

2018 LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

November 2018

Dear Friends of The Wai Foundation,

It gives me great pleasure to report that despite the major disruption to our scholarship program in South Sudan in January 2017, our operations are now fully back on track. We have succeeded in transferring most of our activities from Kajo Keji County, South Sudan to northern Uganda and have increased our intake of scholars. We are now funding the education of 135 girls in four secondary schools in Uganda, and eighteen young women in seven tertiary schools in Uganda and South Sudan. At the end of 2018, twenty-nine students are poised to graduate with a certificate of secondary education. Even more impressive, four of our former secondary school scholars have succeeded in graduating from the tertiary level this year – making a total of seven young women who have reached that goal since we began funding post-secondary scholarships in 2011.

These accomplishments are remarkable given that most of our scholars studying in Uganda are refugees who have fled homes in South Sudan and are struggling to make new lives in the UNHCR camps in northern Uganda. The Ugandan government allows its refugee community to settle in small plots by building temporary shelters and planting subsistence crops for domestic use. Some of our refugee families have managed to build mud huts with grass-thatched roofs; others still live in temporary plastic-paper covered structures. The huts have no doors; the openings are shielded by a sheet of cloth or plastic paper. When it rains, water comes in, drenching everything on the dirt floor, including sleeping mats that take days to dry. Children with distended stomachs play together around in the compound, laughing and unmindful of their plight.

These are the very conditions that we observed during a ten-day site visit to Uganda this past March by three Board members of the Dunstan Wai Memorial Charitable Foundation. Beginning on March 7, 2018, Nyakwea Wai, James Adams, and Ibrahim Wani toured the Foundation's operations in Uganda, stopping first in Kampala. There they met with officials from the World Bank, the Windle Trust, and the UNHCR, (organizations that have a large presence in the same area as our scholarship program).

Then our intrepid Board member, Ibrahim Wani, a Ugandan-born American, drove the team north, often on gravel roads, to our funding area bordering South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. They traveled through Adjumani, then on to Moyo, where they visited our Wai scholars and the four secondary schools they attend. It was there that they went to see the Belameling refugee settlement described above, accompanied by three Wai scholarship recipients who call it home.

One of the highlights of the visit was a meeting on March 14 with the parents of the South Sudanese scholarship recipients. Over sixty parents were present -- most of

whom had walked to the school from distant refugee camps. Some had even left their settlement the day before to arrive on time. While they raised many concerns about the lack of family resources, almost all their comments and questions included expressions of appreciation for our support for the education of their daughters.

The visit's final stop was in Arua, where the Kajo Keji Health Training Institute hosts five of the students we are funding at the tertiary level. The Institute is in the process of relocating from Juba and so currently houses only one classroom block and a tent. Nonetheless, our scholars were full of optimism and seemed fully engaged in their work.

Our observations during this site visit have reenergized the Foundation's commitment to provide scholarships to as many of these ambitious, hard-working South Sudanese and Ugandan girls as possible. Thanks to the generosity of our current donors, we have been able to meet the demands on our resources, despite a substantial increase in the costs for each student from \$400 to \$500 due to a higher cost of living in Uganda than in South Sudan.

We are extremely grateful for the past generosity of our donors and hope that, having landed on our feet after a major challenge, we will continue to warrant your generous support. For those of you who have not yet donated, we invite you to join us in our work to promote girls' education in one of the most challenging places on earth.

Your support is needed now more than ever.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Kim Jaycox', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Edward Kim Jaycox, Chair
The Dunstan Wai Memorial Charitable Foundation