

Harambee

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF FUTURE IN OUR HANDS-USA | FALL 2025

Kenya Visit Summer 2025

As chairperson of the African Programs Committee, I communicated with Linet Aluna, founder of Angelic Ark for about five years after my dear friend Sister Linda Glaeser, passed away. The center started as a home for children infected and affected by HIV. During that time FIOH-USA funded many projects including a Community Resource Center, sewing center, gardens, a black soldier fly greenhouse, chickens, repaired the well, and built a government mandated fence around the property, to name most of them. Linet and I chatted a lot, and exchanged pictures both personal and about projects at the Center on WhatsApp. So one can imagine how excited I was to visit the center and greet Linet in person with a big hug... **Continued on pg.2**



SAVE THE DATES

HALF & HALF RAFFLE

Big things are coming soon. Future in Our Hands-USA and Half & Half boutique are partnering to create something meaningful — a raffle that gives back and inspires change. Who doesn't love a good deal, this raffle could be yours for only \$5 but with a value of over \$500. Keep your eyes open for the official announcement.

GIVING TUESDAY

Look out for information coming out on our socials and emails about the Giving Tuesday Campaign happening on December 2nd.

Amplifiers needed tap below for more information:
[Become an amplifier](#)

ALTERNATIVE GIVING

Give hope instead of stuff! FIOH will have a table at the Alternative Christmas Marketplace December 5th and 6th at St Joseph University parish after all Masses. Instead of buying stuff, you can make a donation to honor your recipient which makes a difference! We will also have some fair trade Kenyan crafts for sale. **St. Joe's is at 3269 Main Street.**

NEWLY RETIRED WITH NOTHING TO DO?

Have you ever thought about joining a board?

PLEASE CONSIDER SHARING YOUR TIME AND TALENTS BY VOLUNTEERING AS **TREASURER** FOR THE BOARD AND/OR AS A SUPPORTER OF OUR FUND RAISING PROJECTS. CONTACT MARY ELLEN DYE BY EMAIL AT MARYELLENDYE@ICLOUD.COM.



DONATE ONLINE NOW

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Angelic Arc Visit

By Mary Ellen Dye

When we walked through the gate, I recognized the projects we had funded. But besides several buildings, the well and the fence, it was like walking into the Garden of Eden. Linet's husband, Francis is an accomplished gardener so with the help of the children, there is green grass, shrubs, flowers, blooming roses, and large gardens full of strawberries, kale, watermelons, squash and more.

After meeting students who had come back for the weekend and touring everything, our chief task was to plan the student celebration for sponsored students who would come tomorrow. Even though most of the children don't live there anymore and current rooms are underutilized, they come back often because of all the love and care they have been given over the years. The student celebration on Sunday was truly a wonderful experience. The community center was full of high school and college students, some who had already graduated, some were hoping for new support. They got to meet us and we got to meet them. There was a group discussion, songs, presentations, and a delicious lunch, followed by cake! When all of this ended, the dancing began. The American visitors, and students young and old danced together while friends and neighbors came to join the celebration. Sadly, by about 6:00pm it was time to leave because it gets dark about 7:00pm on the equator.

As usual, Linet has a plan to make full use of the Centre again. Since Education is a major objective, she wants to start a primary school to maximize the use of the space and continue supporting the children who were beneficiaries of the original program. The school would start with three classes, PP, grades 1 and 2. This is a large undertaking costing an estimated \$6500 to start. We are hoping that generous donors will consider funding this very beneficial project.



Form 990 EZ Submitted to IRS

Anyone wishing to see a copy of the report submitted to the IRS can contact Mary Ellen Dye, acting Treasurer and board member of FIOH-USA, maryellendye@icloud.com.



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FIOH Programs in Awasi, Kenya

By: Michele Sprada

One of the first programs funded by FIOH-USA was a nursery school in the rural town of Awasi. Back in 2005 we purchased plastic cups, cornflour, sugar, and a large cooking pot to create a self-sustaining porridge program at the nursery school. We also started paying two nursery school teachers \$25 a month. There are now three teachers and we raised their salaries to \$35 per month. The original iron sheet roof and pavilion style building has since been torn down and a well constructed cement brick building with three classrooms now stands in its place.

FIOH Kenya was originally started by Cecelia Obuya who moved to Michigan. Her brother-in-law, Rom Wandera took over and ran the organization until his death. His wife Connie served on the board until her passing in 2025. Their daughter Sally is currently on the FIOH Kenya board of directors. The program in Awasi started in Awasi because that is Cecelia and Connie's family homestead. Their brothers Charles, Ernest and Bonface as well as their wives, have been very involved in FIOH Kenya throughout the years. Bonface's wife has been teaching at the nursery school since it started.

The late Ernest and Bonface created many prolific farming projects in Awasi which have been supported by FIOH-USA. We built a well and helped fund a posho mill for grinding corn. Many families in the Awasi area benefit from these farming projects. There is a long line of people at the mill every day waiting to grind their corn into corn flour to make ugali, the staple food in Kenya. Bonface has started a biofuel system that uses animal feces to create fertilizer and power for a stove.

The Awasi Nursery School teachers see a need to create a primary school in the area because there are not any close by. They already have the facility so they would just need a certified kindergarten teacher (\$75/month) as well as furniture and learning materials. The porridge program also needs to be expanded so they need more cups. They also need a water tank because the well has gone dry.



