



Happy New Year!

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF REFUGEES | JANUARY 2023

"Let them thank the LORD
for His steadfast love, for
his wondrous works to the
children of man! For He
satisfies the longing soul,
and the hungry soul He fills
with good things."

Psalm 107:8-9

Janiver is one of several
Impact Hope students to
score the highest score on
their national exams!



Janiver, right side, at Gahogo Adventist Academy with his friends.

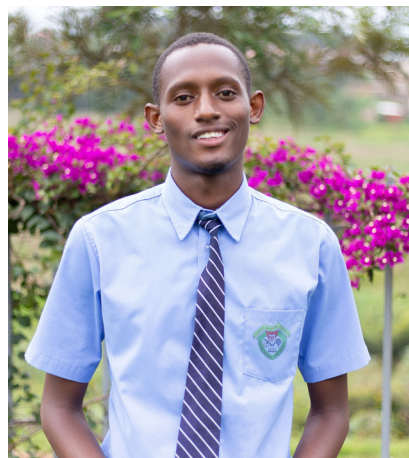
The Miracle that Changed Janvier

By Joan Oksenholt

"I'm Jesus' child!" Janvier smiles as he tells his story. Orphaned a few days after his birth, he was raised by his grandmother who named him Nduwayezu. It means the child of Jesus in Kinyarwanda. They played, prayed, talked, and laughed together. He loved his grandmother very much. "The time of trouble came when the Mai Mai (community based militia in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) grew very violent in our area. Other groups were also at war and it was very dangerous for anyone they didn't like. Friends who lived on our farm told my grandma that they were too scared to stay and were leaving for Rwanda." His grandma knew that Janvier would be targeted so she arranged for

him to go with them - she was 80, disabled, and had to stay. Although he was just 11, he knew that it was likely to be the last time they would see each other. They prayed together before he left and she gave him a goodbye hug. She died a few years later; Janvier thinks of her every day.

The transit camp was awful. There wasn't enough food, the sanitation was poor, and many people were very sick. The situation was so bad that the people he was with decided to return to DRC where life was better. Janvier was left alone. "I was lonely and afraid. Eventually I was moved to the Kigeme camp." Life in Kigeme was better but there still wasn't enough (continued inside)



food. "Although someone from Save the Children checked on me every day, I lived alone and I was very young. There was no one to say good morning to me when I woke up and no one to smile at me when I

to become a good man and wondered how he could change and be a better person. The students at Gahogo have prayer time after lunch and Janvier joined a group. It was there that one of the students told the story about Jesus

"Impact Hope came and rescued us! We could go to a good school!"

came back from school."

Attending school was a challenge - it was hard to get the clothing and shoes he needed for school and it was difficult to concentrate because he was hungry. Eventually he moved into a house with older boys and they shared food together." The camps aren't good places. Those boys didn't go to school and they wanted me to act like they did. I continued to go to school and studied hard in spite of their influence. My scores were high on the national exams but it looked impossible for me and other students to go to high school. This was the first time that I learned that God has more than a thousand ways to take care of us. Impact Hope came and rescued us! We could go to a good school!" Janvier still needed a sponsor though. Thousands of miles away a young teenager looked at information from Impact Hope and decided that he wanted to be Janvier's sponsor. "It was another miracle!" Janvier says.

Janvier loved Gahogo Adventist Academy, the Christian boarding school he was sponsored to attend through Impact Hope. He wanted

sleeping in the boat during a great storm when the disciples were so afraid and woke Him up. Janvier says, "The student explained that the same Jesus who calmed the storm can help us. He will calm any storms that we experience. That story changed my life and gave me a new hope. I was baptized at Gahogo because I know that Jesus can touch our lives with miracles and will help us with everything. I want to share His love!" Janvier's goal is to study international law. "I lived in DRC - a country with no justice. People are put in prison without a trial. Their property is taken from them and they are often killed like animals." He wants to help people who have been treated unjustly and don't have money to hire a lawyer. Eventually he wants to start an organization that can aid them.

Janvier's sponsor (who's assisted by a relative) wants to meet him in Rwanda someday. They plan to play basketball together when they meet. "God touches the hearts of the Impact Hope sponsors," Janvier says. And in America, the teenager who chose to sponsor Janvier feels exactly the same way.

Fun Fact about Rwanda!

Rwanda is home to several of the Virunga Mountains. The Virunga mountains are all volcanic but the biggest are dormant. These mountains are spread out between Rwanda, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These mountains are home to the gorillas!



An Unexpected Surprise

My name is Bosco. I am doing Business Administration in the Finance Department at the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA). I am in my last year working on my thesis for my final defense.

While doing my academic internship, I received a call from my former professor of Business Communication at my university. He told me that he received a request from Impact Hope Rwanda. They were looking for a recommended soon-to-graduate student who is smart and has a high level of integrity. My professor chose me as the best person for that professional internship.

My professor did not know at the time of choosing me that I am sponsored through



Bosco, an Impact Hope university student, chosen by his professor for an internship at the Impact Hope Rwanda office!

Impact Hope. It was also a great surprise to the Impact Hope Rwanda staff to have one of their sponsored students recommended as the student with the highest performance and excellent conduct.

I will always be grateful to Impact Hope for how they lifted me to higher ground.

Opening Ceremony for the Center for Hope



Hans and Mindy Thygeson, founders of Impact Hope, along with Executive Director Liz Thomsen, visited the Center for Hope in Rwanda for the grand opening ceremony!

After visiting each vocational training classroom and seeing the learning taking place in action, the students put on a special program showing their gratitude for this incredible opportunity to learn a vocational skill.

The Center for Hope is a six month vocational training school with a goal of helping refugees and other vulnerable community members learn a skill and entrepreneurial skills that can support themselves.

Scan the QR code to watch a short video of the opening ceremony for the Center for Hope.



Hans and Mindy Thygeson, founders of Impact Hope, along with their three children visit the Center for Hope in November 2022.

Your Impact in 2022



1,081 refugees provided with education and life-skills training.



695 students were enrolled in Christian Boarding Schools.



183 students attended the Center for Hope Vocational Training School.



26 students enrolled in university.



27 students enrolled in IPRC- Integrated Polytechnic Regional College (2 year program).

You Inspire Us!



Our donors are amazing and Sally Hasselbreck is one of them! In the early 70's, Sally traveled the world to work on flame retardant items in airplanes in order to protect people from flash fires if they occurred. She was one of the first females to ever do this!

Sally shared, "I was blessed to have the very unique graduate training I did. God opened my heart for the need to go. Being able to travel around in steerage class with my three granola bar diet substantially changed my life and views of the world. I applaud the efforts of your [Impact Hope's] noble work. May God continue to bless your efforts!"

Thank you Sally for your incredible contribution to the world and to young refugees in Rwanda!

Picture: Liz Thomsen, Executive Director of Impact Hope, with Sally Hasselbreck in Washington.

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Three Ways **You** Can Make an Impact

SPONSOR A STUDENT

\$50 a month goes to providing a safe education at a Christian boarding school, medical coverage, and all living essentials.

DONATE

Whether you make a monthly donation or a one time donation, 100% of gifts goes directly to the mission.

SHARE THE STORY

Invite your community to get involved. Give a church presentation, host a dinner party, or send out an email sharing why you support these young refugees!