

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 a quality education and a safe, nurturing, sustainable home environment that is rooted in community and inspired by compassion.



(l to r): Brightson, Jian, Abigael, Faith, Rebecca, Melvin, Michael, Wesley

TRANSFORMING LIVES, TOGETHER

As 2025 winds down, we are delighted to report that our children and staff in the Okoa Toto Project continue to excel. Of course, none of this would be possible without the generous and faithful support of you, our sponsors, and annual donors!

So many individuals have also offered their time, wisdom, and encouragement over the years. We wouldn't be where we are without them.

Recently, two of our strongest supporters have passed away: Lois Schmitz and Rev. Titus Kubia. Because they meant so much to us, we wanted to dedicate this newsletter to their memory. They are deeply missed.

This holiday season, please consider a donation to Okoa Toto so that we may enter our sixth year even stronger, fulfilling our mission together, and in the special memories of both Lois and Pastor Titus.

Asante Sana,

Doug Pierce
Okoa Toto President

IN FOND REMEMBRANCE...

ASANTE SANA TO LOIS SCHMITZ

A beloved and invaluable board member, Lois Schmitz passed away on October 2nd, 2025, at the age of 92.

Lois was a member of our "exploratory committee" which met often at her home in Oak Creek to envision and plan what eventually became the Okoa Toto Children's Project. She went on to serve on the original Board for several years and was responsible for much of Okoa Toto's success. She was a sponsor of one of the 12 Okoa Toto children, Brightson, whom she adored. Lois endowed with naming rights two of the children's wings in the Okoa Toto home in loving memory of her sister Mary Weiss who served as a missionary nurse in Kenya from 1966-1969, and in memory and honor of Lois Schmitz and her late husband, Dr. John Schmitz.

Lois was a kind and gracious person who brightened up our world with her generosity and resilient spirit. She is deeply missed by everyone she touched with her heart. We look forward, in our own small way, to carrying on her legacy of helping those suffering from poverty and most importantly, giving them hope.



Lois Schmitz & Mark Okello

PASTOR TITUS...

A Community leader who made a huge difference!

Prior to the Okoa Toto Children's project being established, it was vital that local Lumakanda residents were intimately involved. An Advisory Council of local Lumakanda residents answered the call to serve in this way, under the capable leadership of Mark Okello, a co-founder of the project. These included a teacher, government official, nurse, and early childhood educator.

In this group was also the Rev. Titus Kubia, a pastor of the local Church of God, farmer, and a distinguished leader in the community. His insights and wisdom were invaluable through the inception of the Okoa Toto vision and its ongoing growth. Sadly, Rev. Titus passed away on July 21st from cancer at the age of 53. A small financial gift of support was given by the Board of Directors to Rev. Titus's family and presented to them by Mark Okello and the Okoa Toto Advisory Council.

Asante sana to Rev. Titus for his commitment and wise leadership to the Okoa Toto project over the years.



Doug Pierce & Reverend Titus

A SPECIAL GIFT TO THE OKOA TOTO SPONSORS

We have been blessed to have a group of committed sponsors who have supported the mission and work of our Okoa Toto Children's project, many since its inception. They, along with our annual donors, comprise our fundraising efforts, all of which go to support the work of Okoa Toto providing quality health care, private education, nutrition, caring home environment, and emotional support.

As a way of saying thanks, Kevina, and Board members Kathy and Ann have put together a pictorial book denoting each child's growth, along with a personalized message from each child. Design support is being graciously donated by Emily Schroeder of Emily Marie Watercolors in Madison. We hope to be sending out this special gift of thanks to each sponsor this holiday season.

Those interested in learning more about sponsoring a child or becoming a board member should contact Okoa Toto Board President Doug Pierce at dmpier0632@gmail.com.



(l to r): Brightson, Michael, Jian, Gabriel, Wesley, Ramsey



(l to r): Mary, Faith, Rabecca, Joy

SPECIAL EVENTS, SPECIAL FRIENDS

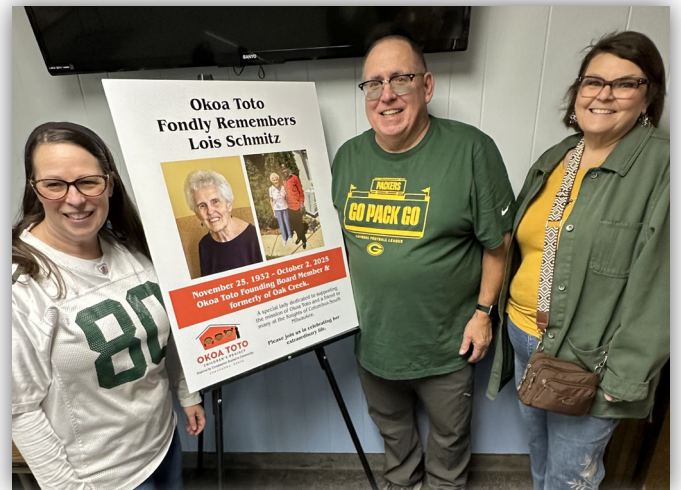
Over the past few years, we have encountered the kindness and generosity of friends who have offered to host fundraisers on behalf of Okoa Toto, including the Knights of Columbus-South Milwaukee, and Weck Automotive in the Chicago area. Your ongoing support and generosity make such a positive difference in the lives of the 12 Okoa Toto children, and the project overall. Thank you!

This fall, special thanks to the Knights of Columbus-South Milwaukee for once again hosting the Annual Harvest Food Drive & Pork Roast on November 2nd with proceeds benefiting Okoa Toto.



Just some of the nearly 30 raffle baskets donated for the event.

Special thanks to Greg (R), Laurie, Andrew, Jim and Linda Schmidt, Ryder Castle, Jim Hellmich (L) and Rick Heck for helping to manage the event and all the fabulous food!



Okoa Toto Board Member Ann Shurte (L) and Luara Faust (R) with Knights of Columbus Dan Castle as they showcase the poster honoring Lois Schmitz, who worked with Dan five years ago to establish the Okoa Toto fundraiser.



Knights of Columbus patrons enjoying the Packer Game, but next year we need a win!



Okoa Toto is a 501c3 non-profit organization in the State of Wisconsin.

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okoatoto.org