

# SERVICE LEARNING ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



20th Year Anniversary of CSRL



## Greetings!

Over the past 20 years, I have had the pleasure of observing the progress of the Uganda Service Learning program from the design phase to full implementation. It is a program that has had deep and lasting impacts on the communities in Kamuli, Uganda, and on the participants from Makerere University and Iowa State University. I know of no other program anywhere that is so thoughtfully designed, that is so academically enriching, and that does such a great job of preparing participants to be global citizens. I congratulate the many students who have dedicated their time and energy to this program, and I thank the faculty and staff at Iowa State University, Makerere University and at Iowa State University – Uganda Program. You have all made a difference.

David Acker  
Associate Dean for Global Engagement  
Director, Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods  
Iowa State University



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In 2005, Iowa State University faculty Drs. Grace Marquis, David Acker, and Gail Nonnecke joined Dorothy Masinde in Uganda to plan the service-learning program with Makerere University, VEDCO, and Ugandan national and district ministries of agriculture, education, and health.

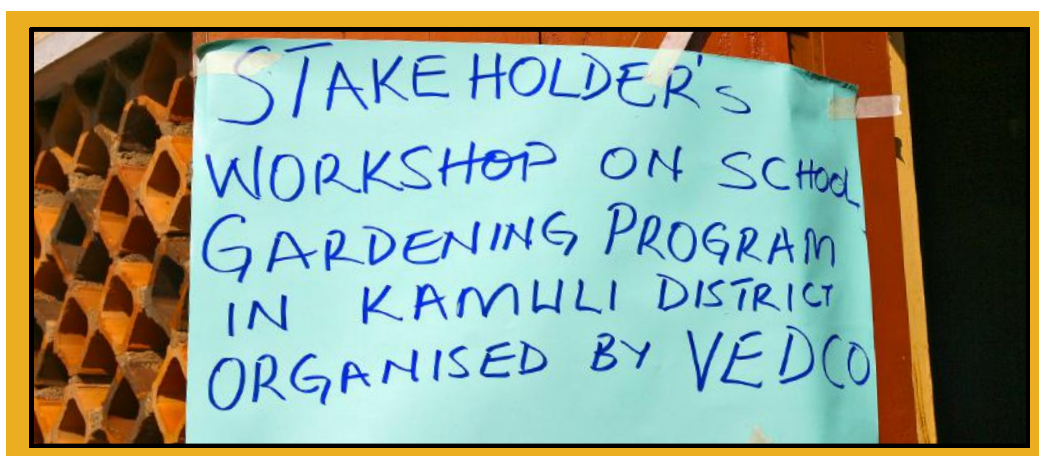
## Celebrating 20 Years of Service Learning

As we commemorate nearly 20 years of service-learning in Uganda, we reflect on the incredible impact the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods (CSRL) has had on the rural communities of Kamuli District. Over the years, service learners have had the opportunity to immerse themselves in local culture and contribute to sustainable development for the Kamuli people. The following brief summaries are a glimpse into the experiences shared by the service learners who have been a part of this transformative program.

We hope you enjoy reading about their journeys, knowing that they all had a positive impact. Their stories reflect the dedication, growth, and lasting impact of their collaborative work. Each of us who participated has memories that remain with us forever – memories that truly last a lifetime.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the donors who support the CSRL service learning and education programs. Your generosity makes these opportunities possible and truly changes lives. Thank you!

Gail Nonnecke  
Global Professor in Global Resource Systems



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# 2006



The “first” service learning team lived in Namasagali along the Nile River, and had projects at Namasagali Primary School.



## **Tribute to Mr. Simon Downie 1943-2021**

Mr. Downing always welcomed service learners to Namasagali. We are grateful for the expertise and time he shared with us. We miss our interactions with him when we visit the Nile River at Namasagali.

Deputy Headmaster, Namasagali College (1975-2022)  
Headmaster Namasagali University (2002-2012), and  
other roles as Administrator, Deputy Vice Chancellor,  
Volunteer Assistant Deputy Head Teacher



## Rachael Ann Cox

**Impact:** Much of my ag education before service learning was classroom based, and I learned a lot from the direct field experiences in Kamuli. They helped me to think critically about development, its sustainability and inequality overall, which informed how I continued my education and went on to a career at international agricultural research centers, and later, my own consulting company.

**Favorite Memory:** The hours of slashing the fields with friends! I learned so much about tropical agriculture, tropical soils, entomology, and friendship in those hours spent slashing. As a student who grew up in urban areas, it was special to have the hands-on experiences to understand the realities farmers face, aspects that you cannot fully understand while studying from a book – even about snakes, termites, and ants in your pants! The experience was priceless.

**Updates:** I own and run a consulting firm, based in Mexico City. We work with non-profit organizations and companies in Latin America and globally on research and strategic design related to agriculture, environmental conservation, economic development, inclusion, and equality.

## Eric Nonnecke

**Impact:** Participating in the ISU-UP program had a significant impact on both my personal and professional growth. Interacting with Makerere University students, community partners such as public health officials, and primary school children in the Kamuli District (Namasagali) expanded my understanding of the right to education, the complexities and importance of agriculture, the consequences of food insecurity on children and their families, and the invaluable experience of engaging with diverse cultures. These experiences have been foundational to my academic and career path in nutritional science and immunology, especially through my interactions with ISU-UP affiliated public health officials, which enhanced my understanding of how food insecurity affects maternal and child health in real-world settings.

**Favorite Memory:** Living in Namasagali made every day feel fresh and exciting. There were so many incredible experiences—teaching at the primary school, gardening, sampling new foods, and working with Makerere University students. Yet, one seemingly small moment that I often reflect on is when we rented bikes from a local shop and rode along a road that ran parallel to the Nile River. It was a simple ride, but it's a memory that still reconnects me with the landscape—meeting locals, carefully weaving through herds of longhorn cattle, and taking in the scenery.

**Updates:** I am an Assistant Project Scientist in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of California, Davis.







## Mark Tekippe

**Impact:** Participating in the service-learning program nearly 20 years ago has had a profound impact on my life. Being immersed in a community with starkly different realities from my own, I encountered firsthand the complexities of life and poverty in a rural setting. This experience was both humbling and enlightening and reshaped my worldview in fundamental ways - both challenging my perspectives and broadening my understanding of global issues. It's changed how I make decisions, where I choose to volunteer my time, and even how I raise my own children. I also gained lifelong friends who I continue to stay in touch with.

**Favorite Memory:** Building connections with our service-learning teammates and the faculty and students in Kamuli. As part of the program, I had the opportunity to do a homestay with one of our service-learning teammates and gain new perspectives of everyday life in Uganda. Many years later, while they were pursuing a PhD at ISU, I was able to reciprocate and host them at my family's home in rural Iowa over the holidays.

**Updates:** Husband, father of two young kids (6 and 4), and Vice President of Product & Growth at Samsung SmartThings. I've been fortunate to stay in contact with one of the boarding students I met at Kamuli primary school in 2006. We initially communicated through hand-written letters and, as technology became more accessible over the years, we switched to email, phone, text, social messaging and video calls. Despite a challenging upbringing and ongoing family, health, and financial struggles, this primary school student went on to graduate from university and is now a father of two beautiful girls and an entrepreneur who is helping business owners adopt technology to streamline their businesses. I hope to visit Uganda again someday with my family to see the sustainable progress of CSRL in Kamuli district and reconnect with friends.

## Rebecca Alice Wokibula

**Impact:** I improved my working relations in diverse communities. I earned an MS Agronomy degree through long distance program, marking the achievement of the first student from Africa and out of the USA enrolled in the long distance course. I gained lifetime relationships. I am yet to become the first female pedologist (PhD Soil Science) in Uganda. I view Service Learning as a double-edged sword or a multiple edged sword because it has a way of cutting through the innermost parts of our souls and spirits differently. Even if you have not been involved, the stories will warm your heart, and the work done speaks for itself; it is a testament.

**Favorite Memory:** Teaching and spending time in a classroom with P.5 pupils who always had smiles and questions about anything for me. They helped me to reminisce about my childhood, and I had a deep knowledge and faith within me that they are full of potential and, if well nurtured, will present even brighter smiles and futures.

**Updates:** PhD candidate/ Graduate Assistant at ISU, Department of Agronomy





# 2007



In 2007, service learners continued to live in Namasagali and assist at Namasagali Primary School. In this second year, service learners expanded their work to Nakanyonyi Primary School.





## Lisa Wasko DeVetter

**Impact:** My experience with the program really shaped my vision of research and extension, which are fundamental to my position working in applied agricultural systems. The program enabled me to learn, practice, and implement stakeholder-based and participatory information sharing. I was also able to broaden my global awareness of food insecurity and approaches to empower communities to realize improved livelihoods.

**Favorite Memory:** I really enjoyed the cultural exchange among the bi-national team, particularly in the early years of the program where we'd connect on the porch overlooking the Nile River.

**Updates:** Associate Professor, Small Fruit Horticulture, Washington State University. I was promoted to associate professor in 2020 and recently submitted my documents for professor. I hope to hear back about the promotion by March 2025.

## Adam Ebert

**Impact:** This experience made me aware of the food insecurity in this world, and made me grateful for all of the blessings I had. It reinforced in me the desire to remain a service-oriented leader back in my own communities.

**Favorite Memory:** When we were working in the food plot behind the school, the school children were so amazed that we would voluntarily work a physical labor job, like working in the garden. They were surprised that the "Mzungus" (white people) would want a career in agriculture.

**Updates:** My wife, Mary, and I farm in west central Iowa. We have 3 children: Heidi (10), Logan (8), & Tucker (6). We raise cattle, hogs, corn, soybeans, and hay. We are active in our local church, and I also serve on our local fire and EMS squads and on our county Farm Bureau board.



## Meghan Filbert

**Impact:** I was 22, meaning, this was an impressionable time of life. Visiting rural Uganda completely blew my mind and heart open. Gaining cultural awareness and an expanded world-view are priceless and it's easy to say these factors have shaped my daily life to date. I also witnessed malnutrition for the first time, which shifts perception and is a lesson in never taking anything for granted.

**Favorite Memory:** There was a boy named Ivan. We went to town and bought him a ball, and I'll never forget the moment when we gifted him and his brother that ball. I've never seen such a simple gift bring so much joy.

**Updates:** I am a passionate advocate of regenerative grazing and work to provide livestock farmers with a new technology - virtual fencing.

## Rebecca Mukebezi

**Impact:** Service learning improved my self esteem and confidence. I was also able to network and make new friends with other service learners.

**Favorite Memory:** Working on bi-national teams in the community.

**Updates:** Lecturer at Makerere University. I hold a PhD in Agricultural and Rural Innovation. I am happily married with 2 beautiful daughters and a handsome son.





## Jude Nsamba

**Impact:** Participation opened me up to endless possibilities in life. I became more aware of myself and what I was capable of achieving. I was no longer limited by impossibilities. I also made life long friends that have become more than friends to me, positively impacting my life.

**Favorite Memory:** Working in the school gardens with the other service learners. It was so thrilling to know that we were imparting a skill to the kids that could become part of their survival in their future lives. If they saw us working, it gave them a longing to strive and be even better than we were.

**Updates:** I am currently a personal banker. I have learned and become aware that there is no opportunity too small. The skills I learned in those few weeks when I was in Kamuli have become something I rely of daily in my everyday tasks.





# 2008



## In memory of Ruth Kawadiny and Jackson Nteebea



**Ruth Kawadiny**

We are saddened by the passing of Ruth and Jackson. They both loved their school garden project in plant propagation to help children learn how to use cuttings and graft fruit trees. We cherish their memories and are thankful for the chance to work with and know them.



**Jackson Nteebea**



## Franny Clary-Leiferman

**Impact:** I gained a completely new perspective on so much: the inequities that exist in our world, global nutrition, the experience of being a racial minority, a better understanding of how easy/privileged my life is, better understanding of another country, an appreciation for agriculture, and I gained many new friends from ISU and Uganda.

**Favorite Memory:** A hilarious skit night at the dorm, hanging out by the Nile, learning so much about Uganda, making new friends.

**Updates:** I work in a local public health department in Saint Paul MN, and I coordinate a grant that supports policy, system and environmental changes for prevention, focused on healthy food access/food security, active living and commercial tobacco cessation. As a part of this work, I also support urban agriculture and community gardens. I live in the Twin Cities, and have 3 kiddos (7, 9, 11).

## Mercy Kasuzi Kabahuma

**Impact:** I thank God that among the beautiful experiences that have shaped my life's journey, service learning is one unique one. Services learning prepared me for not only graduate studies but a career in agriculture.

**Favorite Memory:** The great team we had and working together along the Nile River.

**Updates:** Product Assessment Senior Scientist at Bayer Crop Science.



## Dylan Murray

**Impact:** The world was a much smaller place to me before my participation. The trip to Uganda was actually my first plane trip, and I remember being nervous about getting through security. I hadn't had any significant opportunities to immerse myself in a different culture/community and see how other people lived. It really helped me develop my ability to think about the problems people face from different perspectives.

**Favorite Memory:** Walking down to the Nile River before dinner to watch as the sun set. Each day it seemed so dramatically different.

**Updates:** I've been working as a psychiatrist since finishing medical school in 2012--currently a combination of perinatal psychiatry through the University of Iowa and private practice. I fully recovered from my bout of malaria and saw an infective disease specialist on return to the U.S. who had me complete another course of medicine. No problems since then :) I have two children and taught them both to ride bicycles this summer!



# Mary Tiedeman

**Impact:** The experience enforced my interest in international agriculture, development, and soil science. It also helped me develop a passion for teaching and public outreach.

**Favorite Memory:** The old housing facility was on the bank of the Nile River. Being able to walk across the yard after a long day and relax by the Nile is a memory I often think about.

**Updates:** I am a soil science communicator and grant coordinator at Iowa State University. My charge is to help translate the science of soil organic carbon and to promote a new federal soil carbon monitoring program. I am also developing "The Soil Space", an experiential soil library within ISU Agronomy. Since 2008, I've lived in six cities across four US states from South Dakota to Florida. I got an MS in Soil Science with Lee Burras in 2013 and held research and teaching positions in Central PA and Miami, FL. In 2020, I was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer, and so, took a hiatus to fight the good fight. This July marked my third year in remission and in November I will celebrate my one-year work anniversary at ISU.



# Darrin Vander Plas

**Impact:** The service-learning program in Uganda gave me significant grounded and global experiential perspective working on multicultural teams for a common goal. It also opened my mind to the extreme complexities of development and motivated me to pursue opportunities to travel and live abroad during and after graduation from ISU. To this day, I feel honored and grateful to have been part of the initial/pilot Uganda service-learning program. The knowledge, skills and friendships I gained are absolutely priceless.

**Favorite Memory:** Spending time with our Makerere friends in Namasagali watching sunsets on the banks of the White Nile.

**Updates:** I manage the Farm Loan Program for the USDA Farm Service Agency in Maui County, Hawaii which includes the outer islands of Moloka'i and Lana'i. In 2010, prior to my graduation from ISU, I was awarded a US Dept of State Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship to return to the Kamuli region

of Uganda and complete a 3-month internship with the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods partner, Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns (VEDCO). From 2012 -2014 my wife and I served in the Peace Corps in The Gambia - West Africa. There, I worked with farmers and rural communities to develop more ecological, resilient and profitable beekeeping and forestry practices as well as assisted schools in establishing tropical fruit and indigenous plant nurseries.

This past September, I was selected as one of 25 attendees to participate in a week-long Global Food Security Seminar in Christchurch, New Zealand which was held in partnership with the US Department of State's Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship alumni program and Rural Leaders New Zealand. This year also marks my 10th anniversary working with the USDA Farm Service Agency.





# 2009



In 2009, service learners lived in Kamuli town and later in future years, residences were added in Naluwoli and Namasagali.







## Sam Bird

**Impact:** I enjoyed teaching as part of the service learning program, collaborating with Makerere University students and getting to know them, and learning about development programs in the communities where we worked through a non-governmental organization partner. Since then I have gone on to teach, re-connect with service learning partners from Uganda both in Iowa and in Uganda, and to work on development projects in Kamuli as well as other parts of Uganda and Kenya.

**Favorite Memory:** Our binational service learning project was on making traditional beehives. We taught students how to make the beehives and through these demonstrations had built a number of them. One day we arrived at school and found another beehive had been made -- the students had built one themselves!

**Updates:** I am an assistant professor of economics at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. This summer I worked in western Kenya on a study of religion and economic development. (My picture is from the trip.)

## Naboth Bwambale

**Impact:** Significantly! It boosted my confidence to stand and speak among people. It enhanced my interpersonal skills of engaging with people from diverse backgrounds (culture, race and socioeconomic backgrounds) as well as enabling me appreciate power of collaboration and team work in executing tasks.

**Favorite Memory:** Having lunch by the Nile River!

**Updates:** Currently work with EARTH University in Costa Rica, leading their Africa Mastercard Foundation-EARTH University Fellowship Program. It's a post-graduation transitions Program aimed at supporting bright young leaders in their professional development and entrance to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in Africa. The program seeks to catalyze the impact of these young agents of change in their respective countries in Africa. Besides my professional job, I am a commercial farmer with operations in goats and coffee.



## Amanda Chung

**Impact:** While participating in the Uganda service-learning program, I challenged myself to grow my interpersonal and technical skills by way of the opportunities given to me in the primary school classrooms and bi-national team project.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memory is the homestay at the end of the program. I stayed with a pediatric doctor who showed me what life in Kampala was like.

**Updates:** I am currently working as the academic advisor and student services specialist for the Global Resource Systems major at Iowa State University. I am pursuing a Doctor of Education in Leadership.



## Rachael Farhat Hanigan

**Impact:** The service-learning internship in Uganda was a source of inspiration, education, and connection, that to this day remains an unparalleled experience in my life. It taught me the value of hard work and collaboration, and opened my eyes to a completely different world than the one I grew up in. The experience was humbling and challenging, and through that caused personal growth. It fostered friendship and laughter, and forever broadened my worldview. I look back at that time with incredible fondness and gratitude for the opportunity of a lifetime.

**Favorite Memory:** The many many laughs shared with my fellow service-learning students!

**Updates:** I am a Registered Nurse, working in women's health. I just moved to Houston with my husband and our dog Winnie, after spending the past six years in San Diego. Though I'm missing Southern California, I am excited for the new adventure, and to finally have a yard and garden!

## Ellen Jacobson

**Impact:** Even now, 15 years later, I often reflect on my experience with the Iowa State University-Uganda Program (ISU-UP). The level of resiliency and strength displayed by the school children we worked with was remarkable. The experience opened my eyes to the complexities of aid-work in general, as well as issues specific to rural poverty. The accomplishments of the women university students, especially in a much more gender biased society, were also something that I think of.

**Favorite Memory:** Evening tea with my ISU and Makerere colleagues and professors where we would recap the day and reflect on what we saw and did.

**Updates:** I am a general dentist and co-owner of a private practice in my hometown of White Bear Lake, MN. I am married and have two small children and one on the way! Horticulture will always be a part of my roots, as my family still owns and operates Pine Tree Apple Orchard.



