

SEPTEMBER 2022

FOSA NEWSLETTER



News from the Fairfield Children's Homes



A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

By Jeff Matheny

Fairfield Outreach & Sponsors Association (FOSA)



It was certainly good to get back to Fairfield this summer and see the progress since my last visit in 2019. I was joined by fellow Board Member, Mark Chapin, and we were able to have several very productive meetings at the children's home and other parts of the mission station.

The economy in Zimbabwe is once again experiencing rapidly growing inflation, with current data reporting 490 percent annually. As you might imagine, this has made many basic items very expensive and extremely difficult to obtain as wages in the country have generally failed to keep up with the cost of food and necessities. What truly never ceases to amaze me is the ability of the Zimbabwean people to adapt and stay positive in the face of devastating situations. A resounding sense of hope and resilience is all you will see and hear from the people, and you will always find that the power of gratitude far outweighs any thoughts of anger.

Mark and I were pleased to meet the new Administrator, Rev. Juliet Mwrumba, and listen to her plans for Fairfield over the next few years (you will read more about the new Administrator later in this newsletter). Rev. Mwrumba is a Pastor from the Zimbabwe East Annual Conference and has

already made a positive impact by connecting many of the Fairfield children with families in the local area to help develop relationships and establish connections with the community as they become adults. Mark and I were also able to meet with a few members of the local Fairfield Board, including the Chairman of Old Mutare Mission Station. We had highly fruitful discussions about how we can work together to cultivate stronger partnerships and connections with the local community.

As always, it was a highlight to see the children and hear about all their progress in school and life. We are happy to announce that many are attending post-secondary education, including Juliet Sithole who recently graduated as Valedictorian from Africa University! More updates on Juliet and our other graduates below.

Sustainability is a priority at Fairfield and a fundamental part of our mission at FOSA. As such, Cecillia has been very active completing several major projects around the Homes, including the new water well, pumps, and storage tanks that have greatly improved the reliability of its water supply. Best yet, this project included enough solar capacity to generate and complete all the required pumping! As you may know, the electrical supply from the utility is very unreliable and often offline for long periods of time. To combat this, Cecillia has worked hard to successfully obtain grants that have ultimately allowed for the installation of solar-powered lighting in many of the homes and buildings.



Traditional Braai hosted by staff

Other notable projects include the addition of 200 chicks to be raised in the chicken coop and the building of a piggery that currently houses a few pigs with plans to add more. In addition, it was great to see crops of tangerines, cabbages, and other seasonal vegetables growing well in the winter garden this year and plans to plant the maize crop in the field are well underway.

For the last year, Mark, the Chair of Sustainability Committee, has been working on a special project to meet the growing need for our students to have better accessibility to technology in and outside the classroom. Ultimately, Mark's tablet project met this need by providing Fairfield with 10 tablets for students to access their schoolwork during times of lockdowns, expanding the availability of coursework from the standardized local curriculum so they could access homework and reading assignments when books were widely unavailable during COVID. He was also able to add on some additional free library resources and educational games for each device.

As you can see, we have a lot of exciting things happening at FCH and I look forward to working alongside you on more projects that will improve the quality of life and educational opportunities for our children in Zimbabwe.

I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to every one of our donors and supporters, your partnership is invaluable in helping provide the best possible lives for the children of Fairfield!

Sincerely,
Jeff Matheny

PROJECTS AROUND THE HOMES

2021-2022 Projects



The FCH winter garden full of tangerines, cabbages, and other seasonal vegetables.



Additional picture of the garden at Fairfield.



New water storage tanks help maintain a healthy supply of water to the homes and gardens.



10 new tablets have been arrived at Fairfield to help increase the children's access to online books, curriculum, and remote education resources.



The thatched roofing on the Cooking House was in desperate need of repair (pictured). Mark and Jeff helped to coordinate its repair while in Zimbabwe.



The piggery currently houses a few pigs, and more are expected to be added soon.

DID YOU KNOW...

With 16 official languages, **Zimbabwe won the Guinness World Record** in 2013 as the country with the most official languages at a national level! Of their 16 languages, Shona, Ndebele, and English are the most used. And although English is not the native language for most of the population, it is used in government and official communications.

Zimbabwe is not the most linguistically diverse country on the planet, in fact, that accolade belongs to Papua New Guinea, where some 840 languages are spoken. Nor is Zimbabwe the country with the most languages named in its constitution; India lists 18.

So, how have the languages in Zimbabwe scooped the world record for most languages spoken? According to the decision-makers over at Guinness, it's because in Zimbabwe official languages are recognised as languages of the country as a whole. India, conversely, recognises its languages as being associated with certain areas of the country. Hence Zimbabwe takes the glory.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FAIRFIELD

Updates about FCH

We are delighted to announce a new face at Fairfield Children's Homes, the new Administrator, Rev. Mwarumba! For those of you familiar with the previous Administrator, Cecillia Thobani, don't fret! Cecillia will remain very active and involved in the day-to-day activities of the homes and will remain a consistent figure in the children's daily lives. We are excited to see what this new team has in store for Fairfield and, as always, we are eager to support them in making Fairfield the best it can be for the children of Zimbabwe.



