



# NEWSLETTER

## TRANSFORMING THE BONEZA, RWANDA COMMUNITY

### Our Mission

To positively transform the community of Boneza out of extreme poverty by focusing on education, clean water, healthcare, Pastoral care, and economic development.

### Our Vision

A thriving Boneza, Rwanda, with Christ centered, educational leaders and residents creating hope, health, and sustainability for all people.

### Inside This Issue

<b>National Recognition for KHA Teachers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>National Exam Honors</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Arise Rwanda Leadership Team</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Thank You and Happy New Year!</b>	<b>7</b>

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### National Recognition for KHA Teachers

#### Kivu Hills Academy Ranked Among the Best Schools in Rwanda and Gets Recognized at the International Teachers' Celebration in Kigali

In just the past couple of weeks, Kivu Hills Academy (KHA) received special recognition by the government of Rwanda for being among the very best performing schools in ALL of Rwanda. In addition, the entire KHA staff was invited to Kigali to attend the very special Teacher's Day Celebration at Intare Arena. Not only was KHA invited as one of the best-performing schools in Rwanda - but they were also recognized as THE TOP technical school in the entire country! We give thanks to God!! What a wonderful honor! Every KHA staff member received a brand new smart phone as a reward for their performance in the national examination.

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To celebrate this achievement, the Rwandan government sent a bus to pick up and transport all the KHA staff from Boneza to Kigali for the occasion. The event honored KHA's ongoing dedication to quality education and technical training,

recognizing its role as a leader in academic performance.

KHA has earned additional national recognition as the 3rd best school in the country on the Ministry of Education's list of top 18 schools. Two KHA students secured national honors for best performance in Building Construction and Tourism and Hospitality trades. This remarkable achievement reaffirms the school's reputation for excellence in technical and vocational education.

Since graduating its first class in 2018, KHA has consistently demonstrated growth and success, earning a reputation for academic excellence and community transformation through Christ-centered education.

Let us all praise God for this great privilege and opportunity. Way to go KHA staff...well deserved honor and recognition! We are all SO proud of you!!

## National Exam Honors

### Direct Field Communications From Boneza

And just when we thought the news out of Kivu Hills Academy could not get any better, it did! The annual Rwanda National Exams were recently given and they're very important. They help determine the quality of education being received at all schools. They also help to determine which students are exceptional and worthy of a university scholarship. It can be a stressful time for both students and teachers. However, this year, with over 200,000 students participating across

Rwanda, the #1 and #2 best scoring students were from Kivu Hills Academy! We want to share their extraordinary stories with you. What a year!! We cannot wait to see what 2025 has in store!!

## KHA Student Best Performers

### Meet the National Exam Best Performer in Construction and Building Services



Emmanuel, 20 years old, was one of our students at Kivu Hills Academy in the 2024 class. He was among 43 students who graduated in construction and building services

option and obtained the best grades in the entire country of Rwanda.

Emmanuel led the list of a few students that were rewarded by the Minister of education on the occasion of publication of the national examination results. He received a brand-new laptop and certificate of excellence.

In 2023 when Emmanuel was in grade 11 also known as Level 5 in the Rwandan Technical and Vocational education system represented Kivu Hills



Academy in a brick laying hands-on competition and emerged number one in the western Province. His performance in this contest revealed his potentials to teachers who also helped him in preparing the national end of high school examination.

Emmanuel and his father in their home

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When visited by a KHA staff member after the success, Emmanuel and his parents expressed their gratitude to Kivu Hills Academy and Arise Rwanda. "I had no hope when I finished middle school, I had good grades but there was no hope for a good school to help chase my dreams of becoming a civil engineer," said Emmanuel. "Thanks to Arise Rwanda Scholarship, I attended Kivu Hills Academy which my family couldn't afford. Now, the future is foreseeable, with my grade I will get a government scholarship to attend one of the best universities in Rwanda and become an Engineer in four years to come," he added.

On the hand, Emmanuel's Father was overjoyed when he was invited to Kigali to meet the Minister of Education because of his son's extraordinary performance. "I am still very grateful to Jesus who works through Arise Rwanda to give support and strength to children from humble families just like my son. The only thing in my means is to pray for the School, Teachers and Arise Rwanda. May the Almighty God bless all your projects," he said.

Thanks to his performance, Emmanuel will receive a government full scholarship to study University in Rwanda.

### Meet Pierre, the KHA Student who Emerged First in Hospitality and Tourism Studies Countrywide

Pierre is the 6th in a family of 10 children. He comes from Rusizi about 150 miles from Boneza. Pierre completed his high school education in July 2024. He sat for national exams and was declared the best performer in Tourism and hospitality in the whole country and received a prize from the ministry of education.

Pierre is known by his teachers as a highly behaved, curious and ambitious student who uses

every single opportunity he gets to learn new things.

During his time at KHA, He was academically very active and was involved in research on behalf of planet bird song, as a bird sound recordist and he is now employed by the same organization.