## Malson Natuhwera

**Impact:** I have since learned that teamwork achieves greater milestones and lessens the workload. My mindset completely shifted to serving others more and this is indeed more satisfying than serving self.

**Favorite Memory:** Having had to speak Lusoga for the very first time and mentioning words like "Embooli, Amakaba" (sweet potato leaves)- it was so fascinating!

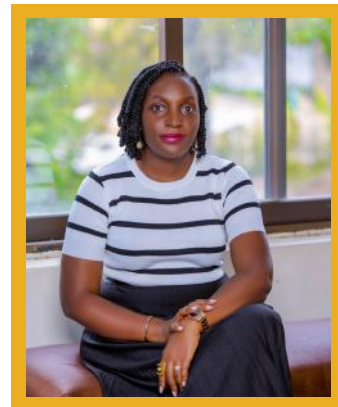
**Updates:** Commercial Poultry farmer

## Joan Mirembe

**Impact:** It broadened my cultural awareness.

**Favorite Memory:** Having lunch by the Nile after a sunny day in the school gardens.

**Updates:** Monitoring and Evaluation consultant. I cofounder a company that supports projects in project management and M&E to improve service delivery for different programs and organizations. I also own a herbal tea company whose vision is to support female farmers to earn a living by training them to use their small spaces to grow herbs that I use in my company's tea blends.



## Geoffrey Omuron

**Impact:** It has created self confidence in me and since then, I believe in myself to achieve my dreams and professional career.

**Favorite Memory:** Flying in a plane to the US was something that had never crossed my mind. It was a miracle for me. (I had the privilege to serve as a Makerere University intern at Iowa State University).

**Updates:** I take part in consultancies on agricultural research with the International Potato Center and also am involved in the training of farmers for the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction. I graduated with my MSc. in Soil Science from Makerere University in January 2025.



# 2010





## Ellen Franzenburg

**Impact:** As the first time I had ever worked in a developing country directly with farmers, teachers and students, this experience taught me a lot about what sustainable development looks like at the ground level. It was a truly invaluable experience for me.

**Favorite Memory:** I really enjoyed working with and getting to know the Makerere students in our group. I remember late nights in the “kasubi” building with the thatched roof sometimes working and sometimes talking. We were all so close that during the homestay, all of us who could attend got together to go hang out at the beach of Lake Victoria. I made good friends that I have to this day.

**Updates:** I am Director of Awards and Lectures at the World Food Prize Foundation, and I go back to the

family farm every couple of weekends to help with the farmers market and Sunflower Experience. I went on a cicada safari and saw a phenomenon of two broods that emerged in 2024 (photo attached). It was exciting to see the double-brood, a rare occurrence of cicadas that had hatched in 2011 and 2007 and burrowed into the ground 13 and 17 years ago.

## Jacob Hunter

**Impact:** Participating in the Service Learning Program in Uganda shaped my career path and inspired me to become an agriculture teacher. My time teaching in the rural Kamuli District opened my eyes to one of the greatest challenges we face today—feeding a growing world.

**Favorite Memory:** While I have many fond memories from that summer, my favorite is now as an alumni, seeing my former students experience the same transformative moments in Kamuli that shaped my life.

**Updates:** I am currently the lead agriculture teacher and FFA Advisor at North Scott Community School District in Eldridge. In 2022, I completed my master's in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Together with my co-teachers at North Scott Community we've ranked in the top 10 high school agriculture programs nationally. I'm also helping launch an \$18 million innovation center for all of Scott County's school districts, where collaborative educational experience will be offered. I also co-lead efforts to recruit and retain agriculture teachers in Iowa.

## Sean Lundy

**Impact:** The Uganda Service Learning program, more than any other life event, set me on the professional course my life has taken. I point to that experience as the beginning of a journey that has lasted 15 years and cut across continents and industries.

**Favorite Memory:** The recurring daily lunch breaks down by the Nile River.

**Updates:** Manager for Special Projects and Initiatives in the Economic Development Department for City Government (Bloomington, MN). Military: 1st Lieutenant with the 1/94 Cav Squadron of the MN Army National Guard.

After graduating from ISU with degrees in Global Resource Systems and Nutrition, I served 3 years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Togo, West Africa. During the first 2 years I was a Community Health Volunteer, and the 3rd year I was a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. After Peace Corps I worked several years in Washington, D.C., before moving back to Minnesota to enlist in the MN Army National

Guard and commission as an officer in a Cavalry Scout Squadron. I went to graduate school, receiving an MBA from the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota, and then a CPPM certification from the University of St. Thomas Opus School of Business.



## Peninah Nangobi

**Impact:** My participation in the school garden program set the foundation for my career in agriculture, giving me hands-on experience and a deep understanding of the sector's importance in rural livelihoods.

**Favorite Memory:** Making friends.

**Updates:** I am currently working as a Human Resource Manager. I have completed my MSc in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security, as well as a Post Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management.





## Kevin Natukunda

**Impact:** It increased my network, which enabled me to advance my education.

**Favorite Memory:** School gardening.

**Updates:** I am currently an Assistant Professor at Augustana University, Sioux Fall SD. I teach Human Anatomy, Human Physiology and Developmental Biology. My family has grown in the most amazing way! We welcomed Jason into the world on March 4, 2023, and being his dad is an incredible joy and privilege.

## Martha Ibore Natukunda

**Impact:** I learned many skills hands-on, learned from my peers and mentors, and also grew in perspective. This experience opened up new opportunities for me in a way that I had never imagined, leading me to pursue graduate studies at Iowa State University.

**Favorite Memory:** Developing friendships with fellow students (both Makerere and ISU), and being able to support each other while we worked on several projects together.

**Updates:** I am an Assistant Professor in the Biology department at Augustana University. I currently live in South Dakota with my family. I am a mum to one son and it is amazing to raise him.



## Silver Tumwa

**Impact:** The participation in service learning pointed me in the right career. While at university I had not made up my mind whether to work in community development or join business companies since my course Agribusiness Management has opportunities for both fields. However, working with service learning provided with the confidence I needed to pursue a career in community development, and therefore it matters to select a suitable internship placement.

**Favorite Memory:** I participated in making reusable sanitary pads as a binational project, but couldn't initially recognize its relevance to agribusiness. I remember learning how the skill of making reusable pads can be linked to agriculture because the provision of pads can increase participation and attendance for women in farmer groups. Making their own pads can cut costs spent on purchasing disposable pads

allowing women to invest their income in agribusiness activities. Here I learned the lesson of not under estimating small ideas or innovations.

**Updates:** Currently I work as a District Program Head with Raising the Village RTV Uganda. I lead the team of 8 project officers, ensuring implementation of the ultra-poverty reduction mode. I have had 12 years of working experience with more than 5 NGO development and humanitarian organizations. Currently in final stages of two master's studies. Service learning prepared me to be a global citizen and think creatively. My greatest accomplishment to date happened when my team proposed a financial inclusion instrument to underwrite smallholder farmers against climate risks. We won the prestigious Kellogg Morgan Stanley Sustainable Investing Challenge 2023, leading to establishment of VSAI climate enterprise Uganda. It is an Initiative that I am nurturing to be able to support smallholder farmers to have protection against crop and livestock losses that affect their livelihoods and make them more prone to the effects of climate change.

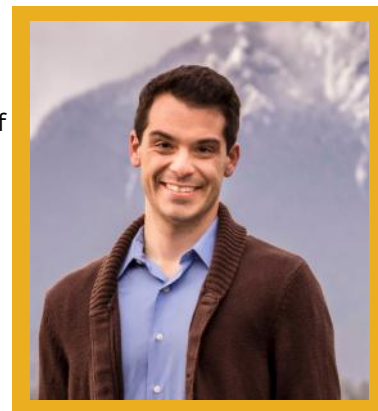
# 2011





# Dylan Clark

**Updates:** Director of Research Mobilization, Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, University of Victoria.



# Tabisa Kagoya

**Impact:** Participating as a service learner significantly contributed to my personal growth. I developed new skills that I hadn't previously anticipated. For instance, I honed my communication abilities by interacting with diverse individuals such as the school staff and pupils, community members, my fellow students from both nations (U.S. and Uganda). It boosted my confidence in expressing my ideas. This opportunity pushed me out of my comfort zone, enabling me to confront challenges and learn from them.

**Favorite Memory:** The first day when we gathered to clear the garden. It was a hot day and we were all covered in dirt and sweat, but the energy was infectious. The fun seeing our friends from Iowa dig for the very first time made the hard work enjoyable.

**Updates:** I am pursuing my master's degree in Agriculture Economics from Edward Mondlane University, Mozambique. After working in the bank for several years, I've had the opportunity to develop a strong foundation in finance and customer service. During my time there, I not only improved my skills in financial analysis and client relations but also took on leadership roles in customer service. Now I am pursuing my Master's degree so as to deepen my knowledge and expand my expertise.



# Tahiya Najjemba

**Impact:** I gained valuable insights regarding how to handle social interactions in a multi-cultural team. Multi-tasking was another skill gained as we hopped from garden to class lessons & back. Hard physical work too. Those garden activities teach endurance, a lot of it!!

**Favorite Memory:** The 4th of July celebrations. We played games, music & danced the night away. Brings a smile to my face remembering it.

**Updates:** Data analysis & Quality Assurance of business processes at Uganda Revenue Authority.



## Solomon Seruwo

**Impact:** Participating in the Service Learning Program in Kamuli was a transformative experience that profoundly shaped my personal and professional journey. Being selected for this program was a stroke of luck that I cherish deeply, as it allowed me to immerse myself in rural communities and apply the knowledge I had gained in school in a meaningful way. Through this experience, I learned that true impact comes not just from education, but from the empowerment we give to others. This lesson has been a guiding principle in my career in agriculture, where I continue to work with and support farming communities. Every day, I celebrate the profound impact of the ISU Service Learning Program, which taught me that the greatest fulfillment comes from serving others and learning alongside them.

**Favorite Memory:** Every experience under this program was special in its own way. One of my most cherished memories from the Service Learning Program was starting a school garden at Namasagali College Staff's Children Primary School. Teaching the pupils how to grow vegetables provided food for them at school and also equipped them with valuable life skills. It was incredibly fulfilling to watch their excitement as they learned something that would serve them for a lifetime. That simple school garden project continues to amaze me for the lasting impact it had on these children's lives.

**Updates:** Currently, I lead the Marketing and Business Development Department at Bukoola Chemical Industries Ltd, a company that empowers farming communities by providing comprehensive crop protection solutions in East Africa. I also serve as a Council Member (Uganda Chapter) for COMESA East Africa Horticultural Accelerator (CEHA) Program and Volunteer as a Master trainer (EHAF) for CropLife Africa-Middle East.





# 2012



## Elizabeth Ahikiriza

**Impact:** My participation helped me to gain confidence and more exposure. I was also able to meet people that have positively influenced my career path who later recommended for my master's course and many other opportunities.

**Favorite Memory:** Hosting an American student in our home

**Updates:** Assistant Lecturer at Makerere University



## Ibrahim Baguma

**Impact:** It opened up my mind to the reality of malnutrition in our rural communities and simple sustainable strategies that can be adopted to improve nutrition and household incomes.

**Favorite Memory:** Having lunch along the shore of the Nile River in Namasagali.

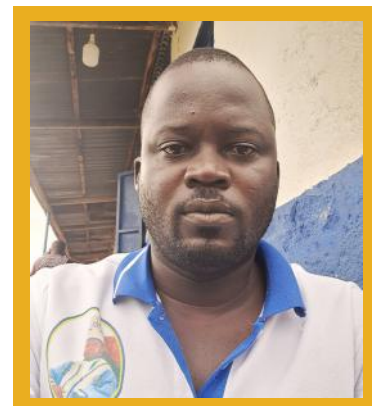
**Updates:** I work for a poultry enterprise in Mukono as a quality assurance manager.

## Aloysius Bampalana

**Impact:** Agribusiness skills acquisition.

**Favorite Memory:** Kasubi Idol

**Updates:** Agriculture Extension Officer (ABINBEV)



## Louis Hilgemann

**Impact:** The Uganda Program had a profound impact on me professionally and personally. I gained exposure and hands-on experience in tropical agriculture and agroforestry as well as teaching and working with rural, underserved communities with limited resources. Being immersed in a culture vastly different from my own and seeing the daily challenges of the people of Kamuli was eye-opening. This experience widened my global perspective and sparked an interest and passion for tropical agriculture and development work.

**Favorite Memory:** Building friendships with the other Uganda and ISU students. Going outside to watch the stars when the power went out.

**Updates:** Assistant Teaching Professor and EARTH Program Coordinator for ISU satellite campus in St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands. Prior to working for Iowa State University, I lived in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, for 6 years, where I worked for the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture and the University of the Virgin Islands, implementing community forestry and tropical agriculture projects.



## George William Kiwanuka

**Impact:** Cross cultural learning was very impactful and it was an important experience working with people from the rural Kamuli community, especially working with children and expectant and breastfeeding mothers.

**Favorite Memory:** Establishment of school gardens and having the gardens' produce help feed the children in schools and at the nutrition education centers.

**Updates:** I am a research assistant at the National Legumes Program under the National Crops Resources Research Institute-Namulonge. I hold a Masters of Science in Agricultural Extension and Education of Makerere University. I also am a farmer. I grow coffee and rear cattle.



## Juliet Kukundakwe

**Impact:** Improved my people skills, report writing skills, leadership skills and helped me discover my strengths which have paved way for me in my career.

**Favorite Memory:** Hosting service learners from IOWA in our homes

**Updates:** Programs Assistant-Eastern Africa Grain Council. My roles are organizing and facilitating commercial trainings on the grain value chain; implementing strategic and annual work plans; preparing and implementing a yearly training calendar, identifying training needs of the current and potential stakeholders; maintaining good working relations with collaborative partners; planning and marketing of the agribusiness expos; supporting monitoring and evaluation, data collection and reporting; and fundraising and resource mobilization for the organization.



## Martin Roy Kagoye Lukwata

**Impact:** Participating in the school garden program provided me with the opportunity to serve as a student leader the following year. Building on this experience, I have since joined the Iowa State University - Uganda Program (ISU-UP) as staff, further advancing my contributions.

**Favorite Memory:** American Independence celebrations

**Updates:** Youth Entrepreneur Specialist for ISU-UP. I have been involved with the service-learning program for 12 years.



## Ibrahim Mayanja

**Impact:** The service learning was crucial in terms of experiencing real life in agriculture, offering service to the community, and experiencing a multicultural environment.

**Favorite Memory:** Interacting with colleagues from ISU and the community service in Kamuli.

**Updates:** I work as a Research Associate, socio-economist, Technology Evaluation and Promotion, with the National Agricultural Research Organization based at NaSARRI-Serere. I completed an M.Sc. in Agricultural Economics.

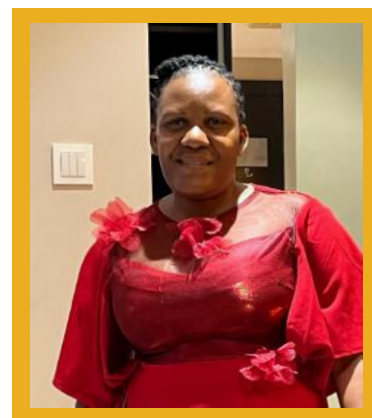


## Moureen Mbeiza

**Impact:** Improved public communication and transparency in accountability and work. Increased by friends both in institutions and community. Learned the value of hard work, self love, and team work.

**Favorite Memory:** Teamwork and nice food

**Updates:** Agronomy and Land Use specialist at Iowa State University-Uganda Program. I love the service learning impact it has brought to the Kamuli community.



## Austin W. Schott

**Impact:** The program not only introduced a new world of agriculture, but it inspired me to pursue agricultural service through the US Peace Corps. In Peace Corps in Guinea, West Africa, I found many of the lessons I had learned from Kamuli translated to advancing rural livelihoods in Guinea. Lessons that Ugandans had taught me in Kamuli, such as raised beds or intercropping, were now being shared in communities in West Africa.

**Favorite Memory:** I'll never forget tea time. I wasn't accustomed to tea time when I arrived in Uganda. But there were countless memories of discussing the day's events, getting excited about what we could accomplish the next day, or chit chatting about nothing at all for one hour in early evening. It was the perfect way to unwind, recharge, build friendships, and mount inspiration for the next day.

**Updates:** Foreign Service Officer, US Consulate, Sao Paulo, Brazil





# 2013



## Pheobe Ayot

**Impact:** Aside from obtaining hands-on skills in agriculture, I learned valuable skills like problem solving, project management, teamwork. My exposure and working with disadvantaged communities developed and deepened my passion to work with and improve the lives of these people. This program shaped me. It exposed me to a world I hadn't experienced, and it matured me and taught me resilience, hard work, and being accountable.

**Favorite Memory:** Teaching the pupils at the primary school alongside the students from Iowa State University.

**Updates:** Research and development manager at Milkweed Biologicals.

## Samuel Bizimana

**Impact:** Mind set change and my perception on different cultures.

**Favorite Memory:** School gardening with pupils.

**Updates:** Agricultural credit officer. I had a chance to have an additional course in Israel.



## Usamah Kabuye

**Impact:** Service learning profoundly impacted me by fostering personal growth, community engagement, and practical experience in terms of agricultural production. The unique program unites individuals from both developed and developing countries to collaboratively address significant human challenges such as hunger, poverty, as well as early childhood care in the rural settings of Kamuli, Uganda.

**Favorite Memory:** Painting the first mural for the 2013 service learning team at the compound in Kamuli town.

**Updates:** Pursuing my PhD in Genetics and Genomics at Iowa State University in the Department of Animal Science. I received a M.Sc. in Agriculture in 2019 from Jeonbuk National University in South Korea. Upon my return

to Uganda in 2019 I took up a teaching position at King Ceasor University (private university in Kampala) rising through the ranks to Acting Dean of Students. Also, with other Ugandan colleagues we started a company in Uganda called the Swine Poultry and Dairy (SPODA) enterprises limited.



## Samson Katunguka

**Impact:** It cultivated a love for service in me and that has stayed with me to this very day.

**Favorite Memory:** Going to the Nile River for lunch and riding my bike through the narrow winding dirt roads in the serene rice fields of Kamuli!

**Updates:** I serve as an Expansion and Operations Specialist with One Acre Fund. I'm nearing completion of my master's degree in Agricultural and Applied Economics from Makerere University and the University of Pretoria.



## Lillian Nabwiire

**Impact:** It was a positive learning experience.

**Favorite Memory:** I had the chance to learn how to make a tiptap and a kitchen garden.

**Updates:** I now work as a Food Safety Extension Educator.







## Rehemah Nasejje

**Impact:** Experience in working with local communities as we would interact with them. The program helped me to learn the basic extension ethics and also practical skills especially in fruit and vegetable growing, fruit tree grafting and propagation, and increased my confidence levels. My first work/employment was related to agroforestry and sustainable land management, while working in local communities. I referred so often to the experiences I had in Kamuli with the service learning program.

