

10TH
EDITION



2016

MEKAELA TIMES



**THE LULU LADIES -
A CLASS OF ITS OWN**

WWW.MEKAEALA.COM

From the Editors' Desk

Welcome, dear readers, to the Mekaela Times of 2016, the 10th consecutive edition of our annual magazine.

They say that the sky is the limit and that dreams come true. Yes, that indeed happened to Mekaela Academies. The group of schools has always aspired to have single gender high schools. We are delighted to acknowledge that this was realized this year. In our edition, find out why the girls appreciate the move taken to have their "own" school.

The Ministry of Education has come up with strict measures to ensure the safety of our national exams. Being Kenyans, one wonders whether this is a lost battle for our well prepared candidates or not. Find out how one young boy sees the two different angles of the whole issue.



Tereza Ajumbo (LHS)
Chief Editor



John Ogado (LPS)
Editor



Onesmus Kioko (MAS)
Editor

Mekaela Academies believes that learners understand better when exposed to the real environment which is why we organize trips within Kenya and abroad. Get first account stories from students who visited Germany and Dubai this year.

In 2016 we completed our second decade. Walk with us in the edition and get to know how we did it in style.

Mekaela Academies is known to have moulded the lives of many successful young people. Also, hear this from the horse's mouth.

Enjoy these and many more interesting stories.

Sincerely yours,
Tereza Ajumbo

Once again we owe it to Base Titanium that we are able to distribute Mekaela Times for free. Their loyalty is highly appreciated especially if you consider that times are very tough for the mining industry with dwindling commodity prices and - not unheard of in Kenya - never ending attempts by the Government and politicians to increase "their" share of revenues.



Base Titanium is committed to improve the quality of life of wananchi in our region as they are sponsoring several educational, agricultural, health and other projects in Kwale County. We are hoping to start a project with Base Titanium regarding secondary education as early as next year.

Asante, Base Titanium for your continued support.

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From the Managing Director's Desk



Elijah Musili
Managing Director

It is yet another opportunity to welcome all of us to Mekaela Times 2016. This is the year we shall remember both in achievements and challenges in equal measure. We have experienced a great measure of growth over the years and the

result has been a level of imbalance between the investment and the shrinking economy in the south coast where we are located and the country at large.

Looking at the results for 2015 candidates, we are happy to say that we achieved a great performance overall both in Primary and High School. We had the best candidate in the County with 432 marks and comparing very competitively in the Coast region. We had the best class with a mean score of 391 in the region as well as having 10 children with over 400 marks and above. We managed to get 70% into National and Extra County Schools and the rest went to the County and Private Schools.

Our Form Four class equally performed well and 75% attained minimum University entry while the rest were qualified for middle level colleges.

This year specifically has seen the schools achieve sterling levels in co-curricular activities. We had a very successful staff tournament which jump started us in term one. The staff participation in various sports helps us to interact and bond competitively. The programme helps us kick off the year with a bang, we literally hit the ground or the year rather running.

In the second term, we had a very eventful time as we celebrated 20 years of our existence as Mekaela Academies. We opened the first school -

Manuel Alexander School - on the 10th of May, 1996 and hence the celebrations. Ordinarily we celebrate our culture in this period hence we decided to merge the two events to kill two birds with one stone. We had the biggest celebration witnessed in our institutions on the 2nd of July,



A Mekaela Team at the School for the Deaf in Kinango

2016. We planted trees in our schools, cleaned up our town, donated food and clothing to Kinango School for the Deaf and did road shows, 2 days before the D-day.

In the same period we had drama/music festivals season and we managed to get over 10 items qualifying for the National competitions. Most of them faired among the best in the country from our very talented boys and girls both in the primary and high school categories. We have cut a niche in the Coast region in poems and public speaking among other items. Our children acted like News Anchors and made it all the way to the top competitions.

We have run our mixed high school - Lulu High School - for 10 years with a growing protest about the status of

both genders together. We managed to start the ambitious programme of separating the boys and the girls starting with Form 1 and 2. The developments have made it easier to manage the single gender schools and the academic levels have improved tremendously. Next year we shall have full separation and we anticipate very healthy inter-school competitions. Quality high



German Sponsors Anne and Wolfgang cutting cake during the 20 year anniversary celebrations

From the Managing Director's Desk

schools are rare in the Coast and we boast of providing this important level in the academic cycle of our children.



