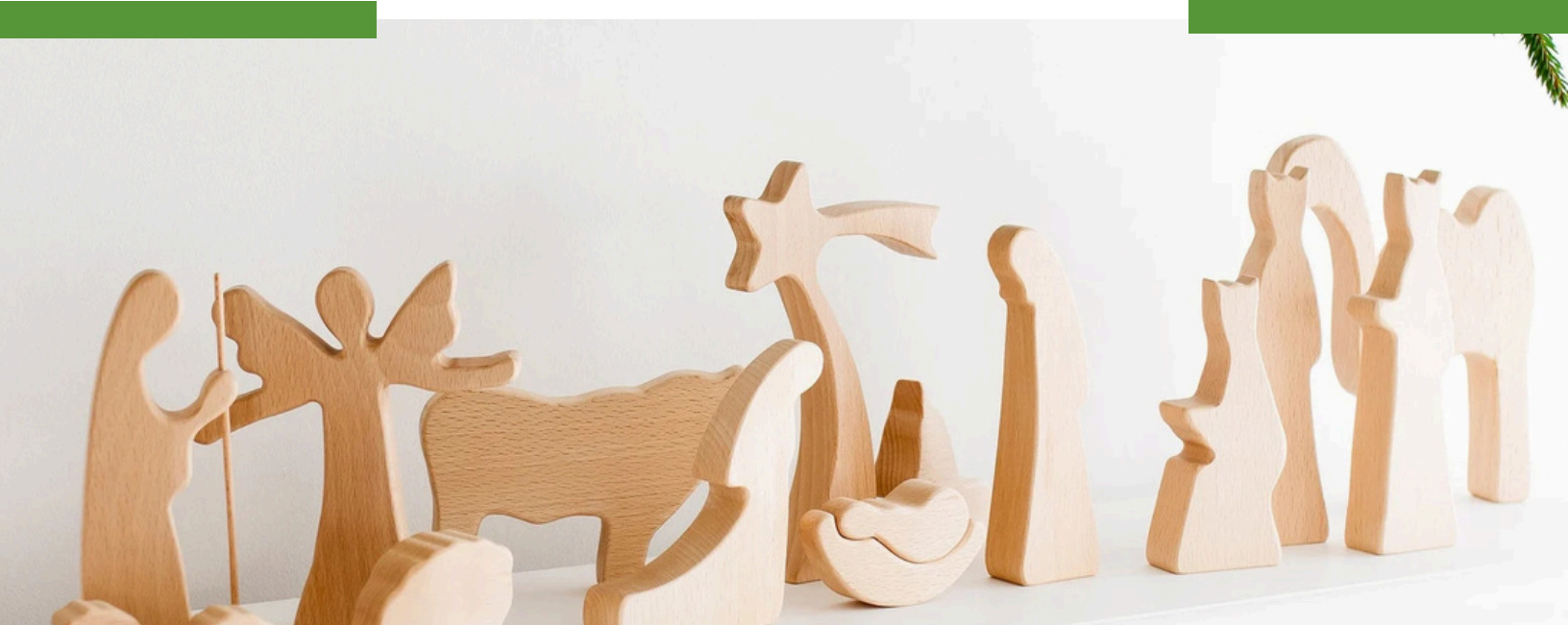


»» NEWSLETTER ««

MMTHC NEWS

Mt. Meru Tumaini Health Clinic & the Ndoombo Community Foundation



WISHING YOU ALL A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON AND NEW YEAR!



Oine performing an eye exam on a student

»» **READ MORE:**
BRINGING VISION TO LIFE

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REFLECTION: A MASQUERADE GALA
FINANCIAL REPORT



Guests at the Masquerade Gala

BRINGING VISION TO LIFE

NDOOMBO COMMUNITY DISPENSARY AND VISION HEALTH INTERNATIONAL'S PARTNERSHIP
TO TRANSFORM EYE CARE AND HEALTH SERVICES IN TANZANIA

Written by Ava Targett

THE FOOTHILLS OF MT MERU

The foothills of Mt. Meru are backdropped by a verdant mountain side with banana plantations towering in every direction. A trafficked dirt road leads up the mountainside making a rollicking ride for newcomers in land rovers, our primary form of transportation. After crossing a steep ravine, we shortly arrive at the Ndoombo Community Dispensary. The early morning journey up to the dispensary was always met with smiles and waves from students commuting to school, many of whom the team came to know at the clinic. And many who would be wearing sunglasses by the end of the Vision Health International pop-up clinic.

