



## A letter from the **Executive Director and Chairperson**

"The future belongs to those who give the next generation reason for hope."

- Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Dear friends.

At WMI, we are in the business of catalyzing hope. Cultivating it. Inspiring it. Empowering young people to be the change that their communities need by providing access to higher education, professional development. coalition building, and seed funding for community-based initiatives.

In 2024, we welcomed 102 new scholars into the WMI family (our largest incoming class to date), bringing our total number of scholars to 806! Within our 2024 Impact Report, you will get a glimpse into the impact of your commitment to these ambitious young leaders:

- Over 600,000 people collectively served by WMI Scholars in 2024
- Nearly 150 social entrepreneurship projects being led by scholars across twenty nations
- 75% of WMI Scholars supporting the education of at least one other person
- Countless stories of resilience and commitment to leading local change



NICOLE BAKER (pictured far right) Executive Director

In November 2024, Nicole Baker, a 12-year veteran of WMI, became our Executive Director. Throughout her tenure with WMI, this fundamental truth continues to drive her commitment to our work: WMI Scholars are unequivocally changing the world. We see it in the schools, businesses, non-profit organizations, clinics, and pharmacies that they found. In the medical research they conduct. In the service and resources they funnel back into their communities.

With every medical patient treated, every young girl educated, every climate solution enacted...WMI Scholars are elevating the very educational, economic, and social fabric of the regions that they call home.

You make this work possible! With every gift to WMI, you are choosing the kind of world you want to inhabit and see sustained in the future. Thank you for choosing one that values education, local leadership, the global community, and dignity, opportunity, and hope for all.

With gratitude and continued hope for the future,

Nicole Baker **Executive Director**  Thomas M. Wells Founder & Chairperson of the Board





\*Permission has been sought and received for the use of all photos featured in this publication.



## 2024

## At A Glance

Thanks to you, hundreds of thousands of lives were changed in 2024 through the power of higher education and local leadership.

630,770

people collectively served by scholars in 2024 through paid or volunteer roles

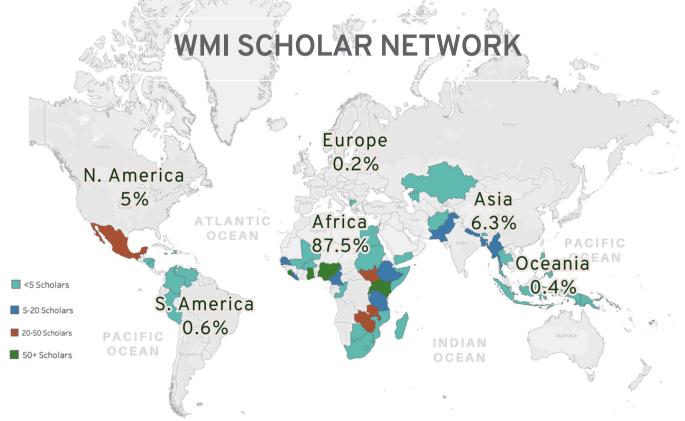
334

student scholars pursuing their undergraduate degree 472

WMI Alumni members working in their home regions after completing their undergraduate degree

55

countries in which WMI Scholars work and study



### SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT Ken and Susan Forester

Ken and Susan Forester believe in giving back to the next generation. New Jersey natives, the Foresters were first introduced to WMI through friends, Tom and Carol Wells. At that time, Susan was working at a local community college and was disheartened by the number of students with financial barriers. She casually mentioned this to Tom, and shortly after found a box on her desk containing 105 textbooks. Enough to supply the entire class. Susan said, "We understood then that Tom and Carol had a heart for giving back, and we wanted to be part of that."

Some years later, Ken was invited to join the WMI board, and he and Susan began reviewing applications, a humbling experience for both. It made them realize just how strong these young people were, and how support from WMI was opening the door to boundless opportunity for hundreds of global leaders. "In reading (the applications), you feel so moved. You can feel their level of commitment to giving back to their communities."

In 2023, the Foresters attended WMI's Dream Big Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, an experience that brought WMI's impact to life for them. "It really was a life-changing experience," said Ken. During their trip, they were especially struck by the plight of our women scholars, who often combat stigma, child marriage, discrimination, and even violence to achieve a better way of life.

On the final day of the conference, Susan complimented a female scholar on her beautiful scarf. The scholar immediately removed the scarf and gave it to Susan, expressing how WMI had changed her life and how happy it would make her to give back in some way. Susan was deeply moved by this young woman's act of selfless generosity. "We have a responsibility to give back, and that is really what WMI enables us to do."