Mekaela Academies founder Frank during tree planting at Cultural Day

We inherited a small school, Mekaela Ratinga School, which we have run as a budget school. The school fees are about half of the other older schools a fact that has led to faster growth compared to the rest. Although it is hard to balance the lower income to run the school it is giving us hope that we can grow a quality school with fewer resources. The academic quality at our budget school is extremely amazing, competing very well with the well-established schools. I cannot wait to see the results of the first KCPE class in 2018 when we anticipate great performance.

We have tailored some programmes which are aimed at boosting performance, involving parents in annual educational clinics and other interactive events. In term 1 we have the annual kindergarten fun day and in term 3 we have the invention of a kids fun festival. These programmes are not only fun for children but are aimed at teaching them different skills they need in their academic and social life. Our goal is to make learning interesting and hence creating a lot of fun filled programmes.

Since the last four years, we have experienced low business due to the near death of the tourism industry in the Coast. The insecurity and other global economic factors have adversely affected the tourism industry which is the main stay in our location. The effects of the low economy has made our school enrolment reduce by a quarter of the total population of 1400 children we had four years ago, which was partly

offset by the success of Ratinga School which managed to add nearly 150 pupils.

We had to give incentives to many parents hence the income did not grow to manage our operational expenses. We have tried to reduce on some non-essential supplies and changed our services to cut costs to no avail.

We took the painful steps of reducing our staff by 18 to cut on our operational costs and we are hopeful to stabilize our financial health.

We have centralised our services, merged some departments and scaled down on non-essentials without compromising our standards. We are grateful to our staff for their understanding and sacrificial services to bring back the financial stability of Mekaela Academies.

Finally, we have prepared our candidates very well this year and we hope to get very good results from our KCPE to KCSE candidates. All our



Mekaela at work for more than 20 years now - and counting

different levels of learning are ending the year on a high note and totally ready to take on the higher levels in their academic journey.

Welcome to the Mekaela Times of 2016.

Musili E. Maanzo

Manuel Alexander School



Abdallah Nyundo (MAS)
Head-Teacher

The success in one's life depends on the choice one makes. We are at Mekaela Manuel Alexander by choice not by default. The school is purely a day school and is located in a peaceful environment near the beach hence providing a conducive learning environment.

In last year's KCPE, MAS managed to produce pupils who appeared among the best ten in the county. Among them, the best three pupils were:

1. Ali Madaraka Ali 417 marks
2. Mutua Martin 409 marks
3. Bothe Priscilla Kawira 408 marks

One thing that we boast of is a team of qualified teachers who are at the beck and call of learners so as to help them get good marks and give them quality child care.

Discipline is also paramount and pupils do not have room to negotiate about it under any circumstance. This is enabled by the strong guidance and a counselling department that helps in moulding the pupils' character. The teachers are also highly dedicated in matters of discipline, further making it better.

Good learning facilities are available for every

student. We have a well-stocked library for good inculcation of the reading culture in the pupils. Our computer laboratory is also equipped with modern laptops. This ensures that we are not left behind as the ministry strives to realise digitalisation of public primary schools.

The school prides in calling itself the mother of all other Mekaela schools since it was the first of the Mekaela group of schools.

We have well organised curricula activities which are aimed at developing pupils' talents in areas as sports, athletics, ball games, swimming, drama to name just but a few.



One of many wall paintings at MAS, the "Talking Walls"

In conclusion, let us remember that the choices we make, determine our destiny. Let us make the right choice as community, let us make the right choice as parents, let us make the right choice as pupils.



MAS Inner Court with playground

Likunda Primary School

Likunda Primary School is a prestigious institution built on roots of great holistic performance with serene environment. The school is run by head teacher Mrs. Florence Munke with deputies and the assistant teachers who make sure the smooth running of the school's activities. The school has a clear learning resource centre organized for learning programmes.

Likunda Primary also offers extra-curricular activities such as, ball games, music and drama festivals, journalism, swimming and creative arts among others. These activities motivate and equip our learners with useful skills in the society.

We also top in academics both in local and national exams where our candidates take the lead in the whole county hence the school is normally the first position annually. In the 2015 KCPE the school managed to present the three best students in the county. These are:

1. Rocha Ndegwa 432 marks
2. Juma Mohammed 406 marks
3. Grace Mukami 402 marks

There is also a boarding section which is our pride in Likunda since it provides our learners with a home away from home. The meals, hygiene and entertainment programmes and well organized modern rooms in protected buildings reveal it all.

