

Greetings from RCPUSA!

We are pleased to start with a story from a donor just like any one of you, a person whose generous support to Rabondo Community Project (RCPUSA) continues to let the Rabondo Community thrive and grow. That person is Fr. John Forliti. Following is his story in his own words.

A story behind St. Timon's in Kenya

By Fr. John Forliti

One day in 2002, Mr. Timon Bondo, a native of Kenya in East Africa, visited me at St. Olaf Catholic Church where I was pastor at the time. A man of few words but indomitable spirit came to ask me to help him build a high school for the youth of the rural area where he was born and raised. Rabondo is the local name but not likely to be found on a map. It is near Awendo which is around 100 miles south of Kisumu, which is a fifty-minute flight from Nairobi. Mr. Bondo had already brought elementary education to the boys and girls of Rabondo. High school had been available to boys if they could go off to a boarding school, which some did, but not to girls. A Secondary Day school for boys and girls was Mr. Bondo's dream and deep desire. "Father John, will you help me?"



Fr. John Forliti (Photo: Courtesy Cretin Derham Hall High School)

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Donor Spotlight: Host Families Sharing Our Vision Since the Beginning

We are most grateful to the host families in Minnesota who have opened their homes and hearts to Sheillah.



In addition to welcoming Sheillah into their families, her Minnesota hosts make certain she gets to and from school, to after-school activities and provide help with homework. Contributions are always needed for Sheilla's education.

Sheilla (center) with her host family, in their kitchen. In addition to hosting Sheila, Gail and Steve (pictured above) have five children of their own.

Impact of RCPUSA: Testimonials



My name is Stephen Ooko. I graduated from St. Timon's Rabondo Secondary School in 2007. While at St. Timon's, I was sponsored by Rabondo Community Project USA (RCPUSA). The project provided me with school fee, medical care, food, and even shelter. Then, I joined the University of Nairobi and graduated with an IT degree. Sony Sugar Company Limited employed me. Currently, I am with RCPUSA. As a direct beneficiary of RCPUSA, I thank those whose generosity has given me the opportunity to give back and those who are still involved in changing the lives of individuals and Rabondo village.



My name is Ochieng Kennedy Okwach. I graduated from St. Timon's in 2009 and enrolled in and graduated from Egoji Teachers Training College. I am now a student at Mt. Kenya University, pursuing a degree in education. I am also currently teaching at Manyatta High School, earning money to pay my university school fee. I am passionate about Rabondo—particularly St. Timon's school for its low-cost education—and about RCPUSA for establishing the school.



My name is Wasenya Onyango Wicklif. I graduated from St. Timon's in 2009. Later I entered Kisii University College and completed a degree. Currently I am a finance officer at Lawala Community Alliance, a multidimensional non-governmental organization that focuses on economic empowerment of locals, health care, and public health. I feel so grateful for being a beneficiary of RCPUSA. It is through preparation at St. Timon's that I was able to secure a chance at entering Kisii University College.



My name is Anne A. Ochieng. I graduated from St. Timon's in 2006. I now work for the government of Kenya as a police officer. During my time in school, I was an orphan and was sponsored by RCPUSA. As a direct beneficiary of RCPUSA, I pray that it continues to support people like myself and the entire community. May God bless RCPUSA and its generous donors abundantly.



I am Anthony Ouma Wakari. I graduated from St. Timon's in 2007. I volunteered as an untrained teacher before enrolling in St. John's Teacher Training College in Kilimambogo in 2010. I am now employed by the Kenyan government under the Teachers Service Commission. I am extremely grateful for the RCPUSA because it has positively changed our lives and the community at large. Hundreds of us are now their families' bread winners, and all are beneficiaries of the RCPUSA.



My name is Stephen Olale Okare. I enrolled in St. Timon's in 2006 when my widowed mother could no longer afford the school fee for the secondary school that I had been attending. After graduating in 2007, I studied mechanical engineering (plant option) at the Technical University of Mombasa. I now work at Equator Bottle Company Limited as a mechanical technician. I thank Mr. Timon Bondo and his project in my heart. I ask that the project continue because it is transforming the face of Rabondo Community.



I am Liz Ayieta. I graduated from St. Timon's in 2008 and enrolled in Meru Teachers Training College. I am currently teaching in Kakamega County. It is through the support of RCPUSA that I was able to arrive in Rabondo Village to join St. Timon's school. I thank God for allowing me to be a beneficiary of the project, which has made me a self-supporting, financially independent woman.



My name is Anne Ouma. I graduated from St. Timon's in 2009. It was the only affordable secondary school available to me, a girl with no financial means to continue my education beyond eighth grade. I later enrolled in Egoji Teachers Training College and am currently a volunteer teacher at Rabondo Primary School. I am thankful to RCPUSA. You made me see the light. Kindly keep up the good work.



My name is Benard Otieno. I graduated from St. Timon's in 2007. I later enrolled in the University of Nairobi and graduated with a degree in education. I am currently teaching at St. Joseph Rapogi High School, and I am always thankful to RCPUSA and St. Timon's for this. The establishment of a secondary school is one of the best gifts that can be given to a community such as Rabondo. I thank Timon Bondo and all the donors of RCPUSA for having the wonderful idea to start the school. It is through this idea and the support donated by the RCPUSA that I am now a self-supporting qualified teacher.



My name is Mary Akinyi Juma. I joined St. Timon's because it was the only secondary school my widowed mother could afford. The low school fee enabled me to continue and graduate in 2013. Currently, I am struggling, working at a menial job, trying to realize my dream of attending college. I thank RCPUSA for developing a platform through which I and others can be assisted. I wish the project could find a mechanism for assisting those in need of post-secondary education.



