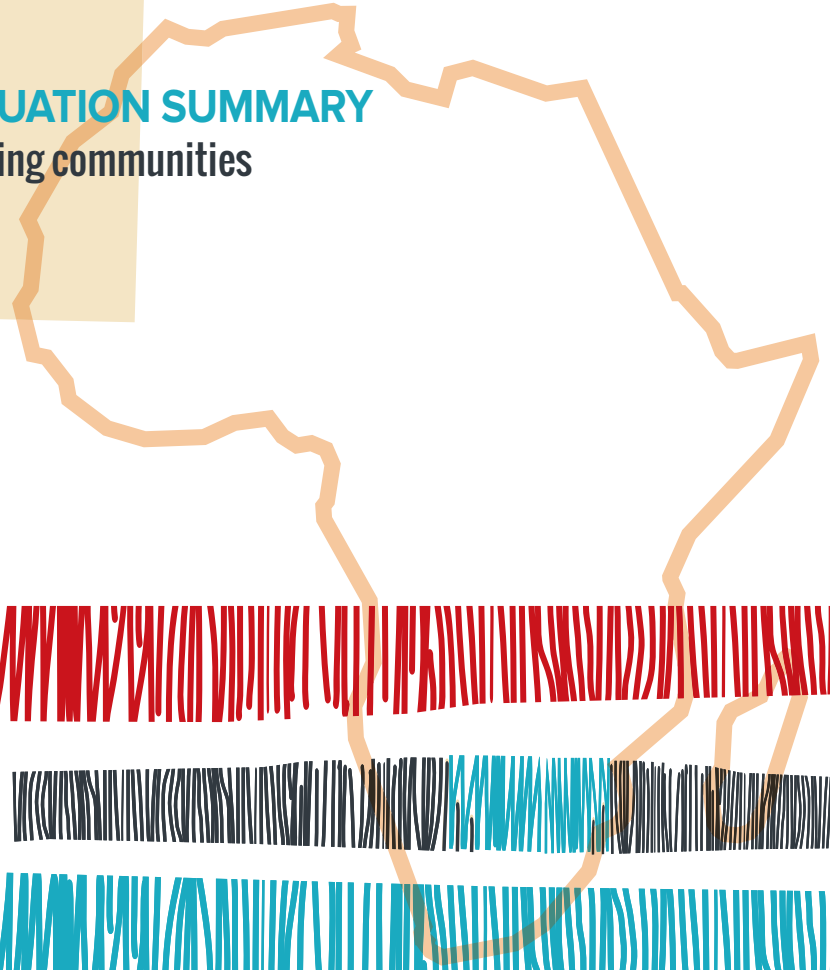


# THE ALBERT BAKER FUND IN AFRICA 2003-2016

## PROGRAM EVALUATION SUMMARY

Changing lives, blessing communities



**Since beginning our outreach to Christian Scientists in Africa** in 2003, The Albert Baker Fund has built a carefully structured program that has dispersed more than **\$2.1 million** in the form of **1,256 education grants** in **13 African countries**.

As our Board of Trustees has reflected on the growth and sustainability of our program, we recognized the need for an objective measure of our success.

We had built a solid and stable management structure consisting of our Sacramento Director of Programs and key staff on the ground in Africa—a program manager in Uganda, and an application processing agent in Rwanda.

We had grown a network of 21 volunteers we call In-Country Representatives (ICR), who have knowledge of local church communities in each country and a strong commitment to ABF's mission.

We had developed the financial relationships with banks and schools necessary to safeguard the disbursing of funds.

We had gained a firsthand knowledge of the individuals and church communities we were serving through visits to churches, and meetings and on-site trainings with our volunteers and Africa staff.

And each year we receive dozens of heartfelt expressions of gratitude from individuals who share how they have benefited from their education and passed the blessing on to others.

And yet, we needed definitive answers to the following questions:

- 1 ***What difference have we made in the lives of the participants we've funded?***
- 2 ***How sincere is participants' practice of Christian Science?***
- 3 ***How have participants passed the blessings of their education forward to help others?***

So in 2015, The Albert Baker Fund trustees and staff launched a **comprehensive assessment** of the impact that our postsecondary-education grant program is having on individual Christian Scientists, their local branch churches, and their communities in Africa.

