

# St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund Newsletter

April 2022

Email: [info@ugandachildrensfund.org](mailto:info@ugandachildrensfund.org)

"Children have to be educated, but they have also to be left to educate themselves."

—Father Ernest Dimnet



**Bertram** was one of our first students, entering first grade in 2005 just before his seventh birthday. He and around a dozen orphaned children were staying in a small, two-room house on the edge of a swamp with their elderly grandmother. Bertram's mother, suffering from mental health issues, also slept there but spent most days wandering around the neighborhood. His father is unknown.

Among this lively group of energetic children, Bertram was the unobtrusive one, easily overlooked as others clamored for attention. He quietly and persistently applied himself to his schoolwork and by the end of primary school, he was one of our top-performing students.



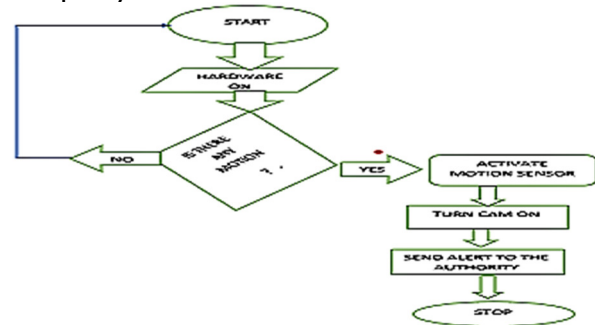
His natural genius and hard work became evident in O Level high school. Completing the national exams, he ranked in the First Division, obtaining high scores in Math and Physics as well as his other subjects. He



earned the privilege to advance to A Level with a subject combination of Math, Physics, and Economics. He completed Senior 6 as our best student and was accepted at Ndejje University for a bachelor's

degree in Electrical Engineering. Now in his final semester, he is on track to graduate with First Class Honours, the Ugandan equivalent of *summa cum laude*.

University finalists in engineering must conceive and implement an independent project prior to graduation. Bertram's proposal is both original and practical. Uganda, and Kampala in particular, has a serious problem of power theft. It's estimated that UMEME, Uganda's power distribution company, loses 28 million dollars annually in power theft and vandalism. Power theft is also one of the leading causes of death by electrocution, and results in inadequate power supply as transformers are overloaded due to the increased illegal load. Bertram's proposal is to design a solar-powered motion-activated system that can detect movement around the transformer, activate a mini-cam connected to microcontroller board, and send an alert via GSM to the electric company.



In addition to designing and constructing the device, he trained himself on the software required to make the thing work. Upon completion, he hopes to sell the idea to UMEME. But most importantly, Bertram has matured into a responsible and kind young man of integrity.



Our engineering students:  
Lydia, Benjamin, Simon, Dorah, & Bertram

**Anna** was also one of our first students, joining the program in third grade at the age of eight. Her father had died when she was two years old and her mother has suffered from chronic health problems. Anna's academic performance in primary school was fair but not outstanding. She was an average student in O Level high school, earning decent grades in her Arts classes but doing poorly in Sciences. We decided to give her a chance in A Level with a subject combination of History, Divinity, and Luganda (the local language).



At the end of the first school term, we were surprised to learn that Anna was the school's top student in Senior 5 and earned a full scholarship for the next term. She held this position throughout the remainder of Senior 5 and all of Senior 6, completing A Level as our best student. She passed the pre-Law exam at Nkumba University and was accepted into their LLB degree program.

Following her graduation in 2021, she enrolled in the mandatory post-graduate bar review course which she completed at the end of the year. As she waited for final certification from the Uganda Law Council she began clerking for a small law firm that handles a wide variety of cases, including civil, criminal, land, corporate, and family.



Anna is highly motivated, professional, and compassionate. Recently she effectively managed the case of a refugee from the fighting in Congo—a young mother whose husband had abandoned her but was still



collecting the refugee support allowance for her and her children. Working through the office of the Prime Minister of Uganda, Anna succeeded in obtaining the financial support the woman needed and deserved. Last week we were pleased to learn that the law firm has offered her a permanent position.

Anna's and Bertram's success has been made possible by your support and your prayers. Thank you for being our faithful partners!

*Peter & Sharon*

We welcome your donations.  
Checks may be sent to:

**St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund**  
**P.O. Box 285**  
**Chardon, OH 44024-0285**

Or you can donate online at  
[www.ugandachildrensfund.org](http://www.ugandachildrensfund.org)

**The St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund is a registered non-profit 501(c)(3) organization eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions.**

### **Uganda COVID-19 Update**

We fervently hope that this will be the final update on the COVID-19 virus in Uganda. The reported number of new cases has dropped to a statistically insignificant level. In December the president of Uganda in conjunction with the Ministry of Education announced that all primary and secondary schools would open on January 10<sup>th</sup> of this year. The students are thrilled to be back in the classroom and we also are very happy to be back to a normal routine after almost two years of improvising.