



Esther



Grace



Jessica



Virginia



Jenny and Allian

A "Hub of Activity".. Thanks to You!

To all of our friends, supporters, sponsors, and donors,

Well, here we are, six months into my role here at Hekima Place, and what a six months they have been! We have experienced so much joy and laughter, and have grown together as a family. With this many daughters, I never know what I am going to wake up to, or where the day may lead, but love and God's grace continue to open new doors of opportunity and to unlock our girls' potential.

We have also weathered some storms as a country, since the political upheaval of elections in August. The girls have been extremely interested in following the political stories, imagining that one day they too could be in a position to help forge change for the people of Kenya. I write this letter to you with a hopeful heart and many prayers for peace.

As a result of the re-election, schools have closed early and we are in the midst of holiday activities: a safari walk in Nairobi National Park, a swimming trip, hikes in the Ngong Hills, and even an educational puppet show. For seven of our girls, these next few weeks will be among the most important of their lives so far, as they sit for their primary and secondary school national exams (taken at the end of 8th and 12th grades). The exam results will determine which doors of opportunity open as the girls transition to their next phase of education. We wish them every success!

As you can see, there is always a hub of activity at Hekima Place, all made possible because of you. Please accept our heartfelt thanks and continue sending us your prayers and love, just as we think about and pray for each one of you. Let's see what exciting things 2018 has in store for us!

Be blessed,

Mum Jenny
Kenya Executive Director



Blessing and Grace graduated from pre-unit and are headed to kindergarten!



Rose (pictured) graduated from 8th grade, as did Esther and Virginia (above)



Finah today

“I Thank God for Giving Me the Strength to Do This Work”

by Finah Nyakwara

Hello everyone,

I come from Kisii County in western Kenya, from a family of seven children. My parents died in 2005, while I was in class five, and my extended family could not care for the seven of us. My uncle, a teacher, knew of Mum Kate’s dream of starting a home for girls, and I was among the first to join the Hekima Place family.

During this time of transition, I had to learn to cope and fit in with my new family. I became close with my other Hekima sisters and especially with Mum Kate and the other mums, who showed me a mother’s love and helped me feel secure and able to trust again. Later, my younger sister Jacinta was also able to join the Hekima Place family, which was a great comfort. I was able to focus on school and successfully completed primary and secondary school.



Finah in 2007

After graduating from high school, I entered a program in social work. **I was inspired by Mum Kate’s dream to help children in need like me, and by my Hekima family, who had given me the gifts of education, good health, safety, clothing, and so much more.** As I progressed in my studies, I was inspired to study counselling and psychology at the university level. Gaining specialized skills and techniques in counselling would help me understand each individual’s unique experience and needs, as well as gain insight into my own life. I am now in my third year at the Presbyterian University of East Africa



Finah helping the younger girls with chores in August

Since January, I have been interning at the **Gender Violence and Recovery Center of Nairobi Women’s Hospital in Kisumu.** The center offers free medical treatment for survivors of physical assault and intimate partner violence. We also treat children who have been physically or sexually abused. I perform an initial assessment to help these women and children get medical treatment and counselling. Later, I work with them throughout the counselling process, from the first to last session.

As you can imagine, it’s not easy work. **These vulnerable patients come with overwhelming challenges and traumas.** I rely on my own counsellor and support network for personal development and renewal, and I thank God for giving me the strength to do this work and to keep up with my studies. I have learned and grown so much, and I know I am helping my patients gain the insight and skills they need to move on with their lives.

I sincerely thank our donors, well-wishers, Board members, sponsors, big sisters, and the entire Hekima family for helping me become the person I am today. On behalf of all my sisters, thank you! **You have changed our lives and given us hope to keep working hard.** I am also grateful to my sponsors Margaret and Robert, big sister Monique, mum Kate, mum Jenny, and all the mums and uncles in the Hekima family. May God keep blessing all of you!

Kate’s Kids

Twelve years ago, “*Kate’s Kids*” opened its doors to ten girls on rented property. Since then, Hekima Place has grown in size and reputation, today caring for and educating nearly 90 girls of all ages. The U.S. Board recently created the ***Kate’s Kids Scholarship Fund Campaign*** to honor founder Kate Fletcher’s retirement from daily management. Scholarships will be awarded to deserving students in Kenya, including our girls and other qualifying children from the local community. To date, the fund has raised over **\$41,000**—and, thanks to the generosity of our donors, continues to grow! These scholarships will act as a lasting legacy of Kate’s unending love, energy, and compassion for the children of Hekima Place.

Learn more and donate at www.hekimaplace.org/kates-kids-scholarship-fund.





A Note from Kate ...

September and October have been filled with grace and gratitude to all those who have contributed to the well being of our beloved Hekima girls.

