

AN EVENTFUL 2025 SUMMER AND FALL

KULE Newsletter

Here's what has happened this summer and what's to come!

The Tragic Passing of Our Beloved Chairman



In this newsletter you can expect:

- *The Tragic Passing of our beloved Chairman*
- *Looking Back at Our 2025 Summer Programs*
- *Update on Women's Collective Program*
- *Fall 2025 Pearson College KULE CAS Activities*
- *Growing KULE Partnerships*
- *Notice of Upcoming Annual General Meeting*
- *Ongoing Funding Challenges*

Here's to a fall of growth, giving, and building brighter futures together!

If you have questions, contact us at director@kulefoundation.org for details.

Geoffrey Tindyebwa

GEOFFREY'S TRIBUTE TO DAVID NJOROGE, THE LATE CHAIRMAN OF KULE INTERNATIONAL

In July, this year, KULE lost its iconic pillar in Kenya. David Njoroge, my friend for nearly 50 years, passed on after a long illness. He and his family supported me when I was a political refugee from my motherland, Uganda, and led the village community to embrace me and - subsequently - my family. This was in the mid-70s. To give back to him and his community, I started KULE. Soon this personal motive morphed into the global experiential learning organization it is today.

Throughout all the years I knew him, David was a compassionate and community development-minded person. When I first met him, he was the principal of Mukangu Primary School. On retirement, he rose through the ranks to become the national vice-chairman of the teachers' union. Passionate about education, he was the brain behind the start of Mukangu Secondary School- today, the best day school in the district, and one of KULE's support projects for over two decades. The list of boys and girls for whom he paid fees is very long indeed. Similarly, it is impossible to list all the community development projects in his village and neighboring areas he initiated; they are too many. Suffice it to say, today's KULE's projects there have his imprint written all over them. These include Koimbi Children's Home where KULE has been heavily involved for over twenty years. Other main areas are Roko 20 Academy and the ongoing Ithirianga Primary School building project.

A charismatic leader and excellent host, he attracted thousands of people to his funeral. I was privileged to attend it in person and overwhelmed by the outpouring of grief at his passing by the mourners.

MESSAGES OF CONDOLENCE FOR THE LATE CHAIRMAN

Some of this grief is reflected in the messages of condolence I received from many KULEans whom he and his family had hosted throughout the 23 years of KULE in his village. Here are a few examples:

- Please accept my deepest condolences to you and to everyone who loved him dearly. He was an incredible man. I know how much he meant to you and to so many of us who had the privilege of knowing him. He was wise, kind and always with a smile. His leadership left a lasting impact on everyone around him. I'll always remember him with admiration and gratitude for opening the door of his house and the village to all KULE members. Valentina, from Argentina.
- Oh Geoffrey, I am so sad to hear this news. My time with the Chairman was deeply inspiring and I found him to be so welcoming, kind, generous and wise. I am sending you and all the community my heartfelt condolences. I will keep you all in my prayers during this difficult time. May you feel peace knowing how much he enriched all of our lives with his caring heart. All the best, Emmy Chahal (from Canada)- KULE Canada board member
- I am really sorry to hear about the passing of the KULE chairman. I remember he was a charismatic and enthusiastic man who always wanted what was best for his community. I am saddened to learn of his death and the loss for the greater family in losing a great patriarch, having also lost his wife in 2023. Do send my condolences to the entire family and the community he loved so much. Daniel Kibet (Kenya)
- Dear Geoffrey, please accept my condolences on the passing of one of your longest and most special friends. I know your acquaintance with David goes back many decades and how he played a key role in rescuing you at a difficult and frightening time in your life. I also know he has been a champion of the poor and has done so much to help those who are vulnerable and misfortunate. He will be greatly missed in his local community but also a wider community who have become connected to his incredible story through KULE. My own memories are of a very kind man who enjoyed a beer, a chat and was always able to show humility and gratitude. Take care; this will be hard for you and his family. My respect and sympathies. Robyn Tyner (retired teacher; Sent many students for 15 years while teaching at the International School of Geneva)
- I am so sorry to hear of this devastating loss to the community, to KULE, and to you. The Chairman was a kind, generous man, and a dear friend to you. Sending you all my love and energy. All my best to you, his children, grandchildren and community. Taya Tootoo (Nunavut, Canada)
- I remember meeting him, and I could tell immediately how much he cared about the community, and how much he wanted to see it prosper, whether it be through supporting KULE or even just supporting individual community members. He was a vital part of KULE and a vessel of knowledge for KULE participants. I hope that KULE continues with his spirit and knowledge, acting as guidance. Sending you, and all who knew him, love and support. Kind Regards, Ilyana Jiwa (Kenya)
- I had a wonderful memory with Chairman and his family during KULE, and I still remember how, on the last day of our KULE trip, he accompanied us all the way from his home to Nairobi. With his lifelong kindness and generosity, I believe his spirit is going to rest at a much better place. And for you, our Papa G, please take care of yourself at this emotional and challenging period. Please let me know if I can help in anything. You have all my support. I will see you when you come back in Toronto. With my deepest condolences, Yiqian (from China and Canada)