When talking to our staff member, Pierre expressed his gratitude to Arise Rwanda that paid his school fees for three years and KHA teachers who never ceased to encourage him to aim higher.

Pierre's Father, a local Pastor in Rusizi cannot stop praising God for his son's academic success.

"Please join us as we thank God." He said. We



are so grateful to God, Arise Rwanda and Pierre's Teachers" He added.

Pierre's advice to his young brothers and sisters who are still at KHA is to remain disciplined and

focused on their studies. "Success is not an accident; you work for it." He said.

Pierre's long-term goal is to become a tour operator and promote tourism in the Kivu belt area. He will be given a full scholarship from the government.



## Arise Rwanda Leadership Team

### Direct Field Communications From Boneza

Arise Rwanda would not be where it is today without the incredible leadership team we have. We thought it might be helpful for all of you reading and sharing the Newsletter to step briefly into the shoes of our team members and better understand the adversities they have faced, the challenges they have overcome, and the ongoing burdens they carry and that you can pray about. They are in amazing positions to mentor and teach the generations they are over seeing.



### Please meet Wellars.

Wellars is 60 years old. Born and raised in Boneza on the hill where Arise Rwanda Ministries is building Kivu Hills Medical Center. Wellars is a local pastor in the methodist church and a

community health worker in Boneza. He helped Arise Rwanda to acquire the land where Kivu Hills Medical Center (KHMC) is built. As a community health worker in his village in Boneza, when KHMC was being built, his neighbors asked him to go and ask John "When are you going to build a medical center for the poor people like us and our families? Because KHMC is such a start of the art medical center and only for the rich people". When Wellars went back and shared the news with the locals that KHMC is a medical center for all the people in Boneza, the entire community was filled with HOPE, JOY and THANKSGIVING. Wellars comes to work at KHMC and gives his village the updates of the progress of the medical center. His village of about 1,000 people are so excited that very soon they will have access to affordable and quality healthcare services in their community. The entire community can't wait for KHMC to open and start offering the very much needed health services.

### Please meet Julienne.

Julienne Nyirahabimana is a 50-year-old widow of 4 children who has been working at KHMC since we broke the ground in October 2022. Her husband died about 5 years ago of diseases they didn't know because they didn't have any hospital to go. It was so heartbreaking and devastating for the family since he was also the breadwinner. Julienne says, "Currently we walk for 5 hours to the nearest government hospital and when you get there, you have to wait in the lines for another 3 years to be seen by a nurse! Many of our children and people have died from their homes because there is limited healthcare next to none in Boneza. KHMC has come as a blessing to the people of Boneza. We will access healthcare services here in our community."



Additionally, KHMC provides jobs to the people in Boneza. Julienne makes \$2 a day and gets lunch every day for 6 days a week. She can feed her family, send all her four children to school, bought two pigs worth \$300. Her dream is to buy a cow for her family that would provide milk, manure for her coffee plantation and an income by selling off the calves. She is so thankful to Arise Rwanda Ministries and the donors for building Kivu Hills Medical Center that will offer affordable and quality healthcare services to the 30,000 people of Boneza and the entire region of the Western province of Rwanda.





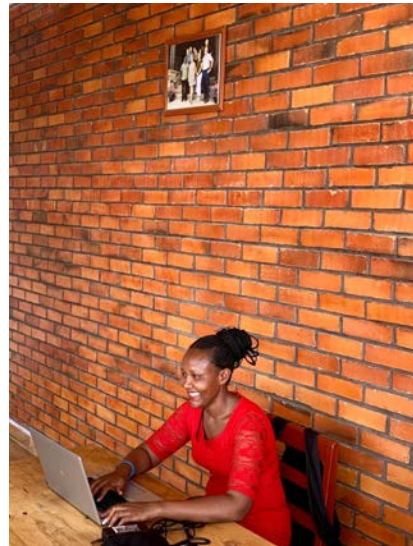
## Grace's Journey of Forgiveness

Meet Grace Nirere Arise Rwanda Community Development officer: Grace is a 36-year-old survivor of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. During the Genocide, Grace was only 6 years old when the genocide broke in her community in the southern province of Rwanda. Grace saw her Father and Mother hacked with clubs and machetes by the militias from her village when she was sitting on the lap of her father! Her dad asked Grace to close her eyes so that she could not see him being killed. Blood covered Grace everywhere! "These were our neighbors killing our family. As children, we used to play with their children. We used to go to the same Sunday school and sang in the same children's choir. Their parents turned and killed my parents and almost all of my family members." Grace was left with two younger siblings, a brother and a sister to take care of at the age of 6. Grace started her first business at the age of 10 selling cassava in the market in order to support her siblings. "Raising children when I was also a child is one of the hardest and most challenging things I have ever done in my life" Grace says. By God's grace and Grace's determination, they were all able to complete college and are now working. The brother is a welder and her sister works in a bank.