## THE DIFFERENCE OF EDUCATION

**"I feel like I can fit anywhere in the world and can interact with any class of persons without any issues."**

**"I used to shy away when talking to people because of my level of education being low, but after the attainment of the Advanced International Diploma, I became bold and able to talk to people."**

**"My self-confidence has increased since I am sure of what I learned."**

The assessment was designed by a professional program evaluator and was completed over a 15-month period. The assessment included an online survey of alumni, phone interviews, and in-person interviews conducted in five countries by our Director of Programs and Africa staff.



*Ernestina Quist, ABF recipient  
Accra, Ghana*

## Here's what we learned:

### 1 Are we making a difference in the lives of Christian Scientists in Africa? Yes!

Our recipients are finding meaningful employment, increasing their income, and developing skills and knowledge that open doors to new opportunities for social and economic mobility.

Our study shows that:

- ABF alumni are completing their education and training at a high rate (83%).
- The majority (75%) of our alumni are currently employed.
- Many beneficiaries (70% of English speakers and 47% of French speakers) found their income had increased since they began ABF-funded studies.
- More than half of alumni pursued additional education after first being funded by ABF.

There's more. The positive effects of education on our recipients go far beyond the tangible benefits of employment and income. Their education actually transforms how they see themselves and how they interact with the world around them.

Our investment is lifting our students' sense of who they are and how they view their place in the world!

### 2 How sincere is participants' practice of Christian Science?

This question can be difficult to measure without imposing a sense of judgment. However, it is a question that is always front and center in our application process and funding decisions.

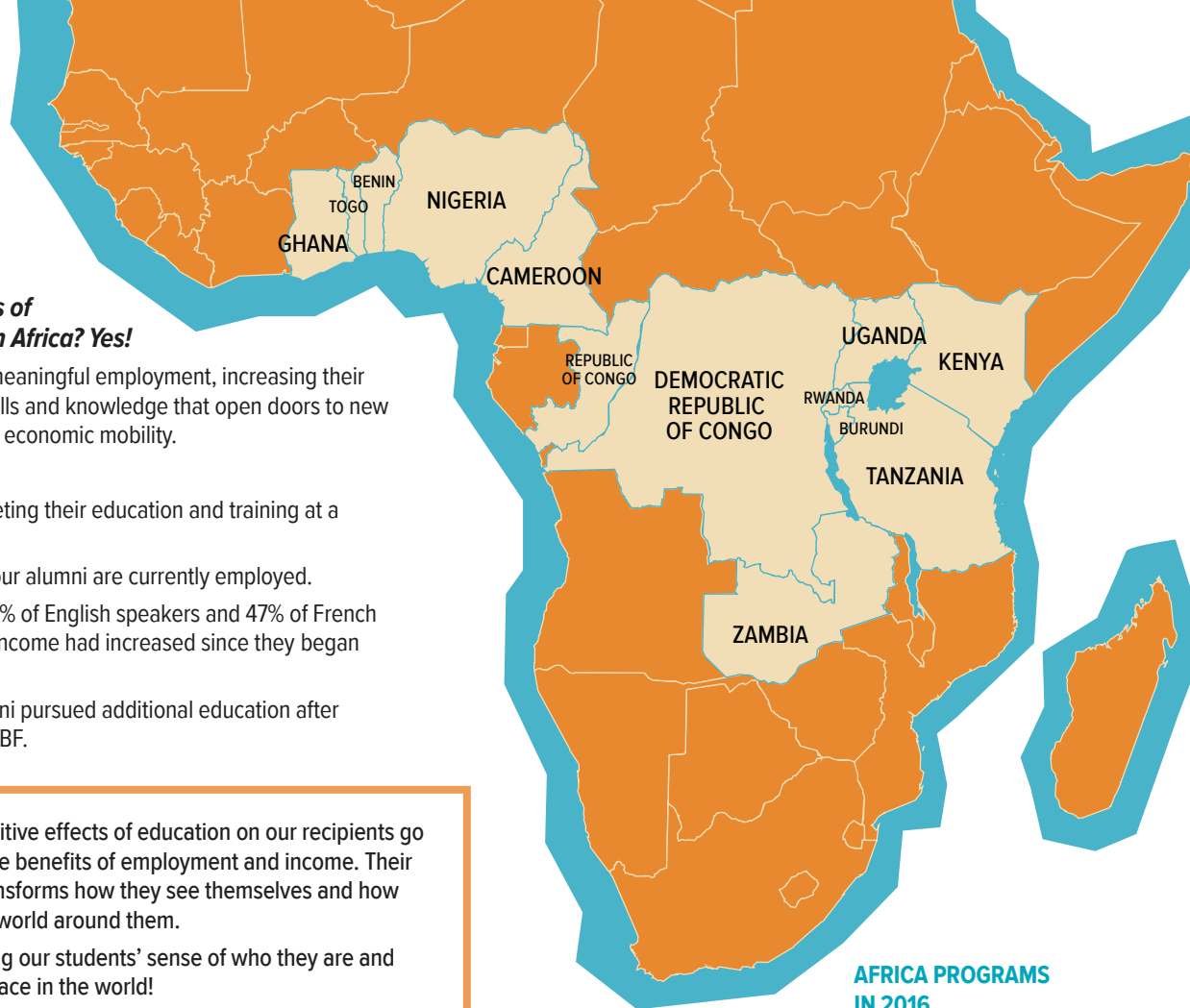
So we were very interested in the responses we received from alumni surveyed and our local network of In-Country Representatives (ICRs). We learned that:

