

# The Kellermann Foundation Newsletter

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**The Kellermann Foundation**  
Providing hope and health in Uganda

## Sylvia takes New York:

### UN committee invites Mutwa woman to share the plight of her people

When **Sylvia Kokunda** was sleeping on a mat in a hut in an impoverished Batwa settlement as a child, she never dreamed she would one day board a plane to New York City to share her people's plight on an international stage.

But Sylvia, the first Bwindi-area woman from the Batwa pygmy tribe armed with a college degree, was given that chance in April.

Sylvia, 25, shared the Batwa story at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at the UN Headquarters. She also visited the Empire State Building and had her first-ever taste of pizza, but stayed focused on her main mission.



"Specifically, I was asked to talk about enhancing political participation for minorities in general and for my people," Sylvia said. She explained to the UN committee how the Batwa were removed from the forest where they thrived for millennia when it became a national park in 1992 to protect endangered mountain gorillas.

"We were not compensated and not included in the decision-making," she said. She described the poverty and poor health that ensued for the Batwa people in unfamiliar territory.

Sylvia's single mother earned money and food for her children by farming crops in other people's gardens. Her meager earnings could not cover Uganda's required school costs for all the children.

"Life was very difficult," Sylvia recalls.



She then explained that the Batwa Development Program (BDP), founded by the Kellermanns, plays a major role in Batwa rehabilitation and could serve as a prototype for other minority groups.

The BDP "has boosted the Batwa to reach another level through school scholarships, land, home building, improved healthcare, various outreach opportunities, and advising. For that, I am happy."

*(cont. on pg. 2)*

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**You  
make the  
stories  
in this  
newsletter  
possible!**

## Uganda Nursing School Bwindi – teaching excellence

Your support of **Uganda Nursing School Bwindi** (UNSB), which opened in 2013, is helping it flourish. The nursing school, an affiliate of Uganda Christian University, currently has 45 students enrolled at four different levels.

Teaching is led by two full-time instructors and supplemented by 16 Bwindi Community Hospital (BCH) staff members who teach part time in their specialty areas.

UNSB admits two classes of students each academic year. Direct entrants (novice students) begin in the fall and complete a three-year program. Trained nurses who wish to advance to the diploma level begin in May of each year and complete an 18-month program.

Despite its isolated rural location, UNSB is a model institution with a growing regional reputation. Students access their textbooks on iPads, and interactive white

boards are used in the classrooms. Partnerships with the University of San Francisco, the University of Vermont, and Stanford University allow online shared educational materials.

"All these [innovations] have put our students on the map and given them an edge to compete with other schools," said Jane Anyango Nkalubo, principal of UNSB.

*(cont. on pg. 3)*

## Volunteer Corner: Daniel and Rachel Jamison

In May, **Daniel and Rachel Jamison** and their two children were welcomed to Bwindi, where they will serve as full-time, long-term missionaries. Daniel, a skilled handyman and manager, will manage the guest house system, while Rachel will serve Bwindi Community Hospital (BCH) as a certified midwife.



**Home base:** Grass Valley, California

**Children:** Willow (6) and Ansel (5)

**Education:** Daniel and Rachel studied at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Rachel studied midwifery with Mercy In Action in 2012.

**International experience:** The Jamison family lived in the Philippines for eight months in 2013, where Rachel trained and practiced as a midwife at Shiphrah Birthing Home while Daniel kept the children and worked as a handyman. They have served around the world, including Cameroon, Panama, Fiji, Mexico, and Ireland.

**Service philosophy:** "But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does

God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." — *1 John 3:17-18*

"Spend the whole of your one wild and beautiful life investing in many lives, and God simply will not be outdone." — *Ann Voskamp*

**Connection to Bwindi:** Rachel visited Bwindi while in college to help with HIV testing and counseling, as well as a nutrition-feeding program for malnourished babies.

**Home for now:** The family of four plans to build a new home soon, but now bunks in the one-room house known as the Blackie Shackie near the hospital. It has electricity and the porch has a sink and a shower with hot water. Monkeys come to visit their porch often.