Ratinga Junior School

That Mekaela Ratinga Junior School would reach the extent it has today was an imagination to many. The school started as a low cost institution offering quality education to the pupils whose



*Florence Munke (LPS + RJS)
Head Teacher*

parents would not afford high cost schools.

'I will only have my daughter learn here until next year. The school is promising us heaven but I doubt if they fulfil this promise' one parent was honest enough to say.

I got interest and asked her why she imagined so and she made it clear that the school had so much to be done which will take ages to accomplish.

'There are not enough classrooms, half-filled classrooms, the teachers are few and yet you talk of offering quality education.' She added.

There were so many Thomases who thought Ratinga was headed nowhere. Today, the school has reached standard six and boasts of adequate buildings that stretch up to class eight. All the classes have a sizable number of pupils clearing the doubts of the people who did not predict any bright future for the school. There are also enough highly trained and competent staff to run the affairs of the school. We will be sitting for our first KCPE in 2018 and we are sure that the academic giants in Coast region and nationally have a reason to get worried.

The school cares about your child's well-being while in school. This has prompted it to provide pupils with well balanced meals both at ten o'clock and at lunch time to ensure that pupils are energised enough for school work.

The pupils' physical fitness is of great importance too. Field activities ranging from athletics and ballgames have soared us up to the County level tournaments further exposing our pupils to tougher competition. The kindergarten section has also been well taken care of because we have a furnished playground that is fit for them.

Ratinga Junior School has managed to position itself among the top established schools in the county with the little, unsure steps that it began with.

Lulu High School



**Anderson Mwero (LHS)
Principal**

Lulu High School, a pure boarding school has a population of 110 girls and 93 boys. The school is well known for the stellar performance that it has always had since it began in the year 2005. We derive our good performance from the well trained

teachers and students who are upbeat in learning. Last year, the school scooped the third position in Kwale County with our best student, Brenda Mutave, attaining grade B+.

The school is dedicated in helping its students get the most possible out high school education. This is achieved by adequately trained and committed staff who are always available for the learners. This has ensured an all-round education that prepares our students for life outside school.

This year, a dream came true: we managed to realise the opening of the girls' wing. We moved the form one and form two girls to a new school in second term. The form three girls will join the rest come January 2016. This is a development that has not only been appreciated by members of staff, but also by our parents; keeping in mind the challenges of running a mixed school. It had always been the wish of many to have the students in two different gender schools.

I would also want to particularly thank the staff for the great relentless effort that they have put in to support the separation and the eagerness they have had to see the two wings successful. Commuting between the two schools has not been easy, but the spirit that I have seen in them is incomparable. It is this determination that Lulu makes Lulu High School brighter and successful.

Diani Beach Hospital

Diani Beach Hospital (DBH) was founded in 1997, just one year after Mekaela Academies. Its founder Dr. S. Rekhi is a great supporter of our schools. He is also one of the initiators of our MMMS scheme.



**Dr. Rekhi (DBH)
Founder**

Since the establishment of MMMS in 2011, his hospital has treated and provided medication for more than 2000 of our members.



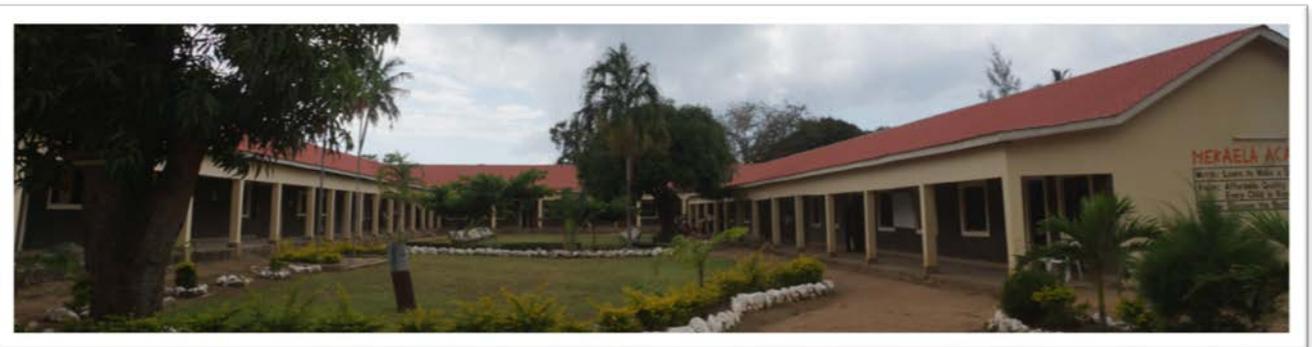
Due to its state-of-the-art equipment and its highly qualified staff DBH is one of our members' most favourite clinics. It is also very convenient that DBH has an in-house pharmacy.

