

# HOPE HAVEN

RWANDA

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The Intentionality  
of Spiritual Direction

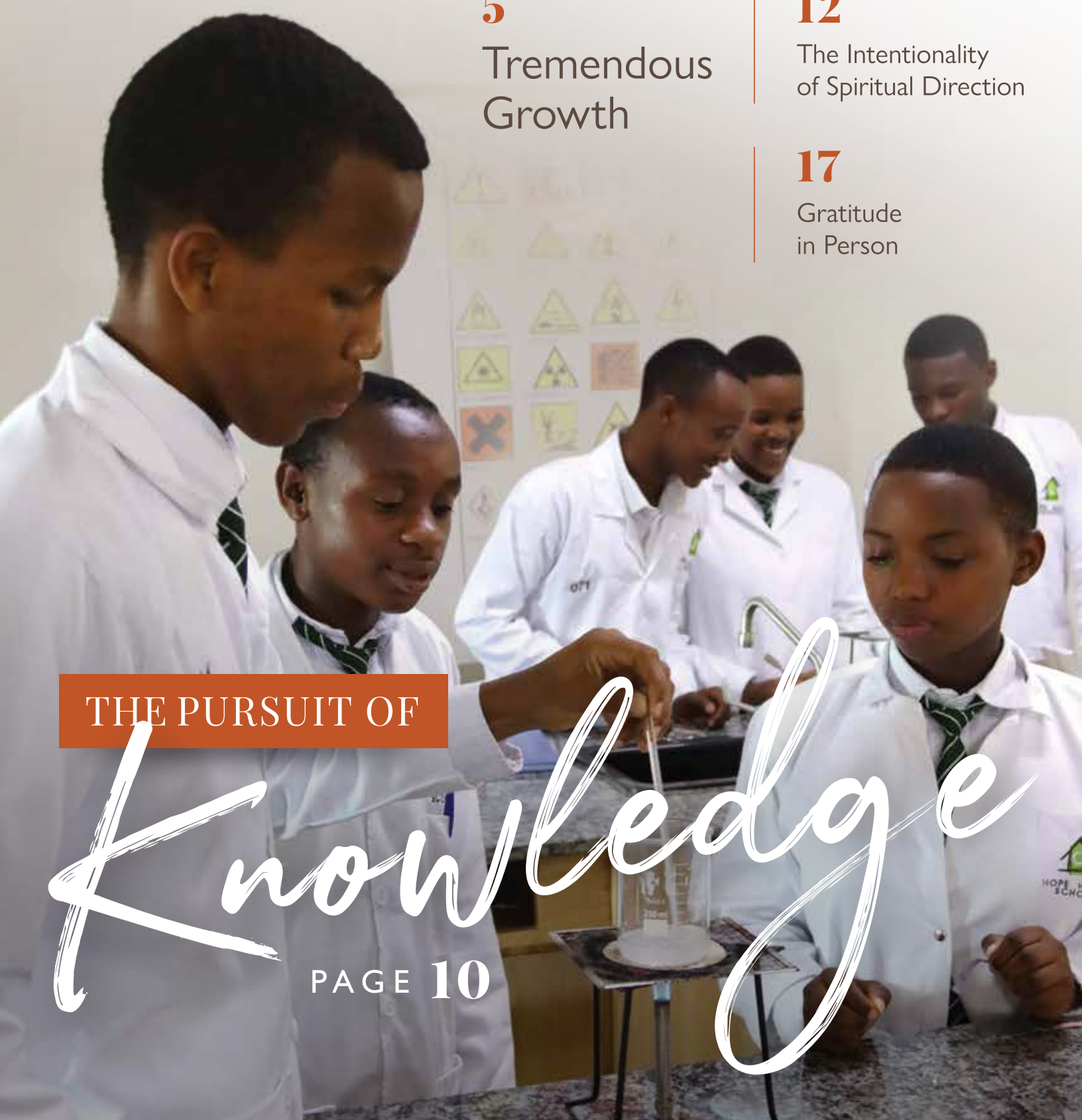
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Gratitude  
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THE PURSUIT OF

*Knowledge*

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# Stay | Be

CONNECTED! | INSPIRED!



Stay in touch with Hope Haven Rwanda.  
Learn more about what God is doing,  
and what He may be calling you to do.  
Here are a couple simple ways to engage:



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[HopeHavenRwanda.org/Newsletter](https://HopeHavenRwanda.org/Newsletter)



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HOPE HAVEN  
RWANDA

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**Hope Haven Rwanda** is a free annual publication to inspire friends, volunteers and donors who support the mission of The Hope Haven Charitable Trust. Together, we are transforming Rwandan families through a holistic approach to education and discipleship, actively demonstrating the love, hope and truth of Jesus Christ.

If you have comments, questions or address changes, we want to hear from you. Please contact us by email at [Info@HopeHavenRwanda.org](mailto:Info@HopeHavenRwanda.org) or call 720-900-1328.

The Hope Haven Charitable Trust  
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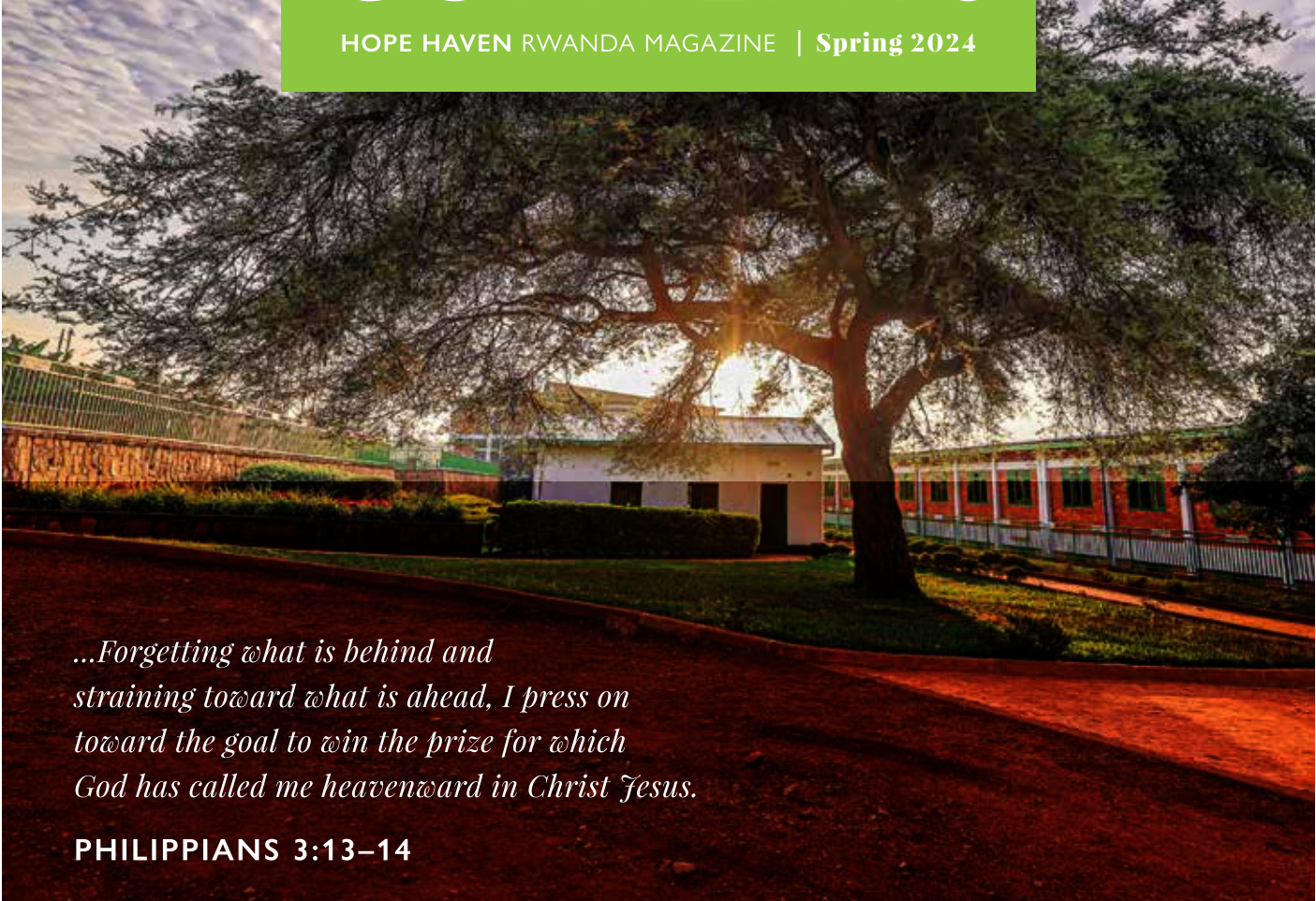
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HOPE HAVEN RWANDA MAGAZINE | Spring 2024