During the KULE students' stay in his house last July, it was his spirit that watched over us as he had passed on already. However, the hospitality that his children accorded us - even though they were preparing for their patriarch's funeral - was overwhelming. The KULE students left for home on the eve of his funeral. I stayed behind to attend the function (my flight was on the following day), a witness to the passing of a wise, humane giant whose spirit will live on in all KULE's activities in Kenya and beyond. Thank you, all, who helped his family (through me) to clear the medical bill they had incurred. RIP, David, my friend, KULE patriarch and visionary. Geoffrey Tindyebwa. Please contact me/Geoffrey if the family did not send you a receipt for your donation.

Highlights and Reflections from 2025 Summer Program

The following are some of the pictures from the 2025 Summer Program activities and a few reflections from some of the Pearson College student participants.



Reflection from LEONA - Hungary

What project were you working on during your time in Kenya?

While being in Kenya, we had the opportunity to help at a local construction site in the Mukangu community. With local builders we have built a new classroom of the Mukangu Primary School, which was founded by KULE. The local workers hired and paid for by KULE provided the required knowledge and experience of building; with their guidance we were able to help and engage with the community. They shared interesting stories with us, as well as they taught some words in their language to us. It was very amazing to see how a whole classroom was built in just some weeks. Moreover, during the 3 weeks spent in Kenya we visited many projects of KULE which have already been completed, like the water tank in Koimbi Children's home, the gender-based washrooms in Murangu Secondary School or the other classrooms at Mukangu Primary School. Meeting the members of the community and seeing how grateful they were for the projects, had a huge impact on me. This made me understand why KULE is worth doing.



**CONSTRUCTION
SITE - KULE
PRIMARY
SCHOOL**



**MUKANG'U
SECONDARY &
PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

**ROKO-20
ACADEMY**



**SHALLOM
ACADEMY**



Reflection from ROCIO - Guatemala/Panama

What impact do you think the workshops had, and what did you personally learn from the experience?

The workshops had a meaningful impact—not just on the students, but on us as well. I saw students becoming more confident, curious, and willing to share their ideas, and there was a spark of possibility in their eyes that was inspiring to witness. Workshops for teachers, especially the first aid training, felt empowering, giving them new tools to support their students and community. What stood out most were the moments of connection: the laughter, teamwork, and curiosity that filled the classrooms. It wasn't just about teaching skills, but about showing students that their ideas and creativity mattered. Personally, I learned so much about patience, empathy, and the power of listening. Working with students from different backgrounds taught me how much we gain when we open our hearts to others, and the dedication of the teachers in Murang'a deeply inspired me. I discovered the beauty of learning together—an experience that will stay with me forever.



