



FRIENDS OF
HOPE AFRICA UNIVERSITY

FRIENDS NEWSLETTER January 2025

Celebrating 25 Years of Hope (January and February Special Newsletters)

Gerald and Marlene Bates kick-off our Celebration of the 25th Year of the Founding of HAU

Reflections from Gerald and Marlene Bates

In recent reading, I came across a statement “Hope as an act of love.” This assertion threw me back into pre-Hope Africa University time. The founding of the university 25 years ago culminated years of longing by the Free Methodist Church leadership in Central Africa. We lived a long time of experience and listening to the longings of thoughtful African leaders who felt we needed to do something to give birth to hope. For example, at one point, Pastor Andrey Nikondeha came to us with a building design as a start for a university he had personally commissioned from an architect. We remember a mountainside across from Bujumbura in Congo which church leaders thought would be a good place for a university. We remember also a long walk with a bishop in Kigali, Rwanda where he showed us a desirable property on which to build a university. Unfortunately, in each case, political events overtook us in our aspirations.

Then, our founder, Bishop Dr. Elie Buconyori had a great vision, thinking the time may have come to take the risk and begin a university. He declared in the first University Catalogue a vision for what a university could do. He wrote. “With the mind of Christ resting within students, it is possible to become an influence and a positive agent for change in this world for what is good, hopeful, pure and righteous.”

Over the past 25 years, we have realized that “Hope is an act of love,” a courageous, sometimes daring, and even irrational statement. Aspirations have been realized in the abundant fruits of the university as an agent of God’s kingdom. We are reminded of Jesus’ message to John the Baptist in prison where he listed the various miraculous healings of the kingdom ending with these words, “And the poor have good news brought to them.”

Hope Africa University is a “good news” university. And God has blessed us over the 25 years. We are celebrating as we look in faith to the future. In those 25 years, we have graduated 339 medical doctors, 52 graduates of the country’s only post-graduate medical internship, and seven current surgical residents. There have been 830 nursing graduates. The impact of these skills taught at the university is incalculable! Just in the medical field, the numbers of inpatients, outpatients, births, surgeries are nearly beyond imagination. There are 22 academic specialties in the university—engineering, computer education, theology, communication (including Radio Voice of Hope and its attached training), community development, and others. In many of these, there are also master's programs. In the past two years, we have launched an agricultural program, much needed in the hungriest country on the planet. These are only examples of what goes on among the nearly 7,000 students over the course of any given year, most of whom come from the subsistence sector of the population. We have to mention the sports programs, close to our hearts, men’s and women’s basketball, volleyball, and interuniversity soccer (where we have a winning record challenging the national university). We work to assist the most needy with scholarships and to support the school budget. Board members of Friends of Hope Africa University go every year to teach and encourage. A whole delegation is there right now to teach and help observe the 25-year celebration (along with hundreds of new graduates).

Our task at this point in HAU's history is momentum. To enlarge our capacity, we are laying the foundation for a new four-story academic classroom and lab building.

We know no project, that competes with Hope Africa University in representing the Kingdom of God and shining its light among people who live on the edge, people we love. Would you join us in this project called "Hope."



Watch for the February Newsletter and pictures of the 25th Anniversary Celebration and Graduation.



Donate: There are many ways to give. Please consider giving to Friends of Hope Africa University online at <https://fofhau.kindful.com>. Or, if making a gift by check is preferred, you can mail your gift to Friends of Hope Africa University at PO Box 580, Spring Arbor, MI 49283.

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