- 85% of our alumni remain in Christian Science.
- 71% remain active in church, identifying specific roles in church, ranging from clerk to Reader, musician, Sunday School teacher, and other jobs to maintain church.
- 90% of French speakers and 80% of English speakers say they attend church regularly, and 86% and 82%, respectively, play an active role in church.

Interviews and qualitative responses to open-ended questions on the survey show that, for a majority of alumni, Christian Science is a very real and, in many cases, transformative part of their lives.

Just as relevant, the way that alumni serve church seems to reflect a rich and diverse application of their gifts and talents — from serving as soloist or Reading Room librarian, to working as the electrician, accountant, secretary, or engineer of their edifice remodel. Several spoke about their involvement while away at school — from starting Christian Science Organizations on campus or traveling two hours every Sunday in order to attend church. Additionally, a small number have become Christian Science practitioners, nurses, or Class-taught students.

*Quotes used throughout this summary were taken directly from survey responses and face-to-face interviews. Each quote represents a different individual.*



## AFRICA PROGRAMS IN 2016

*The Albert Baker Fund has In-Country Representatives and education grant programs in 13 African countries.*

## SINGLE MOM AND ROLE MODEL TO HER YOUNG STUDENTS, JANET PASSES HER BLESSINGS FORWARD

Recently, Dr. Janet Wanjira Kamenju sat down with our Director of Programs, Marilyn Jones, in Nairobi, Kenya, to discuss Janet's current employment and how she succeeded in reaching her dreams. Janet is an ABF recipient. She found Christian Science some years ago through her ex-husband, and over time the whole family became involved in church and in loving this beautiful way of life. Although the marriage didn't work out, Janet and her children didn't let go of Christian Science. Janet had wanted to be in sports since primary school. So even as a single mom, Janet pursued her Ph.D. in Sports and Physical Education at Kenyatta University, graduating in 2014.

Today she teaches at the University of Nairobi, where she also mentors her students, especially young women, to go as far as they can to achieve their dreams. That's one way, she says, of paying the blessings of her education forward. She told Marilyn that one of her proudest accomplishments — once she graduated with her doctorate and was



Dr. Janet Kamenju  
Senior Lecturer  
University of Nairobi, Kenya

promoted to the next level in her university — was being able to completely support her daughter, Agnes Kamenju, in her final year of college. Agnes did not need ABF's help in her senior year, as she had in the past. Graduating in 2014 from Jomo Kenyatta University with a B.S. in actuarial science, Agnes found a job with a U.K.- and U.S.-based insurance company immediately after graduating.

Both Agnes and Janet remain active in their branch church (Agnes's younger brother attends Sunday School), and Janet says that she loves contributing to her church's activity with much love for all that Christian Science has given her. She says that ABF paid for her and her daughter simultaneously, which was very healing. She says with deep gratitude, "It's the whole sermon."

### *The importance of "passing your blessings forward" to others is the foundation and core value of The Albert Baker Fund (ABF).*

We believe that each grant or loan we make to a student expresses our gratitude for the love and generosity of our founders, who began ABF in answer to the simple question, "What can we do to support the youth of our Movement?"

In turn, we encourage each ABF recipient to find tangible ways to share what they've gained from their education and to use their talents in service to others.

When we think about the impact of our students' lives on three continents and in 17 countries, we consider the ripple effect of each one who is taking the gifts of their education and passing them forward to others.

We believe this continuous cycle of good is the true substance and value of The Albert Baker Fund to the Christian Science community.

## THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

"Church has changed my life — total and abundant change."

"Christian Science helped me undergo character transformation."

"Christian Science opened my horizons — drastically transformed my personality and stabilized me."