Due to various factors, FCH has not welcomed any new children this year. However, the two children that arrived last year are still looking for sponsors. If you are interested in sponsoring a new child, please consider Tinotenda or Nilla!

We currently have 39 children actively living in 4 homes. Why does this seem low? Well, that's because Fairfield has an astounding **14 new children attending college** this year! In total, FOSA is helping to support 16 young adults in their post-secondary education through a program called Careers for a Brighter Future. This special account is separate from Sponsorship and General funds and is used specifically to help pay for student's tuition, housing, school supplies, and everything they need to successfully attend college and obtain their degree. When FOSA first began in 1996, we could only dream that one day our children would grow up having the ambition and opportunity to graduate college, and today, we are overwhelmed with excitement to see them pursuing their dreams and becoming young adults determined to give back and make the world a better place.

The fact that so many of our young adults are successfully entering this stage of their lives is a testament to the power of your support as a donor and the incredible milestones that we have collectively reached over the years. As of today, FOSA is proud to say that we have seen a total of 33 Fairfield children attend college because of this program. If you would like to support our college students and donate to this particular program, please indicate reference "Careers for a Brighter Future" on your donation form.

Join us in congratulating all of our new college students!

2022 COLLEGE STUDENTS

Isaac Chinake: Purchasing and Supply Management at Mutare Polytechnic

Faith Mutasa: Agriculture at Magamba

Tapiwa Makosa: Tourism and Management at Magamba

Washington Mushonga: Agriculture at Magamba

Tendai Munash: Tourism and Management at Magamba

Rumbidzai Chikomo: Tourism and Management at Magamba

Valentine Simba: Hotel Catering at Rise Africa Inst.

Simbarashe Tichaona: Agriculture at Magamba

Precious Shumba: Garment Construction at Sakubva Vocational

Grace Shumba: Welding at Magamba

Tinashe Mwoto: Agriculture at Magamba

Munashe Matenga: Agriculture at Magamba

Moreblessing Tinotenda: Agriculture at Magamba

Precious Chipo: Office Management at Mutare Polytechnic

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

FCH Gets a New Truck!

If you have ever visited Fairfield, you have probably seen the old combi (van) parked at the administration office. For many years this vehicle has been the primary source of transportation for getting staff and children to and from doctor appointments, grocery shopping, picking up guests, and for hauling crops around the mission. However, frequent breakdowns and years of wear and tear has rendered this older vehicle largely unreliable and unusable...until now!

We are overjoyed to announce that FOSA received an extremely generous donation of \$28,000 from an anonymous donor wishing to purchase a new vehicle for Fairfield! This new vehicle will be a true treasure for all those living and visiting the children's home and we greatly thank this donor for giving the gift of reliability, safety, and independence. We would also like to thank our Board Member, John Holler, for facilitating this donation and helping to make this dream a reality!

FOSA BOARD UPDATES

Board Prepares for 2022 Annual Meeting

The 2023 FOSA Board will consist of 16 members across 14 states and 2 countries. While we come from many cultures, backgrounds, and upbringings, what we share is far more unifying. Together we share a common passion for inspiring opportunity and providing support to those at the Fairfield Children's Homes. Each of us has answered our own unique call to service and has made a commitment to ensure that each child receives the care, support, and tools they need to become a thriving adult and future leader of Zimbabwe.

Every Fall the FOSA Board travels to a single destination to meet for an annual Board Meeting. This event marks the one time each year we are all together to share updates and create a strategic plan for the upcoming year. Every Board Member pays their own way, including transportation, sleeping accommodations, and food while at the retreat. Taking place in a new city each year, the retreat is most often hosted by a local Board Member who helps coordinate the logistics and provide local insight for the team. This year, we will be meeting in the Music Capital of America, Nashville, Tennessee!



2013 Board Retreat
Hosted in Chicago, Illinois

NEW 2022 BOARD MEMBERS

Please join us in welcoming all our new FOSA Board Members!

Taina Abrahamson

Stockholm, Sweden (originally from Finland)
Supporter of Fairfield Children's Homes for over 20 years and has visited FCH 2-3 times a year since 2002

Nyasha Maforo, Ph.D.

