

Hearth to Hearth Ministries

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Introducing Jo Friday

Our New Board Member

Last summer, when her friend and Hearth to Hearth board member Julie Lowery invited Jo Friday to go with her to visit Hope Center, all it took was three words to capture her interest: kids, teachers, and helping. Jo has 44 years of experience in education, including being a special education, history, and English teacher, school social worker, and most recently, the Director of Educational Support Services for a private school. She has also been a mentor and instructional coach to teachers on both building, district, and state levels. Jo hit the ground running when she arrived at Hope and was almost immediately asked to model some teaching strategies for the teachers. She taught several classes, shared materials, and did some informal in-service. She was thrilled and grateful for



the opportunity to share her expertise and the teachers' receptivity to new ideas.

After returning home, Jo wrote up her observations from the trip and was asked to share them with the board. It was apparent that having someone with her passion and expertise in education would be an asset to the board. We are so grateful that she is our newest board member, and she plans to return to Kenya this summer with another team to continue her work with the teachers. Jo shared, "I feel that my time with Hearth to Hearth is the culmination of all my professional experiences and passion for teaching, and it is beyond an honor to be invited to continue working with Hope Center."



"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" Matthew 25:40

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF A TUNNEL



Felix Otieno, Chef Extraordinaire

Felix Otieno's mother died when he was in fourth grade. His father died a couple of years later. It was hard for him to access basic needs such as food, shelter, clothes, and education, and he lacked any sense of belonging. He recalls arriving at Hope Center was like a light at the end of the tunnel. Felix says the highlight of his stay at Hope was receiving a sponsor.

Cooking for his younger siblings before his parents died and watching cooking shows interested him. After completing high school, his sponsor helped him attend a culinary arts school. He graduated in 2013, and since then, he has used his culinary skills to support his family. Although finding steady employment

has been a challenge, he has supplemented his income by

working as a freelance journalist for the local newspaper and emceeing

special events. Eventually, he hopes to attend graduate school and then teach culinary arts. Having Felix cook for us is a special treat when we visit Hope Center. He serves up very healthy and delicious fare. Before each meal, he enters the dining room, describes each dish, and blesses the meal.

Felix is married to Susan and has three beautiful children, Sara Tecy, Leckrone Boke (named after his sponsor), and Godfrey Obonyo.

Chef Felix explains that while his life has had many challenges, they have been stepping stones to success. When his uncle died, the mother of their three young children ran off without them. Felix opened his home to his three cousins until an aunt became their guardian. He has also faced health challenges. However, his faith, hard work, creativity, and can-do attitude make him an excellent role model for his younger "brothers and sisters" at Hope.

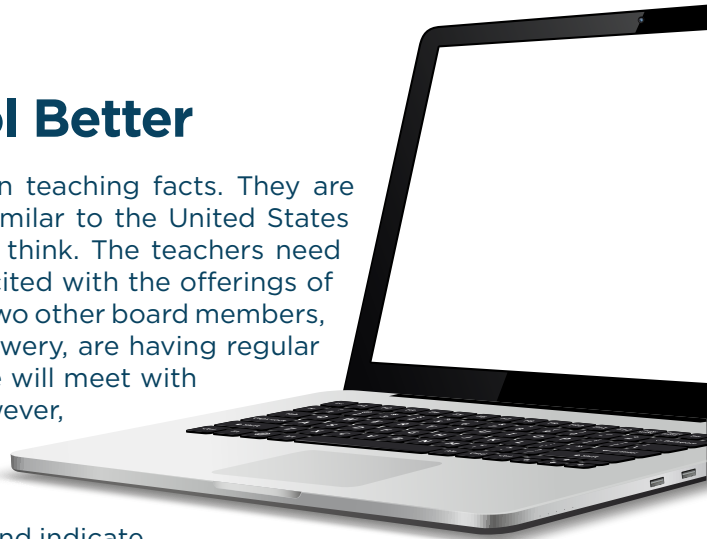


Congratulations Thomas Kabithy

Thomas Kabithy scored in the top percent of all children in Kenya on his 8th-grade national exams, receiving a score of over 400. He received a scholarship to Starhes Boy School, the country's second most prestigious high school. He is our first student to attend this school, and we are very proud of him. We know he has a very bright future.

Hope Academy: Making Our Good School Better

Kenya's education has traditionally focused on teaching facts. They are changing their teaching model to one more similar to the United States and are focusing on teaching children how to think. The teachers need help adapting to this methodology and are excited with the offerings of staff development "workshops." Jo Friday and two other board members, Deb Nickerson (a former teacher) and Julie Lowery, are having regular Zoom meetings with the staff, and Jo and Julie will meet with them in person when they visit in July. However, proper tools, like laptops, are needed to make the transition. Our goal is to raise \$5,500 for 11 computers. To date, we have raised \$550. Prayerfully consider contributing to this effort and indicate on your donation that it is for educational equipment.



Sponsor a Child

While our policy is to find sponsors for new children before they are admitted, we did not do so for Nicol and Hezron because of their dire circumstances.



NICOL, 8, and **HEZRON, 6,** were in desperate straights when we admitted them to Hope Center. Their father was murdered during an election period. Their mother is bedridden and constantly in and out of the hospital. She is unable to support them or provide them with proper care. They often went hungry, and life was very hard and depressing for them.



CHRISTINE LOVVY'S mother died when she was just two years old. Her father died of throat cancer sometime later. Christine was left in the custody of her Aunt Pamela. Pamela, a widow with children, found it hard to care for another child. She brought Christine to Hope Center when she was 9. Christine is now 14 and in the 9th grade and considers Hope Center her home. She has missed not having a sponsor to write and receive letters from; having a sponsor would encourage and lift her spirits.

MANY MANY SMILES

New Clothes Bring Many Smiles

Hearth to Hearth Board member Grazyna Barna of Poland shipped three parcels of clothing to the Hope Center children, and the delivery brought smiles to their faces. In January, she saw a Facebook post from someone named Ewa featuring quality dresses that were reasonably priced. She decided to purchase a few for our girls. She learned that Ewa was a neighbor, living only two hundred yards from her home. Grazyna realized that Ewa had a lot of clothes for sale that she hadn't posted on Facebook. After Grazyna told her about Hope Center and showed her photos, Ewa sold all the dresses to her for almost nothing. Grazyna's husband, Kristoff, sent the shirts the older boys are proudly showing off. Thank you, Ewa, Grazyna, and Kristoff!



Contact us on our website, hearthtohearth.org, or by email at info@hearthtohearth.org.

Our mission is to provide a loving Christian environment to orphans and at-risk children that gives them the foundation to become strong, educated and responsible adults.



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