



Responding to a Calling

Read more at: kicsrw.org

"We live and breathe KICS, as it is God's school, and He has called us to serve in it." Dr. Holly Hixson
Holly teaches HS Chemistry, Biology, Critical Thinking & Advanced Science Topics, and Physics

2016 RWANDA 2017

4 July 2017

10 Year Anniversary

In September 2006 Kigali International Community School opened its doors for the first time with less than 20 students and 5 staff. Ten years later KICS is home to over 300 students and 60+ staff from 24+ nationalities.

In August 2007 the Hixson family arrived in Kigali on a three-year commitment to work with KICS and other ministries of ROC Partners, the owner agency to KICS.

Three-years came and passed with the Hixsons realizing that while God had called them to Rwanda he had not released them. With this realization, the Hixsons will complete 10-years of service in Rwanda in August. Ten years have been filled with challenge and blessing as we have answered the call.

To see how KICS and its ministry has grown, check us out at kicsrw.org



The Calling

Read more about the calling the Hixson's have answered at:

kicsrw.org/responding-to-a-calling/



His Vision, Our Future

Kigali International Community School

Last year we shared with you about the vision for growth of Kigali International Community School (KICS). Christian education in a family environment offers something truly unique in Rwanda and something very desirable to the community. We have been working to find the right piece of land and negotiate for it while seeking financial partners who will help make this vision a reality.

We are in final negotiations with a government entity on a 29-acre piece of land that would allow KICS to continue its growth and development objectives through the next decade and beyond.

The vision before us will require \$15-20 million. While this number may seem impossible to some, we recognize that God's capacity is endless and therefore we trust that He will provide through His people in His time. Please join us in this effort by praying with us. Second, connect us to others and share this vision. Third, contribute in any amount at rocpartners.org.

Recently, the government closed a competing school run by secular Muslims. This left a line of families at our doors that we are unable to accommodate. We don't know exactly what God has in store for KICS, but we are convinced that He has brought us to where we are today and will continue to carry KICS into the future as His school preparing servant leaders to impact the world for Christ.



Growth has begun - 3 new classrooms completed in Aug. 2016

PHASES I & II

Phase I of KICS growth and development began with the construction of three classrooms allowing us to begin double stream classes in two grades. In August we will have two streams in four grades.

Phase II is the acquisition of land and payment for it that will enable us to begin construction of another campus. While we currently have neither the land nor the money we are confident in God's provision that will allow us to realize many new students and new discipleship opportunities.

Through KICS vision we anticipate:

- Academic Center
- Learning Support Center
- Performing & Fine Arts Center
- Science & IT Center
- Athletic Center
- Global Leadership Center



KICS Parade of Nations 2016

Spiritual Greenhouse

As KICS continues to grow so do the opportunities to impact the world for Christ. Each day students participate in mission time (chapel) as well as a Bible class. Additionally, our staff integrate faith into learning such that our students learn to see God in all areas of life.

We see KICS as a spiritual greenhouse that sends forth servant-leaders, who live out God's message of grace, love, and truth daily in their careers and personal lives. We are grateful for such a natural opportunity for daily discipleship of students who will span the globe impacting the world for Christ.



Graduation 2017

2017 is a year of change for the Hixson family as Alexis graduated from KICS and will move on to Pepperdine University. We are so proud of her for the way she has reached this milestone and for all that she accomplished during her 10-years at KICS. Alexis has left a legacy and big shoes to fill. A small sample of her many achievements at KICS include:

LEADERSHIP

1.

- Student Council President '17
- S.C. Communications Officer -16
- Vision Award '17 (KICS Highest honor)
- Service Award '16
- Global Leadership Award '15
- Wisdom Award '14-'15
- Basketball Team Captain '14-'17

ACADEMIC

2.

- Valedictorian '17
- Academic High Honors '14-'17
- National Society of High School Scholars '16-'17

Read about one of 10 major events (Parade of Nations) that Alexis was responsible for here: kicsrw.org/parade-of-nations

If you would like to help kick start Alexis into college you can send your well wishes to:

*Alexis Hixson
2620 S. Oxford Drive
Stillwater, OK 74074*

Goodbyes and Sacrifice

Perhaps the hardest part of living abroad these past ten-years has been the constant goodbyes. Every spring is a season of goodbyes as fellow school staff, missionaries, other expatriates, and graduates transition. The numbers are daunting. For example, over 100 of our staff have transitioned during our 10-years in Rwanda. In one May alone, 25 Christian expatriate families in our community transitioned to other places in the world.