Los Angeles, California (originally from Harare, Zimbabwe)
UCLA Department of Radiological Science

Farai Rukunda

Stevensville, Michigan (originally from Old Mutare, Zimbabwe)
Director of SEP SCI Customer Success and President and Founder of Living Beyond Hope 501(c)(3)

Rev. John Holler

Columbia, South Carolina
Retired Director of Epworth Children's Home in South Carolina

Melanie Matheny, FNP-BC

Parkersburg, West Virginia
Nurse Practitioner and longtime advocate for the Fairfield Children's Homes

ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT

By Juliet Shitole

Age 22



My name is Juliet Sithole, and I am a lady aged 22 years old. I grew up at Fairfield Children's Home in Mutare, Zimbabwe since I was a month old until I was 18 years old. It is with great humility that I am so pleased to write this letter to you. I sincerely want to give many thanks to the Chairman and the entire board (FOSA) for the unwavering support you offered me throughout my four-year journey (2018-2022) at Africa University. Your unconditional love and prayers in the difficult times have sailed me through. I was not quite gifted with a high level of intelligence or a very sharp and quick mind, especially looking at how I completed my 'O'level with a chain of Cs.

Growing up as an orphan was never an excuse that I had to fail in school but it pushed me to aim for the best in my life, to be a good exemplar to those who were behind me, it made me be a living testimony to the girl child out there, that there is nothing too hard for one to do as long as you put your maximum effort to it, thus I thought of pursuing my University education so as to study a degree that would help me achieve my dreams. Along the way, some thought I was crazy, chasing behind something only for the sheer joy of attaining it. As I received this prestigious degree, I do not feel good, in fact, I do not feel anything except tremendous joy and gratitude for everything and everyone who helped me reach this milestone. The dream has come true and today I have completed the requirements for a Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in International Relations, graduating with a Second-Class Upper Division and a Cumulative Grade point Average (CGPA) of 3.62.

Indeed, the journey to accomplish my undergraduate degree was not so smooth as I was fighting what I passed through in life and what I wanted to achieve. Thus, knowing where I came from and where I was going made it manageable for me. Studying International Relations really helped me, whereby I attended several workshops and symposiums that taught me the real-life situations like how one manages natural disasters, conflicts as well as fighting for the rights of people. International Relations has been an interesting degree for me as it paved way for me to really know what I wanted to do

growing up and what I faced then. During the internship period, I went to a non-governmental organization situated in Harare, whereby the main goal of the organization was to ensure protection of children through assisting them with education as well as psycho-social support. This greatly taught me that whatever you face in life, you are not alone, but rather the principle of Ubuntu was upheld which implies, "I am because you are." Wherever I went during my attachment, I was so proud of FOSA since it shaped me to be the woman I am today, to be the fearless girl in the world of hungry lions and tigers, to be the young girl who dreams nothing but peace to prevail in the world, to be that girl who conquers all the challenges that comes her way, to be that girl child who beg to differ the different opinions of persons about her life as well as being a hard worker in everything I do. If I could write a book about my journey at Africa University, studying International Relations degree, I really would do so with a smile on my face.

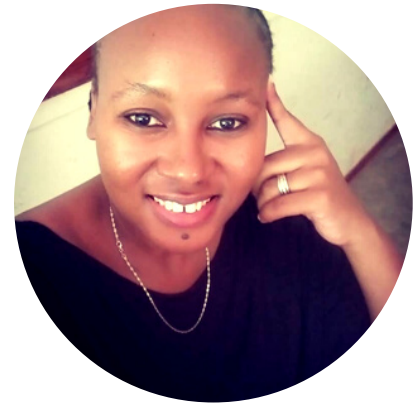
“Wherever I went during my attachment, I was so proud of FOSA since it shaped me to be the woman I am today”

A certain scholar called Aristotle once said, "...The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet," and indeed, today I attest to that perception. There were some long nights, worrying about deadlines, missed family meals, and anxious moments when grades came and yet, I overcame those! One would say, I learned the most important lesson to "Get Started and Keep Going."

The word "Thank you" doesn't feel like enough, but it truly sums up how I feel. I am so thankful for what you have done in my life and indeed your thoughtfulness will never go unnoticed. It will stay with me forever. You have always supported me not only with prayers and encouragements, but financially also. Your support has made me a stronger person and I am forever grateful. May God fulfil your hearty desires. Your prayers have taken me far and may you find favor in the Lord's sight. I love you all and may God bless you!

A NOTE FROM THE COUNSELOR

Rachel Saunyama
Elevation Zimbabwe



Rachel Saunyama

Since 2019, Elevation Zimbabwe has been working with Fairfield to equip children with skills that include Life and Leadership skills, financial literacy, Self-Awareness and Career Guidance. These sessions have been running once a week for 2 hours with a variety of activities including, group discussions, sports, and recently a field trip. The group has 24 registered children, 8 boys and 16 girls ranging between 14-17 years of age. Through the administering of the Aflateen+ Curriculum there is hope that the children will be better positioned to survive as they go out into the world, and they can make informed decisions as well as contribute positively to society.