**Favorite Memory:** Lunchtime at the Nile River near Namasagali College, with all the monkeys looking at us!

**Updates:** Coordinator for Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) Network-Uganda. Gender officer at the Young Farmers Federation of Uganda, supporting rural women in the Northern and West-Nile regions of Uganda. I have a family with three beautiful children. I have acquired certificates as a gender specialist and travelled to a few parts of the world.

## Yosia Mugume

**Impact:** Participation boosted my ability to collaborate with different stakeholders such as teachers, pupils, community members, American students and fellow Makerere University students and program officials and staff to complete different tasks. Through this I was also able to make meaningful friendships.

**Favorite Memory:** Going to the national park with American students.

**Updates:** Research Associate at Michigan State University-Department of Energy Lab. I was able to complete my PhD in Genetics and Genomics at Iowa State University in 2021.



## Samuel Tubwangye

**Impact:** The practical day-to-day engagement in gardening under the farmer field schools and school garden programs reshaped my vision about food security and rural development. This compelled to specialize in food systems and livelihoods for my post graduate career.

**Favorite Memory:** The intercultural sessions where we learned games, including card games from the ISU students.

**Updates:** Currently serve as Operations Manager at Hunger Fighters Uganda, Managing food and cash distribution in Kyangwali refugee settlements. I was honored to participate in the early career Next Generation Institute held by Iowa State University's Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods and ISU-UP in January 2024. The incredible developments and innovations at the Mpirigiti Rural Training Centre amaze me.





# 2014



## IN MEMORY OF SAMUEL SUGUT KIPROTICH (1993-2025)

In 2025, Samuel passed away and we miss his smile and supportive personality. Samuel had a special fondness for the service learning and ISU-UP programs that benefitted the babies at the NECs and children at the schools. We are grateful for his dedication and contributions to the program and for the time we had with him.



## Gilbert Asasira

**Impact:** I learned good work ethics, developed in my leadership skills, and made invaluable life long friendships and connections.

**Favorite Memory:** There are just so many beautiful memories; from the lunches at the Nile, to the social events like the Kasubi idol, to the farewell songs by the kids at the schools, to the songs sung on the van from the field ("Tunga Tunga" was our favorite) then the home visits. I can go on and on and on. Overall, service learning was a beautiful experience.

**Updates:** Currently I work for the Government of the Republic of Uganda, in the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries as an Agricultural Inspector overseeing Crop Protection in the country. I have grown a lot, became a family man, and am married with two handsome boys. Overall, life been very kind to me.



## Joel Bayo

**Impact:** Understanding how diversity can enhance productivity. This has enabled me to adapt to different work environments in my professional growth since I graduated and left campus.

**Favorite Memory:** Cultural exchange in Kamuli to learn first-hand about another culture, especially regarding to food, dances, games, etc.

**Updates:** Project Manager SMART CENTER (HUB)-ForAfrika. I have developed skills in proposal development and these have allowed me to grow through the ranks in various organizations where I have worked.

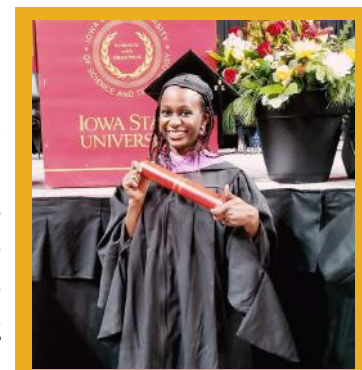


## Shifa Birabwa

**Impact:** I found my husband through service learning and my life changed completely. I was able to complete my master's degree at Iowa State University in Community and Regional Planning in 2021. I currently work in a technology company in Nebraska as the Specialist/Lead Coordinator Business Marketing using all the team work skills gained from service learning. We also complete vegetable growing during summer at our home in Nebraska and use the farming skills we gained from service learning. Overall, service learning exposed me to the world. I am very grateful for the service learning opportunity because without service learning I would not be where I am.

**Favorite Memory:** Celebration of American Independence Day whereby I got a chance to taste different foods from different cultures prepared by students. I also loved the reflection discussions every evenings in Kasubi led by faculty. I enjoyed the Queen Elizabeth game park tour and the home visits when we had a chance host ISU friends so that they could experience life in Ugandan homes.

**Updates:** I am currently at Vishay Technology Company in Nebraska with 2 beautiful daughters.



## Eunice Chekaptui

**Impact:** I acquired the best hands-on experience for my career.

**Favorite Memory:** Interacting with the school children during the garden activities.

**Updates:** Technical manager at Masha coffee. I work with producing one of the best specialty coffees from the Elgon region, confirmed through national competitions ("Best of the Pearl") done by Uganda Coffee Development Authority.



## Adeke Mary Gorrety

**Favorite Memory:** The weekend get together parties.

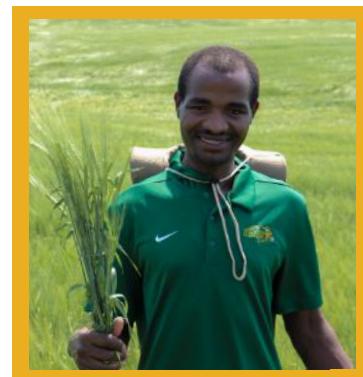
**Updates:** Agricultural officer working with local government.

## Abraham Hangamaisho

**Impact:** I gained skills and knowledge which contributed towards completion of my undergraduate degree. Also, I gained valuable connections with both supervisors/professors and peer students.

**Favorite Memory:** The farm visits, where we interacted and gained hands-on skills from farmers.

**Updates:** I currently am working as a research specialist at North Dakota State University (NDSU) and also enrolled in the Plant Pathology PhD program.



## Robinah Kojo

**Impact:** The service learning program prepared me for the professional world, shedding light into values such as working with people of different backgrounds and cultures, teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving, while exposing me into the realities of working in harsh environments and being resilient.

**Favorite Memory:** The July 4th celebration which exposed me to different varieties of food.

**Updates:** I'm a Policy Adviser on Food and Nutrition Security at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in South Sudan. I'm married with three children; I graduated with an MSc. in International Humanitarian Affairs from the University of York (England) with a distinction. I have acquired professional experience working with several international organizations, governments and NGOs over the past 10 years. I have worked with several dignitaries and led high-level discussions on issues relating to agriculture, food and nutrition. I have also invested in the forestry sector with over 10 acres of plantations.

## Kacey Korver

**Impact:** I joined the program in hopes of leaving a lasting impact on those I would serve. In reality, this program left an even greater impact on my life. I experienced true happiness in Uganda- happiness not centered on skills, possessions, money, etc. Instead, I left Uganda with a greater appreciation for what truly matters in life- relationships with others. Without this experience I would not be the same person I am today and I'm so grateful that I was chosen to participate.

**Favorite Memory:** Whenever I need a pick-me-up, I picture the overwhelming joy and excitement on the kids' faces as we pulled up in that van for the very first time to meet them. It was a humbling scene I will never forget. To have the love of those kids for complete strangers is something I have always admired.

**Updates:** I'm currently a veterinarian in south-central Iowa. While I haven't been back to Africa since the service trip, my family and I support a missionary there. It is my dream to return again someday and share the experience with my family.



## Jane Lakot

**Impact:** Service learning profoundly impacted me, fostering a deeper understanding of teamwork and social responsibility through hands-on experiences in teaching, gardening, and community engagement. I developed a growth mindset, embraced diversity, and discovered my purpose. This experience ignited a passion for lifelong service, shaping my values, goals, and aspirations.

**Favorite Memory:** Lunch by the Nile River

**Updates:** Master's student at NMBU- Norwegian University of Life Sciences



## Deogracious Luyirika

**Impact:** I got an opportunity to apply my class-based knowledge to real world scenarios and also learned how to work in a multi-national team.

**Favorite Memory:** July 4th celebrations with all the service learners.

**Updates:** I am a market analyst. I am grateful to have been part of ISU-UP and to have contributed to the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods. During my time in the program, I participated in various service-learning projects that helped impact the lives of the local people in Kamuli. I am proud to have helped implement agricultural practices that supported food security and economic resilience for local farmers. I am also proud to have worked on the school feeding program that helped ensure that children could have a reasonable meal throughout the entire study period. These accomplishments continue to inspire my ongoing commitment to sustainable development.

## Jane Nabikyu

**Impact:** I was glad to contribute to the school feeding program.

**Favorite Memory:** Ndere Troup visit.

**Updates:** Ph.D. fellow, University of Nairobi in Agriculture and Applied Economics.



## Prisca Lutalo Nalugwa

**Impact:** It opened my eyes on the need for nutrition education among members of our local communities. It also challenged my mind as I saw practical ways of grain storage that protects grain from insect damage, called hermetic storage. I am currently using hermetic storage for my produce. I was also happy to learn how vegetable gardens can transform a school's nutrition even in other parts of the country.

**Favorite Memory:** I enjoyed the competitions between the different student houses.

**Updates:** I am a laboratory technologist and also involved in value addition.

## Joanita Namayengo

**Impact:** My participation in the program enabled me to realize how important it is to give back to the community. I also learned to appreciate the importance of working together as a team, as well as networking with people from different cultural backgrounds.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service-learning memory was meeting with my teammates by the riverside to have lunch.

**Updates:** I am currently an Agribusiness Advisor at N&E Consult International Limited.

## Emmanuel Nsamba



**Impact:** I got connected with a broader serving learning community. Through these connections, I earned a scholarship opportunity to complete a Ph. D. in the Genetics and Genomics Program at Iowa State University. I also got a tremendous opportunity to give back. I have been supporting a child since primary school, grade 4 and he is now in secondary school – grade 2.

**Favorite Memory:** Working with the school children in the garden.

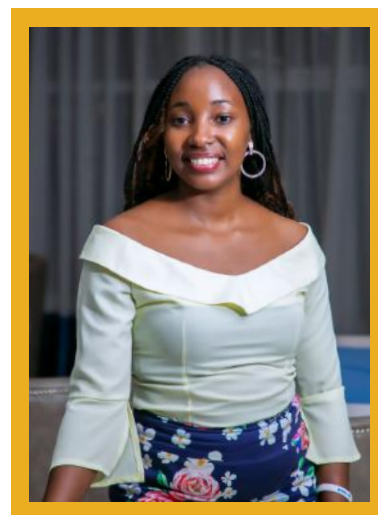
**Updates:** I am a Postdoc Research Fellow at Stanford University. I earned a doctorate in Genetics and Genomics at Iowa State University in 2021. I am also the Founder and Executive Director of Bakugu Agricultural Technologies LTD ([www.bagritech.com](http://www.bagritech.com)). We operate a plant tree nursery and raise fruit, tree, and coffee seedlings for farmers in Central Uganda.

## Doreen Violet Muhumuza

**Impact:** It was a humbling opportunity to work with the schools; teaching and preparing lesson plans were activities that made me appreciate planning my time. I was able to tap into my skill in the classroom by assisting with teaching, which I didn't know I could do. The love that the children showed us and how they appreciated every little thing we did, taught me so much about gratitude. The bi-national team projects taught me about team work and appreciating every team member's input.

**Favorite Memory:** Kasubi Idol talent show, being able to cook together, and the fun moments we had showcasing our talents in music dance and drama from our regions of Uganda and the world. The Visit to Queen Elizabeth National Park was my first time to experience a game drive. I loved the adventure!

**Updates:** I currently work in hardware construction merchandise.



## Frank Tukamuhebwa

**Impact:** Improved my public speaking and leadership skills. Packaging of information based on targeted audience is a skill that has enabled me to become a better presenter.

**Favorite Memory:** Community farmer outreach sessions.

**Updates:** Agriculture Extension Officer working with NGO offering advisories to refugees and host community farmers. I have implemented more than five livelihood and nutrition projects in different regions and am currently winding up an international research project named as HealthyFoodsAfrica. Here I coordinated implementation of activities in one of the ten food systems labs (Rwamwanja Food Systems Lab). I have supported 1000 women refugees to increase productivity, production and marketable volumes to enable increased access to income for nutrition.



# 2015



## Caleb Floss

**Impact:** The service learning program taught me how to work and communicate with people from various backgrounds and cultures. I still use these skills every day in my professional and personal life. I also made lifelong friends from the program and deeply appreciate those relationships.

**Favorite Memory:** Playing soccer with the students and losing to them every time.

**Updates:** I work for the U.S. Grains Council as Regional Trade Manager based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



## Elise Kendall

**Impact:** My experience with CSRL in Uganda helped pave the way for my future career in development. Having the opportunity to work side by side my Ugandan counterparts improved my cross-cultural skills and pushed me to see and think about the world differently. Building and executing projects with my Ugandan partner, Mike, gave me vital skills that I was able to replicate when I joined the Peace Corps after graduating.

**Favorite Memory:** Working with the women's support group to test KinoSol dehydrators.

**Updates:** I am a Food Systems Policy Advocate with the INGO CARE and will begin a master's in Global Development from SOAS in London. After graduating Iowa State, I served as an Environment Peace Corps Volunteer in Malawi before moving to Washington, DC to work on food systems advocacy with the INGO CARE. I am about to begin a Global Development master's program in London at SOAS University and will focus on labour and activism during my studies.



## Shillah Kwikiiriza

**Impact:** I learned to appreciate the role of agriculture in improving rural livelihoods. Having grown in the Western part of Uganda, service learning gave me an opportunity to get to experience and appreciate the different farming systems compared to what had been normal to me. Engaging in Iowa State University-Uganda Program's activities in the Kamuli district has challenged me, to think about how to use agriculture to impact those around me.

**Favorite Memory:** Teaching, especially during the times my teaching partner and I had the chance to engage pupils in outdoor learning in the school gardens.

**Updates:** I am pursuing a Ph.D. in Horticulture and a Graduate Certificate in Seed Science and Technology at Iowa State University. After completing my undergraduate studies at Makerere University, I volunteered with Iowa State University-Uganda Program and later was hired as a Community Innovations Specialist, facilitating income generating activities for mothers and in-school and out-of-school youth before I enrolled for graduate school at Iowa State. I received my Master of Science in Horticulture and a Graduate Certificate in Education and Outreach in Agriculture and Natural Resources during my Ph.D.







## Eria Luyima

**Impact:** I gained a lot of practical experience , especially during farm visits and while working with vegetables during school gardening. Farm visits opened up my mind after graduating, since I had learned a great deal from our host farmers. In fact, I am now a mango farmer in the Luwero District.

**Favorite Memory:** Visiting farmers on their farms and operations.

**Updates:** Farm manager

## Racheal Faith Nahumuza

**Impact:** The participation enhanced my academic knowledge and understanding the agronomic practices involved in plant growing through school gardens, and also the importance of team work.

**Favorite Memory:** Participating in tours and seeing the Source of the Nile.

**Updates:** Working as a Business Development Assistant. I plan to further my studies and have a great zeal for it.



## Catherine Nuwatuha

**Impact:** I got to learn more about the feeding programs in schools and taught in a classroom for the first time. Participating in the program made me explore the communities of Kamuli and it is where I did my special project work for my 4th year.

**Favorite Memory:** The Jinja Nile experience.

**Updates:** I am an Agricultural Extension Officer in Sheema District Local Government and Director at Khamisa Foods Uganda.



## Julius Mugambe

**Impact:** Through my participation, I got my final year project with Prof. Donald.

**Favorite Memory:** Teaching sessions in Namasagali.

**Updates:** Quantitative genetics. I co-founded an organization that focuses on mentoring young boys.

## Paul Mugisha

**Impact:** I learned how to be a team player, and how to work with people of different cultures. I also improved my leadership abilities.

**Favorite Memory:** The Kasubi Idol

**Updates:** Private business. I own a company that promotes organic farming by providing farmers with organic farm inputs that are alternatives to synthetic chemical inputs. I met my wife during the service learning program.



## Agaba Racheal Prossy

**Impact:** I learned quite a number of skills, and these include Powerpoint presentation skills, interpersonal communication skills, agronomic practices, agroforestry, and grain storage.

**Favorite Memory:** Setting up school gardens at Namasagali Staff Children's Primary School. Having to start from land preparation through seeing the vegetables grown and harvested was a one-of-a-kind experience.

**Updates:** I am currently an auditor for private Organic and Sustainable Agricultural Standards such as EU regulation, National Organic Program, and CAFE practices. I carry out inspections and certification activities for both farm and supply chain actors who wish to trade their produce which was certified using these standards. I plan to start an M.Sc. in climate change and development at Makerere University.



## Geoffrey Ssekyanzi

**Impact:** Being a service learner helped me build my CV, social network through international connections, and open my opportunities to the job market.

**Favorite Memory:** School teaching, bi-national team projects and social events. I received the opportunity to co-teach for my first time and it was a great experience and a touching milestone to support children with limited resources in my country.

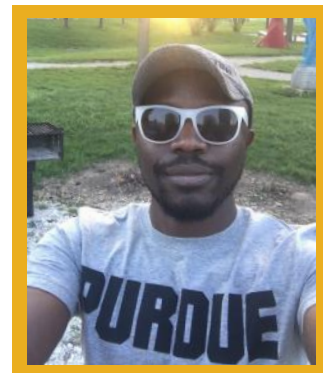
**Updates:** I am currently pursuing my master's degree in Agricultural Engineering in Korea. I am employed in the Rakai District's local government as the District Agricultural Engineer in Uganda. I hope to continue building career and I plan to pursue my PhD in the time to come. I am very grateful to ISU-UP, CSRL for opening up my future.

## Mike Sserunjogi

**Impact:** Working in the Kamuli community paved the way for my passion in global food security and a direct path to graduate school in USA.

**Favorite Memory:** Working with school kids on our binational team projects.

**Updates:** PhD Candidate, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, Purdue University. Completed my master's degree at ISU's department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering.



## Joshua Twatunga

**Impact:** Service learning offers hands-on experience and through this I was able to interact with farmers by offering practical solutions and further engagement through follow ups. It was a total mindset change for me because I learned that I had to engage with illiterate farmers in the hard to reach areas and help them improve their crop yields in order for them to have sustainable lives.

**Favorite Memory:** Establishing nursery beds.

**Updates:** I am a Ranch Manager.



# 2016

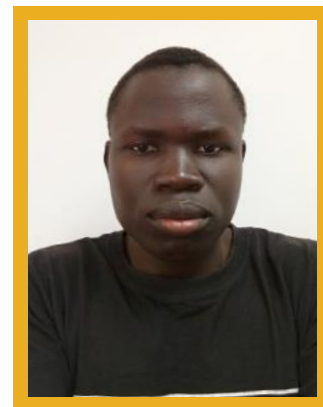


## Joshua Abooki Akenda

**Impact:** I met new people and learned about the American culture, had a lot of hands-on experiences and improved my analytical and problem-solving abilities.

**Favorite Memory:** Making potato mounds with ISU students and faculty really humbled me; the selflessness and humanity from others that I witnessed was life changing.

**Updates:** I work with the Finnish Refugee Council (FRC) as the Livelihoods officer for Kikuube District. I train refugees and nationals with good agricultural practices and climate smart activities to help them rebuild their lives. I have a blooming career in agriculture and sustainable livelihoods, and am also growing crops (groundnuts, maize and vegetables).



## Patricia Akol

**Impact:** Personal and interpersonal development, leadership and communication skills.

**Favorite Memory:** Bi-national projects whereby Makerere University students worked with students from Iowa State University to achieve a common goal, hence facilitating cultural understanding.