While these goodbyes are hard, the hardest are saying goodbye to family for 1-2 years at a time, not knowing what that year will bring. In March we said goodbye to Bryan's mom as she lost her earthly battle with cancer. Just three-years ago we said goodbye to Holly's mom who lost a battle with Parkinson's. While they lost their earthly battles they celebrate together now at Jesus' feet.

While their victory in Jesus is something for joy we recognize that our choice to serve in Rwanda was their sacrifice. We are grateful to our parents for their sacrifices that we might serve and pray that they be blessed for having raised us to prioritize other's souls. In August we will say another difficult goodbye as Alexis transitions to university. We are excited for her although we prepare for yet another difficult goodbye.

Whether goodbyes are temporary or semi permanent they leave us weary at times but thankful that there are also opportunities to welcome new people into our lives. We are also grateful for you and the season that God placed you in our path and blessed us through you before a goodbye.



Bryan's father Bill, Holly and the girls praying over Sandra as she finished her earthly journey.

#HISWORD #HISCHILDREN

I have clearly not learned the art of the hashtag (#) as my daughters seem to get more than their share of laughs at my attempts in online posts. I've even tried to reverse the direction of the laughing by pointing out that it was the pound symbol before it became the hashtag. To my dismay that only exacerbated the laughs in my direction by calling attention to my growing inability to fully appreciate and understand teen language.

I was blessed to teach 8th grade Bible this past school year. Before it began I was not excited as I knew the gap between me and 8th grade was significant. While I love my middle school daughter, the thought of a class full of kids trying to figure themselves out in raging hormones didn't really appeal to me. God softened me and gave me a great group of kids and opportunity on a daily basis to inject scripture into the lives of moldable minds.

In addition to that group of 8th graders I had a group of boys I met with daily in our mission (chapel) program. Holly had a group of 10-12G girls. My role as the School Board Chair doesn't exactly lend itself to connecting with kids, but thankfully our school community is one where that title doesn't alienate me as it might in other contexts. These daily opportunities to disciple through the classroom and mission were a new and exciting challenge that I am thankful for. I pray that #hisword has grown in #hischildren.



Bryan's with Mission Group

KICS VISION

The vision of KICS is to impact the world for Christ by preparing servant leaders who choose:

- character before career
- wisdom beyond, scholarship,
- service above self,
- and a lifestyle of participation over apathy.

DIVERSITY

With 24 nationalities at KICS our children experience the blessings of diversity as created by God with a student body that will truly go into all the world. Alexis is pictured here with some fellow graduates from South Korea, Rwanda, Malawi, and Uganda. Additionally this class had students from Canada, Russia, & the USA.

The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Revelations 21:26



KICS Graduates

Relationship Matters

During our time in Rwanda we have seen many come and go. Unfortunately, a few had to go because they chose not to work with the authorities and expectations of those authorities. We have never had to do anything against our Christian principles and values in order to work in Rwanda, but that doesn't mean everything we've had to do or experience has been what we might desire or choose.



OC Highlights

We first found our way to Rwanda as Oklahoma Christian University employees. Our objective in that trip was the launch of the Rwanda Presidential Scholar Program that has since sent over 550 Rwandan students to Christian universities in the United States.

A few years into that project OC launched an MBA program in Rwanda that realizes about 60 graduates a year. Pictured above, the Minister of Education in Rwanda is speaking to the most recent graduating class, pictured below.

This year marked the 10-Year Anniversary for the Rwanda – Oklahoma Christian partnership. The anniversary was marked with a celebration that included the President of the Republic of Rwanda as its Guest of Honor. Bryan was fortunate to be one of a few selected to share a few comments with, President of the Republic of Rwanda, Paul Kagame. (pictured to the right)

In spite of periodic challenge, we recognize that without relationship we are not in Rwanda nor is the ministry in which we serve. We are most thankful for the positive relationships we have with government officials including cabinet members, diplomats, members of the Senate, and the President.

In addition to having positive relationship with the government we are fortunate to be able to serve the children of many of these people who will hopefully one day become leaders who lead with God.