Interested in becoming a student sponsor? Contact Louise Heubusch at:
googmerrimac151@gmail.com

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Gosese Farms

By: Terri Ricigliano

In July 2025 members of the board of FIOH-USA visited our partners and projects in Kenya and we were quite excited to spend a day at the Gosese farm since our last visit there was in 2019. As we toured the farm the accolades just kept pouring out: "Oh my, this is fabulous", "Look at these gorgeous fruits", "It is astounding how much has changed", and "Linet, You are amazing".

In 2019, Linet Aluna, the founder of Angelic Arc orphanage was running a small farm in Kisii to provide sustenance for the children at AA. She discovered that moving the farm to the next county would be more cost efficient and she could also acquire a larger piece of farm land. In 2020, Linet presented FIOH-USA a proposal to hire(rent) 5 acres of land in Migori county, home of the Kuria people. Funded by donors of FIOH-USA, Linet began planting basic crops; corn, beans and sorghum(kale). These crops provide nourishment for the children at Angelic Arc as well as the local community. As time passed, it became apparent that sanitation and a water supply were necessary. So in 2021, through the fundraising efforts of Lindberg Elementary school in Kenmore NY a hand dug well was built and through FIOH-USA donors a public toilet was added.

2022 was a big year on the farm! In addition to the basic crops, Linet planted mango, orange, lemon trees, and avocados. Furthermore, Linet introduced pig farming and chicken rearing together with the more customary raising of cows and goats. She started with four pigs which multiplied to over 200, she was able to sell 161 and still have around 52 pigs on the farm. There were three chickens, and now there are 63 which yields dozens of eggs that can be sold providing, funds for farm management, and transporting food back to Angelic Arc in Kisii. **Continued on pg. 5...**



Donations in Memory of and in Honor of

In Honor of

Gerry Neff by Louise Heubusch

Gerry Neff by Sally Tower

In Memory of

Richard Heubush by Louise Heubusch



A primary diet for the people in the community is maize which is ground into corn flour to make ugali a staple food served at most meals. In order to make the flour, the corn kernels need to be removed from the corn husk, a long and tedious process usually done by hand. Because of a generous donor through FIOH-USA a corn-shelling machine was purchased which saved hundreds of hours of work. The machine speeded up the shelling process thus, allowing for more corn to be shelled in a shorter period of time, producing more flour and little to no waste. The corn husks are then used for animal food.



We were so fortunate to tour the Gosese farm, meet the animals, taste the delicious fruits and vegetables and experience the progress that has occurred over the past years. We even met the first calf born on the farm in 2024!

Through the passionate and caring efforts of Linet Aluna, our partner in Kisii, Kenya the Gosese farm provides food for the community and for the children at Angelic Arc. The funds to make this all possible were a result of the compassionate and generous donors to FIOH-USA.

Their needs are many and during our visit we learned of new goals and hopes for the future. There is no electricity at the Gosese farm. They hope that an electric line could be run to the farm in order to improve the economic status in the area.

Additionally, the Kenyan government required that all orphanages be closed and the children be sent to live with a family member. Linet Aluna, has proposed that the Angelic Arc property be transformed into a school. Funds would be needed for teachers, teaching materials, and classroom supplies.

The FIOH-USA board members and our African partners are grateful to everyone for their continued support to provide life-giving and life-sustaining contributions. Thank you for making a difference.



Pupils, Pupils, Everywhere

By: Louise Heubusch

Six members of the FIOH-USA Board of Directors were lucky enough to be able to do a whirlwind tour of affiliated schools in the surrounding area of Kisumu and Kisii, Kenya during our African visit.

Our first stop was to St. Charles ECDE/Nursery School where the staff discussed their need for teaching supplies, desks and improved teacher salaries (presently \$25 per month). They have since sent us a proposal to consider supporting these improvements.

Our next stops included Kisumu Central Kudho Primary School, Kanyamedha Secondary School, Archbishop Okoth-Ojolla and Usumo Primary School where we met with several classes of young women.

We distributed sanitary supplies to them and met with several girls who need sponsorship to pay their \$450 tuition for Grades 10 through 12. Meeting these girls who are helped by our Stop the Spot program affirmed the need to expand the program to more schools as money allows.



In Kisii we visited Angelic Ark which is hopefully being transformed from an orphanage to a pre-school and Grades 1 and 2. The Kenyan government has mandated the closure of orphanages with a return of orphans to family members, no matter how distant the relatives nor how financially capable they are in supporting another child in the house. Desks, teaching supplies and teachers' salaries will be on their wish list to start this new school.

We also visited a private grade school in Kisii where we helped to plant conical gardens. We were delighted to hear that the tiny seedlings we planted in July were fully grown crops already being harvested in September.

We met many students who are being sponsored by our supporters. We also met approximately 20 eighth graders who need sponsorship to pay for the \$450 tuition to attend high school. They are bright, eager and worthy of support. **PLEASE CONSIDER SPONSORING A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT!** Go to our website and contribute \$450 for a student's tuition.

Hear Ye, Hear Ye to Western New Yorker's - Donate Your Cans and Bottles



Western New Yorkers, gather your empties now and bring them to 1041 Englewood Avenue, Kenmore, New York to Xtra Dime Back and donate your returns to **#64, Future in Our Hands - USA**. Through your time and effort, we are at the point where the store will be giving us \$100 provided by our donors. Bring your cans and bottles in now and designate #64 Future in Our Hands - USA as your donation of choice. Thank you.

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88 Huntington Court
Williamsville, NY 14221

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