**KOIMBI
CHILDRENS
HOME**

MACHEO



Reflection from KEVIN - Hong Kong

Do you think the people in the community were as excited to learn from us as we were to learn from them?

Absolutely. I think the important thing- and I've said this too many times- is that we came as guests and not tourists. All of us went with an open mind and an eagerness to learn from the people in Murang'a, but it was also heartening to find that they were just as curious about us!

I remember when we were doing construction for a new classroom of the primary school building, the adults were teaching us how to count from 1 to 10 in both Kikuyu and Kiswahili by each bucket of sand or cement we were carrying. But interestingly they also wanted to know how to count the numbers in our languages, whether it was Spanish, Chinese and more. During our school visits, we really admired the kids' energy and enthusiasm. When our bus would drive by, we would see swarms of these little primary school kids rush out of their buildings and chase the bus. It was so wholesome, and we wished we could be there with them the whole time. As my co-leaders have mentioned, we would do workshops, we played football and danced with them, and it really isn't just about learning from each other, but simply communicating and forming bonds and connections.

By the time of our penultimate day, we had been staying at the chairman's house for a good week and the mothers in that community had been cooking for us the whole time. So we decided that we would buy ingredients and cook some of our local dishes from home and serve them for the final meal. We enjoyed good Kenyan home dishes; it was only reasonable to return the favour with a taste of our homes! Lulwa made an amazing Lebanese chicken, Rocio made Guacamole, I made Hong Kong style Mango Pudding, and other peers had their own dishes too. When they tried the food, they were all really curious as to where each dish originated and the culture behind them. Although we definitely weren't master chefs, we were happy with how it turned out!

I have so many more anecdotes to give, but yes- the people in the community were definitely just as excited to learn with us as we were to learn from them. Beyond that, it wasn't only about learning, but also making meaningful memories and forming lifelong connections and bonds.



**CHAIRMAN'S
HOME**

Update On Women's Collective Program

Founded by Bhavana Akilan, then a neuroscience student in her final year at the University of Toronto, with the umbrella and supervision of the KULE Foundation International (KULE), the Women's Collective in Kambirwa village, on the outskirts of Murang'a town is a thriving community initiative that brings together women navigating complex challenges, from social stigma and economic instability to the emotional toll of caregiving and isolation.

Meeting weekly at Roko 20 Academy, a learning centre for vulnerable children in the area, the collective provides a safe and uplifting space where women engage in bead-making, knitting, storytelling circles, and peer support.

These activities strengthen income-earning abilities in addition to nurturing confidence, solidarity, and mental well-being. Over time, the group has become a trusted source of companionship and strength, where women feel seen, valued, and empowered to advocate for themselves and their families.



The initiative, fondly called "Tujiamini" (Swahili: "believe in yourself") by the women, has gained inspiring recognition at the University of Toronto as a model for community-engaged, decolonial global health work. It was featured at the Department of Health Studies Research Day and named a finalist at the UTSC Research & Creative Forum, ultimately being awarded the UTSC Research & Creative Prize. Its story was highlighted in Bhavana's graduation profile on UTSC News and UofT News, amplifying the voices of the women at its heart.

With growing momentum, the project is now preparing to expand to Mukangu, KULE's adopted village, extending access to creative collaboration, financial empowerment, and mental health support across neighboring villages. As the collective continues to grow, its mission remains rooted in shared care: building thriving communities by women, for women in rural Kenya.



Fall 2025 Pearson College KULE CAS Activities



The KULE CAS has been busy this fall. They participated in the Metchosin Day event and numerous craft fairs around the village by making and selling bracelets and other KULE merchandise.

They have also continued the KULE café nights at PC to make/sell drinks and treats. Many of these activities have been highlighted on the KULE Instagram site.

