It’s 2019, and we have so much to celebrate at Jitegemee. Our children are thriving and we continue to grow our staff, programs and capacity to support our mission. Here’s some good news from our children and their families that we recently shared in our 2018 Annual Report:

- 100% of our examination candidates passed their exams at the end of 2018, including 1 university graduate, 5 high school students, and 14 primary school students
- 94% of our Vocational students passed the government trade test
- 48 of our parents graduated from our first ever Street Business School class
- We served more than 49,000 meals through our Feeding Program
- 146 children and 92 parents got physical check-ups and referrals during our Annual Health Days

A NOTE FROM VERITY

MOMENTS OF FEAR, MOMENTS OF JOY
As my flight landed in New York on January 15, following an inspiring and jam-packed visit with the Jitegemee team, I got a text message from a friend:

Have you heard about the attack in Nairobi? Are you back home yet?

The tragic DusitD2 hotel attack in Nairobi reminded us of the fragility of life, as well as the chaos and uncertainty we face in today’s world. Fortunately, there is also joy and progress to celebrate. Gaining an education provides hope and a chance for a better life for our children. Here at Jitegemee, I see much to be thankful for. Our team, children, and their families never fail to amaze me—how hard they work; the adversity they overcome; their resilience and determination to improve their circumstances.

REASONS TO CELEBRATE
Our primary, high school and university graduates again achieved a 100% pass rate in their 2018 end-of-year exams. Our Vocational students achieved a 94% pass rate on the government trade exam. And in 2019, we are providing support to a record 80 primary school, 20 high school, 27 university and 39 newly recruited Vocational students.

What made my heart sing this year—in addition to these wonderful achievements by our students—was the way Jitegemee has increasingly been recognized as a valuable community resource to vulnerable, troubled youth in Machakos.

Our Country Director Jennifer Katiwa is part of a group that meets to discuss the challenges facing community youth. The group includes various government departments, the police, social services, and Jitegemee. This year, the Probation Department recommended two students join our Vocational Program as an alternative to serving time in prison.

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REFLECTIONS ON OUR WORK
In April, I was able to reflect further on the impact of Jitegemee as part of a panel of scholar-practitioners presenting their work and research on Jitegemee at the 2019 Comparative and International Education Society conference.

- Dr. Beverley Bell presented her work with our team to formalize and align our Rehabilitation Curriculum with Kenyan national education standards
- Nyaradzai Changamire discussed her doctoral research on our sexual and reproductive health program
- Dr. David Bell and Martina Amoth shared their work on strengthening our monitoring and evaluation systems

Shortly after the conference, during a presentation at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, I heard Martina share her horror about the DusitD2 hotel attack which continues to impact people and places she knows and loves. Even while discussing this horrific event, she was able to see hope and progress, including the quick response by Kenyan security forces to bring it to conclusion—a noticeable improvement from previous incidents.

WE CONTINUE LOOKING FORWARD
Martina’s message of hope extended to Jitegemee at a dinner event in Boston where she spoke passionately about what Jitegemee means to Machakos youth born into poverty. She explained how critical it is to continue our support to ensure these young people have the same opportunity as others to live full lives and reach for their dreams.

Our focus in 2019 is on growing and strengthening our programs. Our 2018 Street Business School for parents was a success and we want to see it continue in 2019. We want to ensure the quality of care we provide to each child and family as we take on more students every year. We continue to assess the best way to support our students post-graduation as they navigate the world of work.

In all of our plans for 2019, we are mindful that we could never do what we do without your generous support. We thank you for being a crucial part of the Jitegemee family.

Thank you, asante sana!
Verity Norman-Tichawangana
Executive Director

DREAMS OF A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

Faith Mueni, High School Graduate

“The memories of my first day in Jitegemee are still fresh in my mind. How I got to interact with many children from around Machakos county – children who also came from very humble backgrounds like mine; others who were orphans and others who lived on the streets. I found myself loving learning more about other people’s lives, and this helped me become stronger and not to pity myself.”

It’s always astonishing how our students overcome such adversity to achieve good grades and continue their education against the odds.

Faith Mueni is one of our 2018 high school graduates and has proved what is possible with a positive attitude, lots of hard work, and some support from friends. Faith graduated from Mulango Girls High School and will be joining university in 2019 to study Journalism. Neither of Faith’s parents even went to high school, so she is breaking down barriers!

Faith was born in a small village outside Machakos town. Her father passed away when she was only seven years old, leaving her mother alone and struggling to support three children. Her family soon moved to Machakos town where Faith’s mother would wash clothes for people to try to earn enough to feed her family.

Faith is a bubbly, outgoing young lady, and it’s been wonderful to see her grow in confidence since she started receiving support from Jitegemee in 2012. She tells us how being part of Jitegemee has made her a “woman of substance.”

“What makes me happy is that I have never been chased away from school for not paying school fees. This is because Jitegemee pays all my school fees on time. My happiness is greatest when I am with my friends and when I see success in whatever I am working on.”

Faith is passionate about telling the truth and exposing injustice. She is eager to become a journalist so she can tell the stories that need to be told in Kenya. She will take the first step towards realizing that dream later this year when she starts her Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism.

Thank you for helping Faith’s dreams become reality and ensure her brighter tomorrow.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Our 2019 fundraising goal is $260,000, and we need your help to get there. We’re looking to the Jitegemee family to help us reach our goal, and spread the word to new friends and donors so we can continue supporting young people like Faith. If you’re interested in volunteering at Jitegemee or contributing in another way, we’d love to hear from you at info@jitegemee.org.

DONATE TODAY

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www.jitegemee.org

By Check in the U.S.A.
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