There are hardly words enough to express the depth of gratitude that we at WMI feel for the Foresters' abiding support. Through their generosity, hundreds of young global leaders have been empowered to become the changemakers that their **communities need.** Ken and Susan have supported many individual scholars and given substantial annual gifts to WMI for more than fifteen years. They are now considering making a legacy gift to our Endowment, which will literally provide support every year, forever.

At WMI, we honor the generosity that flows in all directions between scholars, alumni, donors, and staff. We are grateful to Ken and Susan for being part of a community that leads with courage, shares with abundance, and builds futures together.







# Hope through Education

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



#### IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"WMI has been a cornerstone in my iournev. Your investment in mv education has inspired me to give back to my community in meaningful ways.

I am committed to transforming my community by offering free agricultural extension services. My goal is to promote sustainable agriculture practices and improve food security for smallholder farmers. This is my way of contributing to the vision you instilled in me to create a positive and lasting impact."

Stellia Tamandani Banda 2024 Graduate Scholar, Malawi Bachelor's in Agronomy

Higher education exponentially increases an individual's personal development, economic opportunity, and effectiveness in advancing social change locally.

WMI's Scholarship Program supports students from underserved global communities who are earning their higher education diploma or bachelor's degree. The scholarship covers the cost of tuition and other education-related expenses such as housing, meals, and

Thank you for empowering the next generation of global leaders!



97,088

hours scholars collectively volunteered in 2024



additional student scholarships awarded in 2024



of WMI Scholars studying or working in the medical field



College completion rate for WMI Scholars

## Hope in Action

## STORIES OF IMPACT

Access to Higher Education

#### THROUGH HARDSHIP. A PASSION FOR MENTAL HEALTH EMERGES

At just one month old. Patrick Tsuma's life changed forever when his parents suffered serious injury in a car accident, leaving them both permanently disabled. Born into an impoverished community in Kenya, his older brother became his caretaker. Through it all, Patrick kept sight of his dream of a better life.

He worked hard and became the first member of his family to complete elementary school. However, because his family had no money for his secondary education, Patrick struggled to find reliable support. He became anxious and disheartened.

After a particularly crushing loss, Patrick sank into a deep depression and began to lose hope. It was in this time of darkness that he developed a passion for mental health, and decided to study Psychology to help others like himself. He graduated and went on to receive a scholarship from WMI, the lifeline he needed to make his dream come true. Today, Patrick is excelling in his studies, and volunteers his time by providing free counseling to those in need.

"I am positively impacting my community by encouraging children from less privileged families not to be overwhelmed by challenges. The future is always bright as long as there is dedication and hard work towards achieving one's dream."





Access to Higher Education

#### LEADING HEALTHCARE EQUITY IN RURAL GHANA

"Growing up in Ghana, I witnessed firsthand how systemic inefficiencies in healthcare often determined whether patients lived or died. These challenges fueled my desire to become a doctor. However, despite my passion and academic dedication, financial constraints made medical school an uphill battle. The WMI Scholarship...allowed me to complete my education and stay committed to driving change in healthcare delivery for underserved communities.

WMI is truly the gift that keeps on giving—not only providing financial support to students but also fostering professional growth."

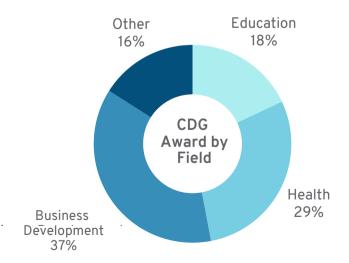
Dr. Lord Sylvester Ofori Teyehugmeh WMI Alumnus, Ghana

## Hope through Access

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS**



The Community Development Grants (CDG) program provides funding to start or significantly expand a scholar's service project, community-based organization, NGO, or business.



145

total social entrepreneurship projects led by scholars in 20 countries

\$1.07

Cost per beneficiary to provide lifesaving resources and programming through CDG

145,158

total beneficiaries of CDG projects, awarding \$155,438 in funding

Image: Dr. Daniel Femi, a WMI Alumnus of Optometry, received a \$1,000 Seed Grant to increase access to eye care services in remote communities in Nigeria, benefiting approximately 1200 individuals.

## Hope in Action

## STORIES OF IMPACT

Access to Capital

### SMILES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS YOUTH IN ZAMBIA

Nasilele Mubita is a Zambian dental surgeon and WMI Alumna who is passionate about preventative oral health, especially focused on the needs of youth.