Like Mekaela Academies, Diani Beach Hospital grew rapidly because of the quality of its services and the satisfaction of its customers. From a tiny practice in Diani Beach Shopping Centre in the early 1990s DBH grew to a group of three hospitals with satellite clinics in Ukunda and Kwale.



**DBH Main Hospital in Diani Beach
adjacent to Leisure Golf Club**

DBH owns the only cardiac care ambulance in the region. Its hospitals offer dental services as well as physiotherapy, oncology and dialysis.



Lulu High School Teaching Complex

Lulu Girls School (formerly Heshima Primary)



Faith Mutua (LGS)
Deputy Head Teacher

About 10 years ago Mekaela Academies had a great demand for primary boarding section only available then at the Likunda Primary School. We teamed up with Eine-Welt-Stiftung (One-World-Foundation) from Germany in 2007 to

build a boarding section near Manuel Alexander School (MAS). The second school was managed by the same administration of MAS.

We only managed to build 3 classes, hence we established class 6 to 8 boarding as the beginning point for Heshima. The boarding facilities, dorms and the dining hall plus kitchen were done to a great detail in terms of size and equipment.

Heshima Primary had become a great school in terms of performance whereby it has taken the lead within Mekaela Academies and in the region severally. The school population began reducing and in the three years until the start of this year we had only 2 classes (Std. 7 and 8) being used with small numbers as well overall.

The enrolment went down in schools of Mekaela Academies due to the slow local and national economy hence the Likunda side had also empty spaces both in the dorms and the classes. On the other side, we had lived with a challenge with Lulu High School's mixed for close to 10 years. The enrolment challenge in the high school was

also creeping in and management of the situation was necessary.

One mitigating factor to reduce on costs of running smaller numbers was to merge the boarding sections and take Heshima to Likunda Primary School to fill up one larger area. This we did and hence Heshima was left empty both the classes and the dorms.

We considered the split of the boy and the girls at Lulu High School and we have taken the girls to the now defunct Heshima School. The split was informed by the preferences of parents to have the girls learn in secluded environments to avoid

unwarranted influences between the two genders. Management was also worried about the effects of unhealthy relationships between the boys and the girls. The merger of the primary schools then became the precursor to the birth of two separate high schools with the single gender approach.



Blue = current buildings
Brown = planned or under construction

At Lulu Girls we aspire to mould a well-balanced girl integrating the physical, spiritual and academic aspects. We are cultivating a culture of responsibility as well as appreciating creative arts such as music and life skills among the girls. In music we are aspiring to be a singing school and we are in the process of coming up with our Lulu Girls' National Anthem.

The girls are determined to work hard, in order to transform their future lives, and are driven by the school motto that states "Learning to make a difference".



New LGS classrooms under construction



**BASE
TITANIUM**



KWALE MINE

Base Titanium’s Kwale Mine is Kenya’s first large-scale modern mining project and a significant producer of ilmenite, rutile and zircon. A KES 26 billion investment, the mine has been exporting minerals since February 2014.

Having successfully optimised operational performance, the focus is now on near-mine exploration to extend the mine life.

The success of the project provides a strong foundation to launch Base Resources’ emergence as a significant resources company in Africa, and positions Kenya as a new frontier for international mining investment.

ASX, AIM:BSE



PROJECT OVERVIEW

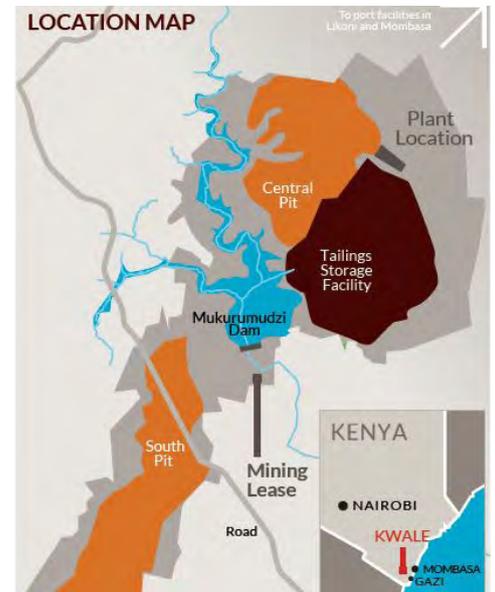
Kwale Mine produces and exports rutile, ilmenite and zircon via its dedicated ship loading facility at Likoni. To support its mining and processing operations, Base has also constructed a water storage dam, power transmission line and access road.