*...Forgetting what is behind and  
straining toward what is ahead, I press on  
toward the goal to win the prize for which  
God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

**PHILIPPIANS 3:13–14**

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An aerial photograph of a school campus in Rwanda. The campus features several large, modern, multi-story buildings with green roofs and red brick facades. To the right of the buildings is a large, green sports field with a wooden bleacher structure. In the foreground, there are several tennis courts with blue and green surfaces. The surrounding area is lush with green trees and vegetation. The top of the image is partially obscured by a large orange banner with white text and a decorative pattern at the very top.

# CELEBRATE

**Impundu** | Give a shout-out to good things happening

Unleashing  
the Power of  
Exponential  
*Growth*


# A Season of Tremendous Growth

In 2012, Hope Haven Christian School began teaching colors, letters and numbers to 97 students under a tree. Twelve years later, school enrollment is more than 1,800 students—a growth of over 1700%! In the last two years alone, since opening the doors of the secondary school, enrollment has more than doubled—from 873 to 1,814 students throughout the campus. Truly, these numbers are staggering. The most important thing to remember is how blessed we are to be able to educate more students, hire more parents, and impact more families than ever—all by God's power and for God's glory.

We currently employ over 250 staff on our Murindi, Rwanda campus. Every position from Head of School to part-time cleaning staff is a blessing from God for the community that is "Hope Haven Rwanda." Most of our cooking and cleaning staff are parents of our students, the vast majority of whom did not have the opportunity to attend school when they were young. They recognize what a gift education is, and they work diligently to provide this opportunity for their children. Not only will their children lift their entire families out of poverty with a secondary school education, they will also positively impact

the village of Murindi, the city of Kigali, the country of Rwanda, and the continent of Africa with their humble and hardworking attitudes.

In addition to paid employees, nearly 800 parents of students serve on campus each month to cover the small amount of fees required for their child to attend Hope Haven! These parents work hard in the fields of our campus, tending to the crops and grounds, assisting with growing many foods their children eat in their nutritious meals each day on campus. Indeed, over one million meals will be prepared and served on campus this year! In a country where food insecurity is prevalent, this is yet another blessing of enrollment and employment at Hope Haven.

Numbers don't tell the full story of the impact Hope Haven is having on this village, but they do speak to the magnitude of how God is working as well as the foundation being laid for the hope of this generation and all who will follow. Thank you for being part of this incredible journey with us and with God! 



## Enrollment in 2024

PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

**450**

PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

**648**

SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

**716**

## Meals Served

PER DAY

**4,346**

PER WEEK

**26,026**

PER MONTH

**112,693**

PER YEAR

**1,015,014**

## Student Growth

2012 | **97**

2015 | **280**

2018 | **618**

2021 | **873**

2024 | **1,814**

## Staff Employment

2012 | **8**

2015 | **20**

2018 | **50**

2021 | **74**

2024 | **251**

*as of Jan 2024*

# A Field of Dreams

The iconic phrase, “If you build it, they will come,” has indeed manifested itself at Hope Haven Christian School. In March of this year, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the opening of the Secondary School Sports Complex. Its strategic location, adjacent to the academic and dormitory buildings, gives students easy access, encouraging them to participate in various sports and activities.

The complex features a regulation soccer pitch, two basketball/volleyball courts, pickleball courts, and a three-lane running track. The soccer pitch is complete with stadium seating to allow families, fellow students, and visiting teams to spectate and cheer on players. And the construction team is working to build restrooms and locker rooms for both teams and visitors.

The construction of this outdoor sports complex is an investment in the future of the students at Hope Haven. It is a testament to the school’s belief in the power of sports to shape character, instill discipline, and promote a healthy lifestyle. The facilities will enhance the physical well-being of the students and foster a sense of camaraderie and unity among them.

Physical education teachers Corneille Iradukunda Tuyishime and Moise Rutinduka are looking forward to students being able to use the complex during class periods as well as organizing weekend competitions for students for fun and skill development. “They will be free to experience a lot just because that space is so big and open, so each student will get involved in his or her preferred sport,” shares Corneille.

In addition, the teachers anticipate increasing the school’s ability to compete with other local schools. Hope Haven already has competitive teams in boys and girls basketball, boys and girls volleyball and boys soccer. With the addition of the new complex, they are hoping to form a girls soccer team as well. Corneille says, “Our school has been performing well in competitions as we have strong track records of achievements.

The new sports will be crucial for raising a conducive environment for training and competition, and a will to win among athletes.” The girls volleyball team was ranked highest in Kigali last year.

Acknowledging the growing popularity of pickleball, four pickleball courts have been included in the complex. This emerging sport takes much less space than tennis and offers students a unique opportunity to engage in a sport that requires hand-eye coordination, agility, and strategy. Moise shares, “Let me talk about pickleball. It is an interesting game and not common here. But as we were being coached by our Founder, Susan, and talking about the rules in class, the students were eager and had fun playing.”

Even in all the excitement, there is recognition that the sports complex is more than just a group of fields and courts it’s a beacon of hope for the community. This massive construction project has provided employment to many local village residents, including parents of students. These wonderful people now have an opportunity to provide for their families through the work they’re doing. Their collective enthusiasm and hard work are truly heartwarming. It is also a bold statement of Hope Haven’s commitment to our students and the greater community, to offer the very best facilities, opportunities, and resources possible. It serves as a reminder of the boundless potential that lies within each and every one of us, and we can’t wait to see the incredible things our students and athletes will accomplish here! 🏠



# COMMUNITY AND SUCCESS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

In the dynamic landscape of education, fostering holistic development in students goes beyond traditional classroom instruction. The inclusion of clubs at Hope Haven Christian Secondary School is significantly contributing to the overall growth and educational enrichment of students.