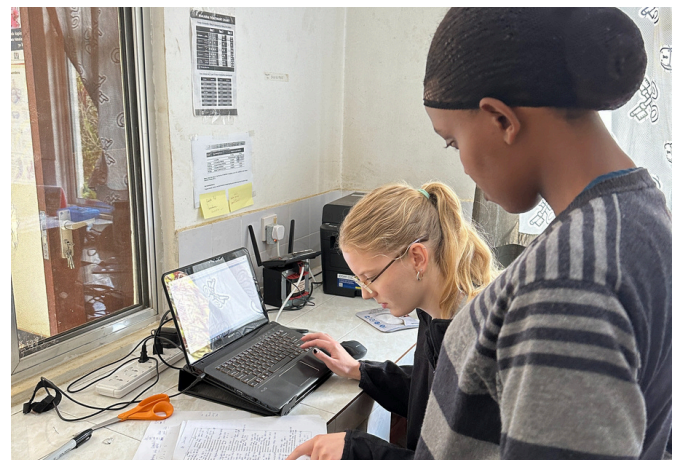


Vision Health International (VHI) is a nonprofit organization that brings quality and accessible eye care to communities around the world that are in need. Their partnership with the Ndoombo Community Dispensary was monumental in executing a combined mission to provide life changing eye care for the local community near the city of Arusha, Tanzania. Over the span of 5 days the VHI team and Ndoombo Dispensary provided impactful eye care for 900 patients. All people from different walks of life came from surrounding villages or from great distances to get their eyes checked. Many patients left with either prescription glasses, readers, sunglasses, eye medication or an opportunity or receive life altering cataract surgery. Furthermore, the collaboration has provided a foundation for future eyecare services to be incorporated at the Dispensary.

The Ndoombo Dispensary's mission is to improve the quality of life for all in this community by providing a variety of healthcare services. The dispensary is equipped to provide both preventative care and accept all walk-in patients with medical needs. Volunteering at the Dispensary inspired me and instilled an idea of what international medicine looks like and what the needs are. As a pre-medical student, I aim to become a physician. My time at the Dispensary has had a tremendous impact on me and my perspective on what makes an incredible integrous healthcare provider.



Volunteers on the second VHI eye clinic 2024



Ava and Clara working on the pharmacy inventory spreadsheets.

➤➤➤ CLINIC DAYS AND PATIENT STORIES

At the clinic, I witnessed urgent medical treatment for wounds, lacerations, and infections. Patients who visited the VHI clinic to get their eyes checked were also sent to the Dispensary for further care upon identifying other underlying medical conditions. This accentuates the importance of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) such as VHI working with local organizations to provide continuous on-the-ground healthcare. Moreover, patients gain an advocate for their healthcare in their own community. Patients can further access immunizations, lab tests, maternity care, dental care, and health awareness education at the Dispensary.

As a volunteer working with VHI and the Ndoombo Community Dispensary, I stepped into any role that needed to be fulfilled. With the help of the remarkable translators, tasks were streamlined, and everyone felt welcomed including myself. The local people working in our team were monumental to the whole operation. The many hours we all spent together within the dispensary and outside of it created a united and close team. I was introduced to local treats such as chewing on sugar cane and eating wild berries whilst hiking together across the mountainside. The close-knit community emanates a caring and warm environment as it seems everyone we passed along our way knew each other. As a 20-year-old college student, I came to Tanzania alone but I left having made many new connections and friends.