Kwale is a robust project with a favourable mineral assemblage, forecast to produce more than 4.8 million tonnes of valuable heavy minerals over a 13-year mine life. The mine and supporting infrastructure were constructed during 2012/13 and operations commenced on 5th October 2013 when the first ore was fed to the dozer mining unit and the wet concentrator. The first 25,000-tonne ilmenite shipment left the port facility on 17th February and regular shipments of all three products were established soon thereafter.

PRODUCTION UPDATE

To the end of June 2016 ore mined and processed amounted to 23 million tonnes from which 1.05 million tonnes of ilmenite, 181,000 tonnes of rutile and 58,000 tonnes of zircon have been produced for export.

Since commissioning, a series of process optimisation projects have been completed to improve efficiencies and minerals recoveries in the plant.



MARKETS

Off-take agreements are in place covering more than 85% of the mine’s projected revenue over the first 3 to 5 years of operation.

During 2015 and early 2016 a prolonged slump in metal and mineral commodities price was experienced and mineral sands were no exception. However, from mid-2016 ilmenite prices started showing signs of sustained improvement as markets tightened in response to improved demand.

To the end of 2015/16 financial year, the mine had exported more than 1.2 million tonnes of products in delivering against its off-take agreements in addition to some spot contracts.



BOOSTING THE ECONOMY

Kwale has a significant impact on the economy. The mine has more than doubled Kenya's previous mineral export earnings, which has replaced coffee in fourth place in terms of value and will inject an estimated US\$220 million into government revenues through taxes and royalties and contribute close to US\$1 billion in GDP over its life. Significantly, the project will serve as a catalyst for mining investment and development of a vibrant minerals sector in Kenya.

As the first large-scale industrial undertaking in Kwale County, the mine is already driving significant economic and social growth in the region, stimulating local employment and skills development and helping to build stronger local communities.

SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Base is committed to supporting long-term sustainable community development.

Working with local and international partners, a wide range of projects have been completed or are underway in the areas of social amenities — including water supply, health and education — with the focus now shifting to sustainable livelihood enhancement programmes

centred on commercial agricultural ventures including cotton, potatoes and poultry.

ENVIRONMENT

Base has implemented a comprehensive environmental management system. Following the transition to operations, it has been active in rehabilitating construction areas following contractor demobilisation, improving wetland ecosystems and creating biodiversity corridors. This has included successful revegetation and indigenous tree planting and the stabilisation of slopes.

Its indigenous tree nursery is now the largest of its kind in Kenya in terms of both plant numbers and diversity of species with over 65,000 plants across 227 species propagated to date.

CREATING EMPLOYMENT

Base's employment system is a key component of its overall philosophy designed to deliver on commitments to maximise opportunities and project benefits to local communities.

Base employs an operational work force of 660, but as a direct consequence of the mine an additional 1,300 indirect jobs have been created in the supply chain and a further 1,400 induced jobs through employee consumer spending. Over

96% of all employees at the mine are Kenyan and 63% are from Kwale County. Complementing this is a structured training programme aimed at rapid skills transfer, supplemented by graduate, apprenticeship and intern training schemes.

PEOPLE AND SAFETY

Base has adopted a world-class best practice safety system across the Kwale operations.

Rigorous training, inspections, hazard reporting and corrective actions have resulted in an outstanding safety performance with over 15 million man hours worked against a Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LITFR) of 0.19.

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Trip to Bremen

Bremen ist eine wunderschöne Stadt. Es ist kalt aber man hat Heizofen innerhalb des Hauses. Meisten Häuser in Bremen sind gross aber meine deutschen Freundinnen haben mir kleinsten Haus geseten.

Schüler in Bremen tragen keine Uniform. Wann ich bin in Bremen gewesen, ich bin in der Schule mit dem Fahrrad gegangen. Meistens haben wir Fahrräder benutzt.