**Updates:** Sales agronomist at Syova Seeds Uganda Ltd, formerly known as East African seeds. I obtained my position at Syova Seeds Uganda Ltd due to the experience I had acquired from service learning, particularly being able to work with smallholder farmers, exercising leadership, authority and influence, and handling challenges and change.

## Esther Achadu Asimo

**Impact:** The participation helped me to learn to think beyond the box and developed my interest in community development.

**Favorite Memory:** Working with the young farmers club members in the garden.

**Updates:** I am currently working with Iowa State University-Uganda Program as an education program specialist. I am also enrolled in a Master of Science in Agriculture Education at Iowa State University and am in my second year.



## Claudia Fenia

**Impact:** I learned postharvest handling, especially drying produce on tarps and drying grains such as maize and beans below 13°C to avoid heat-generation causing molds. I learned that hermetic storage in jerricans is less costly for rural households. All these reduce waste and maintain good quality grains providing higher market prices. I learned good record keeping and reporting skills that I am currently practicing at my job. Cultural diversity helped me gain confidence in public relations and human resource management as a leader in my company.

**Favorite Memory:** 4th of July celebration when we showcased culture, talent, and food.

**Updates:** Managing Director of Given Agro Solutions. I also train others in conservation agriculture and mindset changes, write books about mindset traps, and am a baker (cakes and pastries).





## Isabirye Hamidu

**Impact:** Service Learning hands on activities made theoretical agriculture concepts easier to understand.

**Favorite Memory:** 4th July, USA Independence Day and its celebration.

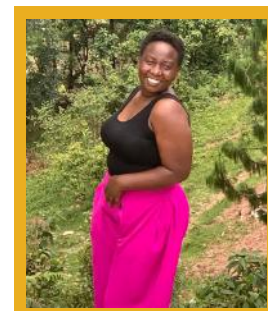
**Updates:** I run a private company that provides agro-inputs and extension services. Service Learning is good program and provides adequate training skills to interns. If possible, I think it should be scaled up to other universities in Uganda.

## Gloria Ishimwe

**Impact:** I was able to learn on how to serve the community selflessly. I learned about various extension services that I can give to a community, and I learned how to dig.

**Favorite Memory:** The Independence Day where all of us cooked different foods.

**Updates:** I am currently a regional coffee extension officer in Mityana district and knowledge obtained has been used to train farmers on how to sustainably produce coffee to improve standards of living. I have been able to finish my Master degree in Agricultural and Applied Economics. I completed a course in agricultural extension services that was funded by Government of Hungary.



## Immaculate Kabejja

**Impact:** It was such a great opportunity in that it exposed me to the different practical field activities and then meeting new people was awesome.

**Favorite Memory:** The cultural day at the main house in Kamuli.

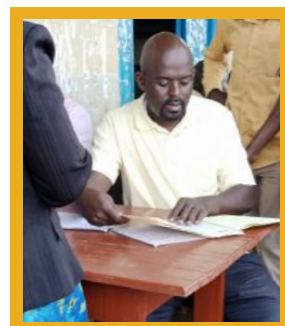
**Updates:** I am a manager at an enterprise.

## Elias Kabaije

**Impact:** It provided an opportunity to interact and learn from distinguished and renowned faculty motivating me to advance in an academic Journey.

**Favorite Memory:** Kasubi Idol

**Updates:** I am an Agriculture Officer working with Bushenyi District Local Government. Service learning faculty from Makerere University have supported me in receiving an Ireland Fellows Programme scholarship in 2024. I am now completing an MSc in Development Practice at Trinity College Dublin.



## Denis Byenkya Kiiza

**Impact:** I was able to change the general perspective of how to handle situations and knowing when to react and when not to. The general idea of knowing that humanity prevails first, no matter who we are and where we come from. The idea of supporting relentlessly communities that are in need with the sole aim of impacting livelihoods.

**Favorite Memory:** Hands on experience school gardening with the pupils of the schools where we worked. This will surely forever remains as a mark in my life and for that of the pupils.

**Updates:** I run a company called DEKIB Agrisolutions Development Group, which deals in supporting farming communities to boost farm productivity, incomes and enhance food security. I was able to start a company that is impacting livelihoods and although it is still at a small scale, we hope to expand with time and as soon as possible.

# Bridget Imaculate Namuwonge

**Impact:** I was exposed to a range of agricultural practices through the school gardening program and the youth entrepreneurship projects. These gave me a true insight of what we learned in school because I had little field exposure.

**Favorite Memory:** The interview day taught me a lesson I will never forget. I found myself figuring out who to pair with to complete the task on time, asking them questions, and then doing it perfectly well. This experience taught me to always team up with people with different resources in case something new comes your way and then you are able to solve every problem.

**Updates:** I run a commercial mixed farm working with meat type birds (broilers) as well as piggery. I am a passionate agri-prenuer. If there are any resourceful individuals will to share innovations or ideas in the same field, please keep me posted. Thank you!



## Erick Okodi

**Impact:** Service learning trained me to be a self-driven hard-working person who can work under any circumstance and environment. Time keeping, team work, social networking, to mention but a few, are among the life's key aspects which I learned through service learning.

**Favorite Memory:** A trip to the Source of the Nile, 2016!

**Updates:** I am a sole proprietor of a small-scale business which basically deals in paper core supplies, especially to plastic manufacturing factories. I also do agribusiness/farm produce supplies (majorly grains). I enrolled for a MSc course at Makerere University-Kampala and am currently fully done with the coursework and my degree program is only pending research.

# Hannah Schlueter

**Impact:** When I came home from Uganda, I remember realizing how incredibly lucky I was to be pursuing an education. I met so many pupils, especially girls, who loved school and wanted to learn, but because of finances or other situations, often had to stay home and help their families. It made me want to work harder and truly made me appreciate the opportunities I had and continue to have. I also learned how small our world truly is! The people I met in Uganda were so similar to me — we loved to play games, to dance, to learn. Even if we didn't speak the same language all the time, at our cores we were more similar than we were different.

**Favorite Memory:** So many! But what stands out is singing songs with all of the kids at the primary schools and going out to the apiary to harvest honey!

**Updates:** Digital Communications Specialist at University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. I received my MSc in Food and Rural Development Research in 2019 from Newcastle University, with my thesis focusing on land tenure, food security, and gender in Kamuli, Uganda. I was so fortunate to stay at the ISU-UP MRTC facility while conducting my research!



# Andrew Waaswa

**Impact:** Participating in the service learning program broadened my local and international network, which has opened huge doors since then.

**Favorite Memory:** Working on a bi-national project is my biggest memory and the fun we had with my group members on the day of our project presentation

**Updates:** I serve as an Agriculture Extension Educator with the University of Nevada, Reno Cooperative Extension, representing Churchill County. I obtained my M.Sc. in agricultural extension in Kenya and just graduated with a doctorate in Agricultural and Extension Education with a minor in Crop Science from North Carolina State University.



# 2017

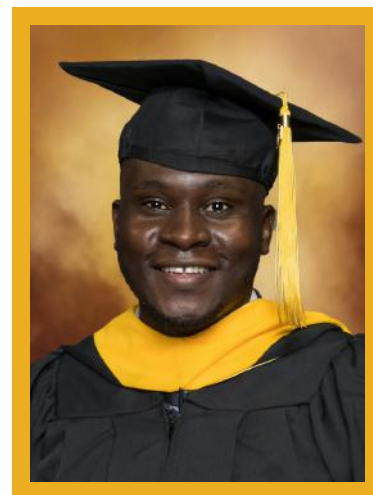


## Francis Akitwine

**Impact:** It was a transformative experience that profoundly impacted my life. Spending 10 weeks in Kamuli, I was struck by the contrast between the resilience of the community and the harsh realities of poverty. Working alongside the ISU students, the pupils in the schools, and teachers especially in the school gardens, I witnessed the power of collective effort. The experience not only deepened my understanding of food insecurity and environmental stewardship but also instilled in me a sense of empathy, humility, and global citizenship.

**Favorite Memory:** The Kasubi Idol.

**Updates:** I am currently a PhD candidate (In Soil Science with an emphasis on Morphology and Genesis) at Iowa State University. As I continue on my academic journey, I am conducting my research in the Kamuli area. I am focusing on how we can integrate pedology and the indigenous soil knowledge into soil mapping in the Kamuli area.



## Natalie Bouchama

**Impact:** Having been a service learner in Uganda it confirmed my commitment to international development, led me to Peace Corps Service and continues to impact my career choice.

**Favorite Memory:** There is one student who will always stay with me from Namasagali Primary school. She was very quiet, very shy, but the most kind and compassionate person. I think about her often, and wonder how she is doing. She will always hold a special place in my heart. I hope one day I can return to Kamuli and see her.

**Updates:** Recruiter for USAID/OTI. I have had the opportunity to serve as a youth development specialist in Morocco for the United States Peace Corps. I went on to work for the United States Agency for International Development Office of Transition Initiatives as a Recruiter.



## Fazhir Kayondo

**Impact:** I learnt how to convert my theoretical knowledge to practical solutions that impact society. The time I spent with ISU-UP built lasting memories.

**Favorite Memory:** Visit to the Nile River.

**Updates:** Pursuing my Ph.D. at Iowa State University in Animal Science.



## John Collins Makanga

**Impact:** I learned that a life lived for others is a worthy one. I learned working well with people from different spheres of life. I also honed my skills in research.

**Favorite Memory:** The 4th of July outing. I really enjoyed it.

**Updates:** Graduate student at Makerere University. After the service learning program and graduating from Makerere University, I rented people's dormant land in the outskirts of Kampala. I established vegetables like collard greens for commercial purposes and my income was with the help of the knowledge I gained from the service learning program. This sustained me for some good time.





## David Derrick Mubiru



**Impact:** I became more resilient to various perspectives of life, such as embracing the spirit of hardwork, Ubuntu, determination, and focus to achieving and accomplishing life tasks. I now generally view failure as the alternative to great success.

**Favorite Memory:** I enjoyed the school gardening and teaching experience.

**Updates:** I'm currently finalizing my M.Sc. in Agroecology and Plant Health from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. I was able to rise from a very limited background and appreciate my single mother who raised me. I learned hard work, interpersonal skills among others, through the program, and by the grace of God, I've been able to support my siblings through school. I also built, a decent accommodation

for my mum, which now can be regarded as a home. Personally, I now feel that I have a sense of belonging, which has always been a lifelong dream. With my colleagues, we started a small communitybased organization, Falsam-Agroecology in Central Uganda, Mukono, Buikwe districts, to try and tackle the huge agricultural extension gap. We have been training coffee and cocoa farmers on basic agronomy, providing organic farming tips. Through small funding we received, some farm implements and demo farmer plots were procured. I personally believe that sustainably transforming our communities positively can be a springboard to massive success, happier communities, poverty eradication, and economic transformation. Regardless of the various ups and downs, the world can always be a better place. Thank you!

## Herbert Mukembo

**Impact:** The field trips to farms, school gardens, impact to my hands-on skills especially in the bi-national project of agroforestry.

**Favorite Memory:** The team building sessions with both the Iowa and Makerere University team.

**Updates:** Research in coffee. In my last five years, I have managed to certify over 30,000 MTs of coffee in the Rainforest Alliance certificate and the coffee has been exported globally.



## Jalia Nalubaale

**Impact:** I gained a much better understanding of life and the privileges I have.

**Favorite Memory:** Working with school children and visiting the United States.

**Updates:** Banker.

## Miriam Namata

**Impact:** It deepened my understanding of the challenges rural communities face, particularly in agriculture, education, and health. I learned to work effectively in a cross cultural environment, building friendships and exchanging knowledge as we lived and worked closely together. This nurtured a sense of humility and strengthened my commitment to work in rural development.

**Favorite Memory:** One of my favorite service learning memories is helping to teach pupils at Namasagali Primary School.

**Updates:** I am currently working as a Community Innovations Specialist at Iowa State University Uganda Program, where I focus on implementing programs that support women to participate in income generating activities.



## Suuti Sandra Namulemo



**Impact:** It greatly contributed to building my confidence and ambitions. It prepared me for the employment world, especially where I had to use the experience from service learning to obtain my first and second jobs at Action Against Hunger and CARE International in Uganda NGOs in Kyangwali Refugee settlement). I was also able to travel to South Korea for an exchange learning program. The interactions with various communities and the schools were a great fit.

**Favorite Memory:** Being able to meet and share with new friends of different culture, with all contributing to learning as we served. The feeding program and the support we would give to schools to ensure they at least have a meal once or twice a week and the impact it had on the children. The supportive supervisors

and coordinators from both sides of Makerere and ISU-UP made service learning the best ever.

**Updates:** I am serving as the Marketing and Operations support consultant with Care International in Uganda in Kyangwali Refugee settlement. Learning about agriculture during the service learning program has enabled me start my personal agricultural farm at which I practice innovation in the field in horticultural production on a commercial scale—a skill I first learned in service learning with the demo plots at the schools.

## Joan Nalugemwa

**Impact:** My experiences gained from participation have strengthened my leadership and project management abilities, which I apply in my role as an Assistant Field Officer with Cafe Africa Uganda. I oversee agricultural initiatives as the Implementing Partner Lead for Louis Dreyfus Company Limited in Rwampara, Western Uganda, enhancing local farming practices and crop yields. I have led projects such as establishing an agroforestry tree nursery and implementing the Youth for Coffee and Agroforestry program at Cafe Africa Uganda, ensuring they align with our project objectives and yield measurable outcomes. These experiences equip me for future opportunities in project management and community development within the agricultural sector.

**Favorite Memory:** When our school garden grew collard greens, we started by creating a nursery bed and later transplanted them with proper spacing. Despite the scorching season and the challenge of cultivating tough soil, we managed to irrigate them. It was my very first time tasting something I had planted myself.

**Updates:** Assistant Field Officer, Café Africa Uganda. Additionally, I fostered strong relationships with stakeholders, adapted strategies during droughts to maintain productivity, and conducted training for youth farmers on sustainable practices.

## Shannon Rauter

**Impact:** My time in Uganda completely shifted my worldview and taught me so many valuable skills. I gained a lot of confidence in my ability to navigate different geographic areas and cultural contexts. I learned so much about agriculture and food production in a challenging environment, and started to understand how complex and interdisciplinary so many of our global issues are. On top of all those professional impacts, service learning was really fun! I had a blast and made some lifelong friendships.

**Favorite Memory:** It's impossible to pick a favorite service learning memory, but one of my favorites was the first time I tried speaking Lusoga to a group of women at a Nutrition Education Center (NEC). We had only learned a few key sentences, but using those to introduce myself in Lusoga when I walked into a room full of women who didn't speak English clearly meant a lot to them. They all laughed at my terrible accent but were very excited to keep trying to speak to me in their local language.



**Updates:** I work for Oregon State University Extension as the Master Gardener and Small Farms Program Coordinator for Clatsop County. Since graduating from Iowa State, I completed my master's degree in Plant Science at Utah State University and thru-hiked two long distance trails - the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail. This past year, I also spent a few months traveling in Asia (Japan, Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand) and couldn't help but think back on all of my travels in Uganda and other countries through Global Resource Systems major.

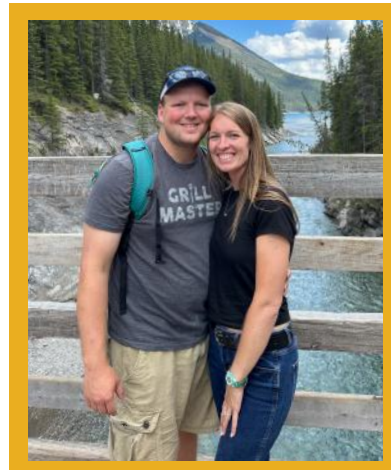


# Kate Stewart Sorum

**Impact:** My first experience in Uganda crushed my soul with how important education and hands-on learning is and the power it has to change a person's future. While there, we were also confronted with questions relating to first aid, personal health, and hygiene. I was fortunate to return for the semester long program and further pursue opportunities surrounding education and public health focusing on garden mapping, crop rotations, and treatment of jiggers. These were foundational experiences for me that lead to my first job out of college working for ISU Extension and Outreach bringing hands-on learning into our local schools. During my first year, I made partnerships that lead to joining our local ambulance team as an EMT and pursuing my paramedic degree. Later on, together with another team member, we integrated First Aid and CPR certification into ISU Extension's Babysitting curriculum done in the school during the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 cohorts. Personally, the Uganda Program opened doors into education and public health. It also showed that knowledge is more beneficial when shared to empower others.

**Favorite Memory:** One of my favorite service learning memories was doing a seed starting lesson with P6 Science with my teaching partner, Jalia!

**Updates:** I currently work as an EMT. In May I left ISU Extension and Outreach after 5 wonderful years as a K-12 Program Coordinator. I married my husband Clayton in June and moved to Lennox, South Dakota. I am currently serving my community as an EMT. I finished Paramedic school in May and am studying for my national certification.



# Alena Whitaker

**Impact:** It sounds cliché, but the experience broadened my horizons. I thought I knew everything there was to know about agriculture because I grew up on a farm in Iowa. I learned so much from fellow ISU students and Makerere University students, local farmers, and especially the primary and secondary school kids. I try to bring what I learned with me every day in my current role working with youth and farmers here in Iowa.

**Favorite Memory:** A benefit of teaching at Namasagali Primary School was eating lunch along the Nile River – which was a dream of mine come true! A specific lunch break happened near the end of my 6 weeks, and what followed was a fisherman. After tipping the fisherman 2,000 shillings (50 cents), I got my water bottle back.

**Updates:** I work with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach with the Iowa Learning Farms and Water Rocks! programs. I get to travel the state teaching K-12 Youth about water quality, conservation, and natural resources. Additionally, I work with farmers and landowners on the same topics through field days and weekly webinars.





# 2018



Since 2018, service learners have resided at the newly constructed ISU Mpirigiti Rural Training Center, with its 13+ acre campus.







## Stella Ahimbisibwe

**Impact:** My internship experience will always be a memorable one to me. My passion for community service was birthed by the engagement in different programs (school gardening, teaching, and feeding). I especially enjoyed working with the community mothers at the nutrition education centers. Working with the malnourished children and seeing how they progressed over time was a joy to me.

**Favorite Memory:** The tour trips I had with the students from Iowa State University. Generally all the fun activities we did as service learners in 2018 like celebrating our Uganda culture, where we cooked our different foods.

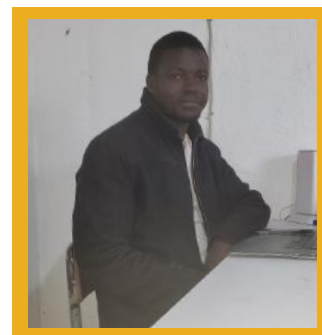
**Updates:** I am a full-time mother, and part time teach fertility awareness to women. I strongly believe that my service learning experience enabled me to win the student exchange scholarship program to Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in 2019. I had a life changing experience during the 6-months stay. Thank you CSRL for all the good work that you do. God bless.

## Mark Peranachy Eyangu

**Impact:** I was able to excel in my field attachment exams and my mind was transformed. I gained more knowledge in my field and life outside class.