Baby Hope's first birthday was celebrated at Slippery Rock University by students from the Student Nonprofit Alliance. The students and faculty of Seton La-Salle High School in Pittsburgh helped raise funds, too, by collecting shoes for resale in developing countries. So much love for such a tiny lady. Thank you!

Several parties and gatherings have been held for Hekima Place this fall: one hosted by Board member Marianne McClain of our Board to say "Happy Retirement" to me and to celebrate the Kate's Kids Scholarship Fund; another to introduce new friends in Pittsburgh to the Hekima story, hosted by our supporters the Castes, Coopers, and Rexes; and the most recent in London, Ontario, organized by our many Canadian volunteers who have for years supported us. We are most grateful to all of them!

St. Fidelis and St. Stanislaus churches in Butler, PA joined the Hekima family of to help fund the girls' schooling. We are thankful to Father Will and his parishioners for their care and concern.

We give thanks, too, to our friends and volunteers in Buffalo, NY for always generously hosting us on trips north. They will be coming to Pittsburgh for the Beatles concert fundraiser on November 4. Hats off, too, to Bill Zalewski of "Come Together" for loving the girls and offering a Music and Art room in our new school.

And a huge round of applause to our U.S. Board and Kenyan Trustees, who voted to build an amazing, child friendly, colorful, wonderful school with money donated for that very purpose. Amani Learning Center will be a community school for preschool through ninth grade and plans will begin this month for its government blessing to begin construction ASAP.

Blessings and thanksgiving to all our supporters near and far - the donors, the sponsors, the volunteers, the boards. May God fill your hearts with peace and joy and every blessing only God can give.

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to all of you from all of us!

With love,

Kate

Fall Flurry of Events

Special visitors from Kenya—Kate Fletcher, Jenny Roach, and recent graduate Maggie Wambui—were in town to enjoy a "flurry" of fundraising events!

A TASTE OF AFRICA -Katie and Dan Caste, Mia and Bob Cooper, and Nancy and Jeff Rex hosted a cocktail party at St. Clair Country Club and helped raise nearly \$14,000 in donations and eleven new sponsorship pledges.

A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR BABY HOPE - the Student Nonprofit Alliance at Slippery Rock University, with the help of Prof. Alice DelVecchio, celebrated Baby Hope's first birthday! The group hosted 75 party guests and collected 2,000 pairs of donated shoes to sponsor Hope for the coming year.

COME TOGETHER PITTSBURGH CONCERT & BENEFIT - Beatles tribute band Come Together generously donated an amazing performance, helping us raise nearly \$9,000! Many thanks to volunteer committee members Sue DiPiero, Colleen Heffernan, Andrea Weber, and Mary Winkler.

CANADIAN FRIENDS OF HEKIMA PLACE - Chris Cheski and Bill Peel welcomed Kate Fletcher to Canada by hosting a wine and cheese gathering at their home, where donors contributed over \$6,000!

A RECEPTION TO CELEBRATE THE KATE'S KIDS SCHOLARSHIP FUND (story at left) was hosted by Board member Marianne McClain at South Hills Country Club. The reception honored Kate Fletcher upon her retirement and thanked all our donors to the scholarship fund!





HEKIMA PLACE

A Place of Wisdom

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What's In This Issue

HEKIMA PLACE NEWS 2017 Issue 2

- Jenny's Update from Kiserian
- "I Thank God for Giving Me the Strength"
- Greetings from Kate
- Fall Flurry of Events
- And more!



"We try to make Hekima Place as much about family as possible... We try to cultivate the girls' natural talents and gifts, because that's the mandate we believe that God has given us, that we allow these girls to develop into everything He has called them to be."

During her recent trip to Pittsburgh, Kenya Executive Director Jenny Roach was interviewed by the Ride Home with John and Kathy on Word-FM 101.5 Pittsburgh. Find the link to Jenny's inspiring, fascinating story at www.hekimaplace.org/about/news.



"Let us pick up our books and pencils; they are our most powerful weapons."

—Nobel Peace Prize Winner Malala Yousafzai

SAVE THE DATE!

Celebrate the season with beautiful music and holiday cheer!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2017

ANNUAL ADVENT & CHRISTMAS CONCERT

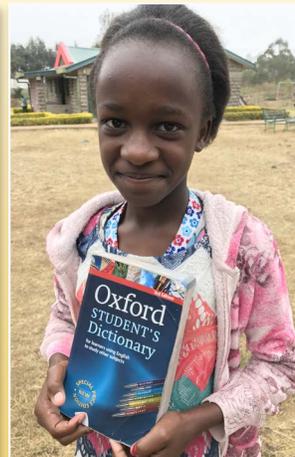
St. Thomas More Church, Bethel Park
7:30pm

Refreshments to follow
Free-will offerings benefit Hekima Place

Visit www.hekimaplace.org/events
for more information.



Mary and Abigail reading a book together



Fridah studying



Bea Njoki graduated in October 2017