### ③ *How have participants passed the blessing of their education forward to others?*

#### THE "MAGNIFIER EFFECT"

Perhaps the most inspiring part of the alumni survey findings is how largely ABF beneficiaries are sharing their gifts with others and the magnifier effect this has on their family, church, and their community.

#### Inspiring others

*"Today my education and work have been a source of inspiration to other members of my community, family, and church who did not have the opportunity to go to both college and high school due to financial constraint. As a result of that, I am working hard, saving as much funds as I can, making connections in order to one day start my own NGO (nongovernmental organization) to help people to do things that will enable them to be responsible and take care of themselves." (from an ABF recipient surveyed)*

### Mentoring

Over 80% of all survey respondents have tutored or advised others about strategies for finding work, getting an education, or other topics related to their expertise.

### Taking a leadership role in their communities

Since finishing their studies, 73% of English speakers and 61% of French speakers say they have taken a more active role in their communities.

### Financial support of others

It shouldn't come as a surprise that ABF beneficiaries have taken to heart the wisdom of the well-known African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child."

And sometimes it takes just one ABF alum to raise a village! Gratitude for their blessings is rippling out in the form of financial contributions not just to other family members but to neighbors, orphans, and many others in need. (See quote sidebar, page 6.)

## Is our investment in the education and training of Christian Scientists in Africa having an impact? Yes!

Our modest investment in their education is not just changing lives but blessing whole communities! (In fiscal year 2015 the average grant award was \$1,314.)

The most impactful program outcome seems to be how greater degrees of confidence, knowledge, expertise, and income are rippling out from recipients to those around them and beyond.

Their gratitude for the blessing of an education they might not otherwise be able to afford overflows as generosity toward others in the form of providing free services to the community; solving problems; mentoring seekers; and supporting needy family members, neighbors, and orphans financially and prayerfully.

In this way, every dollar invested in an ABF applicant touches the lives of many more, raising the aspirations and well-being of countless others.

## How you can help today

All of us at ABF hope you have found this evaluation summary valuable, both for insights into the structure and thoroughness of our program and for the clear evidence it offers that we are truly **changing lives and blessing communities**.

This program could not exist without the generous financial contributions from our Christian Science community.

We know we are making a difference for Christian Scientists in Africa. *Won't you join us in being a part of this difference through your gift to our Africa program?* Every dollar of every donation goes *entirely* to education grant awards.

**To make a gift by mail**, you may send it directly to

The Albert Baker Fund  
1510 J Street, Suite 150  
Sacramento, CA, 95814

**To make a gift by credit card**, please visit our secure website at [www.albertbakerfund.org/donate](http://www.albertbakerfund.org/donate).

**To make a gift of stock or other securities**, please contact our Director of Outreach, Harve Kaufmann, [harve@albertbakerfund.org](mailto:harve@albertbakerfund.org), 916-594-9513, ext 103 (office), or 314-915-3311 (mobile).

**On behalf of each student, their families and local communities, and the world we all share, thank you!**

## PASSING THE BLESSINGS FORWARD: MENTORING OTHERS

"I always share my experience with my friends and also encourage young girls in my community that there is always a way through for each and every one."

"People will only come to you when you are humble. My studies have helped me change many lives in terms of giving pieces of advice to the youth who still do not know what they want to be in their lives."

### 100% of Your Contribution Funds Grant Awards in Fiscal Year 2015

**221** Individual student recipients

**226** Education grants awarded

**\$297,057** Total grants awarded  
(funded by donor contributions and ABF investment earnings)

**\$153,956** Program administration  
(funded entirely from ABF investment earnings)

Audited financial statements are available at [www.albertbakerfund.org/about-us/financials](http://www.albertbakerfund.org/about-us/financials).

## Looking ahead

We are deeply gratified to see that this Program Evaluation Summary provides clear evidence that our students in Africa have capitalized on their opportunities to attend trusted local universities and vocational schools. This evidence also supports our conviction that sincere Christian Scientists can and will find a multitude of ways to pass the blessings of their education forward to others.

Working while in school to pay part of their total costs, these industrious men and women achieve something that few of their family members or friends ever do.

Our recipients have become Christian Scientists who are job creators, mentors, and leaders in their homes, villages, churches, schools, and places of employment. They bring hope and encouragement to all they meet.

Clearly, ABF cannot be expected to financially support every one of the growing number of African students who applies for funding. However, from the success and gratitude of the Christian Scientists living and working in Africa, additional sources of support will surely develop and meet each student's need. And as our alumni progress in their careers, we believe we can help them connect with one another professionally by adapting features of the newly formed ABF Career Alliance to the networking opportunities in Africa.