**Favorite Memory:** Teaching pupils with my ISU teaching partner.

**Updates:** I am the Assistant Farm Manager in Dakabela Demonstration Farm.



## Emily Franciskato

**Impact:** Demonstrating a sustainable way we can use our privilege to learn cultural competence while promoting sustainable living that will feed communities was so humbling. Not a week goes by that I don't think about the kids I taught and where they are now! They're all adults! I learned to approach all my patient care with listening and empathy because of this program.

**Favorite Memory:** Exchanging letters with my favorite P6 student! I still have them all!

**Updates:** Reproductive Genetic Counselor at Vanderbilt University Medical Center

## Moses Kalyango

**Impact:** My participation was transformative in my personal and professional growth. It provided me with hands-on experience in sustainable agricultural practices and a deeper understanding of community development. The exposure to diverse perspectives and collaborative work strengthened my problem-solving skills and adaptability. Additionally, the opportunity to intern at ISU in the USA broadened my global outlook, deepened my technical expertise, and enhanced my network within the agricultural and academic sectors. This experience became a key stepping stone in shaping my career trajectory and leadership in innovative agricultural systems.

**Favorite Memory:** Climbing Kagulu Hill/Rock

**Updates:** Manager, Operations - Jazi Agroprocessing Solutions LTD and pursuing a Master's Degree. During my master's, participating in the Erasmus+ exchange program in Turkey in 2023 was a significant and enriching experience. The program enhanced my intercultural communication skills as I collaborated with students and professionals from various backgrounds. This exposure not only strengthened my research capabilities but also helped me build a valuable international network, which will be instrumental in my future career in smart agricultural systems and bioprocessing.



## Agnes Kampire

**Impact:** It proved that through team work we can change a village.

**Favorite Memory:** Touring the River Nile

**Updates:** Extension officer at Plant Village Uganda. Working on a master's degree in climate change at Makerere University.



## George Kasangaki

**Impact:** My case study on grain amaranth threshing resulted into funding of my final year project by ISU-UP which I wouldn't have been able to afford if I hadn't received support from the program.

**Favorite Memory:** Binational projects.

**Updates:** Currently working with UPDF (Uganda Peoples' Defense Forces), Department of Production, (Assistant Farm Manager Kabamba Army Farm). After university I completed a basic military training course to continue with service learning across the country.



## Elizabeth Nabbowa

**Impact:** I was able to put what I learned theoretically into practice. I attained social skills and learned ideas on how to develop a project and run it until it creates an impact.

**Favorite Memory:** It was the moment we got to showcase our other talents apart, from the academics side of us. It was what was referred to as the Kasubi Idol or Mpirigiti Idol.

**Updates:** I'm working for a construction company.



## Grace Nabulo

**Impact:** The service learning program changed my way on how I look at things that happen in the world to become more curious about my external environment. Growing up, I never realized how serious malnutrition was until I joined the service learning program. I thought this only happened in areas that were previously affected by war like the Karamoja region only to be shocked by the rates I witnessed in Kamuli and learning how to appreciate cultural differences and learn to work with people which has helped me to date.

**Favorite Memory:** The Mpirigiti Idol day! How everyone participated freely - with happiness all over.

**Updates:** Currently an operations analyst.



## Mika Rugarama Muhindo

**Impact:** Leverage my expertise in agronomy, field management and ensuring economic empowerment for farming communities through innovative strategies.

**Favorite Memory:** Working at nutrition education centres with pregnant mothers and their children while teaching them about balanced diet and encouraging them to plant vegetables. I also enjoyed the evening moments at Mpirigiti training center with various games.

**Updates:** I am working as a crop agronomist/head of agricultural market support of coffee farmers at Kyagalanyi Coffee Company Limited. Expertise from being a service learner has helped me to form an organization in Rwenzori, called "Glorious Foundation Kasese". It focuses on helping out young mothers, empowering the youth, providing social support, creating awareness on sickle cell anemia, and training school-going female children on making reusable sanitary pads.

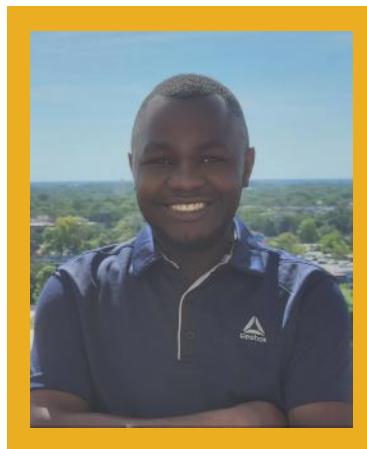


# Reagan Rosales Mulungi Mwenyi

**Impact:** Participating in the service-learning program introduced me to social justice issues in agriculture, understanding the role of agricultural education and extension in curbing food, income, and nutritional security. Prior to service-learning in Kamuli, I had learned about agriculture as a tool for community development, but participating in the summer internship program helped me see agriculture education and extension first-hand, and work with a team of diverse students (Makerere and ISU) on developing sustainable solutions to problems. Participating in the program helped me realize that even small actions can make a big impact if done with intentionality. The service-learning program isn't just about identifying problems, but also working in binational teams and with the community to solve problems.

**Favorite Memory:** The favorite memory that comes to mind is when we organized "Mpirigiti Idol" on the 4th of July as the first cohort in the summer at the new training center. During one of the fun skits, we (Naluoli team) showcased the differences in accents (i.e., Ugandan students speaking English (Uglish) and American students speaking words in local Ugandan languages.) It was a learning opportunity that difference in accents can also be a product of being bi- or multi-lingual.

**Updates:** I'm doing my M.S. in Student Affairs at Missouri State University.



# Annet Desire Ssemmanda

**Impact:** I met very many amazing people.

**Favorite Memory:** Life at the new compound was an exciting experience.

**Updates:** I have just completed my master's degree looking to start my career. I graduated with a master's degree in Food Science and Technology.





# 2019





# Porito Abomugisha

**Impact:** I acquired comprehensive practical training in my learning experience, as well as exposure to social-cultural learning.

**Favorite Memory:** The pairing of ISU and MAK students during the classroom teaching assistance process.

**Updates:** Technical Field Supervisor Uganda at EAST-WEST SEED INTERNATIONAL (a global hybrid vegetable seed company). The service learning programme has interested different international agencies/organizations.



# Mike Bainomugisha

**Impact:** The program gave me many opportunities to explore and further learn. For example, I was given a chance to participate in 2019 exchange program to Iowa State University where I interacted with many faculty, participated in projects at ISU Extension Outreach Farm, Food and Enterprise Development, and obtained knowledge how to startup and run an enterprise.

**Favorite Memory:** Travel experience to Iowa State University

**Updates:** Customer service Agent at DXB airport. From the experience I obtained from poultry enterprises at ISU-UP, I managed to start up a poultry project of about 2000 broiler chicken which I operated for 2 years.



# Namagala Monica Kasemire

**Impact:** Participating in the service learning program exposed me to several farming practices, working in a diverse community and contributed to my good academic performance. The service learning program also built my interpersonal skills and other soft skills.

**Favorite Memory:** The day we visited a prominent cocoa farmer will always be a celebration in my life, since I had picked up an interest in growing cocoa, but had never seen it before. Since then, my passion for cocoa growing has kept growing and I have inspired and trained some people to grow cocoa.

**Updates:** I am currently self employed dealing in brooding chicks.



# Liindah Proscovia Kasiri

**Impact:** Being a student of agriculture and rural innovations at Makerere University, through the service learning program, I got a chance to interact directly with the community through ISU -UP. This broadened my understanding about how to implement or apply what I studied in classes to the field.

**Favorite Memory:** Interacting with people from different backgrounds and cultures.

**Updates:** I am now working with ISU-UP as the school lunch and field stores specialist, and also coordinate the young mothers' skilling project.



## Isaac Kasoro

**Impact:** I gained knowledge and experience in working with the youth and less privileged persons in the Kamuli communities.

**Favorite Memory:** School debates.

**Updates:** I am a co-founder of a breeding company, Seminate Agri Solutions Ltd, and graduate student at Makerere University. I have impacted lives of livestock farmers in my community through artificial insemination service and equipment delivery. Currently I am working on extending the shelf-life of pig semen.



## Margret Kiiza

**Impact:** Working with children enabled me to pursue a career as a field worker supporting children in rural areas to improve their numeracy and literacy skills. I also made friends from service learners who have supported my academic and career journey.

**Favorite Memory:** Visiting places like the source of the Nile, Kagulu hill, Uganda equator and a game park.

**Updates:** I'm a field worker supporting children in rural areas of Busoga region to improve their numeracy and literacy skills.



## Phiona Kisaakye

**Impact:** The participation helped me boost my confidence since it involved school teaching and presentations. I was able to overcome my fear of public speaking, which has been a great skill in my career. I was able to obtain a managerial position because of this and I thank service learning for that.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite part was the school children, getting to bond with them and sharing laughter with them made me smile at all times because it made me my heart full.

**Updates:** I am currently head IT Operations at GDExperts and I manage all MTN products. After getting my degree I pursued another career in IT where I have become a manager.



## Brian Male

**Impact:** It broadened my experience in dealing with people from various cultures and ways of life and I certainly made friends some of whom I still talk to even today.

**Favorite Memory:** The "warm and fuzzy night" which was a very emotional day to remember. It was crowned by the emotional morning when the US team was departing.

**Updates:** Currently serving in the financial sector (DFCU bank) as a compliance officer. Enrolled for a solid professional course (ACCA) and am looking forward to a master's degree in a short time from now.



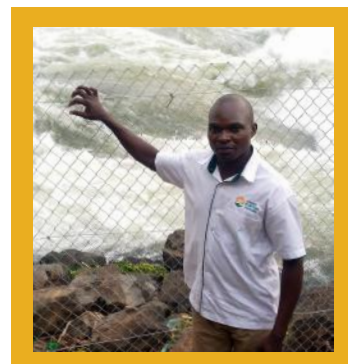


## Emma Masaba

**Impact:** My participation introduced me to new agricultural farming experiences that are hands on and provided new experiences with students from different disciplines and places around the world, but sharing a common goal. I also gained experience in team building and collaboration to achieve assigned tasks, streamlining processes for improved efficiency, and breaking down major goals into small achievable milestones.

**Favorite Memory:** Binational team project.

**Updates:** Program officer at Trees For The Future-Uganda.



## Grace Namatovu

**Impact:** I was able to appreciate the different backgrounds and perspectives of other people I interacted with. This enabled me to be able to blend in very many people with differences and ideas different from mine and appreciate each individual.

**Favorite Memory:** School teaching

**Updates:** Auditor. I have been able to complete my ACCA exams and now am a whole affiliate.



## Richard Ssekamatte Ssebuliba

**Impact:** It made me learn more about vegetables and vegetable production especially the school gardening plots in Namasagali Primary school. I have carried on that knowledge to the demonstration plots that serve as learning points by farmers at my current workplace with East West Seed International.

**Favorite Memory:** Working with pupils in the school gardens.

**Updates:** Sales Promoter (Central Uganda; Greater Masaka Region) at East West Seed International.



## Patrick Ssekidde

**Impact:** As an agricultural engineer I designed and installed and repaired several micro scale irrigation system and also participation in farmers field days where we trained farmers on the post harvest handling technologies.

**Favorite Memory:** The tour to western Uganda.

**Updates:** Irrigation Engineer. I would like to start a company which deals in agro-processing, adding value to the Agricultural products and minimizing losses after harvest.

## Benjamin Wairindi

**Impact:** I found my career niche through this program, realized my passion in development work through working with people and communities towards a common social justice goal.

**Favorite Memory:** Prepping ingredients for the porridge at the hall.

**Updates:** Program Associate with the World Food Programme handling resilience and livelihoods. Graduating in November with a Master's in Sustainability from the University of Edinburgh courtesy of networks built through the service learning program.



# 2020 & 2021



During the COVID-19 Pandemic and travel restrictions, service learning was paused. Although the times were difficult, the ISU-Uganda Program continued with its activities assisting the Kamuli communities, including improving school infrastructure during school closings. ISU-UP also shared weekly lessons and homework with school children at centralized locations in villages.







New classroom block at Nakanyoni Primary School





# 2022





## Anthony Ahairwe

**Impact:** My time as a service learner introduced me to field projects and work, which gave me a platform to work closely with farmers. It was something that I really wanted as part of my professional training, which I was able to achieve through service learning. The program also gave me a chance to help solve pressing problems experienced by Namasagali bee-keepers.

**Favorite Memory:** The tour at the Source of the Nile River and town of Jinja.

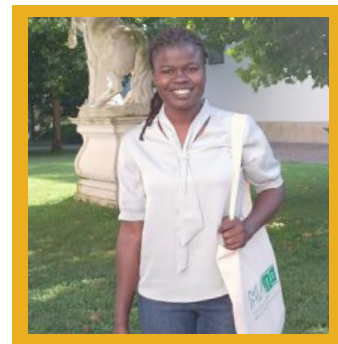
**Updates:** Currently working with Truenorth, a telecom company.

## Miriam Akun

**Impact:** From the program, I enjoyed being of help to other people. Engaging with the community and the school children gave me more confidence in myself as regards to interacting with people from diverse backgrounds.

**Favorite Memory:** My favourite memory was the library at the Mpirigiti Rural Training Center. I enjoy reading a lot and the library provided me with an unlimited supply of books.

**Updates:** Currently I am pursuing my master's degree in Europe with a scholarship.



## Dalton Ainebyona

**Impact:** I managed to obtain on-site training and experience with post-harvest handling machines, including their design criteria, mechanisms and how they are used.

**Favorite Memory:** Designing a horizontal flour and sugar mixing machine for Naluwoli hall.

**Updates:** Project manager for Eistein Rising Foundation at Busujja maize millers. Through receiving funding from ISU-UP for my final year project, I managed to complete my bachelor's degree in Agricultural Engineering.



## Benjamin Bingi

**Impact:** Through the service learning program, my interest in learning more about agronomy, particularly agroecology, grew.

**Favorite Memory:** All the dinners with service learners that were full of talks and fun.

**Updates:** I work with Kisozi Agro Chemicals and plan to apply to graduate school.



## Henry Canafax

**Impact:** Participating as a service learner in Uganda inspired my aspiration to travel to different parts of the world and continue to experience new things in different countries. My experience in Uganda gave me a new perspective on people, places, experiences, and problems in my life.

**Favorite Memory:** Playing soccer with people who lived in the neighborhood of MRTC after the work day ended.

**Updates:** Environmental health specialist for the Snohomish County Health Department, Washington.



## Sofia Fernandez

**Impact:** This program changed my life. I gained invaluable knowledge and field experience with excellent ISU-UP staff and Iowa State faculty. During this immersive experience and working closely with the community, I realized my passion for outreach and extension, especially within international agricultural development. A piece of my heart will forever be in Uganda.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memory was interacting closely with the Food and Nutrition Security Support Groups and getting to dance with the mothers. I appreciated hearing their stories and understanding better how their livelihoods can be improved. I formed meaningful relationships with community members, school children, my peers from ISU and Makerere, and the faculty and staff. Each person taught me something valuable, and I will always cherish these connections.

**Updates:** After graduating from Iowa State in 2023, I was given the opportunity to remain at ISU to complete my Master's of Science in Agricultural Education. I also had the privilege of helping design and lead the Next Generation Institute, an annual development workshop held in Kamuli for early NGO practitioners from all over the world. I am deeply grateful to be able to continue my work in Uganda and address the persistent challenges in sustainable rural livelihoods. I was also awarded the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Student Council Distinguished Service Award and featured in an Iowa PBS documentary, "Citizen Diplomacy", in recognition of my work in Uganda.



## Jacob Friedrich

**Impact:** My participation in the Iowa State University-Uganda Program fundamentally changed my career goals. I went into my baccalaureate major intending to major in horticulture so I could work in greenhouse production, and left with an additional degree program (Global Resource Systems) and a completely different career goal. The program made me realize my passion for food security. Through the mentorship of excellent staff and faculty in the program, I also came to the realization that academia was the best avenue for me to fight for global food insecurity.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memories from the program all center around the soccer pitch at the compound. Nothing made me feel like part of the community as much as playing soccer with the people from the neighborhood.

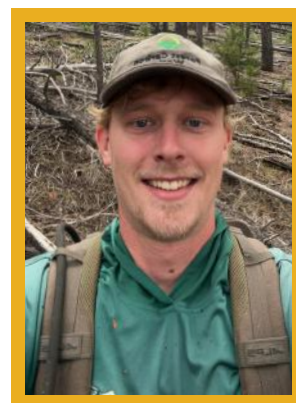
**Updates:** I am a master's student at the University of Tennessee Knoxville, studying vegetable physiology in the Department of Plant Sciences. I am excited to be working towards global food security in my current and future graduate programs and career!

## Logan Hemmen

**Impact:** Overall, service learning impacted me in many meaningful ways. In fact, it is one of the greatest experiences of my life. While being grateful for my situation and the things I've become used to in my life, service learning has probably had the largest impact. You don't realize how fortunate most people are in the US until you visit places where resources are limited.

**Favorite Memory:** Being a part of the agroforestry project and all the different experiences that came with it! Especially meeting Suubi who was a part of the agroforestry team, as well.

**Updates:** I am a forester for the U.S. Forest Service (USDA). If there is any way that I can somehow help or continue to be part of the ISU-UP programs in the future – Please let me know, I really would love to do so.



## Kule Kasimu

**Impact:** Service learning gave me knowledge, especially on the value addition of grain and leafy amaranth.

**Favorite Memory:** Visit to Namasagali district and Namasagali trading center.

**Updates:** Quality Control at Rainbow Dairy Uganda Limited.





## Annah Violet Kataike

**Impact:** I learned about all the benefits of food security in a community.

**Favorite Memory:** Climbing Kugulu Rock!

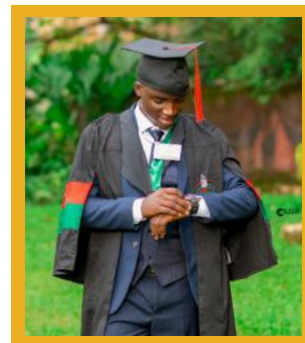
**Updates:** Currently serving as a volunteer with NaCCRI-NARO in Namulonge.

## Allan Katende

**Impact:** My participation in the school garden programme impacted me at 100% positively. I can gladly say that it introduced me to the practical experience of all we studied in classes such as crop husbandry, animal industry management, and many more. It also introduced other service learners and me to communities in the Busoga Kingdom. We worked with schools, rural homesteads and farms, which helped me to improve my confidence, especially during public speaking. I will forever be grateful for what Iowa State University-Uganda Program did for me during my time at Makerere University. Thank you, Iowa State University-Uganda Program!

**Favorite Memory:** Preparing and serving school children a breakfast porridge and 'nyoyo' lunch.

**Updates:** I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture and Rural Innovation and currently am involved in maize farming.



## Allan Kigozi

**Impact:** For starters, I got the chance for the first time ever to work in a cocoa garden. Concepts we learned, such as pruning the plant and ensuring sunlight penetration within the garden, are the same that I have put into practice as I establish seed beds and gardens for different crops. While in Kamuli, we would hold reflection sessions where we would share our experiences of the field activities. Such sessions impacted me greatly socially and my confidence level.

