



March 29 2024 Newsletter

Government Inspection Pushes New Priorities

Throughout its early history the Kibbuse St. James Vocational School has been primarily a “boys” school, with at least twice and often three times as many male students as female. For that reason, our first major construction project for the school in nearly a dozen years was the new boy’s dorm, just opened for the 2024 school year.



Boy's Dorm

But during this post-Covid economy, and with the change from a male to a female Principal, the balance has shifted nearly 180 degrees. Principal Stella Nabitosi’s March 1 report showed a roster of 20 girls and only 13 boys, although Ms. Nabitosi expects a number of late registrants, mostly boys, to arrive this month. This is typical at the start of each year in rural Uganda for two reasons: 1) students staying home to help plant family gardens, 2) students waiting until their parents can gather enough money to make the minimum tuition payment for entry. This is especially difficult for Motor Vehicle/Metal-working students (boys) because they pay extra fees for Driver’s Training (which most of them really want!).



The Inspection

When the government School Inspector toured the campus in late February, he made it clear that no more than four girls could inhabit each of the three available girl’s dorm rooms in the main campus compound. So, what had been transformed into a computer lab (the equivalent of two dorm rooms) during Friends of Kibbuse’s 2020 team visit, has been temporarily transformed into a four double-bunk dormitory, giving just enough space to house all 20 girls within the school’s only walled compound.

The computer lab, already in disarray because of malfunctioning or missing laptops, is now in need of new equipment and a space to put it in, making all the more urgent construction of a girl’s dorm to provide a 36-48 bed girls dormitory, which not only will put the girls in a facility on a par with the boy’s dorm, it will free up space for an expanded and more secure computer lab in the existing compound. You can read Principal Stella Nabitosi’s report on the situation [here](#).

Most of these girls are bunking down in the school’s computer lab.

Revised Priorities and A Girl’s Dormitory

For these reasons, the Kibbuse Foundation Board has just revised their priorities for school infrastructure, and have postponed the Hill House Faculty residence project. All available construction funds will instead be turned to purchasing land currently available immediately adjacent to the existing compound, developing architect’s drawings and engaging a contractor. The 75’ X110’ property will enable the school to simply enlarge the existing wall enclosure around the compound (at a great savings). They will then build a stand-alone girl’s dormitory very similar to the one just opened for the boys, but located at the heart of the campus, where security and oversight of Kibbuse’s female students will be easiest to manage and secure.

Friends of Kibbuse had already raised \$65,000 toward Hill House renovations. That has now been reassigned to the Girl’s Dormitory Project, which with sanitary outbuildings and wall enclosure will probably cost out at about \$105,000. Therefore, we stand in need of \$40,000 to undertake this urgently needed project. Included in the funding will be restoration, expansion and re-equipping of the computer lab, so that all students will have access to computers, now a necessity for vocational as well as academic courses.

We close by asking you to consider donating a tax refund, qualified charitable distribution or other cash gift to help us get the young women of Kibbuse into clean, well-furnished and secure housing!

Contact Us:

Email: Info@friendsofkibbuse.org
Postal: Friends of Kibbuse, PO Box 592, Jenison, MI 49429
Website: www.friendsofkibbuse.org

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