

OKOA TOTO

CHILDREN'S HOME

Inspired by Compassion. Rooted in Community.

LUMAKANDA, KENYA

To create a future for Kenyan Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances by providing quality education and a safe, nurturing, sustainable home environment that is rooted in community and inspired by compassion.



Okoa Toto Family April 2023

Front from left: Michael, Jian, Rebecca, Faith, Joy, Mary, Abigail.
Mid from left: Melvin, Gabriel, Wesley, Brightson, Ramsey.
Back row from left – Staff: Erick, Christine, Kevina, Edith, Joshua.



Celebrating Ramsey!

After his excellent performance in the Kenyan National Exams, he has transitioned to grade 7 in Lumakanda Township Junior Secondary School. We are very proud of Ramsey and thrilled with his hard work and dedication!

What a difference 3+ years makes! A reflection by Doug Pierce, Co-founder & Board Member

On December 7th, 2019, I was honored to help dedicate the building which would serve as the home for the Okoa Toto Project. It was a proud moment for me as it represented the culmination of several years of planning and six months of construction (which used local laborers, materials and was constructed with only hand tools). On that day, more than 200 local Kenyans from the neighborhood attended the dedication and celebration. Since “Rooted in Community” is part of our tag line, this turnout was most encouraging. At that celebration, I first met the 12 children selected by the Lumakanda-based Okoa Toto Advisory Council.

What I witnessed was an example of why our project matters. The children were not smiling; their eyes were dull and distant; their bodies showed the signs of malnutrition, their clothing was worn, torn and tattered. On top of this, I discovered these 12 children had never been to school, some were already on the streets begging, all were in substandard homes and existing on extremely poor nutrition with little or no health care.

Fast forward three+ years, I am pleased to report that all 12 children are excelling in school, their smiles

are infectious and their eyes sparkle full of hope and life. The children are no longer malnourished and are receiving quality health care as needed. They have the support of a loving and gifted staff which encompasses them as “family.” They have the support of the community and their extended families (if available).

Clearly, the Okoa Toto project has made an incredible difference. Our hopes are simple: *while we might not be able to do all that we want to alleviate poverty in the Lumakanda area, we must not fail to do all that we can.* I know our Board takes satisfaction in the hope, that these 12 children will grow up to be community leaders with the ability and motivation to “pay it forward” helping their families and neighbors in the process. The ripple effect throughout the area will then have a much needed, long-lasting impact.

It is because of the support of so many that our efforts up to this point have been successful. We hope we can continue to count on you going forward. You are part of the difference being made in the lives of these children. We thank you for your ongoing and generous contributions.

In their own words

“I wanted friends to donate to Okoa Toto for my birthday because I believe in this cause. I want to support an organization that provides quality education for children who might otherwise not have access to it.”
~ Teri Landry

“Education opens more opportunities and empowers children to grow into community leaders who are then able to shape and change the future for the better. As a monthly donor and teacher, I know that access to education is lifechanging and that is why I continue to support Okoa Toto’s great work.”
~ Lindsey Schneider



Abigail enjoying studying with intern Deana at Springs of Hope school.

A Rewarding Year

This past year, Okoa Toto partnered with the University of Wisconsin-Madison to develop a rewarding study-abroad internship for two interns, Natalie and Deana. During their internship Natalie and Deana helped the Okoa Toto children with homework, leading educational activities, cooking and chores, and visiting the families of some of the Okoa Toto children.

Deana shared the following wonderful sentiment about her internship experience:

“My role as a youth empowerment intern focused on supporting the children’s academics by helping with their assignments and supplementing their math and reading practice. We also focused on music lessons, art projects such as painting, Origami, and playing with clay and teaching the children typing and computer literacy skills with the two new computers donated to Okoa Toto this summer! The time I spent in Kenya was an amazing experience filled with such welcoming people, the sweetest children, and the chance to see a beautiful country!”



Brightson



Jian



Melvin

Springs of Hope

In September, the Okoa Toto children transitioned to Springs of Hope, a highly-rated private school located just two blocks from the Okoa Toto home. Springs of Hope has given the children the opportunity for more one-on-one instruction and support, and the children who attended Springs of Hope last year ranked high on the Kenyan National Exams. The children have had a smooth transition and are enjoying their new school.

Okoa Toto children take a break from their homework to show how much they're enjoying their studies. The children are studying Math, English, Kiswahili, Social Studies, Science and Technology, Home Science, Music, Art and Craft, Agriculture, Hygiene, Environmental and Physical Health Education.



Abigael



Mary



Gabriel



Faith



Michael



Joy



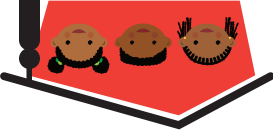
Rebecca



Wesley



SEE STORY INSIDE



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Okoa Toto, Inc.
1228 Summit Avenue
Waukeshah, WI 53188

**3rd Annual
WALK, RUN, PEDAL, PADDLE
June 1 – 15, 2023**

Starting on
International Children's Day,
pick a day and join your spouse,
family or friends and go for a
walk, run, bike or kayak/canoe to
help us raise funds for
the children of Okoa Toto!

\$25.00 Registration Fee.

To register or for more details visit
www.okoatoto.org



We're grateful for a third computer that was donated to help the children study and become more technological savvy.
From left: Michael, Wesley, Gabriel, Ramsey.