**Favorite Memory:** Kamuli is a learning environment. Everything at MRTC provides a chance to learn from it, and such lessons learned are lifelong memories.

**Updates:** I currently work with Brooks Agro Farm Limited as an Agronomist. Some of the practical knowledge I use are concepts learned while visiting different schools, gardens, and farm when I was a service learner.

## George Sande Kiiza

**Impact:** Personally, it was my first time staying in Eastern Uganda, specifically Kamuli district. I had the privilege to experience Busoga culture, learned a couple of Lusoga words even! I believe the training, experience, and mentorship I received from this internship was significant in getting the job I'm now working. I am forever grateful to ISU-UP.

**Favorite Memory:** Planting amaranth with school pupils at Nakanyonyi Primary School. It was time well spent.

**Updates:** Dairy Extension Officer at Pearl Dairy Farms Limited.





## Ben Okurut

**Impact:** I was able to improve my scores and actually had an A+ compared to a C+ that I had in my first field attachment. My participation as a service learner was crucial for me to secure a position as an assistant to undergraduates of the 2023 cohort of service learners. Additionally, I received mentorship from ISU-UP, ISU, & Makerere staff, especially in areas of leadership, academics and other social walks of life. The experiences I had while a service learner compelled me to continue on in graduate school so I can help communities from where I came or shall belong in the future.

**Favorite Memory:** Helping to train the community about kitchen gardening during exhibition week.

**Updates:** I am enrolled at Makerere University for my M.Sc. in Soil Science. At the end of service learning, I set up a livestock unit consisting of piggery and goats. I also introduced the nutritious composite flour in our breakfast.

## Christopher Okwi

**Impact:** I gained knowledge on how simple and small projects can transform people's lives.

**Favorite Memory:** Rock climbing in Kagulu Rock ("hill").

**Updates:** I currently volunteer. My dream is joining Iowa State University for my master studies.



## Gabriel Ssabika

**Impact:** Engaging with the rural community during my participation fueled my passion for community work and deepened my understanding of how education can be a powerful tool for change. This experience encouraged me to work harder in my education, with the goal of making meaningful contributions to society. It also sparked a research opportunity, as I was inspired to write a proposal assessing the adequacy of composite flour used in the school feeding program. This proposal eventually became my final year research project, which was supported and funded by ISU-UP. The successful completion of this project led to a peer-reviewed publication, further reinforcing the invaluable lessons I gained from the service-learning program.

**Favorite Memory:** My interaction with the mothers at the Nutrition Education Center (NEC) at Buguru.

**Updates:** I am running a micro-scale piggery project. I also am involved in reading and writing on several topics in academia, as well as helping other students with writing their research dissertations. I am also searching for opportunities in community work and further studies while waiting for my graduation. I have managed to complete my first degree (BSc. Food Science and Technology) from Makerere University.

## Fred Ssesanga

**Impact:** The service learning program broadened my understanding of agriculture and during the farm visits I learned about the key hole, or "kitchen" gardens.

**Favorite Memory:** Community farm visits and activities to help farmers while learning.

**Updates:** I am an agricultural engineer with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries in Uganda.



# Melia Stackis

**Impact:** The opportunity to serve and learn in Uganda opened my eyes to a new community. Being in a different environment taught me how to be patient and aware of my daily choices. The culture of connectedness, accompanied by daily music from the town, helped me enjoy the experience of being somewhere new. I truly felt welcomed in a place far away from my home.

**Favorite Memory:** Playing soccer or volleyball with local people and ISU-UP staff at the compound after a day's hard work was always the best time of the evening because we could all play together despite our different roles.

**Updates:** Currently, I'm working at a physical therapy clinic in my hometown, making art and getting to know my Iowa community better. Plans after graduation shifted for me due to a sports injury that required surgery, but I'm back on my feet and in the final interview process with my local city government in Dubuque, Iowa.





# 2023





## Wilson Akankwasa

**Impact:** Being part of the service learning program taught me how to work well with others and act professionally. I learned useful farming skills while also building strong relationships with different people. The experience made me more responsible and inspired me to keep helping communities improve their lives.

**Favorite Memory:** Participating in the "Day-in-life" activity at Nakanyonyi Primary School

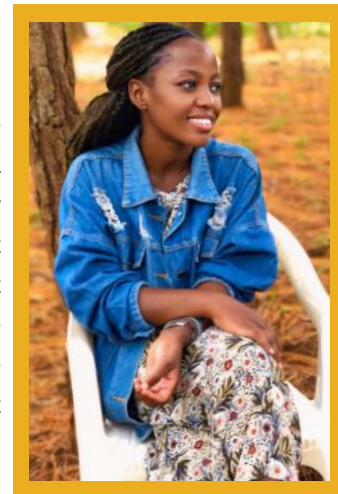
**Updates:** I am currently doing my research for the award of a Bachelor's degree in Food Science and Technology. I developed better communication and teamwork skills, especially due to the group presentations I participated in while in Kamuli District.

## Patricia Arinaitwe

**Impact:** Participating in school gardening equipped me with the relevant skills required for my profession. Participating in the WASH project created a personal fulfillment as my personal vision is to create meaningful change in the community around me. The program instilled in me the attribute of serving with a selfless heart, with an intention of uplifting the living standards of the community, and to foster sustainable development through enhancing the community's livelihoods in a sustainable manner. I learnt that for any project to be a success it requires deliberate effort, team work and serving with a pure heart motivated by love with the intention of making results of the project impactful to the community. The program gave me a platform to share my ideas with confidence and acknowledge the fact that my ideas are valid and worth to be listened to. This enhanced my self esteem. Interacting with students from different cultures and ethnicity enhanced my social skills in the long run building meaningful friendships based on mutual respect and understanding.

**Favorite Memory:** "Day in a life" - It was profound to visit a student who is enrolled in primary school, and experience how her day starts as she prepares for school. It made me realize how different and unique we are. It was an experience for me to learn from my student and also brought some flash backs from my childhood. Memories that were buried were awakened. It was really sentimental and yet a remarkable experience for me.

**Updates:** I develop content for the new, lower-secondary syllabus for learners to prepare them for what is required to be delivered in their exams. Specifically, I developed learning materials for the agriculture subject. I also run projects with YPARD Uganda fostering innovations in agriculture for the youth. I've completed my bachelor's degree and I'm awaiting for the official graduation that will be held in January, 2025. I have joined organizations where I have met like-minded individuals to promote innovations in agriculture especially for the youth.



## Grant Buresh

**Impact:** Being a part of the service learning program exposed me to a completely different side of the world that I had only heard about in the classroom. The cross-cultural nature of the program allows for a truly one-of-a-kind experience that shaped me to build an immense appreciation for agriculture, food security, nutrition programs, and livelihood-building. I also got the chance to meet a number of extremely kind, caring, and hardworking individuals from both Iowa State and Makerere University who I continue to speak with to this day.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service learning memory was playing Ugandan cards and volleyball with Iowa State and Makerere students, faculty, and local people from Kamuli.

**Updates:** I am currently in graduate school online, pursuing my Masters of Sustainability Leadership from Arizona State University. I am also a part-time intern with The City of Ames Electric Services Department working on sustainability and electric programs.



## Idania Carrillo

**Impact:** Uganda was my first study abroad experience, and it was truly unforgettable. I had the opportunity to meet many fascinating people and immerse myself in a new culture. Growing up in an immigrant household in the US gave me some insight into life in a rural area of a developing country, but witnessing it firsthand profoundly shaped my global perspective. I worked in the Water and Hygiene Sanitation Program at Kasozi Primary School, which ignited my passion for public health and clarified my career aspirations in epidemiology.

**Favorite Memory:** I have many unforgettable memories from my time, but what truly shaped my experience were the people who supported, guided, and answered all my questions. One of my favorite highlights was building close friendships during our game nights; those moments created lasting bonds that made my journey even more special.

**Updates:** I am a junior at Iowa State University studying Global Resource Systems and Microbiology. I am a GLOBE Ambassador, IAAS National Communications Director, Public Relations chair for UNIDAS, Secretary for MBN, and a Lab Assistant for Dr. Harris in Plant Pathology.



## Tyson Fleshner

**Impact:** Service learning impacted me by giving me a greater appreciation of cultures around the world. The program gave me a view of food insecurity and some methods to work against these problems that I will carry with me throughout my career and the rest of my life.

**Favorite Memory:** One of my favorite memories was interacting and playing soccer/football with the primary and secondary school students.

**Updates:** I am in my final year of undergraduate studies and I am looking at graduate school opportunities. During Summer 2024, I completed an international program in Rome with the FAO and an internship in Kosovo within the government's parliament with the committee for agriculture.

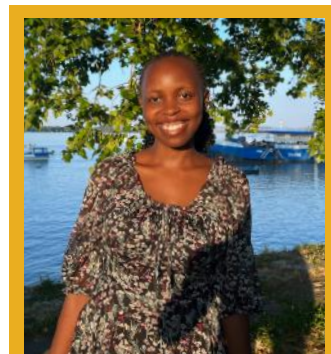


## Lynn Kemigisha

**Impact:** My experience in the service learning program shaped both my personal and professional interests. I learned that I don't have to be or do one thing and that I could have different goals and interests. For me, the program was about the people who I worked with, such as pupils in Nakanyonyi Primary School, the mothers at Naluwoli, and all the service learners. It contributed immensely to my growth and drive for social justice.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memory is in the Wintersteen Lounge at Mpirigiti Rural Training Center, where students stayed up late playing cards. It was fun and the cultural exchange was really exciting.

**Updates:** I currently work in reservations for Buffalo Safari Lodge. In addition, I work in advocacy for climate change and conservation with organizations like GenSea, GBYN and Agape Earth Coalition. I will complete a student mobility program in Serbia this year.







## Ismael Kisuule

**Impact:** My internship at Iowa State University Uganda Program (ISU-UP) significantly enhanced my personal and professional skills. I applied theoretical knowledge to real-world settings by working with rural farmers to address agricultural challenges like the Striga weed. Using participatory tools such as interviews and focus group discussions, I improved my problem-solving, research, and project identification abilities. The "Day in Life" activity, where I followed a rural primary school pupil deepened my understanding of the hardships faced by rural children, including long walks to fetch water and go to school. This experience highlighted the impact of domestic responsibilities on education, shaping my perspective on rural development. Overall, the internship prepared me for a career in agricultural extension and rural development.

**Favorite Memory:** The "Day In Life". The activity was meant to show us how a day of a rural African girl or boy is from the time of waking up in the morning, doing the domestic work, going to school, and doing school activities and heading back home.

**Updates:** I am in Israel participating in an apprenticeship program at Zarfarti Ibudim Ltd which is a horticultural farm. This year (2024) I represented Makerere University- CAES in the EU Blended Mobility Education project (2024-2026) entitled "African BlendEd Course: novel pedagogies boosting employability and socio-economic prosperity. The project is being implemented under a consortium of 6 Universities in Africa from Uganda, Nigeria, and Mozambique. As a team we developed a waste management solution for Zulinkx Agro Vet, which is a farm in Nigeria with 10,000 poultry birds and 1,300 pigs.

## Jess Kowalski

**Impact:** Participating as a service learner was my first time traveling abroad. There is so much that impacted me that it's hard to pick one, from opening my eyes from being immersed in another culture, to affirming that a life of service and working outside is my calling. I remember tender, joyful moments when the students taught me how to dance and sing. Being a service learner opened me to many new, enriching connections with a variety of people where listening and learning were powerful tools.

**Favorite Memory:** Oh, this is another hard one to pick! I would have to choose a day, when helping to teach at the primary schools, and some of my P5 students joined me outside during break and wanted to teach me to sing and dance with their favorite songs/moves. It was really neat to have them teach me something, and they were very patient and happy to share. There were many smiles and laughter.

**Updates:** Currently, I am a junior at ISU and a peer mentor for undergraduate students in the Global Resource Systems major. I also volunteer with Mustard Seed Community Farm and conduct bio-acoustic pollinator research. Over this past summer, I spent 2.5 weeks in Vietnam with the study abroad program "Global Resource Systems in Vietnam." This was an incredible experience and I found myself comparing aspects of Vietnam and Uganda agriculturally. I spent the summer in my hometown of Cleveland, Ohio, as an intern for the Summer Sprout Community Garden program through The Ohio State University Extension.



## Morgan Lang

**Impact:** The service-learning program provided me with growth in both personal and professional levels. I met incredible people, explored my interests, developed skills to work on a team, and learned about the Ugandan culture.

**Favorite Memory:** We left Kamuli just before my birthday. On the last day of teaching in the schools, my teaching partner told the pupils and they all sang to me several times. It was a moment I realized how much I was going to miss these people and place.

**Updates:** I am currently a junior majoring in Global Resource Systems and Ag and Rural Policy Studies. The ISU-Uganda program urged me to explore my interest in international agriculture even more. I completed a study abroad to Nepal over spring break and traveled to Kosovo during the summer to intern with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Development.

## Ronald Lubega

**Impact:** By knowing that the program has donors, I got to understand that there are individuals who are dedicated to making the theory of human development a reality. Such people have supported rural households of the Kamuli district through ISU-UP. From this I was advanced to that kind of human being who is willing to give back to the community (through service, finance and physical ways) for the common good.

**Favorite Memory:** Serving the 'nyoyo' meal to pupils during lunch.

**Updates:** I am in Israel pursuing a diploma in crop production alongside a year long paid internship. I have obtained a Makerere University faculty member to co-author the paper of the research I conducted in Kamuli while I was a service learner. It will be published soon.



## Ronald Lumbuye

**Impact:** The program helped me gain new appreciation for the value of community service and the power of collective efforts to drive positive change.

**Favorite Memory:** My first day in class at Naluwoli primary School. The welcoming nature of the teachers, students and the beautiful songs from the little children are all wonderful memories for a life time.

**Updates:** I am a growing supervisor at Royal Van Zanten Uganda. We produce high-quality flower cuttings (Chrysanthemums), which are cost effective for export. I managed to accomplish my final year project about post harvest handling of maize through ISU-UP. I engaged with the farming community and this greatly improved my communication skills.

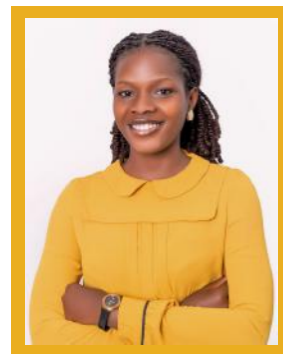


## Racheal Belinda Nagudi

**Impact:** Service learning taught me how important it is to appreciate farming in general as it is a major source of food. The smallest space can be utilized through creating keyhole gardens, urban farming in plastic and sackgardens, etc. I also learned that sustainability is key for any program and it should include a relationship where each benefits the other.

**Favorite Memory:** The "Day in A Life" of a school going child at Nakanyonyi Primary School. This was a great eye-opener and up to date I value each and every resource availed to me and now utilize it to the maximum.

**Updates:** I am currently doing research on the effect of pretreatment on product characteristics of dried eggplants. I am also the current vice chairperson Makerere Coffee Club where we appreciate Ugandan coffee and promote its consumption among students in the university. I participated in a youth leadership workshop by The Julius Nyerere Leadership Training Center (JNLC) in partnership with UNDP. As a research assistant, I conducted research on the safety of oils and deep fried street food. I exhibited at the All-nations Food festival on behalf of Nostalgic Coffee and Makerere University Food Scientists Association.



## Tendo Sidney Nakabugo

**Impact:** Being part of the service learning program opened my mind to what's possible when people from different cultures work together in a team. Often, we came up with unique solutions to problems due to the different perspectives. It greatly developed my skills as a team member.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memory is from the "Day in the Life" experience where we woke up early to join one of the pupils as they did morning chores before going to school. It gave me a very unique inside look and appreciation of what the students grapple with on every school day.

**Updates:** I participated in a two-month internship at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. I had the privilege of being selected as a Youth Representative to the World Food Forum 2024 organized by FAO. I am also the Youth Agroecological Representative for the Lake Victoria Crescent Region.





## Jacob Oketch

**Impact:** It changed my perspective of others and made me realize that at any time I can be of relevance to other people and extend a helping hand to those in need.

**Favorite Memory:** The "Day in the Life" was really amazing.

**Updates:** I returned to Kamuli as a student leader volunteer for the 2024 serving learning. I have successfully completed my degree program, Bachelor of Science in Agriculture at Makerere University and will graduate in January 2025. I served as a Makerere University intern at Iowa State University for two months, September and October, 2024.



## Kawola Peruth

**Impact:** I acquired a lot of skills whereby I can now do my own crop farming at my home.

**Favorite Memory:** Teaching primary five pupils.

**Updates:** Sales operator in poultry feed concentrate.

## Jocelyn Pocernich

**Impact:** ISU-UP is perhaps the most impactful thing I have ever participated in. I got to witness first hand how powerful coming together as a community can be. By the time we left Kamuli, I felt that we were truly a part of a community. Together we worked to spread education, empower individuals, and support sustainable agriculture.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service learning memory is from the goodbye ceremony at the primary school where I assisted in teaching. We got to have a school-wide soccer game with all the service learners versus the older pupils. Then when we said our goodbyes, the class I worked with sang for us, "You Are My Sunshine", a song they learned in class by reading a book. It was a sweet moment at the end of a journey.

**Updates:** I am a senior majoring in Horticulture, Environmental Studies, and International Agriculture at Iowa State. After graduation I plan to attend graduate school. My goal is that through my work I'm able to make a positive impact on people and the environment through sustainable agriculture. The fall after my summer service learning experience I was the 2023 recipient of the World Food Prize David Lambert Hunger Fighter Scholarship Recipient. In January of 2024 I traveled to India to continue my horticultural studies of international agriculture.



## Kira Rieck

**Impact:** My participation in the program allowed me to cherish life and be more grateful for opportunities in the United States. We have many opportunities and I valued helping to create opportunities for others.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service learning memory was being able to connect with other students from Uganda and learning their tribes' dances. These were inherited from their cultures and it was so cool to see and participate in the activities with them.

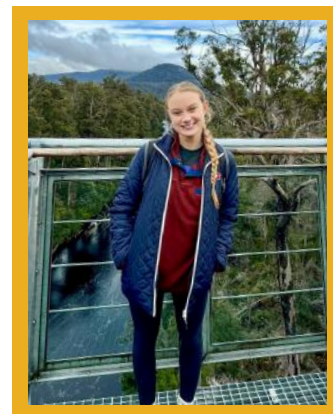
**Updates:** I am working at Bayer as a seed technician. I am overseeing shipping and international shipping. Seed is shipped to sites domestically and internationally for yield trials to be eventually advanced to commercial seed. I will be starting a master's degree in Data Science starting in January at the University of Pittsburgh. This is to advance my experience to create models to support the agricultural realm and increase chances to contribute to various roles within Bayer.