Grace was later to face another big challenge in her life of FORGIVENESS. How do you forgive the killers of your family? How do you forgive people who made you an orphan at the age of 6? She buried that bitterness, anger, hurt and brokenness until she came to serve with Arise Rwanda Ministries as an intern about 7 years ago.

During her time as an intern with Arise Rwanda in Boneza, we visited a Genocide widow Thacienne who had lost 28 people of her family during the Genocide. Thacienne went to prison in Gisenyi to offer forgiveness to Thacien who had killed her entire family during the genocide! After she

offered forgiveness, Thacien was freed from prison and came back to live in the same village with Thacienne as her neighbor.



When Grace visited Thacienne in Boneza, she found Thacien had come to help Thacienne to take care of her cow that Arise Rwanda had donated to her. Then they both shared their stories of

how Thacien killed Thacienne's family during the genocide and after the genocide he was put in prison for his role in the Genocide. Thacien shared, "It was after 15 years in prison that Thacienne came to visit me and offered me



forgiveness. It was then that I was freed. I still regret killing her family members".

Grace couldn't grasp how Thacienne had forgiven Thacien who had killed 28 people in her family! Thacienne became Grace's inspiring story to start her journey of forgiveness.

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About 5 years ago, Grace went back to her village and forgave all the people who had killed her family during the genocide. "Forgiveness is not one day journey, it's a lifetime commitment and choice you have to make every day for the rest of your life," Grace concludes.

Currently Grace is married and has 3 beautiful children. She works with 3,000 women in Boneza through Arise Rwanda Ministries to help them form



Trust groups, teaches them about forgiveness and reconciliation, business development and helping them get out of extreme poverty by focusing on helping them start small businesses. "Serving with Arise Rwanda has given me the greatest HOPE of my life and a purpose to serve the women in Boneza by helping them start small businesses" Grace remarks.



**Please meet Vincent.**

Vincent Abayisenga is 37 year old. Married with 2 children. Vincent joined KHA in 2018 as the KHA Soccer and volleyball coach - and a patron for the boys. For the last 5 years, Vincent has been the Entrepreneurship teacher at

Kivu Hills Academy teaching business start-ups and working with KHA students to create viable

business ideas and start small businesses in their communities. Last year, he launched a KHA business incubation Center. In the incubation center, KHA students come and create and dream of new businesses ideas which they can launch at KHA or after they graduate from KHA. Last year, they started a "KHA savings bank." Currently they have saved \$180 in their savings bank to help them start businesses. Last week, KHA students went for a business plan competition in Kigali, and they came out as top 10 best business innovative schools in Rwanda.

Vincent says "I was born and raised up in Boneza. There was no HOPE in this community until Arise Rwanda came to Boneza. We watched. We were amazed when clean water started flowing and the ARM leaders said..."This is Living water! Brought by God!" They started pre-schools and later on Kivu Hills Academy. Now KHA is known as the top Technical School in all of Rwanda! It is beacon of HOPE in Boneza.



Also, small businesses for women are growing and making a way for so many families to climb out of poverty. Kivu Hills Medical Center is hard to believe! By God's grace, Arise Rwanda made me who I am today! I am so thankful for the transformation that is happening in my community because of Arise Rwanda Ministries. I am very humbled to be part of Kivu Hills Academy."







Our mission is to partner with the Boneza sector to make the programs sustainable and integrated into the fabric of the community. God is at work in this amazing land, and we are privileged to be part of His work there. We give God the glory for all that is being accomplished in His name. Join us in prayer for the success of the mission and for the people we serve.

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**Follow our progress and learn more about our programs, impact, and how to get involved at [ariserwanda.org](http://ariserwanda.org) or on Facebook.**

All donations are tax-deductible. Arise Rwanda Ministries USA is a US 501 (c)(3) charity, EIN 88-3306938

Donations can be made online or sent to:

**Arise Rwanda Ministries USA, Inc.**

c/o Pamela Fogg, CPA

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## Thank You and Happy New Year!

Arise Rwanda Ministries would like to wish you all a very happy holiday season! 2024 could not be coming to a close on a higher or more exciting note! Join us in giving thanks to God for His grace, favor and provision through each one of you. Whether you have given of time, talent or treasure...each unique gift has been powerfully used to advance the Kingdom in Boneza as well as each of our students and staff. Thank you!

As 2024 draws to a close...everyone at Arise Rwanda wants to say Thank you. Because of you, our faithful supporters in prayer, visits, giving and voice... God has blessed the community of Boneza in miraculous ways that only He could do. God stirs hearts, prompts people to visit, transformed lives on both sides of the ocean in significant ways and for His glory. May His Mighty Hand continue to move in stirring all of our hearts to pray, visit, give and share the enormous love of Jesus that shines brightly through all He is doing in Boneza. May we all rejoice and give thanks to God for giving us His Son. Celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ - The King of Kings and Lord of Lords.



[Click here to learn more about Boneza](#)