The clubs, under the guidance of teachers and staff, offer students a platform to explore and nurture their unique talents and interests beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. With a diverse array of options including Science, Music, French, Media, and Debate among others, students have over 20 opportunities to discover and express their creativity within a supportive and encouraging atmosphere.

In the short history of the secondary school, many of our club members have participated in competitions or were recognized for their outstanding achievements.

Fiston, a Senior 5 Math, Chemistry and Biology student, received a bronze medal in the International Youth Math Challenge

Three Senior 4 students, Arnaud, Rhema and Chance took 2nd Runner-Up at the AI Hackathon Boot Camp sponsored by the Ministry of Education

A team of six secondary students advanced to the World Scholar's Cup Tournament of Champions competition at Yale University

Prince, a new Senior 3 student tied for first place across the entire country of Rwanda in the International Youth Math Challenge

Ten Hope Haven girls joined the First Lady, Mrs. Jeannette Kagame, for the Best Performing Girls ceremony, based on high academic performance in national exams.

This marks only the beginning for Hope Haven Christian Secondary School, where unlimited opportunities to shine emerge through exceptional teaching and student engagement. ♦

“ Students have over **20** opportunities to discover and express their creativity within a supportive and encouraging atmosphere.

## SUMMER SKILLS CAMP

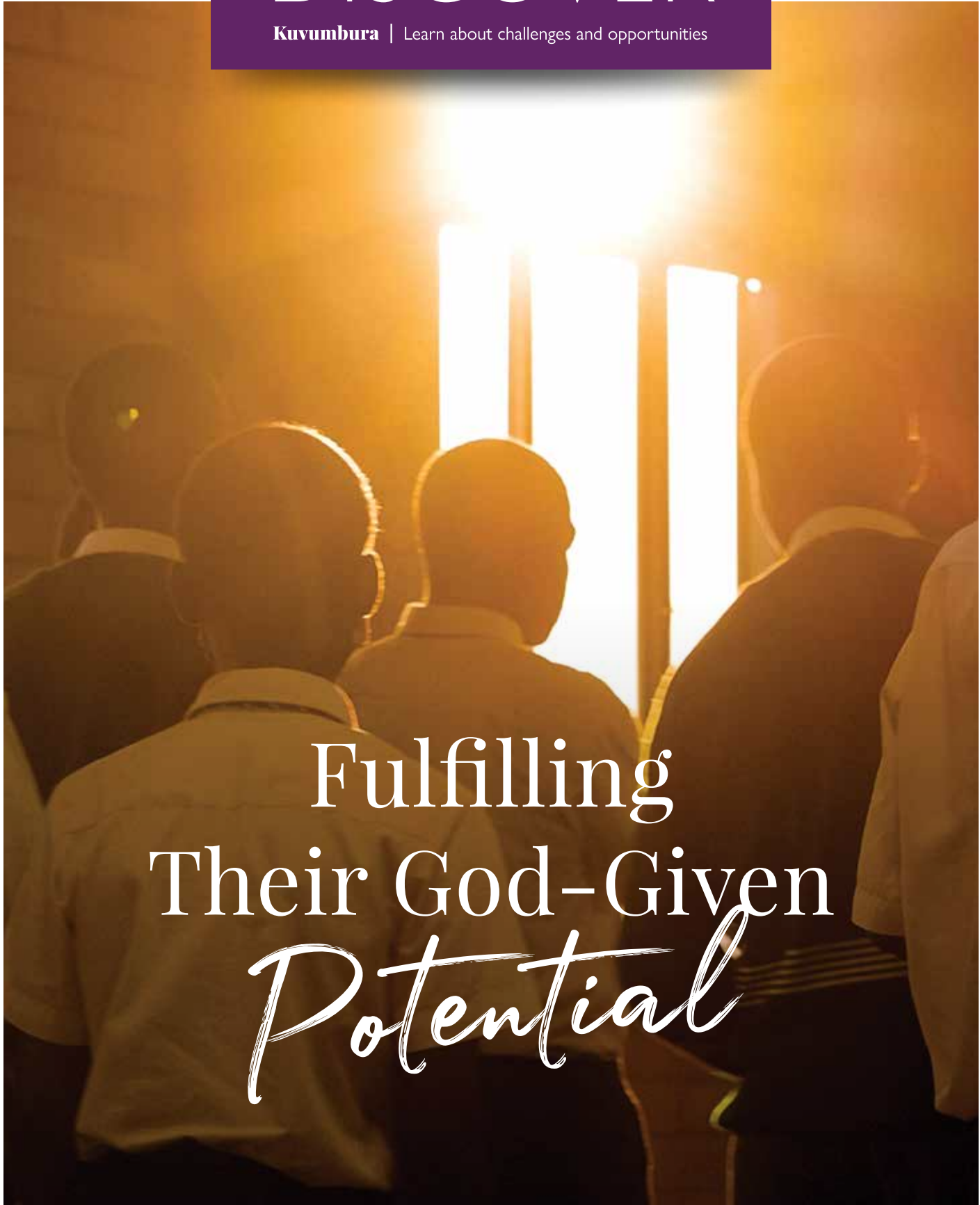
In July 2023, a groundbreaking initiative was launched with the introduction of Summer Skills Camp at Hope Haven Christian School. The primary aim was to provide focused academic support for struggling students in their areas of weakness. This innovative concept swiftly materialized into reality as students embarked on a transformative six-week journey, guided by dedicated teachers, in preparation for their second sitting exams. These exams were pivotal, determining whether students would progress to the next grade level. The program extended its hand not only to those who fell below a 70% average in their third term but also to students struggling in core subjects. It served as a beacon of hope for those seeking to catch up, offering a lifeline of academic support and encouragement. ♦





# DISCOVER

Kuvumbura | Learn about challenges and opportunities



## Fulfilling Their God-Given *Potential*



**A**t Hope Haven, we witness a profound transformation in our students' aspirations. Often, upon their arrival, their goals barely extend beyond mere survival and supporting their families. However, as time unfolds and they recognize their own capabilities and achievements, a remarkable evolution occurs.

Hopes and dreams that were once dormant begin to blossom.

As our secondary students approach graduation, we are privileged to share their voices and aspirations with you. They stand on the threshold of a new chapter, eager to articulate their goals and plans for the future, a testament to the enduring spirit of resilience and ambition fostered within the halls of Hope Haven.

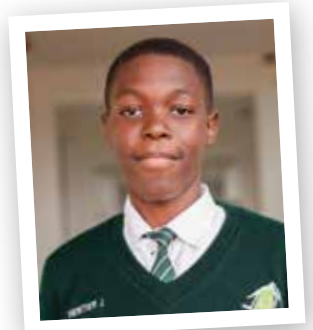
### Mugisha Caleb

*"My name is Caleb, I want to have my own manufacturing company. The main reason is to become a Christian leader who will help improve the lives of my fellow Rwandans through the company and develop Rwanda and Africa at large. I know it's not easy but through Christ who strengthens me nothing is impossible."*



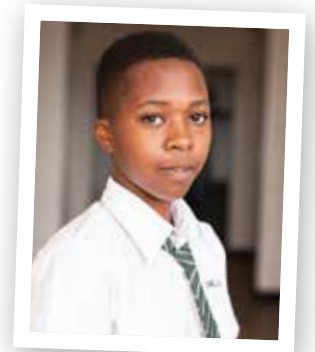
### Izere Hertier

*"In my future I want to become a software programmer, where in achieving my work to come true I have decided to study mathematics, computer science, and economics."*



