

# St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund Newsletter

June 2013

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"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap . . ."

—Galatians 6:9a

(Mengo Senior School Theme for 2013)



**Mengo Senior School** is the best high school in the city of Kampala and one of the finest secondary schools in all Uganda. Founded in 1895 by Anglican missionaries as a grammar school for sons of chiefs, it has grown and expanded over more than a century. Its high academic standards are matched by a commitment to developing strong moral character. Entry requirements are strict and only the top-performing students on the national exams are accepted each year.

Located just three kilometers from our office, Mengo S.S. has long symbolized an impossible dream for the impoverished

children in our neighborhood. How can even the brightest child aspire to Mengo when his or her family can't afford to pay school fees at the cheapest primary school?



It would be an understatement to say that our original group of children was at an academic disadvantage when we began this work in 2005. If they had attended school at all, their education was regularly interrupted by being sent home for lack of fees. Students missed whole terms and sometimes entire years, falling ever behind their age-mates.

We first became aware of Mengo S.S. in 2006, when **Martin** shared his dream with us. He was twenty years old and in his last year of primary school, sitting in the

same classroom with twelve-year-olds. Impressed by his determination and his good grades, we told him that if he were admitted to Mengo, we would support him all the way. He was, and in 2007 Martin became our first Mengo S.S. student.



Mengo S.S. Campus

**Simon**, who joined Martin the following year, was our second Mengonian. He was one of a family of five abandoned children that we rescued from a condemned building and took full responsibility for their upkeep and welfare. His story is one of incredible success against overwhelming odds.

It wasn't until 2011 that we increased our Mengo students from two to five. **Rosemary, Ronald, and Titus**, who entered as Senior 5 students, completed in November, 2012, and are eagerly awaiting their university admission letters.

Eight years ago, we wanted little more than to get disadvantaged children off the streets and into a structured environment where they could eat a cooked meal every day and receive a basic education. We did not anticipate what would result from regular class attendance, improved nutrition, and comprehensive health care over a period of years. This year we've seen the results.

We had seventeen students complete O Level (Senior 4) last year, and fifteen of them qualified to move up to A Level (S5-S6). The level of instruction in A Level is equivalent to a Junior College in the U.S. and Canada. Even more impressive, six of

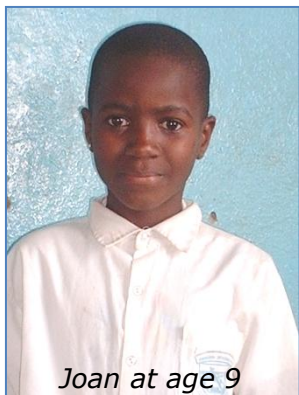
our S4 graduates were accepted into Mengo Senior School. Combined with two returning students and two new students in Senior 1, this doubles our total 2013 enrollment at Mengo S.S. to ten.



*New Senior 5 Students*

*Phionah, Hilda, Moses, **Joan**, **Swaibu**, Olivia*

Let's meet a few of them:



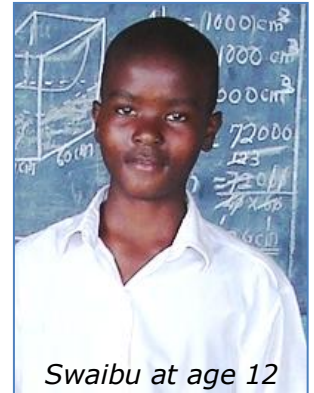
*Joan at age 9*

**Joan**, 17, was one of our first students; she's been with us since Primary 4 in 2005. Orphaned at the age of six, she lives with an uncle & aunt and their four children in a two-room flat. A quiet, determined girl, Joan ranked first in her

class every single school term. A visit to her home during the school holiday will find her fetching water for the family or working at her uncle's small shop. She not only was our top-performing S4 on the national exam in 2012, she achieved the best score ever of any student we've sponsored. Her course of study at Mengo consists of Biology, Chemistry, Math and Computer.

**Swaibu**, 19, was recommended to us in 2007 as a promising student who needed help. His mother died when he was five and he lost his father four years later. He was in Primary 5 at the age of twelve, two years behind his peers. The next year, the school called us in for a conference.

Swaibu was hanging with a bad crowd and his school work was suffering. After Peter sat him down for a tough-love talk, Swaibu saw the light, dropped his bad friends, and got serious about his education. At Mengo he is studying History, Geography, Luganda (the local language), and Computer.



*Swaibu at age 12*

**Frank**, 13, is one of our two new Senior 1 students at Mengo S.S. His parents both died when he was one; a young aunt has been caring for him since then. An excellent student, Frank is also a humble and respectful boy. He was thrilled to be accepted at Mengo Senior School.



*Frank & Mariam, S1 students at Mengo S.S.*

We are proud of these students and grateful to you, our faithful partners. You are helping to make their dreams come true.

### *Peter & Sharon*

We welcome your donations.  
Checks may be sent to:

**St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund**  
**P.O. Box 285**  
**Chardon, OH 44024-0285**

Or you can donate online at  
[www.ugandachildrensfund.org](http://www.ugandachildrensfund.org)

The St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund is a registered non-profit 501(c)(3) organization eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions.