

Answering for the Children Newsletter

This month's AFTC newsletter has been written by a new AFTC board member, Steve Rozmus, and his wife Kelly Underwood Rozmus, who is a new advisory board member.

We Get Back Up by Steve Rozmus

This August our family visited Jinja, our old home of 4 years, and AFTC, part of our extended family. One kitchen talk I had with Marybelle and Esther reminded me of the strength of Uganda and our commitment to seeing AFTC succeed. We were talking about what subjects the girls liked most - they both mentioned history. We got to talking about Uganda's history from independence in 1962 to the present — the girls, not surprisingly, knew their history, talking with detail through the amazing 55 years that has passed. Three times in that period found Uganda knocked down through war and upheaval. Kampala was destroyed and rebuilt twice. Hundreds of thousands around the country died. Uganda got right back to getting on with life each time. In fact, most Ugandans don't spend much time talking about the past but rather focus on the present and hopes for the future. They are strong and move forward, rebuilding along the way. I don't know any nationality that is so strong and has gone through, as a nation, so much and came out of it moving forward. The story that Uganda is lazy, behind and its population is to be pitied is just not true. Uganda has been tested more than most countries over the past 50 years and the country pulls forward.



This is the story of AFTC, too. Every child in this wonderful family came through great upheaval to before arriving in Dee's loving arms. Those arms have carried them through triumphs and a lot of tribulation but always forward and always full of love. Dee and Joe have been tireless, strong and make things happen when everything seems to be a hurdle. The kids show this love and are full of great character and determination. They get up everyday to do their best. My family is proud to be a part of the AFTC family and proud to contribute monthly to AFTC. The success that is AFTC is a story whose ending is far from over and we all can help write. With inflation higher than I remember and school fees showing no sign of getting better, my family is upping our monthly contribution and I humbly request you to think about doing so, too. As partners we help these determined, hard-working kids join in with their neighbors in building Uganda. Being part of this family is not only a great honor, its one of the greatest expressions of love and inspiration in my life.

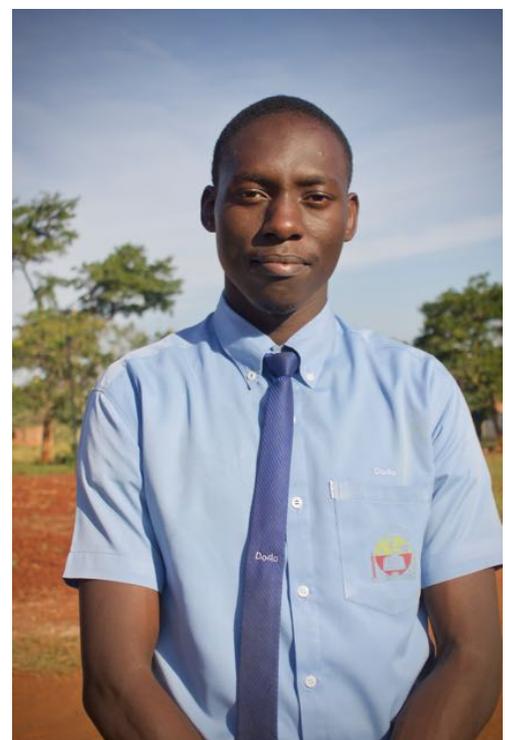
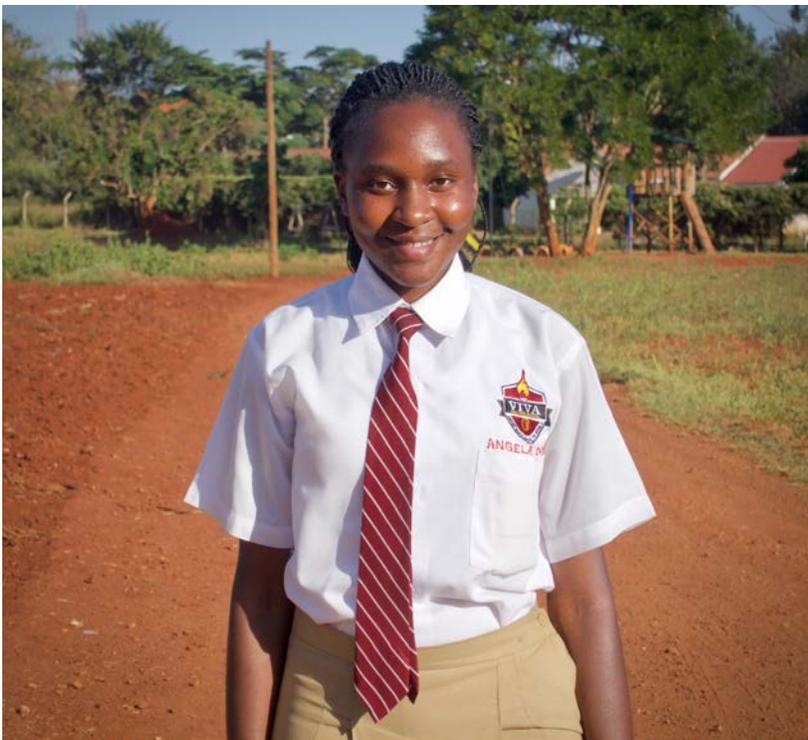
Train up a Child by Kelly Underwood Rozmus

