, but also for your time promoting OBA projects and your prayers for the children and youth we serve.

Doing good isn't always an easy road. Rewards often take years to materialize and there may be many obstacles in the way. Sometimes those doing good become disheartened when something doesn't turn out as they had hoped. Yet, as people of faith, we are exhorted to not give up, but to persevere.

The harvest has been plentiful for those who have supported OBA over the past 51 years! Tens of thousands of Tanzanian and Malagasy children have studied in OBA classrooms. More than 750 girls have graduated from the MaaSAE Girls School, and nearly half of these graduates have pursued post-secondary education. The first ALMC School of Nursing graduates are a new generation of healthcare workers ready to minister to those in need. Through education, all of these students are changing the lives of their families and communities in positive ways that we can't imagine.

In addition to our donors, we wish to honor the commitment and work of our volunteers and outgoing board members. We especially would like to recognize Hazel Reinhardt, who served as President of the OBA Board of Directors and also worked in the OBA office for the past six years.

I have announced my upcoming retirement in 2017 as Executive Director and a search will soon be underway for my successor. I have been blessed to have served OBA and sincerely appreciate the support you have given me. OBA is in good hands with enthusiastic board members who are committed to the work of OBA as we enter our 52<sup>nd</sup> year of service to those in Tanzania and Madagascar.

With gratitude,

Diane Jacoby

Executive Director, OBA



For the third consecutive year, **Charity Navigator**, the leading charity evaluator in America, has awarded its highest rating of 4-stars to Operation Bootstrap Africa for sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency.



## Foundation Support

*We appreciate the generous support received from the following foundations*

**InFaith Foundation**, Joyce Gouwens Fund, funding for the neonatal intensive care unit and the children's malnutrition project at the Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre and Selian Hospital

**The Beverly Foundation**, funding for construction of a medical dispensary and support for a primary school near Lushoto, Tanzania

**The Minneapolis Foundation**, funding for teacher training at the MaaSAE Girls School



## Memorial Gifts

*Honoring friends and loved ones with gifts designated to OBA*

When long-time OBA supporter Jean Ekern died last month, her family knew that her wishes were to have memorials designated to OBA. Jean was an MGLSS sponsor and had visited Tanzania. As a registered nurse for more than 60 years, she was also delighted to support the scholarship program for the ALMC School of Nursing.

We sincerely appreciate that so many of you have given memorial gifts designated to OBA in remembrance of your friends or family members who have passed away this year.

If you wish to designate a memorial, you may donate by check, or online on the OBA website at [www.bootstrapafrica.org](http://www.bootstrapafrica.org). All memorial checks must be made payable to OBA.

## GIVING GENEROUSLY

Your gifts to OBA can be made with a variety of assets in a variety of ways

### **GIVE NOW: Benefit to OBA immediately**

Assets to give: cash, publicly traded stocks, bonds or mutual funds, real estate, and closely held stock

Maximize donations with matching gifts through employers

Designate Thrivent Choice dollars to OBA

If you are 70 1/2 or older, you may gift from your IRA up to \$100,000 per year income tax free. The check must go directly from your IRA custodian to OBA

### **GIVE LATER: Benefit to OBA upon death**

Assets to give: life insurance, publicly traded stocks, bonds or mutual funds, real estate, closely held stock, retirement assets (IRAs, TSAs, 401(k) or 403(b)s, savings bonds, and annuities)

Bequests made from your will or trust. Beneficiary proceeds from your retirement accounts, annuities or life insurance. Gifting property while retaining use and enjoyment as long as you live

### **GIVE & RECEIVE: Receive income payments now, but provide future support to OBA upon death**

Gifts made using charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder annuity trusts, charitable remainder unitrusts, and testamentary trusts



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*Dignity* is a publication for friends of Operation Bootstrap Africa, a Minnesota-based non-profit dedicated to providing access to education for children and youth in Tanzania and Madagascar.

In partnership with African communities and organizations, OBA provides support and assistance to projects and programs based on locally-established priorities.

Gifts to OBA are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. OBA may assess up to 10% for administering these gifts.

Website: [www.bootstrapafrica.org](http://www.bootstrapafrica.org)  
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Phone: 612-871-4980

A wide, orange ribbon with a 3D effect, featuring a central rectangular box and two pointed ends. The text 'Give Hope Through Education!' is centered within the box.

## Give Hope Through Education!

Designate a gift of any amount to **“Where Needed Most”** to meet urgent needs

- \$25** Provides a Tanzanian primary school uniform (shorts or skirt, shirt, and sweater)
- \$25** Provides a high school math or science textbook
- \$50** Provides a three-student primary school desk
- \$500** Provides a half scholarship for a student at the MaaSAE Girls School
- \$1,000** Provides an annual scholarship for a student at the MaaSAE Girls School
- \$1,000** Provides an annual scholarship for a student at the ALMC School of Nursing

**Give to the project of your choice by mail or online at  
[www.bootstrapafrica.org](http://www.bootstrapafrica.org)**