

Kenya AIDS Orphans Project, Spring 2022 Update Greetings to Friends and Supporters of the Obara Family!

We continue to have gratitude for all the activities of Obara family members and their contributions to their community, through generous support and encouragement from Runnymede United Church and friends.

As we reported in October 2021, the Obara family continues with regular activities despite Covid issues and increasing prices in Kenya. The oldest 11 children in the family are all independent and many are volunteering their professional skills, contributing to their communities as their parents taught them.

Patricia, (Pipi), teaches catering and mentors 5 women in their small street food business. This year she participated in a fund-raising cooking video for the Village of Love program. www.villageoflovecanada.org It was very rewarding to see her giving back. We learned cooking skills from her and two mothers in the Village of Love Program.

The 4 youngest members of the family have continued as devoted students. They managed Covid changes and delays to their programs as well as possible. Thankfully, donors have continued their contributions, allowing consistent funding for their programs. Isabella Obara has arranged for each of the students to send us information about their progress. See their messages below.

We Celebrate Deborah's completion of her Nursing training! She was 13 when Andrew and Leonora adopted her. As an orphan, she did not have money to attend school and was vulnerable to all the problems that could happen to a young girl. She and the Obaras have used our support well! She has worked diligently to become a Nurse, to have a good life and contribute to her community. This is so rewarding for us!

In May 2022, Andrew Obara reported to us:

Rising costs of items due to the pandemic (COVID), drought, and the war in Ukraine. Goods and service prices have escalated so much; they have either doubled or tripled. Some items are imported from Ukraine i.e. wheat. Now that the wheat is not forthcoming, prices on this item have skyrocketed hence the price of bread.. Generally food prices have been hiked thereby hitting the low income families very, very hard. Matters are worsened by the fact we are approaching general elections. Entrepreneurs are wary of using their capital at this time hence scarcity of common goods in the market...Jobs have shrunk, worsening the situation. This has caused social problems i.e. domestic violence, etc...

Deborah's completion of her nursing course and her eventual registration (she graduates in December) has done us proud. It has been a journey that has had all the telltale signs of success due to the fact our friends and donors were determined to see her through. Her hard work and diligence were contributing factors too. She has now become an inspiration to the rest... She says she cannot thank the donors enough. Her gratefulness will come through the hard work she will put in her work.

As you are getting some sunshine and warm weather we in turn are experiencing the onset of cold season. The advice I get when I visit a doctor for check up is to eat well, exercise and keep warm. Having contracted COVID I am vulnerable to anything that will affect the lungs...

Best wishes to the Runnymede Church family. "May God Bless you abundantly!"

From **Debora Don Adhiambo Omondi, Kenya Registered Community Health Nurse (KRCHN).**

On 11th November 2021, I managed to sit for nursing council license examination. The examination took one day and it was successful. I managed to get distinction. Due to challenges posed by covid 19 pandemic, we were forced to go back to clinical rotation from 20th January 2022 for a period of 8 weeks (pediatrics). This ended on 19th March 2022 at Kisii Teaching and Referral Hospital. I am now through with my class work and clinical rotations and the school management has fully recommended me for practicing license from the Nursing Council of Kenya. Am now on the working application process for this. I wish to work as a nurse and to get a better nursing job with better pay in the near future. Am free to work and practice my profession either locally in Kenya or abroad. Once again, I want to say thank you for the financial support you offered to me. Without you, this journey would have not been successful. Thank you for the guidance and advice you showed to me.

"Some people want it to happen, some people wish it would have happen, others make it happen. If you don't go after what you want, you will never have it."

From **REGINALDA (Regina), Articling Student** (see her photo in plaid shirt)

I am so glad to write to you. I completed my written examinations on April 8th. The results will be released in June. I will inform you on how I performed. I began my pupillage (articling) program on April 19th. The pupillage program entails training in a law firm under the instruction of a duly certified Advocate of the High Court of Kenya. The program runs for a period of six (6) months which are counted on a business-days' basis, so it totals up to approximately 8 months. Therefore, I shall complete the program in around mid-February 2023. I am currently training at a medium-sized law firm based in Nairobi. I really enjoy the training because I practice what I learnt in class. I attend court sessions, draft pleadings, conduct research, review contracts, prepare case briefs and engage in any other work that the Advocate issues me. I am so happy and grateful for the opportunity that you and the great fraternity have afforded me. I am practicing my dream career and it is very fulfilling. Thank you very much and God bless you.