At the dispensary I spent a lot of time performing visual acuity tests and taking eye pressures. Every patient who came into the dispensary had their visual acuity assessed making this position a unique opportunity to interact with everyone, young and old. Patients would often wait in the spot-screening room with me before waiting in the hallway to see the doctors. During these waiting periods children often chatted with me or wanted to draw together. One instance, a young boy named Daniel was drawing a picture of me and as he drew the children in the hallways burst out in laughter every time I walked in. I quickly realized he had drawn me with big spiral eyes, and I reciprocated with silly faces to match the drawing. The hallway that served as a waiting room was often filled with chatter and the ebullience of happy children. To further illustrate the patients' experiences, I have accounted Mercy Male and Lisa Betheli's stories. They are two amazing women who wanted to share their lives.

Mercy Male a young woman, 19 years of age, came into the dispensary to have her vision checked because she was having a hard time focusing in school. She was diagnosed with simple myopic anisometropia. Essentially her right eye is nearsighted and the other has perfect vision. This condition can cause a lot of eye strain, fatigue, and headaches. Mercy is in pharmacy school and explained that she often has migraines and blurred vision after going to lectures and studying. Dr. Arbuckle explained that prescription glasses will have a large impact on her day-to-day life especially as a student. The prescription glasses will help her vision tremendously and also ease her fatigue and migraines associated with focusing her eyes in school. Mercy is a highly motivated student and expressed how excited she is to receive her new glasses. She laughed and said that she would not only look smarter but be able to work harder at her studies. As a student myself with glasses, I gleefully agreed.



Performing visual acuity exams.
The first stop for the patient's.



A drawing for Ava.



Ava performing eye pressure checks.

»»» LISA'S STORY

A couple days later Lisa Betheli came to the dispensary with her grandson who helped her navigate her way around. Her vision had become exceedingly worse for the past 3 years and she explained her normal day to day work had become exceptionally tough and unmanageable. She came all the way from Midawe, which is a town about 2 hours away to visit the VHI and Ndoombo Dispensary partnership clinic to receive an eye examination. She presented with severe cataracts and received an opportunity to have life changing cataract surgery that will allow her to see again. Lisa explained that she has always valued her independence as she raised 8 children on her own after her husband passed away. It has been difficult to rely on other people because she can hardly see what is in front of her. Her vision impairment has caused her a lot of struggles to continue to support her children and her grandchildren. She told me that she is grateful to receive such a transformative surgery and finally return to her normal way of life. Her gratitude radiated throughout the room when she left with a big smile and exclaimed to the other patients that she would be able to see again.

Moments like those were in abundance. Gratitude encapsulated the whole experience. The entire team of volunteers, doctors, translators, staff worked in unison to accomplish the joint mission of providing quality care. The VHI and Ndoombo Community Dispensary collaboration captures the strength of transnational teamwork, and the impact transformational eye care has in local communities.



Group leaders at the end of the week celebration. Giving a special thank you to the volunteers and translators for their hard work.



Students after getting their eye exams.

REFLECTION ON THE GALA FUNDRAISER

WRITTEN BY ANNA-LISA MBISE

Heartfelt Gratitude

As we reflect on the success of our second annual fundraising event, we are filled with immense gratitude for the incredible support that made it possible. This year's theme - Masquerade - transported guests to an evening of elegance and mystery, beautifully set against the historic backdrop of the Bucyrus Club's 1893 Ballroom.

The event was a vibrant celebration filled with new and familiar faces. The event featured a sit-down dinner, curated by the wonderful chefs at the Bucyrus Club, our boutique filled with handcrafted items from Tanzania, a silent auction and presentation from one of the clinic's co-founders, Exauidh Mbise, our Board President, Aliliywa Mbise, and our Medical Director, Dr. Jill Hilty. It was a night not only dedicated to fundraising but also to celebrating the history and impact the clinic has made throughout the years.



Our patient Elisiana.