I am Julius Ochieng. I graduated from St. Timon's in 2005 and enrolled in Mosoriot Teachers Training College. I am now employed as a teacher by the Kenyan government under the Teachers Service Commission. When I was growing up, I dreamed of becoming a great teacher. But as I came from a humble family, I could not afford government schools and my dream almost faded away. Thanks to RCPUSA, my dream was revived and came true. Today, I am able to pay the school fees for my brothers. I have realized that nothing in nature lives for itself: trees do not eat their fruit and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. RCPUSA didn't come from itself; it is the vision of its founder, Timon Bondo. He has taught us that it is possible to do good to others. Thank you RCPUSA for making me who I am. Continue making the dreams of endless needy children come true.



My name is Benard Ooko Chacha. I entered St. Timon's in 2007. After graduating, I enrolled in the University of Nairobi to earn an education degree. With focus, anything is possible regardless of the challenge. With more resources, I believe St. Timon's and RCPUSA can achieve much more and expand their scope. This will allow founder Timon Bondo to help more people. I thank Mr. Bondo and his supporters. They have transformed our lives in a special way.



PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

To volunteer, please contact us at:

763-545-2828 or info@rcpusa.org
RCPUSA could use your skills either here or if you are visiting Kenya.

To give a monetary donation, please submit checks to:

Rabondo Community Project, USA
PO Box 27954
Minneapolis, MN 55427

PayPal is available:

www.rcpusa.org
Click 'Donate - Volunteer' tab towards the top of the page.

Find us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/rcpusa



RCP is finally on Facebook!

See photos taken by our sponsored students and read about things that are happening in Rabondo.

Short on cash and time?

If tougher times have you left you short on cash and not travelling these days, please consider donating your unused frequent flyer miles. It takes 85,000 mile for Timon to visit Rabondo every year to view the progress of our projects.

The Rabondo Community Project USA is a 501(c)(3) organization and gifts are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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A story behind St. Timon's in Kenya (Continued from page 1)

That year I had been planning to raise funds in support of six specific projects in Kenya. Enter Timon Bondo. "Father, will you help me?" Feeling the six projects were enough, I said No. Timon insisted, begging me to "do something." Following a few moments of anxiety and exasperation I agreed to introduce Timon to ten pastors, hoping some would invite him to their parishes for an appeal. Only one responded—which I have learned can be sufficient. After delivering his appeal to the parishioners at St. Therese in Deephaven, one of the couples, Jim and Colleen Ryan, offered to donate half of the \$100,000 Timon needed to build a high school. The rest would have to come from other sources.

The following week, Mr. Ryan informed me of his offer and urged me to include Timon's high school as the seventh project. A brochure was mailed with information about each project. The generous response of St. Olaf parishioners resulted in \$105,500 of which \$26,000 was designated for Rabondo. With another gift from the Ryans and the contributed services of the people of Rabondo (hauling rock, water, sand to make cement block), construction began. St. Timon's School opened in January 2003.

Why the name for the school? St. Timon was one of the original deacons mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts: 6, 1-6), thus the name of the school to honor our own Timon Bondo. Consisting of seven separate spaces—classrooms for grades nine through 12, a science lab, administration offices, and a future dining hall—the campus quickly became "the talk of the town." The government saw the need and was compelled to bring electricity from about ten miles away to that part of Kenya. A few years later, fresh and safe water followed with the drilling of a well. Education, electric power, safe water, a clinic—four life-changing contributions from Minnesota to Rabondo. But even more importantly, St. Timon's Secondary Day School has been a beacon of hope for young Kenyans and their families as they see dreams becoming reality. As of the end of 2015, a total of 609 students had graduated from the school. Twelve of those graduates have written testimonials about the role the school has played in shaping their hope for their future education and lives. See their pictures and stories in the previous pages.

In 2006, five St. Olaf parishioners and four teachers from Cretin-Derham Hall (CDH) accompanied me to visit Rabondo school and while there officially dedicated the new school. Over 700 local dignitaries and folks attended the dedication Mass and all-day picnic. How much this school meant to the entire community was very obvious and heartwarming.

My next visit was three years later when I accompanied two teachers and eight students to Rabondo. Our mission was to bring the community into the computer age. Having received a grant of \$10,000 to supply St. Timon school with computers, CDH students introduced the wonders of technology to Kenyan youth who before had never seen a typewriter. It was an eye-opening experience for all. In 2011, a second group of students from CDH visited Rabondo, again bringing suitcases filled with school supplies, athletic equipment, clothes, and much more.

In 2012, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of my ordination, I invited both family and friends to divert their gifts toward a dining hall and kitchen. Enough funds were donated and construction began on the "Fr. John Forliti Kitchen and Dining Hall." As of September 2016, the basic structure has been completed and efforts continue to equip and furnish it. Hopefully, it will be in full operation soon, serving the three hundred plus students and staff of Rabondo, Kenya.

For more information about St. Timon school and the Rabondo mission, go to www.rcpusa.org. On the website, you will find projects that are not complete. There is still work to be done and more donations are needed. For example, caring for deprived students such as orphans and at-risk students and taking care of the need of girls who require menstrual pads to be able to go to school during their menstrual cycle. Money is also needed for school fees, books, uniforms, meals, and miscellaneous supplies. An incomplete project includes the water distribution phase, including constructing a water tower, fencing to secure the water system, and running water to the primary and secondary schools, the clinic, and a water kiosk for local residents.