As the Christian Science churches in Africa continue to nurture their congregations with a clear vision of God's presence and power, we can expect to see those healed and blessed aspire to bless and heal others. And as they strive to do this, The Albert Baker Fund and its family of friends promise to support their unselfish love for mankind by providing resources for their education and development.

Alan R. Bashor  
*Chief Executive Officer*

### PASSING THE BLESSINGS FORWARD: FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING OTHERS

"I am helping to pay school fees for 12 orphaned children and providing their essentials."

"I have six students in high school courtesy of me. One of them is an orphan I rescued from an early marriage. This year she will definitely make it to the university."

"I helped a girl who lost her parents to get capital to start her daily business so that she can develop herself because she didn't get a chance to study."

"I have contributed to my local branch church, funding the repairs of chairs for visitors and cleaning of the church carpets."



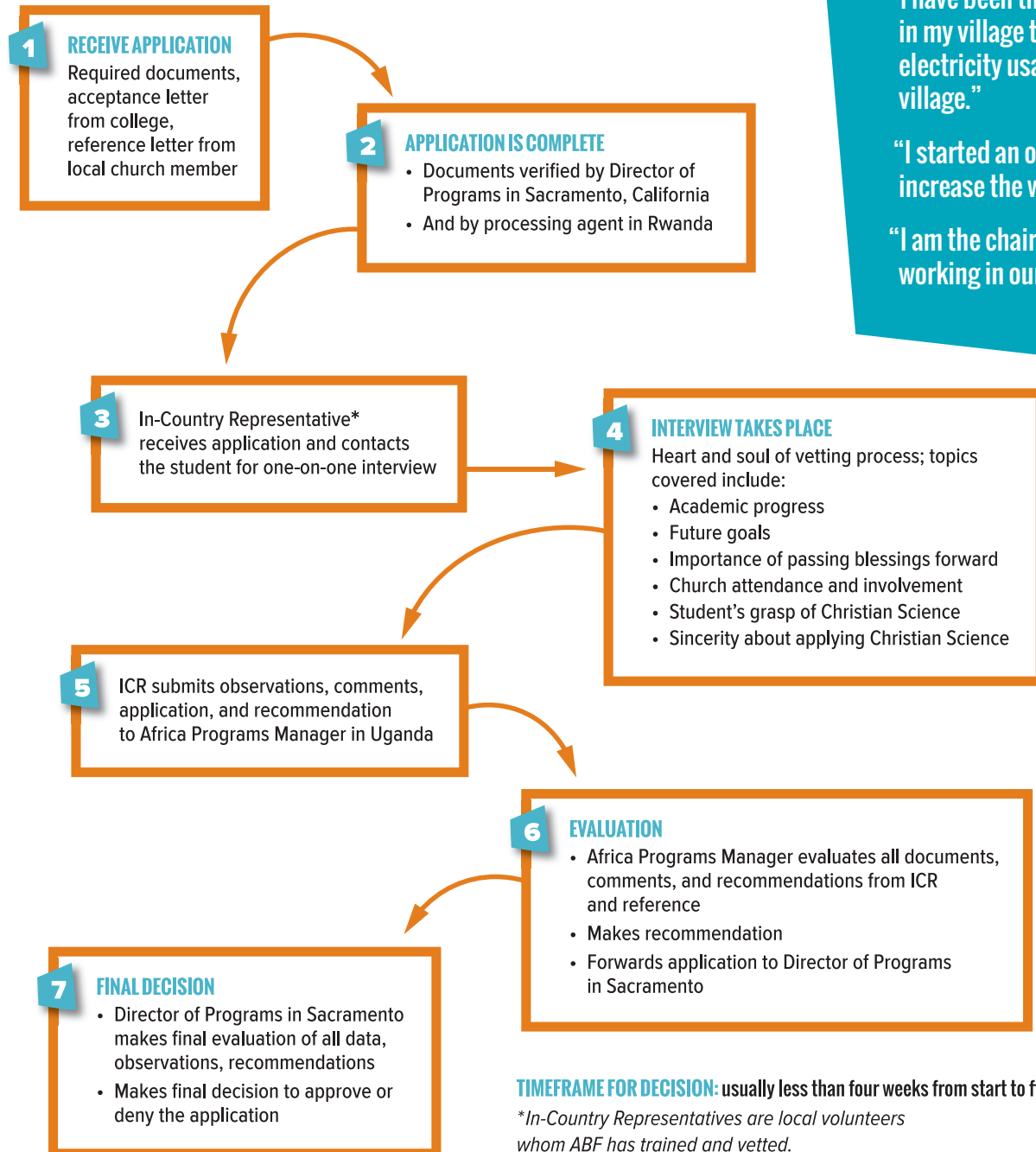
*Juvet Nganga, ABF recipient  
Pointe-Noire, Republic of Congo*

## What is our process for approving applicants?

Every student we consider funding goes through an extensive vetting process.