The adolescent years of a child are the most crucial, and they determine a child's future. These set of skills will become their life first aid kit to face the numerous challenges that lay ahead of them, after life in the home. In recent years, there has been a major challenge, especially in Zimbabwe, with high rates of unemployment. According to the World Bank, the current unemployment rate for youth in Zimbabwe is 7.23%. It is, therefore, important to expose the children to many career options, including entrepreneurship and understanding how money works. Drug and substance abuse is another huge problem facing young people in the country, with a prevalence of 57% (Matutu, Musasa: 2019). Life skills such as self-awareness and leadership will help the children make better health choices.

The children have been very receptive to the program and are very grateful for these sessions. We are still in contact with some of the children who have left the home and are now in tertiary institutions. The impact of this program cannot be quantified, it goes beyond figures. It is life transforming. We would like to thank FOSA and the administration for supporting this initiative. These children are all our children, and we have a responsibility towards them. There is an African Proverb that says, "it takes a village to raise a child" and this is so true when we look at the story of the Fairfield Children's Homes. Thanks to all of you, there is Hope for these children after the home.



Children at EmpowerBank

FIELD TRIP TO THE BANK

When: July 23, 2022

Where: EmpowerBank, Mutare

Participants: 15 children

The purpose of the field trip was to enhance financial literacy by familiarizing the children with the banking system and processes. The bank staff talked to the children about the requirements for applying and opening a bank account, what's needed to apply for a loan, how loans are paid back, the consequences for failing to pay back loans, as well as basic banking operations and services available to them.

After the tour, the children enjoyed lunch at the Chicken Inn — which was a highlight for many!

LOOKING TO SPONSOR?

FOSA supports a substantial portion of Fairfield Children's Homes' financial needs, and our sponsorship program generates a large chunk of FOSA's funding. All sponsorship funding goes directly to the needs of the children and the sustainability of the Homes as a whole. Your sponsorship donation of \$30 a month is used collectively to cover the expenses of things like food, housing, education, health, dental, transportation, and costs associated with maintaining the facilities and operations at the Homes. These funds also go to cover the salaries for the mothers, aunts, educators, workers and other staff who care for the children.

TINOTENDA AND NILLA NEED SPONSORS!

Tinotenda, House 6A



Nilla, House 3



Find out more about sponsorships
at <http://fosakids.org>



Tinotenda and Nilla came to the Homes last year. Since the children came to Fairfield without birth certificates, their official age and birthdays are unknown. We believe them to approximately 2 years old.

WAYS TO SUPPORT FOSA



Sponsorship

For \$30 a month, your sponsorship money will help provide the children with everything they need to grow, flourish, and succeed.



Donate

Make a one-time donation or recurring donation that will support all of Fairfield's children and facilities. You can indicate on our donation page if you would like to support a specific cause, such as Careers for a Brighter Future.



Fundraise

Help us spread the word about FCH by raising funds at your church, local hangouts, and social media. Contact us for more information about how you can start a campaign and advocate for the cause.

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW...



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK FOR MORE UPDATES!



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS



4 Homes

4 mothers
1 Administrator



39 Children

5 living with
Foster Families as they
prepare for college



16 Students in College

*Note that FOSA does
not fund all college
students as some
students receive
outside funding and/or
financial opportunities



84% of Children Sponsored

5 unsponsored
33 at least partially
sponsored



\$76,009 Donations

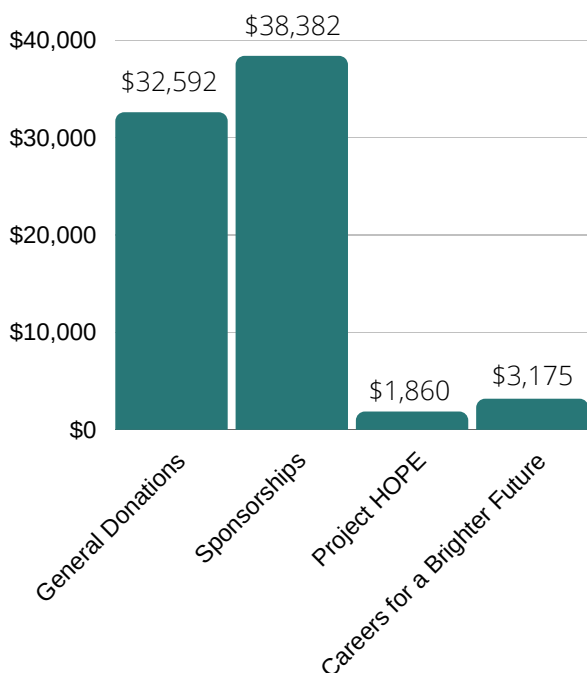


12 Board Members

1
Administrative
Assistant

2021 Income

\$76,009



2021 Expenses

\$79,950

