


get to know:

Ukho

Ukho is currently the second youngest child of 41 at Open Arms. He is 10 months old and came to us at 4 weeks of age after he was abandoned. As you can see from the photo below, he is a favorite of older children like Namhla who play with him and give him lots of hugs and kisses every day. Ukho is one of more than a dozen children who have spent virtually their entire lives at Open Arms. Like all people, our staff and children love when a baby arrives and there is no shortage of love for these youngsters!



 *Ukho* AGE *10 months*
 FAVORITE COLOR *we'll let you know later!*
 FAVORITE FOOD *rice krispies and bananas*
 WHAT MAKES ME HAPPY *playing with toys that make noise!*

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open arms

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UKHO AND NAMHLA. OUR OLDER CHILDREN LOVE THE LITTLE ONES!



Open Arms is a 501 (c)(3) organization and any tax deductible donations can be sent to the US address at right.

open arms news

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LISA, AGE 6

A LETTER FROM BOBO

Friends,

Like most people, I have a very special place in my heart for my mother. She died when I was 24 years old but I still cherish every single memory I have of her. She was a joyful, funny and compassionate person who touched the lives of everyone she encountered. Not a day goes by without me thinking of her in some way.

Regardless of when it happens, the loss of a person's mother is a very traumatic event. Moms are very special people because they bring us into the world and have a bond with us that no one else can have – they literally give us the gift of life.

At Open Arms, many of our children experience the trauma of two separations from their mothers. The first one takes place when mothers become too sick from HIV/AIDS to care for their kids and the children are placed with us. The second one, unfortunately all too common, is

experienced sometime later when the mother finally succumbs to AIDS and passes away.

In the past year or so, we have had 11 children lose their mothers to the scourge of AIDS. This is more than one-quarter of the children in our care. The children attend the funerals and we do our best to help them through love, counseling, play therapy and a lot of hugs. These actions are never enough but we do our best to let them know that their mothers have moved to a better place and that they still have a home where people love them.

South Africa has one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in the world. More than 20% of the adults in a country of 49 million people are HIV positive. For that reason, we know we have not seen the last of the children coming to our doors because their mothers are sick nor the last of the funerals that follow. This is the reality we face.

Your gifts to Open Arms provide love and hope to kids who have to face the loss of a mother far sooner

than most of us have experienced. And that's why your support is so critical and so appreciated. We cannot and do not replace the special love that only a mother can provide – but we do our best and I know first-hand how much the children appreciate it and how much difference it makes in their lives.

There is a Jewish proverb that says "God could not be everywhere, so He created mothers." In their absence, our children are very grateful that He created *you*.

With Gratitude,



BELOW: OUR CHILDREN AT KOMGA JUNIOR; LISA HEADS OFF TO KOMGA KIDS PRESCHOOL



For any child, a good education is a key stepping stone to future success in life. We take this responsibility very seriously at Open Arms. Because we raise our children to adulthood, we take every opportunity to make sure they have current and future success in the classroom.

Our educational process consists of 4 distinct stages:

AGE 2-4 Children attend our on-site preschool to learn basic skills and get used to a classroom setting. We have our own teacher who works for three hours each morning with our toddlers.

AGE 5-6 Our kids head off-site to Komga Kids Preschool for a pre-k and kindergarten curriculum. They learn more formal things like math, their alphabet and also work on their formal English skills.

AGE 7-13 Our children attend one of two elementary schools in the local area, Morgenster or Komga Junior. Komga Junior is the best school in the area and we are proud to have six children at this school this year with more to come next year if they pass the qualification exam.

HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE Although we don't have any children this age yet, our children will attend high school in nearby East London and college at one of the many universities in South Africa. We are thankful college is cheaper in South Africa than the U.S.A.!

mark your calendar

The widely acclaimed gospel and contemporary vocalist, **ROBERT ROBINSON** will perform for our kids on **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3** at the Wigwam Resort in Phoenix and on **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25** at the Metropolitan

Ballroom in Minneapolis. As we expand our services to ever more children, these events are very important for us. Please contact Ted Freese at ted@openarmshome.com if you need more information. **SEE YOU THERE!**



ROBERT ROBINSON

purses with a purpose

One of the most heartwarming things about Open Arms is the way children from America have rallied to support the kids at Open Arms. Children in schools and churches across the U.S. have banded together to raise money, make items and send books and supplies to our campus in South Africa. Other children have had birthday party guests bring donations to Open Arms in lieu of receiving gifts. We continue to be touched and inspired by such efforts!

One very special young lady has gone above-and-beyond for the kids at Open Arms. **JESSICA YOST**, 15, of the Milwaukee area has twice volunteered at Open Arms, even raising the money for the 2nd visit herself. Jessica has taken her love for our children back to the U.S. in a very special way. Last year, Jessica started "Purses With A Purpose," a project in which she makes and sells stylish purses and donates the proceeds to help children in need, including Open Arms. Recently, Jessica sent in a check for \$1,500.00 to help our children and we were so humbled to learn how hard she worked to make this possible.

In an article in her high school newspaper, Jessica recently remarked that her purse project was a way "to prove to the children that I will always be there for them and I want to be a part of their lives as long as I can."

We salute this remarkable young woman and all the young people who continue to inspire us with their generous efforts and contributions to Open Arms.

→ thanks jessica!



LET'S GET COOKING!

On January 28th, 2012, Open Arms will dedicate our new kitchen and dining hall facility that is currently being built. Thank you to all of our generous donors who made this building possible!



"WE LOVE OPEN ARMS"

RITA MONTGOMERY, our Executive Director, along with three volunteers, **PATRICK LLOYD**, **KEATON VAN BEVEREN** and **KYLE DEBRUHL**, successfully climbed all 19,340 feet of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania as a way to raise money and awareness for Open Arms. Thank you, conquering heroes, for inspiring us and helping our kids!



JESSICA AND BHUKO

wish list

CURRENT NEEDS

Many people ask if there are particular items or projects that need to be funded. To that end, here is a partial list of some of our more pressing needs. Please don't hesitate to call Bob or Ted if you have any questions.



NEW VOLUNTEER ACCOMMODATIONS

\$110,000.00

This will allow us to house up to seven volunteers to serve our growing number of children



NEW 14-PASSENGER VAN

\$40,000.00

We need to purchase a third van to get our children to school, athletic practices, church, medical appointments and everywhere else!



BICYCLES FOR OUR KIDS

\$5,000.00

We have long dreamed that every child at the Home could have their own bike to ride & maintain. This gift would buy 50 bikes to make that dream come true.



BE AN OPEN ARMS ANGEL

\$1,200.00

A commitment of \$100.00 per month takes care of the needs of a child throughout the year. Join up today at www.openarmshome.com and receive 3 reports on your child throughout the year.