From **Zacharia (Zaki)- 4TH Year Engineering Student**

I just finished my last industrial attachment on 22nd of April 2022 that comes at the end of the third year of study. I have proceeded to my fourth year, First semester on 10th of May. Now that I am in my fourth year, I am expected to take an academic project that is scheduled to last about 6 to 7 months. This usually comes after the second semester of the fourth year. After completion of the project, I will graduate. I am so happy to get into my fourth year of study and eternally grateful for your help. Let the last lap begin! I am putting my best foot forward. **Here are the units I am going to study in the first semester of my fourth year:** Neural networks; Robotics and automation; Biomechanics; Embedded systems; Biomedical signal processing; Digital imaging processes; Industrial management

From **Lorraine (Lolo) – 3RD YEAR Engineering Student**

I am happy that the spread of COVID has been curbed and that we are enjoying some bit of normalcy. Schools reopened officially in April last year after the pandemic's worst period had finally passed. After completing my second year in December 2021, I had an internal internship program. This is in-house practical training for student engineers done at school by certified engineers. The program was three months long (From January to March 2022). I have commenced studies in my third year at the beginning of this month (May). This semester is set to run for three

months and the following are the subjects I will take: Physical electronics; Analogue electronics; Circuit theory; Electrical machines; Control engineering
Operations research
Partial differential equations
Electromagnetics
Digital electronics

Thank you for your support and commitment. I am working towards growing my technical capacity as an engineer and while growing mentally (self-development).

ISABELLA OBARA – PROFESSIONAL

Thank you! Thank you to the Runnymede family! For the friendship, the love, commitment, care and undying support.

For me it has been 15 years of being part of the Runnymede Family and oh how thankful I am!

From January to May I have grown in my career as I plan for the next steps and explore other areas of growth whilst knowing my value. Above all, I continue to give back in my own ways.

The Highlight of this period was when I trained 80 Human Rights monitors on Human Rights Documentation (*pro-bono*) Legal and when I adjudged the All-Kenyan moot Court 10th Edition (*Pro-bono and I was recognized and awarded for it*).

I also petitioned the Chief Justice (CJ) to be sworn in as a commissioner of Oaths now that I am serving in my fourth year at the bar. Once the CJ sets a date, I will communicate.

The impact of your support is immeasurable! Thank you, now and always.

Please share; I am happy to interact on social media – for anyone who would like that;-

Twitter ;- @nabwire_o

Linkedin: Isabella Obara

About Runnymede United Church and Donations to Kenya AIDS Orphans Fund

(KAO): Andrew and Leonora Obara have 5 daughters born to them and they adopted 10 more children whose parents died of AIDS. Since 2005, Runnymede Church has been contributing to the family as they support and educate all these children. The oldest 11 children are now all self-supporting and contributing to their community.

Runnymede United Church is a registered charity of the United Church of Canada. Runnymede has established the Kenya AIDS Orphans Fund as one of its programs. Administered under the auspices of the church and run by volunteers, this allows nearly 100% of donations to go directly to the recipients (except transfer fees to send the money to Kenya). Donations to Runnymede United Church, identifying this fund, will be issued charitable donation tax receipts. The Fund supports the work of the Obara family in educating AIDS orphans in their family and Village of Love Program: www.villageoflovecanada.org. in Kibera, Kenya, the largest "slum" (informal settlement) in Africa.

From the Kenya AIDS Orphans Committee: Thank you to everyone who contributes in many ways, making such a difference to the Obara children who are now adults. All donations are very

much appreciated. Monthly (PAR) donations provide stability to the students and the family in the unstable Kenyan economy with significantly increasing living costs. These young people are using their opportunities for professional training to the fullest. They're keenly aware that our donations are their only way to pay for their education. If you know of potential funders interested in contributing to young Africans' education in law and engineering, please let us know.

*Robyn Salter, John Rossall, Laura Rossall, Lynne Salt, Tom Axworthy,
Kenya AIDS Orphans Project, Runnymede United Church*