A significant highlight of the evening was our successful fundraising effort for a patient we encountered in September with VHI. Elisiana, a single mother in her thirties with a 16-year-old child, approached us with complaints of vision loss, resulting in near blindness in both eyes. The physician expressed concern that her condition might not be solely an ophthalmological issue, but potentially neurological as well. They recommended imaging, but Elisiana lacked the immediate funds to proceed, mentioning she could consider selling some items to prepare for this expense by December.

In response, we sought assistance from all of you. The MRI she required was approximately \$240. During the gala presentation, Dr. Hilty suggested that if each attendee contributed just \$7—about the cost of a weekly latte—we could collectively meet her financial needs and provide her with the answers she urgently sought.

I am pleased to report that we raised \$353.95, enough funds for the MRI but also for her transportation to and from the hospital. The results revealed the presence of a mass in her brain, and the doctors will provide further recommendations based on these findings. While the news was not what we had hoped for, Elisiana asked us to extend her heartfelt gratitude to all of you for your generous support and donations. She is now able to plan for her future and that of her child.

Masks from the Gala



Acknowledgment to the Organizations and People that made the Night Possible

Sponsors' Generosity - We extend our deepest thanks to our sponsors, Kumbe Coffee and Educators Credit Union. Their support not only helped create a memorable evening but also propelled our mission forward.

Dedicated Volunteers - Our team of dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure every detail was perfect. From planning and set-up to welcoming guests and managing the evening's activities, their commitment and enthusiasm were truly inspiring.

Engaged Attendees - We are grateful to all attendees who joined us for this special evening. Your presence and participation were vital in creating an engaging and lively atmosphere, and your generous donations will significantly impact our ongoing initiatives.

Talented Vendors - We also appreciate the talented vendors who added a unique flair to our event. Their creativity and professionalism enriched the experience for everyone attended.

Looking Ahead

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this event an unforgettable success. We are incredibly thankful for the generosity of everyone who helped us raise just under \$6,500! As we look to the future, we're filled with optimism. The success of this year's fundraiser not only strengthens our resolve but also reminds us of the powerful impact of community collaboration. Together, we're not just expanding a clinic and creating opportunities; we're building hope for healthier communities. Thank you again for being part of this journey. We look forward to continuing our mission with your invaluable support and sharing future successes with you.



Masquerade guests showing off masks



Exaudh Mbise at Masquerade Gala.



Masquerade guests enjoying the photo booth.

PICTURES OF THE QUARTER



FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR

Beginning Cash Balance as of July 1, 2023 **\$99,242.49**

Revenue:

Designated Contributions	\$5,305.85
Non-Designated Contributions from fundraising	\$12,598.46
Non-Designated Contributions	\$19,851.64
Grants	\$6,000.00

Total Revenue: **\$43,755.95**

Dispensary Expenses:

Dispensary Employee Salaries	\$26,636.10
Electric Utility Expenses	\$524.00
Pharmacy Expenses	\$4,522.96
Technology Expenses	\$1,386.49
Tanzania Government Fees	\$0.00

Service Project Expenses

Dispensary Medical Equipment	\$789.21
Maintenance & Renovations	\$1,285.19

Administrative Expenses

Organizational Fees	\$437.42
Wire Transfer Fees	\$220.00
Professional Fees	\$1,485.00
Printing & Postage	\$952.96
Fundraising Expenses	\$7,398.16
Office and Digital Expenses	\$0.00
Travel Expenses	\$11,586.82

Total Expenses: **\$71,567.31**

Net Income: **(\$27,811.36)**

Ending Cash Balance: June 30, 2024 **\$71,431.13**



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Stay updated on the latest news by following our social media and website!

Donation Station:



Paypal



Venmo @mmthclinic

Website: www.mmthc.org

By mail at our mailing address

MMTHC is a non-profit 501 (C) 3

Money isn't the only donation we accept!
Contact us on social media or via our website if you're interested in volunteering at an event or on service trips.

If interested in service trip opportunities, fill out our application online. Trips occur annually with an **estimated** cost of \$3,000 including airfare.

PARTNERSHIPS:



Vision Health
International



Foundation for African Medicine & Education

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SOUTH MILWAUKEE, WI 53172

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