

# A is for Africa

## 2016 Summary of Accomplishments

**National Recognition for Matim Primary School...**The Ministry of Education, The United Republic of Tanzania, presented Mr. Angweni Lang'o, Headmaster, Matim PS with an award as one of the most improved primary schools in all of Tanzania. Congratulations to Mr. Lang'o, the teachers and students of Matim for this outstanding achievement. Mr. Lang'o recognized the role that his many local and international partners, including *A is for Africa*, have contributed to this outstanding accomplishment. Mr. Lang'o's personal goal is to become the #1 primary school in all of Tanzania!

**Matim Opens A Real Library...***AIFA's* principal focus for the January trip was to set up the library. The books donated by St. James Episcopal Sunday School (Mount Airy) and the students of Mount Airy Middle School have been making their way to Matim in our luggage on each trip. In January 2015, the dream of a library started with 25 books. Since then a classroom has been painted, the floor refinished and tables and chairs purchased become a dedicated library. Shelves were built and approximately 300 books were displayed, including stories from Africa and around the world, books for beginning to advanced readers, and American classics to two shelves of books in Swahili, to name a few. The library will also serve as text book storage for teacher use. One donor family asked if part of their donation could buy books written in Swahili. Selected by the teachers and Mr. Lang'o Headmaster, Ms. Sarah Kivuyo has agreed to serve as the first librarian at Matim. You may remember that Sarah assists teacher Yasinta Peter for the kindergarten. She will continue as a kindergarten aide and keep the library open before and after school and during the two student breaks during the day.

**Increase in School Enrollment and the Lunch Program...** When *AIFA* budgeted for the school porridge program for the first period of 2016 (Jan-Jun) there were 930 students. During January trip we learned that enrollment has grown to 1050 students. When we first built the kindergarten there were approximately 100 children, last year that number grew to 140, and this January's enrollment is 200 children. In fact, in very cramped quarters, only 160 children fit in the room and the remaining 40 children stand outside the door to attend class.

**Water for Matim/Lemanyata Community...** What a venture! The well has been dug (250'), and the storage tanks are in place. The pipes to the school have been laid, and water is flowing to the kitchen and the faucet in the school yard. Community residents now have a safe reliable source of water thanks to *AIFA* donors. Families can purchase water for their home use at a very reasonable fee charged to help pay ongoing electrical charges and operation and maintenance.

**"Shoes of Hope" Campaign...**We officially began our shoe donation drive on September 26th with a goal of 100 bags or 2,500 pairs of shoes. We concluded our drive in early December and finished with an incredible 273 bags or 8,500 pairs of shoes donated. We have so many friends, businesses, churches, girl scout troops to thank for their generosity; too many to list here! Due to the popular response we will once again support a 2017 campaign.

**Computer Lab...**The primary purpose for our March service trip was to establish a student computer lab. Our team of seven brought 21 gently used laptops to launch the lab. From the first moments the laptops were unwrapped, it was clear that some very hard work lay ahead. Fighting the ever present dust, more dust, lost of electricity, we were challenged to open the lab by the end of our stay. And when it was done, the dozens of kids who had so patiently watched us from the doorway for days were willing to test our work. Any concerns we had about whether they could navigate the software dissipated. It took the children, who were as young as four, about five minutes to figure out how to get to a bright, fun (and educational - shhh) game.