### Ineza Chanella

*"My name is Ineza Chanella. When I first had this optimistic dream of becoming a computer engineer with my own tech company, I thought it impossible, stupid even, but given the opportunities at this school, I have a spark of hope that maybe my merely childish dream may come true."*



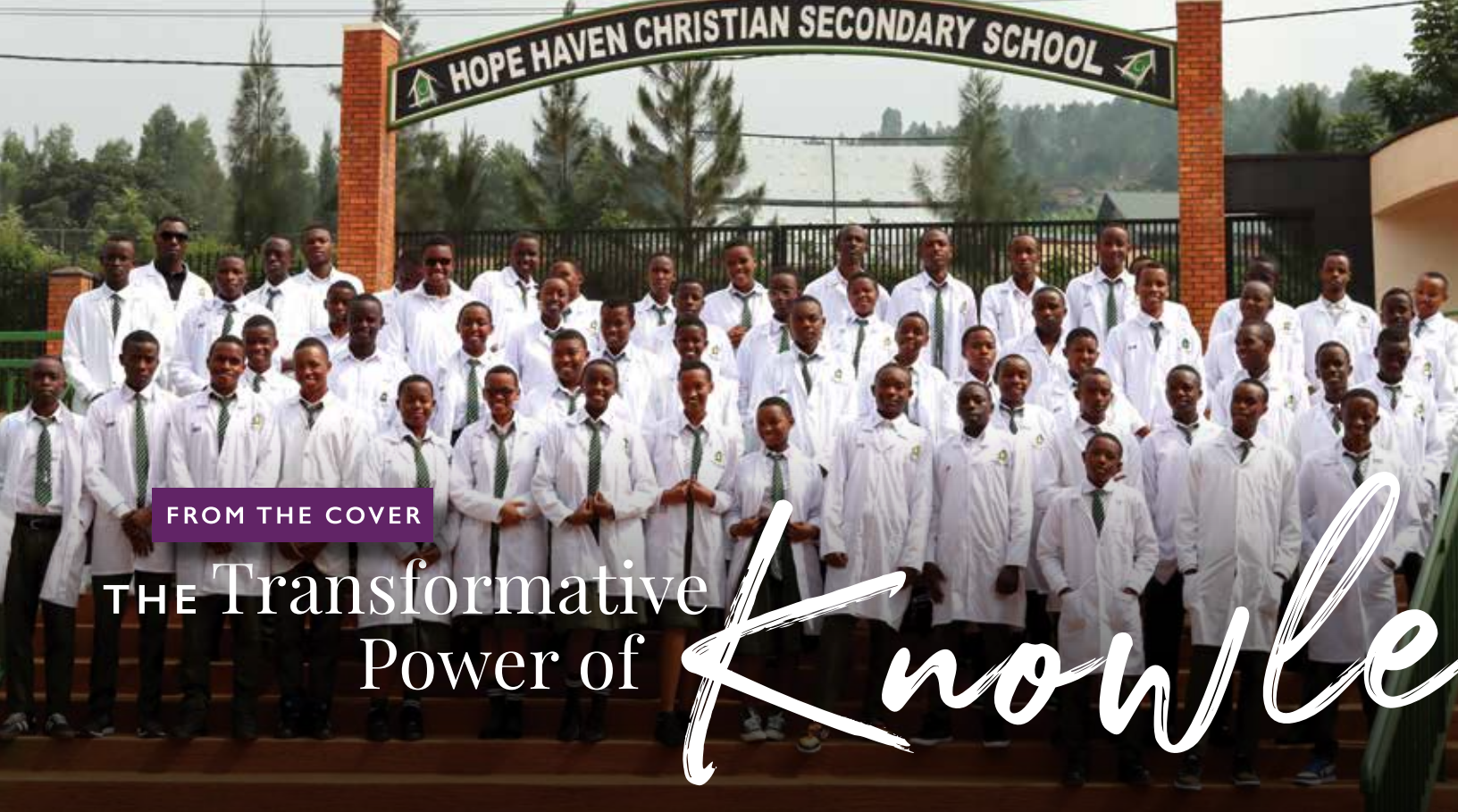
### Gasaro Peace

Last year, we introduced you to Gasaro Peace, who came to Hope Haven through the nationwide search for students carried out by School Director, Fred Karangwa, and Director of Studies, Samuel Odeke. Now in her second year at Hope Haven, Peace is excelling in her classes, on her quest to become a pharmacist.

*"I want to become a pharmacist to help people get high quality medicine and work hand-in-hand with doctors. I am working hard to achieve my goals, because I believe that with my hard work and the help of God, I will make it."*



“  
Hopes and  
dreams that were  
once dormant  
begin to  
blossom.”



FROM THE COVER

# THE Transformative Power of

# Knowledge

1

## Career & Academic Counseling with Work-Based Learning Opportunities

We teach soft skills such as eye contact, hand shaking, speech, and communication; assess skills, vocational interests, and personalities; and counsel on career choices. We work hard with each grade level, starting with Senior 1 (7th grade), but many choices culminate at the end of Senior 3 (9th grade). A student can choose a vocational route (see page 13) or a combination of studies (academic focus) that will direct their career choices.



2

## Supporting Our Students in Educational Transition

In Rwanda, there is a gap of time before students who complete Senior 6 (12th grade) can begin their post-secondary education. We plan to work with these students to develop next-stage living skills including personal finance, cooking, navigating transportation options to travel to a job, and time management. These students will also be enabled to take advantage of STEM classes and other course work online; offer their skills as teachers and tutors in local government schools; tutor students at Hope Haven in the evening; be teaching assistants in Hope Haven's nursery and primary classes; offer their help and skills at local hospitals; and serve in internships at local entrepreneurial businesses and government entities.

“

My desire for our students is to instill a strong sense of faith, morality, academic excellence, leadership skills, and the ability to compete for scholarships in university. We are committed to actively contributing to the development of a vibrant and thriving Rwanda, and even spilling over to the African continent.”

Susan Hollern, Founder and President of Hope Haven Rwanda





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To develop our students into Christian leaders and build a bridge for them into the working world, we have launched the

## **Hope Haven Leadership Institute.**

With a mission to inspire and prepare students academically, professionally, and personally, including a distinctive emphasis on cultivating Christian World Leaders, the Leadership Institute will operate across five pillars.

---

**3**

### **Selecting Universities, Obtaining Scholarships and Internships**

Our students desire to be doctors, engineers, IT professionals, business owners/entrepreneurs, manufacturers, pilots, drivers, tourism and hospitality workers, soldiers, ministers in government, bankers, accountants, radio and TV announcers, journalists, teachers, and lawyers. We will work with them to apply for acceptance to universities and scholarships to fund their post-secondary education. Due to most families' financial situations, scholarships will be necessary for the vast majority of our students to continue their education.

**4**

### **Job Placement and Entrepreneur Development**

Our staff will work with partners in the community, linking initiatives to help students be intentionally placed in jobs and to ensure every student is thriving in the job market, whether they attend university, vocational schools, or enter the labor market directly after secondary school. In addition, we will partner with others to develop entrepreneurs and help students start businesses

**5**

### **Multiplier Effect—Paying it Forward**

In 8–10 years we will have an established alumnus emerging in governance, medicine, IT, tourism and hospitality, engineering, business, teaching, and industry. These individuals will be the engine for future local support, continuing to provide opportunities to the next generation of Rwandans. They will be role models and invest in the next generation by providing internships, insight into post-secondary education and career paths, and scholarships for primary/secondary education.