**Why do you want to work in Bwindi:** "We identify with the mission of BCH in serving Jesus Christ through giving holistic healthcare and life in all its fullness to the staff, patients, clients, and visitors in the hospital and community. We love Jesus and He brought us here to serve, and so we are doing that. We are loving life here and finding our place."



## Sylvia (cont. from pg. 1)

The Batwa still face challenges. She explained no Batwa are involved in any level of political leadership and only three have graduated from university in Uganda. Sylvia has presented this message before in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo with the Minority Human Rights Group International, which funded her trip to the UN through IDEA, the Institute for Democracy and Assistance.

Her impassioned report at the UN prompted an invitation from the ambassador's office later that day to discuss the future of the Batwa.

A Kellermann Foundation donor named **Judy Goldman** (see story on page 3) sponsored Sylvia through secondary school. Sylvia was then the first Mutwa woman from the Bwindi region to receive a university education, thanks to a scholarship from [Uganda Christian University Partners](#).

Sylvia, the girl who learned gardening basics from her mother, now manages the agriculture department for the Batwa Development Program.

"I want to be with my people," she said. "I have to be their role model and inspire them. I want to see the Batwa in the future get involved in the government activities and afford things without being dependent."

## Batwa women sew uniforms for Compassion International

The **Batwa Women's Center (BWC)** was recently invited by Compassion International's Rutenga Child Development Center



*Constance Koshaba, instructor, sews a uniform.*

to make school uniforms for students in the Compassion sponsorship program. This project generated income for the Batwa women who participated and helped make their sewing services known in the area.

Constance Koshaba, program director for the BWC, and Samari Nyamishana, a trained Mutwa seamstress, finished the order, including 125 uniform dresses made of red dotted Swiss material.

The BWC may be introduced to Compassion International branches in other sub-counties for future sewing projects. Thanks to Onesimus Kiconco, son of BDP coordinator Enos Komunda, for connecting BWC to this program.



*Samari Nyamishana cuts dress pieces for sewing.*

## Donor Corner: “A simple act of saying yes”

Contributed by Judy Goldman



In 2003, I took off for an adventure in Uganda to see the big animals.

We arrived at the mountain gorilla lodge and spent two days tracking and observing these giants. But

most of all, I was struck by the people: The elderly. The children with infectious smiles, waves, and greetings. The women busy with cleaning, shopping, caring for children.

I'd heard of a nearby hospital founded by a doctor from my hometown of Nevada City, California. I asked around and found Bwindi Community Hospital. As a registered nurse, I was fascinated by the facilities and the way they utilize every bit of equipment provided them.

While exploring the hospital grounds, I met **Dr. Scott Kellermann**. I learned about his foundation and current financial needs. I decided to help out.

I flew back to my home, my faucet with safe running water, a kitchen with electricity and gas appliances, a tile and wood floor, air conditioning, a garage, and a car. I arrived in Uganda with gorillas on my mind. I left Uganda with people, community, health, and a smile in my heart.

After a few years as a Kellermann Foundation supporter, Dr. Kellermann asked me to sponsor the high school education for a bright young Mutwa girl, **Sylvia Kokunda**. He said she showed great potential. I agreed to help.

I never met Sylvia, but we communicated through email. Over the years, she shared her plans and dreams for her future. There were bumps in the road as she became a teenage mother. She persisted in her education and I persisted in my support. I offered grandmotherly pep talks: “I have faith in you. You're going to do great.” We talked about possibilities, persistence, studying, faith in herself and God, loneliness for her family, and courage.

Sylvia completed high school. She was elated to begin her college career on a

scholarship from **Uganda Christian University Partners**. My last gift to her was a laptop for her university coursework.

Sylvia is now one of only three Batwa to graduate from college and has become a champion for her people. I heard she was speaking before a UN committee and I was amazed. (See Sylvia's story on page 1.)

I asked, before all of this: What can I do? I'm one person. Now, I see what I can do: **A simple act of saying yes.** I'll help. I'll jump in. **I gave. Will you?**



*From Sylvia: “I'm sure I wouldn't have reached this level without Judy and the Kellermann Foundation. Now, I can advocate for my people. I am the first to be educated, so I have to be their role model and inspire them to also study and be like me.”*

## Uganda Nursing School Bwindi (cont. from pg. 1)

The school also collaborates with **Imaging the World** to train the students in obstetric ultrasound, enabling them to identify risks and complications in pregnancy and thus reduce maternal and neonatal mortality once they graduate. Students receive this training at the ultrasound skills laboratory established on campus. The ultrasound machines are also used for BCH patients, further improving diagnosis and treatment to this vulnerable population.

