



Thank you for all the support you have given to our students and teachers during the pandemic and helping them get back to school.

We are proud to announce that two students, Silas and William, have recently graduated from University both with a Second Class Honours degree of Bachelor of Criminology. Much of this edition of the newsletter is taken up with information about our University Students.

We have known Silas since 2005 and William since 2007. Some of our supporters who have been with us for a long time will remember the first school we supported - Mwokoeni School. In fact the name of our charity was originally called 'Friends of the Mwokoeni Children' until we changed our name in 2008 to 'Friends of the Mombasa Children'.

When we bought the land that Unity School now stands on, many of the pupils transferred with us; including Silas and William. They are the first pupils since we started the charity to go from Primary School to Secondary School and then on to University. We are very grateful for a sponsor who has financed them through their University schooling.

Some words from Silas

"I grew up an orphan and moved to Mombasa in 2005 with my uncle. I started a new life with a new family but things were very hard and I often went to school bare footed with torn clothing.

Mr Joash and Mr Were who were teachers at Mwokoeni before moving to Unity School always encouraged me and understood my home life and background. I moved to Unity School in 2009 with the trustees Friends of the Mombasa Children as I wanted a brighter future. I was encouraged by the trustees and the teachers all through my primary and secondary education and I was able to wear decent shoes bought for me by the trustees. After gaining a B+ I gained a place at Masinde Muliro University of Science."





Some words from William

"I joined Mwokoeni School in 2007 and met the teachers Mr Joash, Mr Were and Mr Ooko who gave me much support in terms of learning because I was a slow learner. I had the chance to meet the trustees of 'Friends of the Mombasa Children' and they instilled hope as learning was never easy for me. Mr Joash and Mr Were understood that my parents who were unemployed could not afford school fees. I moved to Unity School the same time as Silas and with the help of the teachers and the trustees I was able to go on to secondary school and then to University."

Silas and William have both said that they want to help and encourage other students at Unity and give something back to society.

Two other students started their University studies at the same time as William and Silas—and had been in the same class at Unity School.

Priscah Akinyi went to Pawani University to study for a degree in Education. She is expected to graduate later this year. Priscah was due to commence her final teaching practice when schools were closed due to the pandemic.



Priscah is standing on the right.



Cornel is studying Chemistry and should graduate this summer.

Thank you so much you to those who have been on this journey with us over the last 21 years or so, whether here in the UK or in Kenya.

Cornel is pictured while on an industrial placement.

Exam results at Unity School

After such a difficult year with many school closures due to Covid, we are pleased to announce that our Class 8 had a mean score of 341 out of the possible 500 marks which is an overall B plain. Two students, Samson and Pauline both came close to the magic score of 400 marks. (Students who score 400+ can often obtain scholarships to Secondary schools.) Congratulations to all the candidates and well done to all our teaching staff.



Buildings

Some of the older buildings at Unity School were badly in need of some repair work. One of the classrooms due to be repaired had to be rebuilt, and one other classroom was recently repaired. The picture below show the final rebuild and, on the left, internal work being carried out. All the older buildings have now been repainted and the front gate repaired.

The next building plan is to extend the office. At the present time there are two very small office rooms, one for the headmistress, Manager and Deputy Manager, and the other for the administrator and finance support worker as well as being used by various teachers when marking books. This space is extremely small and so plans are in hand to extend the office area.



The graduation party and cake cutting

Coming up in 2021

Following the Prime Minister's publication of a road map out of Lock-down we hope that there will be some fundraising events later in the year. We're looking for a date in early Autumn for **The Great Sale of Everything**. Maddy and Chris have re-booked their accommodation for the third time ready for their **Sponsored walk up Mount Snowdon**. This is now planned for September 9th.

Last summer Carol and Steph, two of our trustees completed a sponsored bike ride fundraiser, cycling 32 miles.

This year they are planning a cycle ride from Rustington to Brighton, a round trip of about 45 miles. This will take place on Wednesday 30th June. If the weather is very wet the ride will take place the following Wednesday 7th July.

More information on Facebook and in our newsletters will be available in due course, as well as their Virgin fundraising page.

More from Mr Norbert Were—School Manager

The Trustees wish to thank everyone who has helped us keep Unity School and its community safe during the pandemic. Without any plans for dealing with the emergency, you responded to our appeals for food for families, rent for teachers and learning materials for pupils.

Just how much this meant to our friends in Mombasa is summed up in this message from Mr Were:

"God gave you the zeal, enthusiasm and placed in you a big heart which gave birth to brilliant ideas one of which to support the needy parents, and support the home-based learning. You kept us busy even when the future seemed bleak, when our children were locked in their houses. Our overall performance is said to be better than our counterparts around. Please do not forget that you participated. Most teachers in many schools were completely forgotten during the hard times, but ours were remembered. Pupils were forgotten, but ours were remembered. When we reopened in October, they came back rejuvenated and ready to learn. Our girls came back, we were worried about them since so many girls were impregnated in the process of trying to help their families to fight the pangs of hunger. It was really a challenging period for this gender and even most of the boys became addicts of drugs, but ours were busy with their assignments.

That is why I began by thanking you most sincerely".



You can donate to Friends of the Mombasa Children via

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charities/mombasachildren>

Or by on-line banking: our Treasurer Khatija Volk or Carol Groves can give you more advice.

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