When I first met Deidrah and her children at the holiday reading camp I was directing at St. Nicholas Primary School in Jinja, I was immediately impressed by how much time, care, and attention this mother of 30 children put into their education. After teaching about 20 of Deidrah's children in the classroom at St. Nicholas or in private tutoring in my Jinja home, my admiration for this woman only grew. Now that I have returned to live in California, my role in her family's life has shifted from Teacher Kelly to Auntie Kelly. However, I remain highly interested in their education.

During our August visit to Uganda, my husband Steve, son Amulen, and I were privileged to spend a week in Deidrah's home. During previous visits, the kids had all been at home on between-term vacation. This time, Deidrah's home was eerily quiet, as most of the children were away at day or boarding school. In the United States, we think of boarding schools as either elite or military like institutions. However, in Uganda, most middle class families send their children to boarding school. Local government schools are often extremely overcrowded and sorely underfunded, with an average of 75 children in one classroom! Many middle class families seeking a quality education for their children put their children in private schools that require boarding.



While in Deidrah's home, I observed her manage the education of her now 31 children who attend no less than nine different schools or educational programs! These schools range from a private preschool, to an in-home elementary school and a day/boarding elementary school, to a day high school and a boarding high school to rehabilitative programs. With 31 children, you can imagine that Deidrah has a wide variety of capabilities and needs among her children. One school doesn't fit all! So, Deidrah has painstakingly chosen schools that meet the needs of her kids. And, she has done so well! But, since these schools and programs are not government-funded. Deidrah must pay tuition for every child. And school fees in Uganda are increasing exponentially. Two of Deidrah's oldest children, Angela and Isaac, are in their last year of extended high school. (In Uganda, a student can do four years of high school or extend to six years to prepare for college.) They are preparing for adulthood and higher education. Angela hopes to go to England for university and would like to become a lawyer. Isaac hopes to come to the United States to join the Air Force, with the long-term goal of becoming a pilot. On the other end of the spectrum, Deidrah's youngest, Nicholas, is preparing to enter elementary school next year. Please stand with us to support Deidrah as s



We want to say thank you. Every prayer and every contribution is such a gift to us here at AFTC. We are praying blessing over all of you. Our prayer is that you will choose to walk forward with us to help change lives and history.

If you would like to give to AFTC please make your checks payable to: Answering For The Children

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*Please visit our web site at: <http://www.answeringforthechildren.org/>
AFTC USA Board*