Alexis & Grace in Ministry

Our children are a vital part of our ministry. From their influence and service in the classroom, the sports field, church, and the community they exemplify what it means to live as a Christian.

Both Alexis and Grace have excelled in many things giving them a platform from which to share. Both have received awards in the classroom and on the sports field that reflect this. KICS gives a character award in each sport and both girls have won the award multiple times. KICS also gives character awards in the classroom and both have been recipient of those awards as well. Alexis closed out her athletic career as the MVP in basketball. In her junior year she was KICS Athlete of the Year and also received the character award along with numerous such awards in the classroom and on the court throughout High School.

While the awards are only a reflection of their actions they are also a demonstration of their example to their peers and the community. Without question Alexis just put together the most successful year as the Student Council President leading with excellence and integrity. As noted by her advisor, most adults would struggle to accomplish all that she accomplished in the role. She has also been vital to developing a culture of character and integrity at KICS through her leadership & service in many areas.

A junior presented Grace with her character award for basketball and expressed that she had never met a nicer and sweeter person. Grace's passion and love for others shines through in all she does making a difference in the lives of others whether in the classroom, with orphans, or beyond. Grace is a shining light of the Gospel.



Alexis with student council officers



Grace with soccer team



Grace (above) Alexis (below)



Grace with some classmates.





Other 2017 Highlights

Christ's Church Rwanda (CCR)

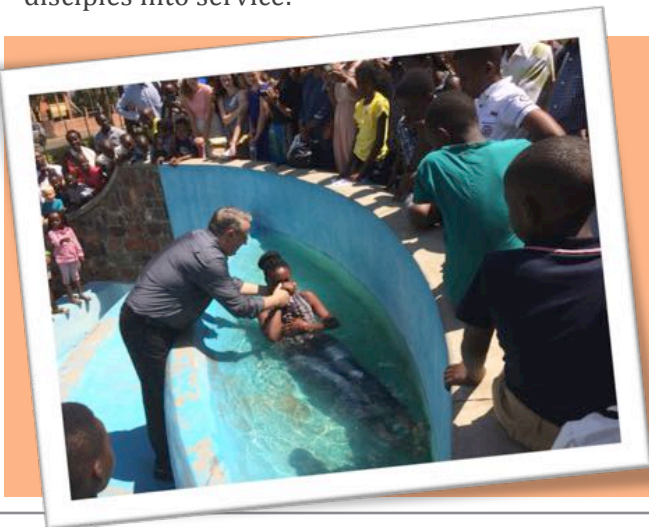
Our ministry colleagues, Brett & Keli Shreck, served as host to the Global Leadership Summit – Rwanda for the 3rd consecutive year. In addition to the Summit, Bill Hybels (above) made a visit to Rwanda for Leadership Insights speaking to a smaller group of leaders from the Kigali community at CCR.

Holly & Alexis have continued to serve through the worship ministry while Grace serves through the Children's Ministry and Bryan through speaking. Through the 2016-17 school year we were blessed to witness many commitments to Christ and baptisms. With each new commitment we celebrate with the angels as we welcome new disciples into service.

Anniversary

We marked 2016 with several milestones including KICS 10th Year Anniversary. We were blessed to have former colleagues and KICS founders, Dave & Jana Jenkins join the festivities. Additionally, Mary Cavin (above), another founder and ROC Board member joined us prior to the festivities. These visionaries, along with others, will forever be part of KICS as generations are impacted for Christ.

We were also blessed to have Holly's father, Phil Harris (below), with us for several months as he joined us to celebrate Alexis' graduation. During his visit he was able to visit a national school and experience children enamored by someone of his age in a nation whose median age is under 20 compared to a median age of just under 40 in the US.



Praying for the Hixsons in Rwanda

We are dependent on you and request your continued prayers for us and our ministry in Rwanda. Please pray for:

- Alexis' transition to university and our adjustment to her absence
- Partners for His Vision, Our Future (KICS growth & development initiative)
- Land negotiation, acquisition, and funds to pay for it
- Good health and safety
- Continued favor with national authorities
- New financial partners in ministry
- Wisdom and clarity

Giving options

Online at: rocpartners.org

By check at: ROC Partners
Attn: Stephanie Hess
3007 NW 63rd, Ste 205
Oklahoma City, OK 73116
Memo: BH



Grace (left) and some of her classmates participate in Phase I groundbreaking for His Vision, Our Future



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