# The Intentionality of *Spiritual Direction*



**Hope Haven Christian School** set out on a mission to deepen the spiritual instruction of its students by partnering with Summit Ministries, a renowned leader in Christian education since its founding in 1962. With a humble beginning as a series of camp-style conferences, Summit Ministries has evolved into a powerhouse of resources, including K-12 Bible curriculum utilized by over 50,000 students annually.

At the helm of this partnership is Curriculum Specialist, Lois McNair, whose journey from initial inquiry to full implementation is nothing short of inspiring. Through her dedication and expertise, Hope Haven's students are equipped to navigate the challenges of today's world with a firm foundation in their faith.

With Summit Ministries' comprehensive approach to apologetics, worldview analysis, and social engagement, students at Hope Haven are not only receiving spiritual instruction but also practical tools to live out their faith on a daily basis. This partnership signifies a commitment to holistic education, ensuring that students are prepared not only academically but also spiritually for the journey ahead.

As Hope Haven continues to grow and evolve, the collaboration with Summit Ministries stands as a beacon of hope, empowering students to embrace their faith and make a meaningful impact in their communities and beyond.

*Reflecting on my time at Hope Haven Christian School this past September fills me with overwhelming emotion. It's truly incredible to witness the remarkable work being done by the dedicated group of educators, administrators, and staff at this ministry.*



*What began as a simple phone call in March 2022 about reviewing our Bible Curriculum at Summit Ministries has blossomed into a profound partnership with Hope Haven. Despite the challenges of implementing a new curriculum, especially one in English as a second or third language, the teachers embraced the task with determination and enthusiasm.*

*In the fall of 2023, Hope Haven took a significant step by appointing designated Bible teachers for Kindergarten through High School. I had the privilege of spending 10 days on campus at the start of the school year, training these teachers in Summit's biblical worldview material. Their eagerness to learn and dedication to their students were truly inspiring.*

*Visiting the classrooms, I witnessed the mission to train Christian World Leaders in action. From the youngest to the oldest students, the commitment to excellence was palpable. One of the most memorable moments occurred during teacher training when a previously struggling teacher had a breakthrough. Despite her challenges the previous year, she found newfound confidence and joy in teaching the elementary Bible material.*

*As tears of joy streamed down her face, it was evident that a "lightbulb" moment had occurred. With renewed certainty in her abilities, she embarked on the 2023-2024 school year empowered to make a lasting impact on her students' lives. Every lesson taught became an opportunity to sow seeds of Biblical worldview that could potentially change the trajectory of their future as leaders in Rwanda.*

*The journey at Hope Haven is not just about education; it's about nurturing growth, empowering educators, and transforming lives.*

*It's a testament to the power of dedication, faith, and the unwavering belief in the potential of every student.*

**Lois McNair, Curriculum Specialist**





# Support beyond the boundaries of the campus

A degree from Hope Haven Christian School opens up plenty of possibilities for its students. For many of them, it is a dream to attend university. However, not every student is suited for or interested in studying at a university. Many students need more practical and less theoretical input. For them, training at a vocational school is more promising.

God made each of us differently and we are all his children. This individuality should be encouraged and supported with the tools students need. Hope Haven has a warm, open, and benevolent view of all students and desires the right education for each one of them. As part of this, Hope Haven enables students to attend vocational schools off campus. Seven Hope Haven students are currently attending the SOS Technical High School in Kigali which offers a wide range of highly-qualified TVET education.

Lilian is one of the students who is attending SOS Technical High School through Hope Haven. She knows how lucky she is to be able to pursue her dream education. She is studying hard and enthusiastically soaking up all the information she will need to fulfill her dream career. She wants to become a website designer and is passionate about her programming languages including HTML, CSS and JavaScript. She has already created her own websites, which she proudly presents.

“I’m among like-minded people here and feel really comfortable,” adds Lilian with a beaming smile. Hope Haven continues to support these students on their individual paths to a promising future.

**T** ECHNICAL  
**V** OCATIONAL  
**E** DUCATION  
**T** RAINING

# The Heart of *Leadership*

**Hope Haven Christian School** has been blessed with an incredible Leadership Team of some of the best and brightest in Rwandan education. Each one desires to achieve student success on every level - academically, socially and spiritually - and they work tirelessly to bring their best to our students, their families and our community. We sat down to ask them some questions about the triumphs and challenges of operating a school.

## What inspired you to become a school principal or leader?

**Liz Ingabire (LI):** Reflecting on my journey to becoming the Managing Director of Hope Haven, I never imagined I would be in this position. From the very first day, my approach was simple: work with dedication and commitment as if I owned the school myself.

**Fred Karangwa (FK):** What inspired me to be a school principal was the opportunity to help students reach their full potential and also mentor teachers to advance in their career.

**Pascal Nduwayezu (PN):** I was inspired by the vision and the mission of this school and I wanted to share my leadership skills with the existing team and learn something new from them as well.

**Emmanuel Nsengumuremyi (EN):** I wanted to make a difference in young people's lives and inspire passion.

**Samuel Odeke (SO):** My former Headteacher's exemplary character of service inspired me to become a leader. He created a positive learning environment for me and the entire school. I felt valued, supported and empowered to reach my full potential.

**Priscillah Kembabazi (PK):** Hope Haven is all about serving the poor and that's my calling.

## How do you balance the needs of your students and teachers with the needs of the school?

**(LI):** The administrative team acts as the eyes and ears of the institution in their respective departments. When issues arise, I involve everyone in the decision making and find a solution as a team.

**(FK):** The most important thing is to work as a team identifying the needs of students and teachers, prioritizing them, and addressing them accordingly.

**(PN):** I create a supportive relationship within the school, using a small team of teachers or students to help me identify the needs of individuals and the school overall.

**(EN):** One of the keys to balancing the needs of students, teachers and the school at large is to prioritize my tasks and focus on the most important ones. I also delegate and seek support from the school principal or teachers.

**(SO):** I take a balanced and inclusive approach that prioritizes the needs of both students and teachers while aligning with the school's overall goals.

**(PK):** We work as a team. Respect is very important among students, teachers and school leaders.

## What do you view as your most important contribution to the daily operations of the school?

**(LI):** The presence of a leader in the workplace is undeniably vital for the growth and success of any organization. While it's true that self-motivation plays a crucial role in individual productivity, the guidance, support, and oversight provided by supervisors and leaders are indispensable.

**Liz Ingabire**  
Managing Director



**Fred Karangwa**  
School Director



**Samuel Odeke**  
Secondary School, Director of Studies



**(FK):** To provide leadership to the Education department, oversee the daily operation of the entire school and ensure effective teaching and learning processes.

**(PN):** To ensure that students' well-being is at the forefront of the decisions made by the school and that students are supported in all areas of school life.

**(EN):** My most important contributions to the school include curriculum implementation, offering supportive feedback to all teachers, monitoring academic standards and implementing strategies that maintain the academic momentum within the school.

**(SO):** My role is crucial in ensuring that the school provides high quality education that empowers students to reach their full potential academically and prepares them for success in their future endeavors as Christian World Leaders.