Verschiedene Essen gefallen mir auch. Zum Beispiel das Brot. Es gibt viele Sorten Brot. Ich habe viel Brot gegessen, weil sie sehr lecker sind. Leute von Bremen sind sehr Freundlich und ich habe viele gelernt. Diese Leute finden Uhren sehr wichtig.

Ich habe Theater mit Herr Jorg gelernt. Ich habe Klimahaus und das Museum besucht auch. Klimahaus hat viele Zimmer mit verschiedenen Klima. Ist das nicht wunderschön?

Die Leute lernen English und sie sind sehr fleissig. Sie können gut Englisch sprechen. Ich habe viele Orte besucht und ich habe viele erlebt. Ich bin eine Deutschschülerin und es war sehr interessant mit den deutschen Leuten zu sprechen.

Ich danke meiner Schule weil es hat mich ausgewählt für diese Reise. Diese war sehr wichtig denn sie war mein Wunsch.

Vielen Dank!

*Fatma Kassim
Lulu Girls School*



As the plane tore through the clouds straining to attain its cruising altitude of sixty thousand feet above the ground, for a destination almost seven thousand kilometres away, I looked out of the window and saw the overview of Mombasa city and it was exhilarating. For most of us, this was the first time we were flying abroad and the anticipations were great.

The first thing we learnt from the Germans is that they are a loving and caring lot. On arrival at the Hamburg airport they readily offered us warm clothing and hot meals. Although it was bone chilling cold, we still enjoyed the weather, since at night we would cuddle in bed with hot water bottles.

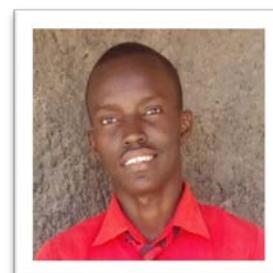
Despite the fact that Germany is well developed, most Germans prefer bicycles and public transport to using private cars, they do this to prevent polluting their environment. I think Kenya should borrow this from the country.

From the onset we learnt to always keep time unlike our norm. We also learnt how to interact nicely with others, respect their opinions, be open minded and embrace change. The programme was superb. We learnt how to shoot videos, edit them and also act in play, our topic of study being "Flight and Migration".

All this would not have been possible had it not been for God's mercies, all our partners in Germany, Mekaela Academies, Eckhardt Kreye and you. The knowledge accumulated and the fun we had shall be useful to all and sundry.

Thank you for this chance of a lifetime.

*Silas Mandikwa
Lulu High School*



Alumni's Corner

No producer fails to be proud once their product comes out of the production process. It even brings more joy when the said product can't remain unnoticed in the market. This is what Mekaela Academies has made in me. I have been in Mekaela Academies all my education except for college which I now take in Moi University.

I joined Mekaela in 1999 at Likunda Primary School and went up to STD 7 before joining Manuel Alexander School where I did my KCPE. The year after, I joined Lulu High School where I sat for KCSE in the year 2013 and passed.

During my entire education life at the Mekaela Academies, I can say that I graduated from the system as a whole round student who has learnt so much including what the books I studied offer us. It is the belief of many people that students who go through private schools are geared to only passing exams. Not in Mekaela Academies. There are some life skills such as service to humankind, equality amongst ourselves and respect that the school taught us.

While there, discipline is paramount. I remember how the teachers would tirelessly work so as to discipline some of us who appeared wayward. I meet some of my notorious classmates who many times had discipline issues and they tell me, 'man, Mekaela Academies put me in my place. I thank God for the outside life preparation that the school gave me.'

My friends, both at home and in college tell me most of the time that there is something unique in me that they find irresistible. How the pleasures in college have not diverted my attention from the studies, how I manage to endure the financial difficulties in college and still remain strong. All I tell them is, 'Mekaela Academies put that in me.'

As learners we were well guided with the motto, 'Strive to Excel' and indeed I was able to do all this and that is why I am this far. Currently I am taking Bachelor of Education, in Moi University and I feel proud to have passed through Mekaela Academies.

Matano Shee Gwerenya
Lulu High School, Class of 2013



It is a bit difficult to envision myself as the little girl I once was in Manuel Alexander School, but I can never forget the memories created and shared with peers in this great institution. I joined Mekaela in the year 1999 and sat for my KCPE IN 2004. For me, studying and passing was paramount. That is why I aced my papers with As.

