



Homes of Joy

Dear Friends of Homes of Joy,

It's hard to believe that 2021 is already drawing to a close, and our family of young girls and staff are busy finishing up the school year in Zambia. It seems like a long time since we were able to send someone to Zambia (our last in-person site visit was in 2016) to meet the girls and staff in person. Fortunately, through social media and WhatsApp, we have been able to keep in regular contact through the wonderful staff at both Nyumba Yanga and Future in My Hands. We are pleased to provide you with the following updates as a result:

COVID-19

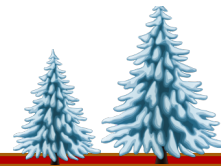
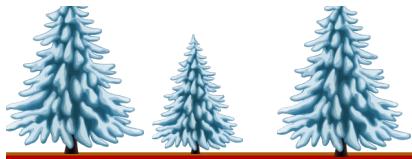
Over the past few months, cases in Zambia have been on a steady decline, with substantial improvements to vaccine rollout and access across the country. Zambian Health Minister Sylvia Masebo has expressed confidence within the last week that Zambia is set on the right trajectory to hit the 8.4 million threshold in the COVID-19 vaccination program with continued community engagement and outreach to combat vaccine hesitancy. However, watching the current trends in Europe, she warns that Zambia may be headed toward a 4th wave this festive season and into early 2022. We are very pleased that the girls have remained in good health, thanks to significant health and sanitation efforts and education in both projects. There were some positive cases amongst the Sisters at both projects and 4 girls at FIMH, but thankfully all have recovered and the Sisters acted fast to reduce any further transmission. So far the girls who tested positive for COVID-19, are not presenting with any ongoing long-term effects.

UPDATE FROM NYUMBA YANGA

As in Canada, the girls have experienced many starts and stops in their school year, as it was necessary to lockdown and close schools due to the pandemic. We are pleased to report that the girls came through these academic interruptions very well. In order to help them through the lockdown periods, we were asked to send some emergency funds (\$5000.00 CDN) to purchase laptops. These laptops were used at Nyumba Yanga to allow the girls to keep up with their schoolwork and study remotely. This expense was not in the budget or funds initially sent for 2021, but the Board felt it was something that we needed to do through our Disaster Relief fund. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to this fund over the past two years, making decisions like this possible!

We recently learned that we have three new graduates at the Grade 7 level. Congratulations to Anastasia, Maureen and Anna M. for a job well done! These three young girls will be moving on up to Future In My Hands in January 2022 to start grade 8, allowing space for four new girls to arrive at Nyumba Yanga.





Health checks were completed with all girls thanks to Sister Rose (who is also a medical doctor) and doctors from Levy Mwanawasa Hospital, and thankfully the girls are all quite healthy aside from a few needing additional support with minor vision and skin issues.

Growth continues with the garden project as well, and the Nyumba Yanga garden provided an exceptional harvest of maize and groundnuts this Fall (much to the girls' delight, as groundnuts are a favourite snack and key ingredient in many Zambian sauces).

We have received our budget proposal for 2022 from Nyumba Yanga and are being asked to support elementary education for 40 girls (which is similar to 2021). Unfortunately, with the additional mid-year emergency fund request, our funds are currently at an **all-time low** and we are asking for support to "Enhance Elementary Education" in our Giving Tuesday campaign this year.

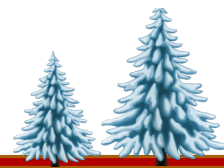
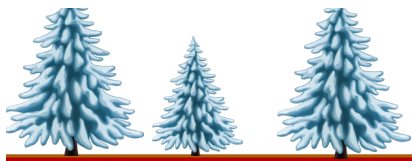
FUTURE IN MY HANDS

All the girls have worked very hard academically this year, despite the difficulties brought-on by the pandemic. The number of girls that we have attending FIMH is also increasing. For 2022, we are looking at supporting 15 girls from Grade 8-12 with their educational needs. This is because instead of just accepting girls who move up from Nyumba Yanga, FIMH is now accepting urgent cases from the local rural Lusaka West community. The first year with this change was very successful and has had wonderful social benefits as the girls who have grown up together at Nyumba Yanga have worked to incorporate new members into their FIMH family. Another key highlight, is that FIMH has now received government approval/recognition for students to write their government exams at FIMH (instead of having to outsource externally). This is an additional level of verification for the school which will help with costs and recognition of the status of the FIMH school moving forward. All the high school girls are currently writing their end of year exams, and we hope for strong results and good news in December!