**(PK):** Taking care of students' mental health and being available for parents who are facing different problems.

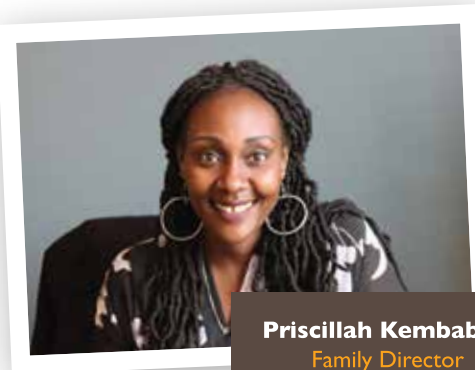
**Emmanuel Nsengumuremyi**  
Primary School, Director of Studies



**Pascal Nduwayezu**  
Dean of Students



**Priscillah Kembabazi**  
Family Director



## What do you believe sets a great school apart from others?

**(LI):** Setting goals and maintaining them is important; the founder should not get tired of checking that the core values of the institution are being exercised every day.

**(FK):** I believe in developing and enforcing excellent school policies. School standards in academics, discipline, faith and spiritual growth set our school apart from others.

**(PN):** As we strive to keep our originality, we can be observing and learning from other schools through their successes, and implementing strategies that will successfully set us apart in our unique culture.

**(EN):** A good school should be a supportive learning environment where students and teachers share a vision to achieve high standards of excellence in academics, behavior and discipline. One that provides excellent equipment and facilities for teaching and learning, and seeks to develop well-rounded students through extracurricular activities. Hope Haven exemplifies these traits.

**(SO):** A great school is managed by a strong leadership team. These leaders are visionary and effective who set clear goals, inspire their staff, and create a positive school culture focused on student success. The leadership team at Hope Haven sets our school apart from others.

**(PK):** Hope Haven stands apart from other schools by having Christian values, good leaders and the best facilities in the country.

## HOPE HAVEN EMBRACES NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR MATH SUCCESS



We are thrilled to announce the introduction of Khan Academy (KA) as a forthcoming learning resource for our math classes! KA is a personalized, online platform with:

- Engaging practice exercises
- Clear instructional videos
- A personalized learning dashboard


With lessons in over 190 countries and a mission to provide free world-class education for all, KA aligns perfectly with Hope Haven's vision.

In March of this year, thanks to the efforts of volunteer Sally Pearson, several of our teachers received hands-on training, and we are confident that their excitement and expertise will translate into a successful implementation, benefiting all our students.



# COME TOGETHER

Guterana | Create connections that make a difference



“We believe everyone needs a chance to have a good education, and more importantly know they are loved by God and He has a plan for them.”



# Gratitude in Person

A trip to Hope Haven opens eyes and hearts to all that God is doing in the lives of our students and families. And for those who sponsor a student, visiting the student's home and meeting the family deepens the experience.

What we might not realize is the importance of those visits and how they give our Rwandan families a chance to express their gratitude in person.

Doug Miller, Lead Pastor of Plum Creek Church in Castle Rock, Colorado, visited Rwanda in 2023. His stay at Hope Haven allowed him to meet Esther, the student Doug and his wife Beth have sponsored since April of 2021.

Reflecting on our Kugaba Initiative, Doug says, "When I found out about this opportunity, I was honored to be a part of it. To be able to partner with Hope Haven and play a small part in helping a child have a good education and know they are loved is worth every single thing I put into it."

Both of Esther's parents lost their jobs during the COVID pandemic. Esther's mom, Janice, was fearful their children could not attend school because they could not afford to pay for supplies or school fees. Doug and Beth's sponsorship of Esther changed that!

"You know someone is loving your child when he doesn't know her, he doesn't know where she lives, but he decides to take the child as his own child and cares for her," says Janice.

Asked what she would do if she met Doug, she continues, "The first thing I would do is hug him, feel so amazed and thank God for him."

Janice, Esther and her entire family were able to express their gratitude to Doug in person when he visited their home last year. Most of our Hope Haven families live in very humble homes, but they take pride in welcoming guests.

After two years of praying for Esther and writing letters back and forth, Doug was able to see Esther's home, meet the family, pray for them in person and just spend time with them. Crossing all cultural and language barriers to express love and thankfulness meant the world to Doug and to Esther's family.

"My family is only one of many people who partner with Hope Haven to see lives changed because we believe everyone needs a chance to have a good education, and more importantly know they are loved by God and He has a plan for them."

Their face-to-face meeting allowed Janice and her family to tell Doug how much they appreciate the Miller's investment in Esther's education, giving them hope for the future.

"I'm sure Mr. Douglas will continue to pray for us, and if he prays for us, something big will happen to us, more than we expected. We thank God for him and we wish him a big blessing from God. I'm thankful to God and I'm thankful for Hope Haven—they are enlarging my children's dream." ♦



Doug was able to visit Esther's home and enjoy some very special time with her entire family during his time at Hope Haven.



# Families United: *On a Mission Together*

## The Jones Adventures

Two years ago, our family set out on a journey to shape the perspective of our four young boys. We sold everything and walked away from corporate America in pursuit of adventure, culture, and service work. Little did we know our path would lead us to one of the most densely populated countries in all of Africa—Rwanda. And little did we know our lives would forever be changed!

Upon touching down in the “land of a thousand hills” we climbed into a 4x4 and ventured towards a town that would quickly grab ahold of all of our hearts. Where the pavement ended, the red dirt roads began, and so did our story.

Nestled into thick, lush greenery sits the most amazing school we’ve ever witnessed. Yes, the buildings and technology are impressive, but it was the people who separated it from all others.

We were greeted with smiles that stretched as far as the Virunga Mountains span. Those smiles were accompanied with hugs and laughter, and in an instant we felt a part of something much greater than we ever could have imagined.

In the days to follow, we spent countless hours with the incredible children. Whether we were walking hand-in-hand with the young children fetching water from the local waterhole for their families before and after school, or building mud homes for their families, these authentic opportunities allowed us to get to know each kid and their story. We spent hours praying with and for these families, asking the Lord to lay His desires on our hearts and asking for the strength to act on those desires.

We intentionally inquired about some of the most vulnerable students. One of those students happened to be little Rachel. She and her mother lived alone in a 10’x10’ mud hut with no electricity. Their worn mattress was draped in a tattered mosquito net and laid directly on the mud floor. There was a small pile of clothes folded neatly next to the bed, sitting in the mud as well. There was nothing else to the home. Their door had no lock; the hut had no windows.

Yet, mother and daughter welcomed us with the brightest of smiles. They embraced us and invited us in to sit on the floor and talk. How could someone with so little be so content, so grateful, so joyful?

Over the course of the month we were at Hope Haven, we got to know Rachel and her mother well. We learned their personal story. The challenges they had endured tugged on all of our heartstrings and we began praying for God to reveal ways to share our blessings with them.

Today, Rachel and her mother live in a 2-bedroom home with concrete floors, several windows, and a door that locks. They have new mattresses and dishware and clothing. They have new living room furniture to host guests. Their rent has been paid in full for the year, and they have a new Bible written in their local language, Kinyarwanda.

Our four boys gained the sister they’d always hoped to have and a perspective they never would have gained here in the States.