I always sought to please my mother, who at that time was struggling to give me quality education. That is why I never spared a moment in idle talk. I am not saying that I was a saint, but I would rather spend my free time buried in a novel. Furthermore, the competition among us students was so stiff that at times it would even get physical.

Teachers in that era believed in the adage that says 'spare the rod and spoil the child'. There was no room for laziness or perpetual failure. I believe the values instilled in me shaped my career path. Teachers were not only classroom tutors, but also our mentors and second parents. It is no surprise therefore that I am a teacher today.

Mekaela helped in shaping the person I am today. It goes without saying that success does not come without hitches. Many are the times when I found myself wallowing in self-pity for one reason or another. But again there were people I could talk to, most importantly Mr. Mwachia, who would urge me to work hard and take one step at a time. Thus, I acquired life skills that still come in handy.

To date, I still have this overwhelming pride to be a Mekaela Alumni. This is why it has never been difficult for me to go back after High School and even during campus days. It also gives me great happiness to see some of my colleagues excelling in various fields. In fact, I even work with a fellow alumnus.

A piece of advice to the current students: live your life as the motto suggests, 'Striving to excel'. It does not matter if you have to crawl, make sure you meet your goals. Keep the Mekaela flame burning.



Mwanajuma Ali
Manuel Alexander School, Class of 2004

Welcome Baby Lulu Girls

Since inception, Lulu High School has been known as a mixed gender school until recently when it split. This led to the birth of Lulu Girls High School and Lulu High School remaining for boys. The girls' school officially opened on 2nd May, 2016 started with the form one and two students. The form three students are set to be transferred to the school at the beginning of next year.

Although students had opposed the idea citing all manner of excuses, the benefits are now being seen. The school is situated in a peaceful environment two kilometres away from the beach. It enjoys a team of qualified, experienced and dedicated teachers who are always at the beck and call of students to assist the learners be the best that they wish to be.

The school offers high class boarding facilities that very few private schools can afford to provide. The dormitories are spectacular with high quality furniture. The meals offered are up to the standard, balanced and of adequate amounts to all the students.

The separation of the boys from the girls has led to healthy and stiff competition between us and the boys. We are really motivated to set a good pace for girls yet to join our school. We have learned how to balance education and co-curricular activities and how to express ourselves better hence raising our self-esteem.

It was hard to cope with the challenges we faced at first but now we have learnt and have managed to surmount them.

*Stacy Asikoye
Lulu Girls School*



The Won Debacle?

Cases of cheating in the Kenyan national exams have been on the rise in the recent past. On one side stands the justified arm of law that stands for a free and fair examination period devoid of all exam irregularities. On the other side of the battlefield are the parents, teachers and students who by all means must excel. The government has put in place stringent laws to curb this vice

including ensuring that school will be free of any person other than the schools head, the candidates, the invigilators and the supervisors and not allowing phones within the schools among others. But the latest additions to these laws are the cause of students' worries.

That the exam will be flown directly from overseas to the regional distributional offices which will be manned by two officers unknown to each other brings a lot of mixed feelings in a sizeable number of Kenyans.

The go getters are all for it claiming that nobody can rob them of their hard earned success through leakages. They also claim that the period of examination will be peaceful without the lower forms in secondary schools and that they can do without their parents for a few months.

The slow witted claim that three years is quite a long time for a student caught in the act. Furthermore, alluding from psychology they attest to the fact that one performs in their normal environment, in this case, around other students and the teachers.

Some of the reasons cited for cheating in exams is the fear of the aftermath of failing, panic, availability of the leakage, parental influence from proud parents and so on. To curb this habit that is eating away at our sanity, students need to prepare adequately and all stakeholders should uphold integrity.

We can also think of administering exams through the internet as we are moving towards achieving vision 2030. Experts say, that though the site can still be hacked for the leakage but it will not be easy particularly if the parties involved will uphold data integrity.

*Silas Mwandikwa
Lulu High School*



Recognizing Talents

Over the years, Mekaela Academies has offered scholarships to bright minds. Of late, though, Lulu High School, a branch of the elite force has picked up the axe and struck it right at the hub of talents

Pupils' Corner

by offering scholarships to its talented youth. Esther Dhiramo, one of the benefactors, is a charming student in her second year. Her aptitude for football has placed her in the limelight.

Having kick started her fruitful career in the year 2007 in her hometown football club, The Man Hunters, Esther also dubbed 'Messi' seems to be going places.



