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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #259

Dear friends and family,

November 28 will mark my first anniversary year in Africa. It has been an adventure, and the chance of a lifetime. I am truly grateful to all of you who made this possible for me through your gifts and prayers. My life is so different now. The things I felt were the essentials of life in the U.S. are no longer important. I have learned to enjoy the little things like going for a walk and watching the sunset. I have actually seen elephants, hippos, monkeys, and impalas in their natural habitat. When we see roadkill, it is usually monkeys, not deer or dogs. The people here in Malawi get up with the dawn of each new day. Mzuzu is a bustling city with markets where you can buy anything from furniture to food, but they close at dusk because they operate the same as they did many years ago with no electricity. There are also grocery chains where you can buy some of those things that we miss in America. There are even a few fast food restaurants. Every time I go out is an adventure because you never know what will happen, so I have to be aware of my surroundings, especially while driving. They do not have the many tow trucks and emergency vehicles we have in the States.

As the ChildCare Administrator, I come into contact with almost everyone here in the Village. We now have only twenty residents remaining at the Village after some of them graduated this year. The graduates have taken their national exams (MSCE). I got a chance to get to know them and become involved in their day to day lives, but after graduation their lives changed. They no longer reside in the Village overseen by their Rafiki Mothers. They have fully transitioned to life outside the Village and are officially adults. Although they live outside the Village, they are still supported by donors like you through the child sponsor program. Some of them are working here in the Village



Madam Anna and graduates

in the daytime performing assorted jobs as they wait to be placed in various scholarship programs dependent on their skills and MSCE scores.

Rafiki now has more graduates than residents under the umbrella of childcare, so our function is ever evolving. We have students all over the country that are still on support. That means visiting them at university and maintaining communication with them as they prepare for their future in various universities and technical schools. Just in the last three months, we placed two of our 2024 graduates in diploma and degree programs, and we are working on placing the rest. This time has been so exciting for us because, for the first time, two of our graduates, Laurene and Justina, graduated from university with bachelors degrees.



Madams Martha and Velepi visiting the students attending UNILIA

Meanwhile we still have our twenty residents. They are all older now, the youngest being eleven so they can take on some more mature activities. They still love their sports, but now they are venturing outside the Village and serving the surrounding community. These kids are amazingly skilled, so along with their survival skills, they are also learning about social graces and how to conduct themselves in any social situation. They are visiting the surrounding villages and presenting the Rafiki Bible Study and other activities to the children there.

I thank the almighty Father for answering all my prayers. I am surviving and thriving in my new situation, but my prayer requests have not changed. *All of my prayers are works in progress, so please pray that my relationships with team members, national staff, and children continue to grow and evolve into even stronger bonds. Pray that I will thank God every day for the work He has given me to do as a Rafiki Missionary and that I strive to do everything with excellence and integrity. Pray that I continue to trust the Lord to give me the wisdom and courage that I need. Pray that both our graduates and residents as well as our day students continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

Grace and peace,

May

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