We arrived in the poorest continent on earth and had the goal of leaving it and its people better than we found them. Although our intentions were pure, we had no clue it would be us that would be forever changed. We came hoping to give, yet we received far more than we ever could’ve given. Hope Haven will now be a part of our own story for the rest of our days. ✦





## Foley Family Adventures

Imagine trading in bustling and rushed carpool mornings for laughter echoing through sun-drenched halls and classrooms. Picture swapping grocery store aisles for hand-in-hand walks through vibrant Rwandan communities. This wasn't just a vacation; it was a month of transformation for our family of six as we embraced the warmth and purpose of Hope Haven Christian School in Kigali, Rwanda.

From the moment we stepped onto the lively school grounds, we were enveloped by the infectious energy of over 1,800 curious, smiling faces. We've never had so many hugs in our lives as we did at Hope Haven. Our four children, initially wide-eyed with cultural differences, were soon swept into a whirlwind of shared games and sports, broken Kinyarwanda phrases, and the universal language of love for Christ. Between the amazing teachers and the students, there was an infectious love and dedication for learning, which we would soon realize is one of the primary ways these students will have opportunities few will ever know in the surrounding villages.

Beyond the classroom, our hearts were stirred by encounters with the families of these students. Sharing conversations in their humble homes, adorned with colorful fabrics and the aroma of woodfire cooking, offered a glimpse into their daily struggles to provide the basic needs for life and unwavering resilience. We witnessed firsthand the transformative impact Hope Haven is having on the community around them, not just in academic growth but in the hope it instills within these families.

One particularly poignant moment came during the construction of a traditional mud hut for a Hope Haven family. Working alongside community members, sweat dripping from our foreheads under the midday sun, we felt a tangible connection to their lives. It wasn't just about bricks and mortar; it was about shared effort, cultural exchange, and the satisfaction of building something together that would have a great impact on a family's lives.

Another unforgettable experience was visiting the community well, the lifeblood of the village. Witnessing the long lines of women and children patiently waiting with jerrycans, we gained a deeper appreciation for the preciousness of water, a resource we often take for granted. Our kids will never forget the nearly 1-mile trek back up to the homes in the village carrying the heavy jugs of water these kids and families carry every day, multiple times a day.

But our journey wasn't solely about service. The richness of Rwandan culture unfolded before us—spirited dance performances, the rhythmic pounding of drums, and the infectious joy of singing praise and worship during the school's Sunday church services with the students. Evenings were spent sharing stories around crackling bonfires, forging lifelong friendships with fellow volunteers and the incredible Hope Haven staff.

As we reluctantly said goodbye, our hearts overflowed with gratitude. We left not just with souvenirs and photographs but with a renewed sense of purpose, a deeper understanding of global challenges, and the unwavering belief in the power of community and compassion.

If you're considering a similar life-changing experience, here are some key takeaways:

- **Open your mind and heart:** Embrace cultural differences and be willing to learn from the community you serve.
- **Step outside your comfort zone:** Challenge yourself and discover hidden strengths and perspectives.
- **Engage with the community:** Don't just observe; actively participate and build meaningful relationships.
- **Seek opportunities to serve:** Look for ways to use your skills and resources to make a positive impact.
- **Reflect and share:** Carry the lessons learned and inspire others to make a difference in the world. 💡

# A Transverse Flute in Rwanda

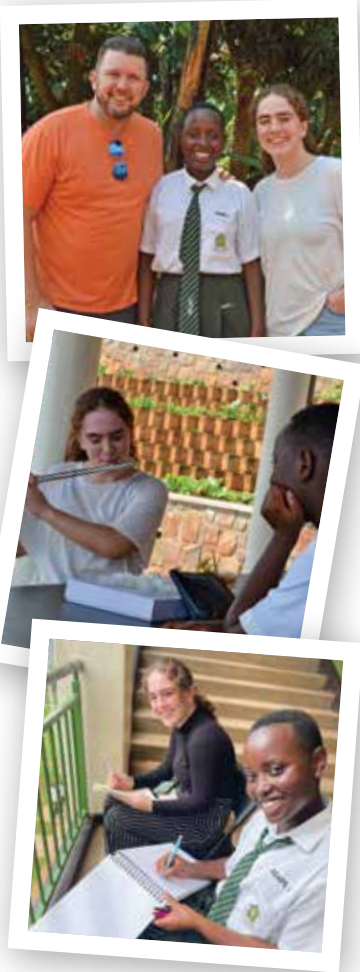
Opening up worlds, broadening horizons and paving the way—these are goals many parents have for their children. This is why Ben Rainey travels to Africa with each one of his five daughters as a father-daughter trip when they reach the age of sixteen. He has already been to Tanzania and Uganda, and this year it was Annabelle's turn to visit Rwanda.

Since 2020, Ben and his family have sponsored a Hope Haven student named Agape, with whom his daughter Annabelle has maintained a lively pen pal friendship ever since. Agape, which means "divine love" in Greek, is 15 years old. Annabelle is only one year older and the two have many things in common. In a relaxed atmosphere, they talked about music, their favorite subjects and their plans for the future.

Agape dreams of becoming a pilot one day. She has never really seen an airplane up close, let alone flown in one. "No one in my family has ever been on an airplane," she says with a big smile. But she sees the big planes when they fly over Hope Haven and that inspires her. Annabelle told her how it feels to be flying and they looked at photos of different kinds of airplanes online.

A very special moment between the girls was when Annabelle unpacked her transverse flute to play a little tune for Agape. The young Rwandan had never seen such an instrument before, and she was even allowed to try out playing the flute. "Not so easy," she realized with amusement. Another cherished moment was spent drawing together, a beloved hobby shared by both girls.

In the end, the journey not only afforded Ben and Annabelle precious moments of shared quality time but also deepened a friendship bond with Agape.



## A PRACTICAL YET STYLISH GIFT FROM OUR ANGELS

As Rwanda enters the rainy season, the Nursery & Primary students are happy to have new yellow rain coats to keep them dry. The Secondary students are also thrilled to expand their wardrobe with a long sleeve white t-shirt.

**Thank you to all the Hope Angels for their contribution this past Christmas.**

# Remembering the Rwandan Genocide



Take a virtual tour of the Rwandan Genocide Museum



In the Kinyarwanda language, **kwibuka** means “to remember.” April 2024 marks 30 years of remembering the 1994 genocide and reflecting on Rwanda’s story of reconciliation and nation building.

Most Americans have heard of the genocide, but don’t know many details. Visitors to Hope Haven Rwanda learn all about it with an unforgettable “field trip” to the Kigali Genocide Memorial.

Understanding how the country came to such a dark place means unpacking the history. Ethnic Tutsis and Hutus once lived peacefully, but with longstanding tensions. Due to social and economic status, Tutsi were generally the “ruling” majority. While under colonial rule in 1932, Belgium introduced identity cards that distinguished people by tribe: Hutu, Tutsi and Twa people.

Once Rwanda became an independent nation in 1962, the Hutu took control, and many Tutsis fled the country. In the 1980’s, discrimination against the Tutsi became official policy and sadly, such discrimination was endorsed by certain religious leaders in Rwanda.

Just after peace accords were signed in April of 1994, extremist radical Hutus reacted with a final solution to kill all Tutsis. They mobilized the population – urging neighbor to kill neighbor, friend to kill friend, down to the last infant.

Vicious attacks against the Tutsi began on April 7, 1994. Over 800,000 people were killed before military forces finally stopped the genocide in July.