Your partnership is needed to ensure that the school can continue to overcome challenges and improve student services such as web access and transportation. In addition, most students at UNSB come from lower-income families, so scholarships and financial support are crucial. Six students, including Twinomugisha Herbert (photo above), currently receive scholarships through the Kellermann Foundation. Many more students are eligible for scholarships should funds become available.

A UNSB staff member said, “We love the school, and we are proud of our achievements and the people who have joined hands in supporting us. Thanks to all of you.”

**We hope you will join with us in supporting this amazing institution.**



*Herbert practices setting up an IV.*

## You can help

- Sponsor a student (\$4,500 a year). [donations@kellermannfoundation.org](mailto:donations@kellermannfoundation.org)

- Become one of our **Nursing School Champions**. Here's how:

Do you have contacts with:

- Professional organizations that focus on medical or nursing fields?
- Friends and family with interest in healthcare, sub-Saharan Africa, or social justice?
- Nurses, physicians, or other healthcare providers?
- Church groups, schools, or civic organizations?
- Friends in social media?

Reach out to them to tell the story of UNSB and other Kellermann Foundation work in Uganda.

Let us equip you to share! Contact our office at (972) 685-0279.



## The Kellermann Foundation

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## Staff

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## New home for Nossi

The **Batwa Development Program (BDP)** recently teamed up with **Redemption Song Foundation** to build a new home in the Batwa settlement of Karehe. The house was built for single mom Nossi and her son Moses. It was funded through the generosity of donors to both Redemption Song Foundation and the Kellermann Foundation.



*A door is placed on Nossi and Moses's new home.*



*Moses (left) and friend Jonas at the leaf hut where Moses and his mother used to live.*

Batwa families. The foundation's programs empower local families to find sustainable solutions to poverty. Wendee now lives in the Bwindi area, working directly with those in need. Her programs complement those of the BDP at Karehe.



*Nossi tries the raised bed frame (made by the Batwa) in her new home as friend Jackline peers in.*

**Wendee Nicole**, founder of Redemption Song Foundation, created the 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 2014 after meeting Scott Kellermann and spending time with Karehe

## Kellermann Foundation Board Members 2015

Jean Creasey, DDS, President  
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## Tidbits

- Many thanks to **Randy Mayeux** and **Karl Krayer** for featuring the Kellermann Foundation as the June charity sponsor at their **First Friday Book Synopsis** in Dallas. At this popular monthly event, Krayer and Mayeux summarize two recent business best-sellers to a diverse audience eager to learn the latest. (Read more in a recent *Dallas Morning News* article [here](#)). Our participation in the event helped raise funds and awareness about our work in Uganda.
- Do you have experience in education? The Kellermann Foundation is seeking a **long-term volunteer** to assist with teacher training, student support, and mentoring in Uganda. For more information, email [volunteer@kellermannfoundation.org](mailto:volunteer@kellermannfoundation.org).
- **Kathleen Cook-Hunter**, her husband **Paul Hunter**, and friend **Sheri Crandall** are creating a Kellermann Foundation display for the **International Museum of Cultures** in Dallas. The display will depict the life of the Batwa pygmies and our work in Uganda with healthcare and nursing education.

## Batwa Challenge Race Aug. 15

The 5th annual **Batwa Challenge** 5K and 10K run and 5K walk will take place in Nevada City, California, on Saturday, August 15. The event, which starts at Pioneer Park, is now a part of the **Gold Country Grand Prix** in Nevada County.

This year's course will include northern California forest trails evoking images of Bwindi! All proceeds benefit the Kellermann Foundation and our programs in Uganda.

To register, volunteer, or learn more, visit [www.batwachallenge.com](http://www.batwachallenge.com).



*Race director Jean Creasey and Dr. Scott Kellermann prepare to start the 2014 Batwa Challenge.*