

## **2024 Back to School Report to Donors**

On behalf of the ACCES Society Board, the ACCES Foundation Board, and our beneficiaries, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support of our mission to alleviate poverty through education in the western region of Kenya. This communication aims to provide some updates as we look forward to a new school year for our beneficiaries.

This September, 374 ACCES-sponsored post-secondary students will be heading to school, including 302 continuing students selected in previous years and 72 new students, thanks to your generosity.

### **2024 Scholarship Intake**

Each year, ACCES advertises and awards scholarships to bright and needy students in the four counties that comprise the former Western Province. In April 2024, ACCES received 615 scholarship applications and selected 72 new students, 5 of whom live with a disability, to benefit from a scholarship that will support each to graduation. Alumni volunteers and staff selected 47 university, 15 college and 10 trade school students after interviewing 210 students and conducting home visits for 150 shortlisted candidates.



*2024 Cohort of new ACCES scholars pictured at the August 2 orientation session in front of the Golf Hotel.*

### **Donor Visit to Kakamega**

I enjoyed observing the interview phase of the scholarship intake process over three days in May with Canadian guests—long-time donors and former neighbors of Beth and George Scott, Conrad and Mary Anne Dickhoff and their daughter Leslie and her son James. The family and I met in Nairobi and travelled to Kakamega by air and



*Scholarship interview during donor visit May 2024*

road. We visited important sites in the region over five days, including an ACCES-built elementary school. The family became more familiar with the important work and legacy of ACCES and attended student scholarship interviews. The family continued their Kenyan adventure and enjoyed a safari in the Maasai Mara. The Kakamega Sports Club and Drunken Elephant Safari Lodge donated accommodations which the Dickhoff family purchased at a silent auction at the ACCES 30th anniversary event in Canada.

# African Canadian Continuing Education Society

alleviating poverty through education for over 30 years

## Civil Unrest in Kenya

Unemployment rates in Kenya are very high amongst young adults. Anyone travelling to the region has seen large groups of working-aged men and women in their twenties and thirties sitting idly in town squares with limited hope of employment. The 2020 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics reported that youth aged 20 to 29 had an unemployment rate of 32.4%, including 7.9% who haven't been employed in any capacity for over a year. Meanwhile, President William Ruto's government, elected in August 2022, has dramatically increased taxes and reduced regulation on various things, including post-secondary tuition rates, to be less reliant on foreign debt. This is the backdrop for the planned peaceful demonstrations scheduled every Tuesday and Thursday against the federal government, in which protesters are demanding accountability and good governance. The goal of the protests is to halt commerce and remind the political class of the impact that regular citizens have on the economy. Although not the aim of the organizers, some groups have used the rallies as an opportunity to incite violence.

## Trusted Stakeholders:

### Kenyan Advisory Committee

The Kenyan Advisory Committee (KAC) was established in 1997 to provide advice and guidance to Kenyan staff and the Canadian Board of Directors through the Executive Director. The group has no policy making or decision-making authority but is a valuable resource in helping make strategic decisions that are culturally sensitive and in the best interest of our long-term goals of sustainability.

Currently the KAC is made up of five members who have a great depth of experience.

Name	Sponsored in:
Dr Moses Akali	1998-2003
Gerishom Manase	1997
Lucky Ngoya	1998-2001
Anthony Napali	1993-1997
Susannah Onacha	2017-2023

## New Partners:

### ACCES Scholars Foundation

The ACCES alumni is a representation of the legacy of your generosity. On Friday August 4, 2023, the Government of Kenya officially registered the 'ACCES Scholars Foundation' as a legally recognized Kenyan society. It has been a long and complicated process to establish this legal entity, which is a representation of the alumni's desire to give back and continue the mission of alleviating poverty through education established by Beth and George. On May 18, 2024 the ACCES Scholars Foundation Executive was formed at an alumni meeting in Kakamega.



ACCES Scholars Foundation Executive - Left to right:  
Kevin Okwara, Vice Chair (ACCES beneficiary, 2012-2015)  
Anthony Mutevane, Staff (ACCES beneficiary, 2005-2009)  
Aminah Mukonzo, Treasurer (ACCES beneficiary, 2010-2014)  
Andrew Ndiema, Chair (ACCES beneficiary, 2011-2013)  
Prudence Munyendo, Secretary (ACCES beneficiary, 2016-2019)  
with Kevin Fadum, Executive Director, ACCES Society

## Thank You to Our Donors

Thank you, once again, for your ongoing support. ACCES is a donor-based organization which relies on the generosity of people like you. If you would like more information or have any questions or ideas you would like to discuss, please contact me directly and we can arrange a telephone or face-to-face meeting.

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