Recognizing a lack of accessibility in rural Zambia, she founded We Smile, an organization that aims to improve the healthcare available to marginalized communities through increased access to dental hygiene resources and education.

Utilizing a Seed Grant through WMI, Nasilele implemented an outreach program for children with disabilities in Lusaka. reaching 350 young people and families in need with quality dental care.





Access to Capital

### **GUIDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF GLOBAL LEADERS**

Precious Mhlanga is a WMI Alumna from Eswatini who completed her degree in Education in 2020. After witnessing rampant drug abuse and criminal behavior in her community, she decided to do something about it.

Precious received a seed grant from WMI in 2024, and is now providing career and college readiness training to high school students, giving the young people of Eswatini a renewed sense of hope and pathways for the future.

## Hope through Service

## WMI SCHOLARS GIVING BACK

Service is a vital component of every scholar's journey with WMI. Students who engage in community service are significantly more likely to feel connected to their respective communities, do better in school, and stay in their region after graduation.

During their studies, WMI Scholars are required to complete at least 100 hours of community service annually. They often report that this is an incredibly impactful part of their education.



81%

of alumni are employed or engaged in fulltime graduate studies



66%

of WMI Alumni continued to volunteer in 2024



36%

of WMI Scholars have launched a nonprofit or business that have collectively employed over 443 people and served over 277,166 individuals



75%

of WMI Alumni support the education of someone else, supporting **708** individuals in 2024 alone, **33%** of whom are girls



## WMI FELLOWSHIP FORMS AS AN OFFICIAL NON-PROFIT

There are currently thirteen WMI Fellowships. In 2024, the Uganda Fellowship decided to restructure their legal status in-country in order to serve even more community members as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). This designation is in process, and they are looking forward to sustainably addressing even more local challenges as an NGO.

With your support, WMI Fellowships are multiplying positive impact and meeting local needs throughout the Global South.

## Hope in Action

## STORIES OF IMPACT



Sustainable Change through Service

### COMBATING POVERTY AND CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH AGRONOMY

Harriet Kilama was born in a war zone in Northern Uganda, the sixth of eight children. She grew up in a refugee camp and witnessed firsthand the malnutrition, suffering, and hopelessness that often came with her status.

Agriculture is the backbone of Uganda, and yet Ugandans were unable to farm their own land for years as a result of raging civil war that left them refugees in their own country. Today, smallholder farmers are still struggling to "catch up" with modern farming practices. Harriet began to realize that access to land was essential for both sovereignty and prosperity, and she dreamed of studying modern farming practices one dav.

With your support, Harriet was able to graduate with a degree in Agronomy in 2019. Post-graduation, she was awarded a CDG grant to realize her greatest hope: empowering local farmers to implement more efficient farming practices while fighting climate change through regenerative agriculture. In 2024, her organization served 1000 direct beneficiaries and employed 2 full-time staff members.

Sustainable Change through Service

#### FOUNDING A SCHOOL FINDING A CALLING

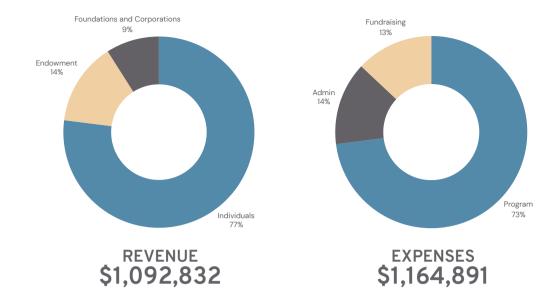
Jacquelyne Alesi is a WMI Alumna who is passionate about providing access to safe housing and quality education for orphaned and impoverished children in Uganda.

Through a WMI Growth Grant in 2024, Jacquelyne was able to construct a dormitory to house students and improve their academic performance and quality of life. The orphan crisis in Uganda is severe, and many children have nowhere to live if their parents are deceased or displaced.

The dormitory now houses 42 children, and enrollment has increased to 173 students. Thank you for restoring hope to the children of Uganda!



## Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Overview



### THE CORNERSTONE CIRCLE

Launched in 2021, Cornerstone Circle is a program dedicated to our most generous and committed donors (full annual sponsors of a WMI Scholar or annual donation of \$2500+). Members have unique opportunities to engage with scholars, network with other Circle members, engage with leadership, and have access to exclusive content outlining the impact of their donation.

#### Thank You, 2024 Cornerstone Circle Members!

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Each year, approximately 150 volunteers review over 1600 scholarship applications. We could not do this without them.

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