The interview is the heart and soul of the vetting process. We depend on the ICR's\* knowledge of the student, awareness of church attendance, and the applicant's genuine interest in Christian Science.

Once the Director of Programs in Sacramento makes the final decision to approve the application, the student's college is funded. Our time frame is usually less than four weeks from start to finish.



**TIMEFRAME FOR DECISION:** usually less than four weeks from start to finish

\*In-Country Representatives are local volunteers whom ABF has trained and vetted.

## PASSING THE BLESSINGS FORWARD TO COMMUNITIES

"I was appointed one of the peace ambassadors in my refugee camp."

"I am conducting vocational training skills to the vulnerable communities in Uganda."

"I have been the very first person in my village to establish grid electricity usage in my home village."

"I started an organization to increase the welfare of youths."

"I am the chairperson for women working in our district council."

## KEY MILESTONES OF OUR AFRICA PROGRAM

### 2003

- ABF Board of Trustees approves a pilot program to fund college and vocational grants in Africa.
- Lamech Katamba, a Christian Scientist and native of Kampala, Uganda, is retained part-time to vet applicants and help develop the program.

### 2004

- First educational grants are made to students in Zambia and Uganda.

### 2007

- ABF staff make first trip to Africa to meet with recipients and local churches.
- ABF lays groundwork to expand to countries in West Africa.
- ABF expands college and vocational grants to Christian Scientists in Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, and Tanzania.

### 2009

- ABF expands its grant program to Christian Scientists in Ghana, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, and Rwanda.
- Lamech Katamba is retained full-time to oversee ABF activity in East Africa.
- ABF employs an International Program Director to oversee all programs outside of North America.
- ABF establishes an online application process for English- and French-speaking students in Africa.

### 2010–2012

- ABF employs a Congolese French-speaking Programs Manager to live in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, and oversee grant programs in West Africa.

### 2012

- ABF hires a Director of Programs in Sacramento to consolidate management of Africa, Europe, and North America programs.

### 2013

- ABF expands educational grants to Christian Scientists in Benin, Burundi, and Togo.
- Lamech Katamba is promoted to Africa Programs Manager, overseeing all ABF activity in Africa under the direction of ABF's Director of Programs.
- ABF replaces the West Africa Programs Manager with a French-speaking Rwandan Processing Agent to consolidate processing of all applications in Africa.

### 2014

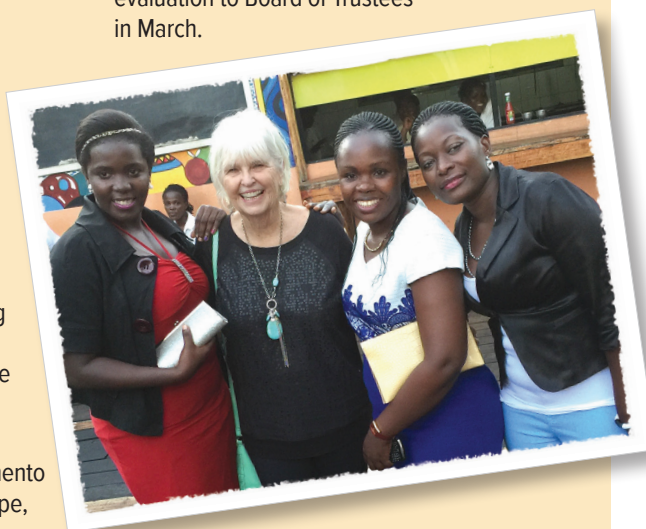
- ABF retains a professional program evaluator to design an evaluation study of its Africa program.

### 2015

- ABF launches a program evaluation through email surveys, telephone, and face-to-face interviews with African alumni.

### 2016

- ABF staff presents results of Africa program evaluation to Board of Trustees in March.



(l-r) Sophia Nantale (ABF recipient), Marilyn Jones (ABF Director of Programs), Jacqueline Namusalisi (Uganda ICR), and Barbara Nagadya (ABF recipient)

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