

JEWELLS in AFRICA



New group of dorm boys, but familiar photo spot. This is one of our favorite places to get a dorm photo, about a 45-minute hike from campus with an overlook of the valley in the background.



Round 4!

It's hard for us to believe, but this school year marks our seventh year at Rift Valley Academy. With it, we also welcomed our fourth group of boys into our dorm. Just like every other group we've had, these boys have their own unique personalities, which we're still getting to know. Most of these boys were brand new to RVA, so learning to live together with eight other dorm "brothers" brought some challenges. But some of the things we've loved about them is how well they listen, respond, and are willing to grow. This also allowed us to get to know each other a lot faster and grow closer! They are inquisitive, responsible, social, loud – and we're really looking forward to getting to know them even more over the next year and a half!





Rift Valley Academy

After all the unexpected challenges of 2020, we were thankful to start working back toward some “normalcy” in 2021. When we welcomed students back to campus in January 2021, there were many protocols and precautions put in place. Not only does Rift Valley Academy have the challenges experienced by many other schools in opening back up during the pandemic, but we also have many additional ones due to being a boarding school. One of the primary challenges we face is if Covid was to spread through our staff and students, we are not able to close for a couple of weeks but would instead have to close “in-person” learning completely for the duration of the school term because our students live in many countries around Africa. Due to things like cost, our students would not be able to just come back and forth every few weeks, if needed. As a result, we sometimes have to take additional precautions to ensure that we are keeping our campus healthy. Amazingly, by God’s provision and grace alone, we were able to make it through all three school terms in 2021 without having to close. Part of the miracle is that we only had a few total known Covid cases on campus while students were here (out of more than 500 people)! Along with this, because many of our students travel internationally at the end of term, we had hundreds of Covid tests administered for them to travel home – with all negative test results! God is truly amazing!

As the calendar prepared to roll into 2022, we were looking forward to even more “freedom” and loosening of restrictions when students returned for the new term this month (January). At the end of November 2021, the positivity rate in Kenya was actually under 1%. However, a few weeks later, it had passed 30%. Because of this increase – along with many of our staff being isolated or quarantined – we had to make the quick decision to move almost entirely online once again to begin the school term. Although we might be uncertain what the coming weeks and months will look like, we continue to trust that God is completely in control and has a plan in all of it!

Home Assignment!

We’re very excited to be coming back to the U.S. for our first furlough since 2018, arriving late-March and staying through mid-August! We are really looking forward to spending time with family and friends while we step away from RVA for a few months of rest and reconnecting. We hope to see as many of you as we can while we are back! Also, as we look ahead to our time home, we are hoping to have a vehicle to use. If you know of a well-working car for sale, rent, or loan, please let us know.



Family Time

Over this past December break, we were blessed with lots of family visiting! Dave’s parents were able to come to Kenya for the first time, which was such a wonderful experience for all of us. In addition, Dave’s brother and his family were all able to be here, along with Ashley’s parents. We had such a great time together, taking them to some of our favorite places and even going on safari! And not only did God work out all of the many details to get them here, but He also got them back home to the States before the Covid numbers started rising again!

Beau’s Bit

Super social as always, we often don’t see Beau from the time he leaves for school in the morning until sometime around dinner in the evening. We are super blessed to be on a 90-acre campus where this is possible, where he can walk himself around, live life with his friends, and enjoy being a boy!



Evi’s Piece

Often at home with Mommy, Everleigh loves playing with her big brother (when he’s around). She loves tea parties and dancing, and she just recently started riding her bike without training wheels!

Praises...

...and Prayer Requests

We are looking forward to our furlough time in the U.S.!	For a vehicle to use while we are back in the States
RVA found a family to cover our dorm while we are away!	For the dorm boys and family that will be with them while we are away
God has sustained RVA as a school for over 115 years!	For staff for RVA, as we are facing a shortage next year
We serve a God who knows all!	For wisdom, as we seek God’s guidance for future decisions
God took our initial two-year commitment to RVA and has provided our support into year #7 and counting! Thank you to everyone who has supported us in each and every way!	For financial support, as our monthly support is currently low