Rwanda suffered both physical and psychological effects. Almost every Rwandan citizen found themselves displaced and grieving. Communities, homes, schools, hospitals, and crops were destroyed. Food was scarce and World Vision estimated that 75,000 children lost one or both parents.

Looking at Rwanda thirty years later, most ask the question: How does a county heal after such a horrific event?

In his speech at the 2024 U.S. National Prayer Breakfast in


Washington D.C., Rwanda’s President Kagame answered just such a question, one which he confessed he has asked himself for the past 30 years and still doesn’t have all the answers.

“Today our country, against all odds, is peaceful, flourishing, entrepreneurial, and most importantly, united,” said Kagame. “But Rwanda’s experience is more than a story. It’s a warning about what happens when we allow hatred to triumph over humanity.

A genocide can happen when a society loses faith in the future, when it loses faith in the power of faith itself, and when it can no longer distinguish truth from deceit. A genocide can happen when political leaders preach division and hatred while people of faith and people of science remain silent.”

While executing justice, leaders also focused on forgiveness and reconciliation. Kagame continued, “The desire for retribution was huge. We could not allow people to take justice into their own hands. We had to break the cycle of violence and convert the urge for vengeance into a national program of unity and reconciliation.”

Kagame knows it was difficult to ask the survivors to forgive. “Reconciliation is an act of faith because it requires a leap of the imagination, a belief in the unseen, a reality all your senses tell you is impossible. This is also the reason why faith leaders were key partners in our effort to rebuild after the genocide.”

By faith, Rwandans continue to work toward these goals 30 years later, and visitors can see the results. While scars remain, the Rwandans are kind, loving, and proud of their beautiful country. Perhaps by remembering, no other nation or people group will ever face such darkness again. 



“

Rwanda’s experience is more than a story. It’s a warning about what happens when we allow hatred to triumph over humanity.



# ENGAGE

# INVEST

## Visit Hope Haven Rwanda

Put your education, experience and skills to use to help make a difference in the lives of our staff, faculty, students and families!

**Opportunities exist for individuals, families, church or school groups.**

Volunteers experience the transformation happening firsthand and get to be the hands and feet of Jesus, demonstrating His love in Rwanda.

Email [visit@hopehavenrwanda.org](mailto:visit@hopehavenrwanda.org) if you are interested in planning a visit to Hope Haven.



## Demonstrate Love, Commitment and Hope

Children the world over thrive when they are known. The Kugaba Initiative is a great way to get to “know” a student at Hope Haven! Meet a new friend who’s waiting for their Hope Angel! **Sponsoring a student provides for 100%** of his or her programming costs including education, nutrition, and job opportunities for their parents, and is a great way to invest in a student’s future.

[HopeHavenRwanda.org/Kugaba](http://HopeHavenRwanda.org/Kugaba)



## Take Action

You can help the students and families of Hope Haven from the comfort of your own home – no traveling required! Invite your friends and family to a special dinner or dessert party at your home to learn about Hope Haven Rwanda. Or, create a fundraiser in lieu of gifts on a special day through JustGiving or Facebook! Email Wendy at [wendy@hopehavenrwanda.org](mailto:wendy@hopehavenrwanda.org) for more ideas and information. Whether your goal is to raise \$100 or \$1,000,000, every donation received is a gift in support of our students and programs.



## Growing by Faith

The story of our ministry since day one is the same story we want for our students: **Growing by Faith**. That’s why we took the bold step to build the secondary school and expand our capacity and reach! Our expected building projects include dedicated space for [The Leadership Institute](http://TheLeadershipInstitute.org). For further details, please reach out to Susan Hollern.

[susan@hopehavenrwanda.org](mailto:susan@hopehavenrwanda.org)



# Let Them Write the Next Chapter of

# Rwanda

**W**hen I look at the students at Hope Haven Christian School, I am amazed to see how far they've come. But what really takes my breath away is knowing how far they will go from here.

Hope Haven Christian School has been a work of the Lord. When we opened in 2012, classes were held in a tent, a mud house, and under a tree for the 97 students who showed up for school that first day. Since then, we have grown by faith with the support of many partners, and today have a 220,000 square foot facility with over 65 classrooms, four computer labs, three science labs and two dedicated libraries. Over 1,800 students call Hope Haven home, with full boarding for almost 720 of them from every province of Rwanda.

## **The fruit has been overwhelming**

The students follow a curriculum that's more rigorous than any you will find in Europe or North America. And in national exams, Hope Haven students routinely place in the top 3% of the country. These are children who have come from poverty - with little to no educational opportunities. Now they are succeeding at the highest level, simply because they were given the chance at an excellent education. This is not "better than what they had," it is exceeding standards across the developed world!

## **For Rwanda, 2024 is critical**

While Hope Haven Christian School cannot address the problem of millions of children not being in school, we have done a lot with "the ones in front of us." Sub-Saharan Africa is in the midst of a demographic boom which will double the working-age population in the next 30 years. Hope Haven's "Christ focused" students will be the leaders of tomorrow to harness the human capital. Our students will be the entrepreneurs to build a diverse workforce that can lead in business, technology, medicine, and agriculture to address food security; to create a true middle class and make waves that will ripple down through generations, transforming the futures of Rwandans who haven't even been born yet.

Hope Haven students are ready to rise up and meet the needs of their nation. They know who they are in Christ, and they know what they are capable of. Many joined us at the age of three. Soon, they will be part of the first graduating class in 2025. They are leading thinkers of their generation!

## **The next step they take is the one that matters most**

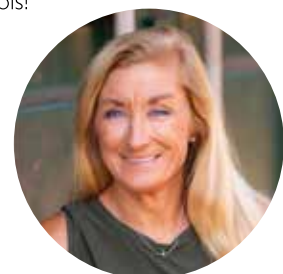
To develop these students into Christian leaders and build a bridge for them into the working world, we're launching **The Hope Haven Leadership Institute**. (see pgs 10-11) The goal is to equip students with the skills, knowledge, and values necessary to excel in leadership roles while maintaining a Christian perspective. These students will be prepared to attend the best East African Universities armed with scholarships, internships and finally jobs to change the trajectory of their families and their country!

It's a bold vision that God has called us to. Stay tuned for updates on needs for new infrastructure as we step into this new stage. By building the Hope Haven Leadership Institute, we will complete the bridge into the working world and let our students **write the next chapter of Rwanda**.

Blessings & Thanks...for staying the course in partnership with Hope Haven Christian Schools!



**Susan Hollern**  
Founder & President





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## SPONSOR A STUDENT TODAY!

**The Kugaba Initiative is a unique sponsorship program designed to create a lasting connection between you and a student at Hope Haven Rwanda.**

*Kugaba* means to give in a way that creates lasting benefit. And that's what happens when you sponsor a student.

Your monthly donation of \$125 creates positive, life-changing benefits to your student through:

- Nutritious meals and clean water
- Excellent academic and discipleship programs
- Interactive learning with computer and science labs
- A unique earning-and-learning model that provides jobs to parents
- Much more!

And every day, our dedicated faculty, staff, and volunteers actively demonstrate the love, hope and truth of Jesus Christ.

Sponsoring a student is truly a gift that can last a lifetime.

**Visit [HopeHavenRwanda.org/Kugaba](http://HopeHavenRwanda.org/Kugaba) to become a Hope Angel today!**

**KUGABA**  
*Initiative*

A RELATIONAL  
INVESTMENT PROGRAM