# Gracya Snowbarger

**Impact:** Being a service learner opened a lot of new opportunities for me. I built lasting relationships with students and faculty, which helped extend my network. After returning home, attending meetings, lectures, and banquets that highlight ISU-UP held a different meaning than before. I was able to connect with the program and genuinely understand the impact that Iowa State has in Uganda. I became more cautious of the life I live and the opportunities that are present around me. Being surrounded by such inspiring people changes the way you see the world. The professional, educational, and life skills I learned in Uganda will stick with me forever.

**Favorite Memory:** Spending time at Namasagali College while participating in the school lunch program was amazing. I loved being able to interact with students who were closer to my age. The potential and abilities of the students were beyond words. I found so much joy in knowing I was a small part of making resources and opportunities more available to them.

**Updates:** I am currently in my third year at Iowa State and I participated in a full semester, studying abroad in Tasmania, an island state in Australia!

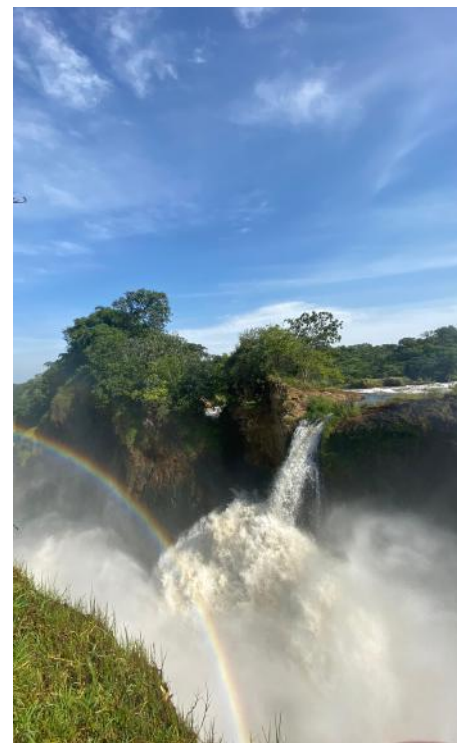


# Daniella Thuerauf

**Impact:** Being a part of the Service Learning Program in Uganda was a phenomenal way to be a part of a sustainable development project. I gained leadership skills, made new friends, and, most importantly, was able to be a part of a lasting and impactful project.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memory was during our visit to Murchison Falls National Park. We got out of the van to see a hyena, and when I realized how close it was to us, I instinctively put an ISU student in front of me. The other students said "it was a push", but I remember it differently!

**Updates:** I am a junior in Global Resource Systems, Environmental Science, and I just added a forestry minor, largely inspired by working on the agroforestry team in Uganda. I recently began my role as a Smart Energy Intern for the City of Ames. I am excited to continue my journey in sustainability!





# 2024

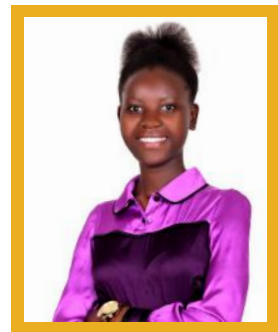


## Lilian Akello

**Impact:** It was a great learning opportunity for me, learning from pupils, farmers, and the Naluwoli women group.

**Favorite Memory:** Watering vegetables with the pupils in Kasozi Primary School gardens.

**Updates:** I'm a final year student pursuing a bachelor degree of agribusiness management at Makerere University. The improvements in the bee-keeping binational project were so impactful. I will never regret working with bees in Kamuli.



## Natasha Akora

**Impact:** Improved on my communication skills and team work skills. For me, work is not about energy, but a team. When working with people who have different opinions and objectives, by having a discussion with them, you end up with one common objective.

**Favorite Memory:** Carrying out gardening work together with the pupils and helping to teach them in class.

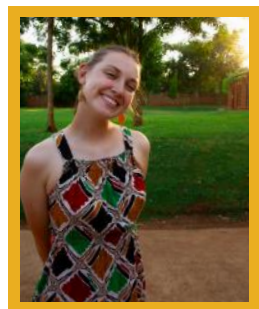
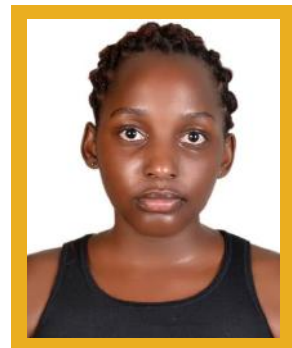
**Updates:** I am a student. I learned to develop a "business-oriented" mind, that is, using the least locally available materials to start and then develop a business and generate income.

## Cherise Alema

**Impact:** It has made me a more vibrant person on topics like climate change and global development, while increasing my ability to think critically. It has helped me to be able to spread my vision to greater heights of achievement and also greater environments.

**Favorite Memory:** The children - the children will always be my highlight.

**Updates:** I am a final year student at Makerere University in Water and Irrigation Engineering. I am glad to say that I am steadily progressing in the final year project implementation, which was one of the things I identified while in Kamuli and with ISU-UP at MRTC.



## Gillian Anderson

**Impact:** This program left a lasting impact on me and how I view the world. I am so much more aware of all that I have and how fortunate people are in high-income countries. I also learned a great deal about community-led development and how complex but important it is. I am grateful to have been a service learner and be a part of a program that is doing so much good.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memory is spending time with the pupils at Naluwoli Primary School. I spent most of our break time with them either talking or playing and I loved getting to spend time with them.

**Updates:** I graduated from ISU in December 2024 with a primary degree in Agriculture and Rural Policy Studies, a secondary degree in International Agriculture, and a minor in Learning and Leadership Sciences.

## Araphat Tamale Ddembe

**Impact:** I gained a hands on experience in agriculture and sustainability, improved on global understanding with deeper appreciation of America. I improved my teamwork skills and built long term partnerships with other service learners.

**Favorite Memory:** Farm visits.

**Updates:** I am waiting to travel for an agro-studies apprenticeship program. I also am processing papers to open up an agro-based company to offer extension and advisory services.



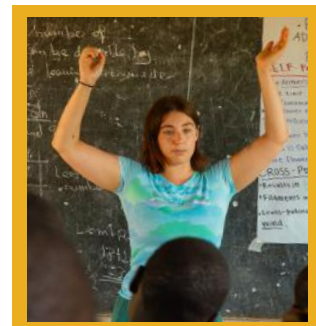


## Eden Grimes

**Impact:** My experience in Kamuli gave me a direction for the kind of research and career I wanted to pursue when I arrived back to the US. I met so many kind and committed community members in Kamuli who are dedicated to their community in many ways, and it inspired me to renew my commitment to my own community to improve the health and food security of my community here at home.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service-learning memory was our final ISU-UP staff vs. service learners soccer game, where a Makerere University student scored a goal only 1 minute after he got subbed in, after which we all danced to music in a big circle.

**Updates:** I am currently a research trainee in the College of Human Nutrition at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, completing a 4-month traineeship for a project between McGill, Global Affairs, and WorldVision. I intend to pursue a Master's in Public/Global Health after completing my bachelor's degree at Iowa State University, and I hope to return to Kamuli, Uganda.



## Soliana Janni

**Impact:** Participating in the Iowa State University-Uganda Program profoundly impacted me by expanding my understanding of global issues like food security and poverty. Working hands-on in the community, getting to assist in teaching, and working in a cross-cultural team to develop a project have given me invaluable insight into development work at the grassroots level. I'm also policy-focused in my major in global resource systems, and exploring how an NGO functions was essential for me to understand where I was to go career-wise clearly. But most importantly, I got to explore a culture different from my own and develop a global perspective and skills that will help me grow personally and professionally.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memory from my time in Uganda was this one day during recess when the students invited me into their circle and taught me how to dance and play pat-a-cake. It was such a fun and heartwarming moment, filled with laughter and just being in the moment with them. Those little interactions outside of the classroom meant the world to me, and it's a memory I go back to often.

**Updates:** Currently while at Iowa State University, I'm working as a communications intern for the Multicultural Student Affairs office. I'm also the vice president of the Uganda Alliance Club, where we sell baskets made by the Tusibila group in Kamuli Uganda and send the profits back to support their livelihoods. I'm also serving as the secretary for the International Association of Students in Agriculture and Related Sciences (IAAS).

## Juana Jones

**Impact:** This program has changed my life. It was a wonderful experience that helped me form life-long connections on the other side of the world and redefined for me how people find happiness.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service learning memory was close to the end. It was my last day to help teach, and as a reward for the class doing good on their exam, I taught the class how to play "heads up, seven up" and had the opportunity to play with them one last time.

**Updates:** I graduated from Iowa State University in August 2024 and recently obtained a position in the industry.



## Caroline Jane Kukiriza

**Impact:** I learned how to live with people of different cultures, and I improved my public speech skills.

**Favorite Memory:** Cultural outings and trips.

**Updates:** I am studying and serving in the 90th guild house of Makerere University.



## Julia Letsche

**Impact:** My participation impacted me in a variety of ways. Academically, I figured out the specific interest area I wanted to pursue with my degree at Iowa State and built on the knowledge I had learned in my first year. The experience in Uganda helped to push me outside of my comfort zone, helping me to grow as a person. Since leaving Uganda, I know that I came back a different person. I see life from a different perspective and am more driven in my studies to live a life of service and learning.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service learning memory happened while helping to teach at Nakanyonyi Primary School. Teaching was one of my favorite experiences. On my last day, I made my pupils fortune teller messages of inspiration. Later that week, I returned to my school and saw that many pupils were carrying them around in their uniforms and had figured out how to make more! This was inspirational because my small act of kindness was something these pupils were treasuring.

**Updates:** I am currently a sophomore at Iowa State continuing my education for a degree in Global Resource Systems and Agriculture and Rural Policy Studies with a minor in Spanish. I am the Vice President of IAAS (International Association of Students in Agriculture and Related Sciences) and the Social Media Chair for the Uganda Alliance. I am also involved in the Agriculture and Rural Policy Club, Letters of Love, Globe Ambassadors, and Kairos. I also work as a peer mentor for the Global Resource Systems program. I would like to share that since returning, I feel I have been able to have improved clarity over the life I would like to lead professionally and personally.



## Nicholus Lwere

**Impact:** I gained experience in working in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment, working with supervisors in a respectful and productive way.

**Favorite Memory:** The songs that we sang both in and outside classes at the schools.

**Updates:** Student in my junior year and I'm the class coordinator/representative. I have successfully completed my internship, and submitted the report and logbook.

## Prossy Mbwali

**Impact:** My participation taught me to appreciate what I have in life and what I have so attained. It also taught me that I can still impact people with the little that I have in terms of knowledge, love and gratitude. Service learning taught me that small impacts like creating gardens really helps in ending hunger and poverty.

**Favorite Memory:** Helping to teach children at Naluwoli Primary School.

**Updates:** I am now in year three for my BSc. Food Science and Technology at Makerere University.



## Precious Kelvin Mumbi

**Impact:** Exposed me to creative ways of ensuring that fresh vegetables are always available.

**Favorite Memory:** Climbing Kagulu Rock.

**Updates:** I am in my final year as a student at Makerere University.





## Isaac Mwebaza

**Impact:** It was an experience beyond a field attachment. Different from other places, service learning gives you opportunity to gain the practical skills and at the same times you impact very many lives in the community. It's amazing how the activities impact very many people, starting from the children to the youth to the adults. Seeing this impact has inspired my professional growth as an agriculturalist. It has turned me into a person oriented towards solving challenges within my community. To me, service learning was a jackpot. I acquired the skills I was supposed to learn and at the same time I felt like I was part of the team that made a difference in a community. I felt like I was engaged in something that counted, I mean something that was to add value to people. In conclusion, I can say service learning was a life changing opportunity.

**Favorite Memory:** Playing with the students at Namasagali Primary School while harvesting grain amaranth. The students decorated all the service learner's hair with flowers and they were so excited about how we were able to play along with them, while completing work. To me this was an opportunity to inspire the kids to stay in school and work very hard.

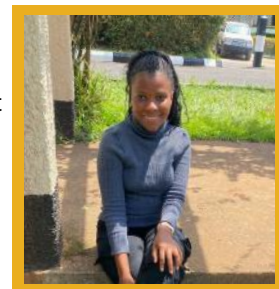
**Updates:** I am completing my bachelor's degree at Makerere University. From the knowledge I acquired in service learning about kitchen gardening, I have started a sack and verandah garden project in my home backyard. I can now fully utilize small space to be more food secure. I have taught my neighbors, who have also tapped into the project, and now are doing the same. Sharing my new learning is something that I consider as a big achievement, because this is the first step I have taken in changing my community.

## Mary Veneranda Nakibuuka

**Impact:** It helped me improve my communication skills with peers and mentors, and people I meet for the first time.

**Favorite Memory:** Visiting Busoga Palace.

**Updates:** Student at Makerere University.



## Vivian Nakiwala

**Impact:** I got to work on my social skills, and I learned new things by getting to practice practically what I was studying theoretically.

**Favorite Memory:** When we visited Lake Mburo National Park.

**Updates:** Third year student pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Food Science and Technology at Makerere University.

## Patricia Nanyanzi

**Impact:** I acquired a number of practical skills and knowledge that helped enhance my confidence in the field I am undertaking. I also got to an opportunity to live and work with people of a diverse culture.



## Bruno Obwora

**Impact:** It was a mind-opening experience as it enabled me to see things from a different perspective.

**Favorite Memory:** Playing soccer with local people.

**Updates:** I am a student at Makerere University. The service learning program with ISU-UP enabled me to complete my internship successfully.

## Andrew Pioquinto

**Impact:** Met the most hard working and accomplished people I have met in my entire life and has motivated me to pursue further projects involving food security.

**Favorite Memory:** Teaching P.5 mathematics.

**Updates:** I am in my senior year of B.S. industrial technology. Currently working with a hydroponic farming company on a project that converts shipping containers into hydroponic gardens that will allow vegetables to be grown almost anywhere.



## Samuel Rukundo

**Impact:** Improved my career growth and helped to identify global solutions to world challenges.

**Favorite Memory:** Teaching pupils about raising nurseries.

**Updates:** I am a student of agriculture who is enthusiastic about sustainable agriculture.



## Maddy Stevenson

**Impact:** Having experiences that face real-world problems has deepened my understanding of using my classroom knowledge to improve the lives of others through service.

**Favorite Memory:** Siting bee hives in the trees surrounding Namasagali College with the beekeeping club.

**Updates:** I am a senior at Iowa State University.



## Bonny Waiswa

**Impact:** Developed communication skills.

**Favorite Memory:** Farm visits.

**Updates:** I am doing research on breadfruit.





# 2018

## SEMESTER LONG



### FALL SEMESTER





## John Henrich

**Impact:** Even though the world shut down and plans had to be changed with the COVID-19 pandemic, the foundation ISU-UP was able to provide has been the basis of my professional goals and aspirations. Unique problem solving opportunities, lots of cross-cultural communication, and working alongside staff with the knowledge and drive towards positive change created an atmosphere of security and encouragement that I was lucky enough to take part in. I honestly believe that my participation helped me grow into who I am today, and will continue to frame who I am as I continue to grow.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service learning memory was Lusoga lessons with Mr. Paddy. His insights into local culture, as well as his thought about American culture were always a welcome companion to the language classes.

**Updates:** I'm a Grant Coordinator with the University of Pennsylvania's Department of Surgical Research. I'm currently taking classes with the University of Pennsylvania towards a Masters of Public Administration, with an concentration in International Affairs.

## Belinda Hoffman

**Impact:** Participating as a service-learner in the Semester Along the Nile was more impactful than I could have ever imagined. Upon returning home, it led me to change my major, informed my involvement in extracurricular activities, and ultimately my profession. I was drawn to community education and change at a local level after witnessing programs and participating in projects in Uganda.

**Favorite Memory:** As I reflect on the semester, I can't help but think of all the meals we shared together. From enjoying lunch by the Nile River to learning new recipes in the kitchen, those moments around food were rich with connection. One of my favorite memories was our Thanksgiving meal—what a delightful day! We cooked together, filled the evening with laughter, and shared cherished traditions. The entire day overflowed with joy!

**Updates:** Currently, I work as a nutrition educator with Iowa State University - Extension and Outreach. Our nutrition lessons are designed to help families with limited resources make healthy habits easier. During the learning experiences we review current nutrition recommendations, and practice cooking low-cost healthy recipes, meal planning, label reading and physical activity. In addition to teaching, I attend collaboration meetings and work alongside other community health advocates.

In addition to my professional life, I am active in an international ministry through our church. While I would love to continue to live and work overseas, this is a special way that my husband and I get to immerse ourselves in learning about different cultures and sharing ours with people in our community. We love the nations!! Last year, I was able to attend the Iowa Hunger Summit and connect with some fellow “Globies.” The picture attached (Alyssa Brown '20, Belinda Hoffman '22, and Sarah Swenson '24) captures 3 “generations” of Globies, SHOP presidents, and International Friendship Connection leaders. While we are each unique and life post-college looks very different for each of us, things that matter deeply to us provide the perfect platform for connection.





## Dalena Rogers

**Impact:** It taught me the importance of community-centered development work and how to transfer classroom knowledge to the real world with limited resources and capital.

**Favorite Memory:** I enjoyed working in the school gardens and interacting with the schoolchildren.

**Updates:** I completed a Master of Science degree in majors in Environmental Science and Horticulture.



## Benton Uddenberg

**Impact:** Service learning in Kamuli impacted me in personal and professional ways. While service learning allowed me to continue my growth and knowledge with agricultural production in a new setting, I also made great personal connections with community members who I still keep in touch with today! I was shocked to finally hear from a friend whom I had left all my contact information with in 2018, and he reached out to me just a few months ago. It has been great to catch up.

**Favorite Memory:** The chefs making the best rolex! They personally kept us full of nutrients to be able to do the work we conducted.

**Updates:** I just bought a small plot of my own to start production. I can't wait to get fruit in the ground! I also just finished a band/choir tour in Europe; it was a blessing to share music with other parts of the world.





# 2019

## SEMESTER LONG



## SPRING SEMESTER





## Inna Couri

**Impact:** My participation in the ISU-UP was hugely impactful! This experience shaped my worldview and deepened my understanding of how limited resources and extreme poverty affect the health of a community. In regards to my career path, my time in Uganda definitely influenced my decision to pursue primary care.

**Favorite Memory:** The ISU-UP family! I still cherish all of the relationships I made during my time there.

**Updates:** I am currently in my fourth and final year of medical school at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine. I am currently in the process of applying to family medicine residency!





# 2020

## SEMESTER LONG



### SPRING SEMESTER





## Calvin Dauner

**Impact:** The Uganda program changed my life forever. I went on to graduate college and volunteered for similar programs in Sierra Leone, West Africa until 2021. I volunteered at a hospital in Sierra Leone and grew food for pregnant women. I then started my own nonprofit in Sierra Leone, based on the knowledge I obtained in Uganda and Sierra Leone. Today, Growing The Grassroots is three years old, we train women in agriculture, and I could not imagine living a different life.

**Favorite Memory:** One day, I helped a youth group dig a trench for quicker irrigation when using a watering can. They were so appreciative and invited me to their house where I played with their children, and we ate fruit. It was the best birthday of my life.

