



## Ireze Foundation Update 2023



- The number of children we support in primary school rose to 340 children, aged from about 18 months to 12 years, with about half of the children being under 6 years of age.



- We completed a building with eight (8) classrooms for St Augustine Secondary School.



- The number of students in the scholarship program grew from 33 to 42. Below are some of the 42 Rochasta scholarship students taken at St. Augustine, standing in front of their new classroom building.



We are proud to report that Destiny, our first scholarship recipient (seated) who is now a senior, is doing very well and was recently appointed School Prefect! Destiny is a science student with hopes of studying medicine if he does well in his exams and is able to secure a place in 2024. We are actively soliciting sponsorships for this promising young student.



Rochasta Primary School graduating class and 2023 scholarship recipients

The above photo, taken at graduation, shows a group of anxious young boys and girls, apprehensive and not sure if they were ready for secondary school. But when I caught up with some of them one day as they walked home from school barely one month into their secondary school education, you could see the change. Here they are, looking like they are ready to take on the world!





- Installed nine (9) tablets and laptops in the computer lab.





- Installed a Playground at the primary school. In addition, replaced roof of one building in the primary school, repainted the school buildings and updated murals. We also fenced land the school has secured for a proposed skills and vocational training Centre.



- A summer book drive in Lagos yielded more than 200 books. To augment these, the Foundation acquired several books and jigsaw puzzles for the schools. Bookshelves were stocked at Rochasta with help from the primary school children.



- Provided students and teachers with reading glasses.



We purchased five (5) kits each containing tools and materials to produce forty (40) eyeglasses from DOT Glasses (a German Company), for a total of two hundred (200) reading and long-distance glasses.

In March, technicians were sent to train three people on how to test, measure and assemble eyeglasses. Three kits were delivered and shared by both Rochasta and St. Augustine, while two of the original trainers each received a kit with which they have been testing and fitting people in their respective communities.

In October, we sent the three trained personnel to the village to train five teachers at both schools. In addition, several teachers and students identified as having difficulties in reading were tested and fitted with reading or long-distance vision glasses. In one case, a girl at St. Augustine was fitted with both reading and long-distance glasses.

Below are some images from the mission.



- Introduced the children to the game of jigsaw puzzle to foster collaboration.



The jigsaw puzzles were a hit! Most of the children had never seen or played it before, so they had a lot of fun learning and playing with their peers. It was great watching them share ideas and collaborate as they tried to fit the pieces.



*Collaboration*

During the game, two teams crowded over the one table that was available in the small hall. And for the next one hour or so, they worked together to solve their respective puzzles.



When the first team completed their puzzle, the whole school erupted in cheers and jubilation. You would have thought they won an Olympic medal. You have never seen a happier group of kids!



Celebrating Success!





## Michael's Story

Michael, 12 years old, is one of our scholarship recipients who is now in JSS2 (8<sup>th</sup> grade). He has what has now been diagnosed as neurofibroma.



After the school visit, I sent his picture to the head of a medical mission that was due to arrive in Nigeria in late October. They requested a CT-Scan, so we arranged to have him and his grandmother (who is his primary caregiver), brought to the nearest town to the village. We met there and spent the better part of the day securing the scan. The next day, we received the report which confirmed that his condition was indeed neurofibroma, which the mission doctor had suspected. Sadly, we were advised that surgery is not indicated for this condition as the growths are aggressive and tend to reappear. We were also advised that the condition may be life-threatening in certain conditions.

We have since learnt of a certain new drug, Koselugo which has been found effective in treating the condition. However, the drug is not yet registered in Africa and is

therefore not available in Nigeria. We contacted the drug maker but were advised that Michael will not be able to access the drug since the company has no access program in Nigeria and they also do “not allow medical tourism.”

So, we seem to have hit a roadblock for now. However, as the healthcare landscape is always shifting, we hope to keep an eye on the situation and if things change, we will revisit. That is also why I am sharing Michael’s story here because you just never know.....

Notwithstanding the roadblocks above, at least for one day Michael could smile as he spent the rest of the day having a good time with his grandmother at the local Marriott Hotel! The smile on Michael’s face was born of hope. Hope that there may be a solution out there.



**THANK YOU!**



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Or by check to 303 Lyon Circle, Doylestown, PA 18902

Ireze Foundation is a 501(3)(c) entity, committed to providing quality education to children in rural, resource limited communities, from primary to secondary school, and through technical schools and universities. We are committed to changing the trajectory of the lives of these children and their families for the better, through education. We cover all education related expenses for our secondary and tertiary scholarship recipients. We rely on the generous donation of our sponsors and donors like you to achieve these goals.

## PHOTO GALLERY