Growing KULE Partnerships

The following are some KULE's partnership highlights from Geoffrey, our Director:

In May this year, I was a guest speaker at Bloorview Research Institute to a group of twenty-two research scientists, all connected to the University of Toronto. Eleven of them attended in person and the rest did so virtually. For one hour, I engaged my rapt audience on the topic Dr Calvin Ngan, the director in charge, had given me: *Service vs Saving, Lessons from the KULE Foundation experience*. Inevitably, the topic of white saviorism came up but everyone who spoke in the subsequent discussion was quick to point out how humility, deference to the host community, open-mindedness, consultation, avoiding installing white elephants and celebrating a shared humanity are at the heart of a successful philanthropic mission. Dr Ngan, the host, was kind enough to draw from his own experience when he led the Fortune and Wisdom Charity from Hong Kong to do some excellent work in KULE's adopted village, Mukangu, in February/March 2023. A truly inspiring afternoon I had with the audience! Below are two of the responses shared with me by Dr Ngan:

- *"I was truly moved by Geoffrey's presentation on KULE and the impactful work being done to support communities in Kenya. He delivered an eye-opening and heartfelt talk that challenged us to reflect on our own privilege and offered a powerful reminder of the realities others face around the world. It was inspiring, humbling, and a powerful call to action. Thank you, Geoffrey, for sharing your incredible work with us"- Gloria Lee, Research Manager, Bloorview Research Institute.*
- *"Geoffrey Tindyebwa is a powerful storyteller and the heart behind the KULE Foundation. His passion and clarity inspire real change, helping build schools, water systems, and opportunity in East African communities. It was a pleasure hearing him speak!"- Vishal Pendse, PhD candidate, Biomedical Engineering.*

November 2025 witnessed another heartwarming addition to KULE's growing partners. The Canadian International School of Hong Kong (CDNIS) did a very busy week with us in Mukangu, with a focus on rescuing a badly damaged road leading to the heart of the village and advancing work on our primary building construction work at Ithirianga. The safari after the few days in Murang'a was one of the highlights of the trip, with some students reflecting on the immense difference between the socio-economic differences represented by the three different hotels that had hosted them. Other students rightly commented on the contrasts between the different landscapes so obvious on the safari, maybe climaxed by their stopover at the escarpment, to witness the Rift Valley at its most calming splendour on a very clear morning. Little did they know that this was part of the intentional strategy of diversifying the learners' experience and therefore subverting the temptation to stereotype situations, especially given the impact of some media coverage of some parts of the world.

Other students reflected on, to them, the difference between the haves and have nots, while some commented on the world of privilege. Mr. Jeremy Power, the Deputy Principal and leader of the trip, while promising to send me some detailed feedback, was quick to say that,

"the experience was overly positive, and great times were had by all."

It was an honour and privilege for KULE to host such an exceptional group of learners, led by a team of friendly and professional adults. What a memorable experience!



Jasper Yam, one of the Grade 12 students, had this to say, in a letter he had written to me:

"In hindsight, while the safari was fun, I think the main takeaway for most students is seeing this slice of Kenya not just another African country on a map, but humanizing it as a unique and distinct society with a friendly and welcoming atmosphere..."

I am sure most students will carry this experience and their learning for the rest of their lives."

Notice of KULE Canada Annual General Meeting

The KULE Canada Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place in January. There will be the option of attending in person at Pearson College or via ZOOM Meeting. More information, such as the location and ZOOM details, agenda and last year's minutes, will be sent out a couple of weeks before the meeting.

PLEASE HOLD THIS DATE

18 January 2026

10-11:30 am Pacific Time

Please contact Geoffrey at director@kulefoundation.org if you are interested in attending.

Ongoing Funding Challenges

PLEASE

NOW WOULD BE A GREAT TIME TO DONATE TOWARDS THESE PROJECTS

- KULE Foundation International website at <https://kulefoundation.com/> which has the information required to do a direct bank transfer
- Gofundme fundraising site for KULE at <https://gofund.me/33275cf4>
- If you have any questions, please contact us at director@kulefoundation.org for details

Our KULE family would like to wish everyone a wonderful Holiday Season

Thank you for your efforts in our quest for growth, giving, and building brighter futures together!