**Updates:** Today I am the president and founder of Growing The Grassroots, an agricultural non profit. I am starting a business called Grassroots Travel, a travel agency bringing people to Sierra Leone for service work and vacation. Growing the Grassroots built the largest elementary school in Sierra Leone last year. We trained and certified 75 women in advanced agriculture practices over the last three years. In the best season our women had, they yielded 1640 kg/acre of peanuts and local average is just 550 kg/acre. Our methodology and teachings are effective!



## Grace Jakes

**Impact:** This experience profoundly impacted my understanding of sustainable agriculture, food security, and community outreach as a whole. It inspired me to see my career path of choice through a global lens, and gave me vision for future work that impacts smallholder farmers in a meaningful way. It also gave me a distinct appreciation of the Ugandan culture, as I still miss my time there, the community, and the delicious chapati we would eat by the Nile River.

**Favorite Memory:** I really appreciated the opportunity to engage with farmers and understand how they benefited from and accessed veterinary care. I distinctly remembered the pride everyone had in sharing their story with me, as well as showing me their animals. It was very meaningful to connect with them on a personal level and understand their experience with animal health services through ISU-UP. I distinctly remember the days that we helped the veterinarians as they vaccinated farmers' chickens for Gumboro

and Newcastle's Disease. It was such a good learning experience to personally connect with farmers, understand veterinary-farmer relationships in the Kamuli district, and see the direct impacts of ISU-UP.

**Updates:** I am a combined DVM/PhD student at Colorado State University studying cattle respiratory immunology and bovine respiratory disease. My goal after graduation is to pursue an academic career that enables me to work at the intersection of cattle immunology and how farmers and producers manage their cattle, with specific emphasis on global cattle medicine, including the management of dairy cattle immunology on smallholder farms, nutritional immunology, and infectious disease.

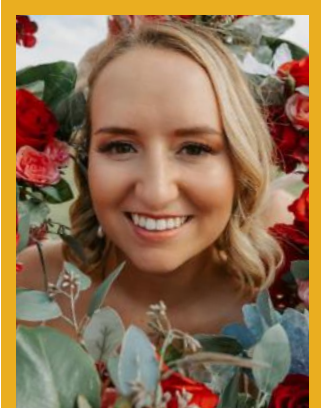


## Alana Platte

**Impact:** The most impactful part of my participation in the Service Learning program was having the opportunity to experience it with my cohort! My cohort helped me to be reflective, tap into my emotions, and challenged my ways of thinking. I am a better friend, teammate, leader, and person as a result of the relationships formed that semester.

**Favorite Memory:** Dancing in the rain with our student leaders!

**Updates:** I currently work for Cargill Animal Nutrition as a Formulation Specialist! In short, I make and manage the recipes for our animal feeds. I am also the Formulation Training Coordinator and get to supervise new hires for the first six months of their formulation career. I'm grateful for the experiences that have led me to where I am today because I love my job and the team I get to work with! I also graduated college debt-free, thanks in part to the many scholarship opportunities afforded by Global Resource Systems!



# 2024

## SEMESTER LONG



### SPRING SEMESTER





# Aryanna M. Márquez Acevedo

**Impact:** My participation in the Semester-Along the Nile allowed me to explore my passion for tropical agricultural and ecological systems, encouraging me to continue to move forward in my studies. I truly enjoyed the opportunity to learn from the locals and their wisdom through the immersive and collaborative nature of the program, as well as the opportunity to connect with my culture through the cultural similarities between Puerto Rico and Uganda. Additionally, I would say that this program helped solidify my desire to pursue a Master's degree in the study of tropical systems.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service learning memory was a school visit in which I had the privilege to work with a local agriculture club. The students at the agriculture club were so kind and taught me everything there was to know about how to take care of their crops. For me, this moment was so special, as there was something so powerful and impactful about youth coming together and being so knowledgeable and passionate about agriculture.

**Updates:** I am currently in my third year of my undergraduate at Iowa State University, majoring in Animal Ecology and Global Resource Systems.



# GRADUATE STUDENTS



Graduate students from Iowa State University actively contributed to the service learning initiatives over the years. They supported service learning activities, often while completing research for their graduate degrees. We thank them for making a positive impact on the service learning programs, mentoring students of all ages, and assisting communities in the Kamuli District.





## Brandie Martin Nonnecke

**Year participated:** 2009 and 2012

**Impact:** Participating in the ISU service learning program in Kamuli, Uganda, as a graduate student was a transformative experience for me. Immersing myself in a community with distinct cultural and socioeconomic dynamics deepened my understanding of global disparities and the importance of sustainable, community-driven solutions. The program allowed me to collaborate with local residents and students, reinforcing the value of mutual learning and respect. I gained a profound appreciation for how technology, policy, and education can intersect to address pressing challenges. This experience continues to influence my work today, inspiring me to advocate for inclusive, responsible innovation.

**Favorite Memory:** I'll never forget the time I gave a banana to a monkey at Lake Mburo National Park. What started as a fun moment quickly escalated when, out of nowhere, dozens of monkeys emerged from the trees, all eagerly looking for their share of the treat! We had to rush inside our cabins for safety until the monkeys eventually dispersed. Lesson learned: Do not feed the wild animals.

**Updates:** I am a leader in AI governance and tech policy, focused on developing responsible AI strategies and shaping public policy. My work involves collaborating with government agencies, lawmakers, and private sector organizations to ensure that AI is developed and used in ways that protect public interests while fostering innovation. As an associate research professor at UC Berkeley, I lead efforts in AI governance and contribute to high-impact research, advising on state and federal AI initiatives. I'm also passionate about public outreach, hosting the show "TechHype", where I work to debunk misunderstandings about emerging technologies and the laws and policies that shape them. I'm proud of the work I've done in AI governance and tech policy, including receiving the SF Business Times INSPIRE Award for my leadership in responsible AI. Over the years, I've collaborated with governments, industry, and civil society to develop responsible AI strategies that prioritize public safety while encouraging innovation. My role as a professor at UC Berkeley has allowed me to drive impactful research and help shape both state and federal AI policies. Additionally, I've worked to raise public awareness around emerging technologies, including through my show "TechHype".



## Reagan Suubi

**Year participated:** 2022

**Impact:** The service-learning experience helped me to discover my passion in working with young people and this pushed me to discover my passion in academia so that I can be a resourceful person in helping them to achieve their passion/ Goals.

**Favorite Memory:** Working with secondary students on their projects for the youth institute.

**Updates:** Currently, I am doing a master's in agricultural education and studies at Iowa State University.

## Jessica Veenstra

**Years participated:** 2008

**Impact:** The Uganda Service Learning program was such an incredible life experience and opportunity to spend an extended period of time in rural east Africa, living and working with locals. I learned so much about their day to day experience, that I have been able to share with my family, friends, and students.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite part was sitting around the dinner table with fellow students from the US and getting to know the Ugandan graduate students from Makerere University that were working with us, to learn more about them, their families, and what life is like for them growing up and living in Uganda.

**Updates:** Currently, I am a Professor of Natural Sciences and Department Chair at a small liberal arts college, Flagler College, in St. Augustine, Florida. Since, our study abroad in Uganda, I have helped lead six study abroad courses to Bermuda, the Bahamas, Jordan, and most recently Zanzibar, Tanzania. It was great to return to East Africa again this summer, and it was so wonderful to share that incredible place with such a wonderful group of students! (photo from the trip included).



# FACULTY



A faculty partnership from Iowa State University and Makerere University has collaborated to have a lasting impact in the Kamuli District. They worked side-by-side with ISU-UP staff and university students to focus on others, especially to create opportunities for children, youth, and young adults. We are forever grateful for their many years of commitment, inspiring work, and devotion to others.







## Saul J. Abarca Orozco

**Years:** 2023-2024

**Impact:** Participating in the service-learning program was highly beneficial for me. Professionally, I gained insights from the decision-making processes of ISU faculty, ISU-UP staff, and community members. Personally, I interacted with teachers from three schools, learning about their challenges, creative solutions, and views on the ISU-UP program. These interactions deepened my understanding of education and policies. Additionally, the teachers were eager to learn about educational differences in North America.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memory from the service-learning program was at the First African Youth Institute, organized by the World Food Prize Foundation and ISU-UP. Service learners from ISU and

Makerere University showcased their professionalism and skills to high school students and teachers from Kamuli. Our service learners' dedication and effort impressed me, as they served as role models for high school students eager to advance their education. This memory stands out because, as a roundtable moderator, I engaged in fruitful discussions about global food security with seven pupils. I listened to their ideas, exchanged solutions, provided feedback, and encouraged them to dream big and pursue higher education. This experience taught me that a simple guided discussion can transform the lives of youth.

**Updates:** During my last week in Kamuli, I discussed my research interest in financial literacy and education with ISU-UP staff. We identified challenges in record-keeping among youth farmers and entrepreneurs, especially those with low literacy levels. There are opportunities to enhance training for youth entrepreneurs by incorporating more financial lessons to build their business skills. My long-term goal is to find solutions for both in-school and out-of-school youth entrepreneurs and support more income-generating activities for youth in the Kamuli communities.

## David Acker

**Years:** 2003-2024

**Impact:** I was inspired by the commitment of ISU and MAK students to a) helping to improve the success of pupils in the schools where they worked and b) engaging with fellow students from a completely different culture.

**Favorite Memory:** Seeing how the new training center encouraged informal interactions among ISU and MAK students on the soccer field, in the lounge, in the dining area, etc.

**Updates:** I have been fortunate to serve as the Dean's representative to the program since the start and have had the chance to meet some incredibly dedicated faculty and students.



## Julie Blanchong

**Years participated:** 2015-2024

**Impact:** I feel exceptionally privileged to be a part of this program. I have redirected my career at ISU to have greater investment in stewardship of this remarkable program. It has been amazing to see the transformative impact the program has had on the children of Kamuli and the ISU and Makerere University service-learners.

**Favorite Memory:** It's impossible for me to pick one. My favorite moment this past year in 2024 with the students was watching Julia do reading with the Nakanyonyi pupils. The pupils were hanging on her every word and super eager to participate. You could tell she was making an impact. My personal favorite experience this year was getting to distribute the porridge to the youngest pupils one morning at Naluwoli Primary School. So cute!

**Updates:** I am so excited for the opportunity to become more involved with the CSRL Uganda programs, including those with university students, by joining CSRL as an Associate Director.



## Tom Brumm

**Years participated:** 2009-2024

**Impact:** It is gratifying and humbling to be a part of the service-learning program. It grounds me in what's really important. And it's not 80% of the things I get caught up with in my day-to-day life as a professor. It also positively impacted my family. The Kamuli stories I share with them help us talk about our roles in the world. A number of Makerere service-learners come to ISU for graduate school. I host many of them for Thanksgiving/Christmas dinner. Having my sons hang out with Ugandans, laughing, joking, and learning about other cultures has helped shape the men they are becoming today.

**Favorite Memory:** I love playing "cards" with the Makerere students. It's always fun because they are not used to playing cards with professors. Once, I made a totally illogical choice (but on purpose) to name a card suit which led to me winning the game. An MAK student looked at me incredulously like I was a magician. While I lose my share of games, the look on her face in this game was priceless.

**Updates:** I am still a professor at Iowa State Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering.

## Rich Bundy

**Years participated:** 2000-2010

**Impact:** I think the entire CSRL experience reinforced for me the power of philanthropy to do good in the world. Jerry and Karen Kolschowsky's original gift -- and the many that followed from them and other donors -- has transformed a region of Uganda, saved and improved the lives of countless people, and elevated Iowa State's global stature. All while giving ISU and Makerere University faculty and students a life-changing experience of their own. I am very proud to have been a part of this program from the start!

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite service-learning memory was my experience co-leading the 2007 cohort of students. We stayed in an old colonial house on the banks of the Nile River near Namasagali College and would walk to and from the primary school each day. The students were incredible, and I am still in contact with many of them -- we learned a lot, worked hard, laughed often, and even celebrated the 4th of July with a campfire (and improvised S'mores!)

**Updates:** After leaving ISU in 2000, I served as President and CEO of the University of Vermont Foundation for six years, and then as Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations at Penn State for seven years. Since April of 2024, I am the President of the University of Cincinnati Foundation.



## Lee Burras

**Years participated:** 2006-2024

**Impact:** Playing a small part during the beginnings of Service Learning in the Kamuli District in Namasagali was one of the best things I have ever done as a human being.

**Favorite Memory:** Waking up and looking west over the Nile River.

**Updates:** I continue to work in Uganda and across East Africa with my efforts now focused on soils research, education and outreach, and training graduate students.

## Donald Rugira Kugonza

**Years participated:** 2009-2024

**Impact:** Participation in the program changed my perception of community-life. I now understand why farmers in Kamuli do things the way they do and why change happens at the pace it does. I became closer to university students compared to before I was involved and now I relate better with all Makerere University students. In general, I became a better human being.

**Favorite Memory:** The day Mpirigiti Rural Training Centre was officially opened and the placing of the time capsule by Prof. Dr. Wendy Wintersteen, President of Iowa State University.

**Updates:** It's great to see hundreds of students who have been impacted by the program, including the thousands of school children our university students have been able to interact with and empower.







## Dennis Lutwama

**Years participated:** 2012-2024

**Impact:** Through the service-learning program, I have helped to train Makerere and ISU students on appropriate low-cost crop production practices for growing vegetables, while also learning from their innovative ideas. These activities have helped me develop new skills, particularly in multitasking and integrating innovative solutions for improving and sustaining school gardening and school lunch programs.

**Favorite Memory:** When a student groups came up with an innovation of using a solar drier to dry excess vegetables from the school gardens for use in school lunch during dry seasons. A previous challenge for the school gardening program was having excess harvest from the gardens during the rainy seasons of production. The solar drier is a huge savior.

**Updates:** Over the past period, there has been a notable progress in the programs that are at the schools where ISU-UP has been involved. The establishment of woodlots and orchards has created practical learning environments for both pupils, teachers, and the community, allowing students/pupils to learn about tree growing, firewood harvesting, and fruit harvesting, including guavas, avocados, and oranges. This hands-on approach has fostered a deeper appreciation for sustainable environment management practices. Additionally, there has been a positive shift in the community's willingness to participate in school gardening and service-learning programs in the Kamuli district. Overtime, we have observed an increased community attendance and engagement in school gardening activities. The growing enthusiasm and participation in Iowa State University-Uganda Program's field days and Young Farmers Club at the schools by the community members and the school community is encouraging. The community is more actively involved by sending their children to help in the gardens during school breaks. These initiatives have enhanced the students' learning experiences and also fostered greater collaboration and shared responsibility within the community, making it rewarding to be part of this positive change toward sustainability.

## Dorothy Masinde

**Years participated:** 2004-2024

**Impact:** I am proud of the positive impact that the program has made in the lives of the students who have participated in the program over the years. I know the program has contributed greatly towards the successes that they have achieved, I treasure that.

**Favorite Memory:** The time we were able to move all the students to one location, when Mpirigiti Rural Training Center was constructed, finally accommodation and program implementation were never going to be a problem for our students ever again. I will always remember that moment.

**Updates:** I have been a major actor in building this program from scratch to the point where we are now. I spent considerable time conducting situational analysis, and studies to determine how the program would look like. I

visited sites in Kenya and Uganda, which culminated in a stakeholders' workshop where we launched the program in 2005. Over the years, I had to select schools that we worked with, organize the logistics that included but not limited meals and accommodation, binational team projects, parents/teachers' meetings etc. I am not able to list all my accomplishments and updates in this limited space. All I can say is that the success of this program remains one of the crowning glories of my professional career.



## Lucy Mulugo

**Years participated:** 2009-2024

**Impact:** Interactions with the surrounding local communities taught me the importance of "giving back" to our people.

**Favorite Memory:** The World Food Prize and ISU-Uganda Program's Uganda Youth Institute opportunity and competition by the secondary students in Kamuli district.

**Updates:** My attendance of The World Food Prize in Iowa under The Borlaug Fellowship for African Women in Science.



## Gail Nonnecke

**Years participated:** 2005-2024

**Impact:** Having the chance to help develop and participate in the service-learning program over the past 19 years has been a true honor. I learned more than I could ever contribute, and seeing development in action over the years was amazing. The experiences transformed my understanding of rural life and sustainable development practices in Uganda and the incredible capacity of university students. Each year, binational teams of university students showed their resilience and ability to thrive in demanding situations while completing meaningful work with the Kamuli schools and communities. I am so very proud of each-and-every service learner and their inspiring contributions and willingness to learn.

**Favorite Memory:** There are so many “firsts” across the years—the first time that planting materials from the school garden program were sent with children for their home gardens; the first time that a school lunch included vegetables and fruits from the school gardens; and the first vaccination clinic for infants and children at a nutrition education center, saving children from potential impacts of devastating childhood diseases.

**Updates:** I have been very fortunate to be recognized across the years for my academic work. But, the recognition is truly for the incredible teams of students, faculty, Iowa State University-Uganda Program staff, Kamuli teachers, pupils, and their parents.

## Boniface Orum

**Years participated:** 2007-2024

**Impact:** Being involved in the service-learning program has broadened my understanding of rural poverty, the impact of rural development strategies and interventions, as well as the positive contribution that students bring to such rural development initiatives.

**Favorite Memory:** Participating with service learners in school gardening.

**Updates:** Personally, I believe the visit by Makerere University administration and faculty to the ISU-UP service-learning program in July 2024 was a big plus. Additionally, the recognition by the top management of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences of the service-learning model used in Kamuli as a way to organize student internships/field attachment is a great achievement.



## Richard (Dick) Schultz

**Years participated:** 2009-2024

**Impact:** As an avid traveler, I have learned a lot about the land and the culture of Uganda and have made many dear friends both among the staff of the program and the great students from Makerere and Iowa State University. I am in awe of the caring, strong work ethic and knowledge of the young people in this program. Their empathy for each other and the people that we work with has helped make this a life-changing program.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memory happens every year when I see the swarm of school children come running out and happily greet our service learners.

**Updates:** I am looking forward to having the privilege to work with our outstanding young leaders for a better world.

## Catherine Swoboda

**Years :** 2018-2024

**Impact:** Participation in the service-learning program has had an immense impact on me professionally and personally. Every time I return to Kamuli, I learn new things about agricultural systems and rural development. It's an honor to learn from and work with community members, ISU-UP, undergraduate service learners, Makerere and ISU faculty who, across a diversity of fields and backgrounds, share a common purpose to affect changes in food security.

**Favorite Memory:** My favorite memories from the service-learning program are with ISU-UPs youth programs, especially the young mothers and youth entrepreneurship programs. The challenges our world will face to sustainably and nutritiously feeding a growing population in the coming decades will be met by those who are currently adolescents. Seeing the daily commitment of the young mothers and youth entrepreneurs to advancing their own learning and skills in agriculture in order to improve their livelihoods and that of their communities, is an inspiration.

**Updates:** I look forward to continuing my work in the service learning programs, both in summer and semester-long, and in the ISU-UP community education programs.









To view recent videos (2023, 2024) about CSRL and Iowa State University-Uganda Program activities in the Kamuli District, visit:  
[https://www.youtube.com/@ISU\\_CALS\\_CSRL](https://www.youtube.com/@ISU_CALS_CSRL)



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