POST SECONDARY

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, we are delighted to announce that we have our first college graduate, Memory. Her graduation ceremony took place on November 19th. Our hope was to be able to send Micaela and Susan to be able to attend the ceremony, but the current travel restrictions did not allow for that. However, we all wished Memory success on her special day through a special note and photos sent to her on social media the morning of her ceremony and she expressed her extreme gratitude to all of you who have supported her once again! We wish her all the best in her chosen career of nursing, and are very proud that she is currently helping to administer Covid-19 vaccines, and providing health and safety education in a local clinic in Lusaka.





Idah is completing her final term and exams in the Medical Clinic Officer Program currently. We wish her well and look forward to hearing about her plans in the new year. We hope that she will soon claim her place as our second post-secondary college graduate!

Chisanga is currently in her third year of the Civil Engineering program. In August, we received an urgent request to send funds (\$840.00 CDN) for her fall term tuition which we also accommodated. We were happy to support Chisanga to continue her studies and hope to be able to continue to do so for 2022.

We will hopefully have two new girls joining Chisanga in post-secondary studies in 2022 if we are able to raise enough support. Two girls who have come up through Nyumba Yanga have recently completed their Grade 12 education and have applied for places in a local Teacher's College Program for January 2022.



As you can see, our girls are progressing well with their education and this is all thanks to you, our donors, for giving them the opportunity to learn and grow! As our fundraising is currently behind our goals, we have decided to focus on just one Special Project for 2022, and we continue to raise support for our Post-Secondary Scholarship & Bursary Fund, as we need to raise another \$6000 CDN to support the girls outlined above.

GIVING TUESDAY

Enhancing Elementary Education in 2022. This Giving Tuesday we are focusing on raising funds to support our Nyumba Yanga Project for our Elementary School girls!

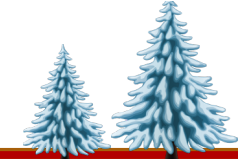
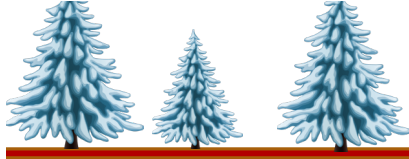
Once again, we are using **Giving Tuesday** (Nov 30th) to launch our holiday fundraising efforts and to lead right into World AIDS Day on December 1st. Our girls are HIV/AIDS orphans and have experienced the devastating impacts of the AIDS pandemic directly. This year, our Nyumba Yanga Project has also been severely impacted by additional costs. These include important resources needed to keep the girls safe, and keep them engaged through remote education during the Covid-19 pandemic.



All funds raised on Giving Tuesday will specifically support education costs (tuition, uniforms, supplies, exam fees etc.) for our Elementary School girls for 2022. So, we humbly ask you to consider donating to help honour the resilience of our girls and make an important impact on opening doors for their futures.

'We know that education is the key to unlocking human potential.' ~ Dr. Jill Biden

We know this is a difficult time financially for many. 2021 has been a hard year around the world, and therefore we would be truly grateful for any amount you can contribute! With significant growth in each of our projects, and a request to support **58 girls total for 2022**, we are in dire need of your support before the end of the year.



The impact of the pandemic and decision to send funds over mid-year this year has significantly impacted our funding reserves, and every dollar raised will help us meet our 2022 goals and needs. To those who have recently donated or donate monthly, thank you SO very much for your ongoing generosity.



You can give online at www.homesofjoy.org/donate, by cheque payable to Homes of Joy Inc. to our home base at 45 Ballantine Street, Cobourg, ON K9A 5G8. We will also be launching a **Facebook fundraiser** in early December where we are now a registered charity and receive 100% of funds donated.

IN CLOSING

The year 2021 has been another interesting and challenging year but our projects and girls have demonstrated great resiliency and continued growth! We hope and pray that 2022

will be an easier year for everyone both at home and in Zambia. As part of that hope, we are excited to welcome a new face to our Board of Directors: Val Tutton. Val brings background in finance in the government sector, a long history of volunteering and is also an avid world traveller. She connected with Micaela on a Habitat for Humanity build to Kenya in 2019 and has been a keen supporter of Homes of Joy ever since. We are thrilled to welcome her to the team!

We, as a Board, hope that all our friends continue to share their love and compassion to all in our world as we are truly better together.

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a JOY-filled holiday season remembering always to stay safe, stay healthy, and keep supporting one another.

With gratitude,

The Homes of Joy Board of Directors



MICAELA ROUGHTON

SUSAN VISNESKI

SHANIQUA LISTON

AMANDA VISNESKI

SONYA HARTWIG

VALERIE TUTTON

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