Her iconic father has been her mentor and greatest supporter, she says that he helped her see her own eyes and feel her own heart. Back in Lulu High School, her teacher and confidante, Mr. Mutua has stood by her, helping her be the change she wants to see in the world.

Her one and only desire, is to join the Harambee Stars U-17 team and see it soar to the FIFA women's world cup. She is truly grateful and elated by the chance Mekaela Academies has given her since opportunity only knocks once. Once again it has showed its prowess in recognizing talents.



Silas Mwandikwa
Lulu High School

Lucky to be Alive

It was unusual for the bell to be rung that day since it was an examination week. I knew as clear as an Arabian crystal that it was not a good calling. We all ran and assembled at the assembly ground. The teacher stood before the pupils and ordered everyone, 'Keep quiet!'

We all became as mum as a deserted cemetery. The look on his visage was blood-curdling. A deluge of sweat cascaded like a river which had broken its banks. Guilt, concern and fear swirled around him.

'It has been discovered that there is a gang of robbers known as 'Wakali Kwanza' here, they are loitering hither and tither...' he said. Barely had she said the next word when he was cut off with

firing of bullets. Everybody ran helter skelter for safety. I had to put my best foot forward and use pearls of wisdom.

I followed the class eight boys who were strong and gigantic. They ran to the field at the speed of lightning and I followed suit. On reaching the perimeter wall, they climbed and jumped over the other side with ease that left me astonished. Everything happened very fast and I stood beside the wall dumbfounded.

With a quick glance onto my back I saw some men marching majestically towards where I was. They were armed to teeth. Fear ran down my spinal cord like shudders from a carpenter's clump. I bolted to the top of a tree huffing and puffing. In a push of a button, they were in the shed of the tree. I felt something cold between my legs and knew what had happened.

They stood below looking up then they took off the masks they had on and to my utter dismay, one of them was my long lost brother. A mist of thoughts clouded my mind as I figured out if indeed it was him. Then I heard a sound coming from the branch I had perched on. All of a sudden, I found myself on the innocent ground writhing and groaning in agony with my hands held up and crying.

The men immediately held their guns ready and aimed at me. Then my brother said, 'Stop, this is my brother, Robin.' Our eyes met and tears gushed down our ruddy visage forming a beautiful eleven. We cuddle-hugged each other joyfully and chatted for some time. At last I asked him if he would like to come back home, but instead he gave me a cold shoulder. I tried to convince him but my frantic efforts were proved futile.

One of his friends inquired, 'How can we let an alien free?' My brother answered, 'Yes, we will, I hope he has some news spread like fire in a dry thicket.'

I ran home at a high speed. All in all, I was lucky to be alive.

Robinson Rukwaro
Likunda Primary School



The Heart of Education

Mekaela schools have opened doors to my success and made me realize that nothing comes on a silver platter. Before I joined Mekaela Academies, I was pretty sure that discipline promotes excellence and I would only get it at Mekaela Academies.

I was considered a weakling by most of my classmates when I joined Manuel Alexander but thanks to the sports, challenges and difficulties I have faced while here. I was changed into a superb pupil by all these. I also worked through tooth and nail so that my teachers would appreciate that I play my part as a pupil.

I can also not forget the trips that I have had while in the Mekaela schools. They were tremendous and full of exuberance. I cannot forget the mouth-watering, palatable and finger licking delicacies that we ate during our trips to Arusha, Gedi ruins, name them.

Our cultural occasions are to be remembered too. Everyone is always happy with their elegant cultural dresses from whatever community. Some even wear lessons and paint their faces so as to show which tribe they belong to. I was particularly amazed at how the Maasai drink blood from animals.

The last thing that has also made my stay in Mekaela Academies enjoyable is the Talent Explosion that we hold yearly. This opportunity has always made me show what God has blessed me with as a talent which is dancing. This year I recall I danced with a pole on stage because I felt it was a lifetime opportunity.



Charles Kariuki
Manuel Alexander School

Mekaela Academies, Key to Success

Academic excellence and success in life is simply through education. Without good education you may not be able to make it in life. We all have big dreams especially as pupils or parents. Pupils

have the dream of making it big in future while parents on the other hand want the best for their children.

But the question is, how do we achieve these dreams? Mekaela Academies is the answer to all these. My parents, Fredrick and Esther sought me a school and they found Mekaela Academies. I am thankful to be here for I was sponsored and until now I am still under their proper care.

I have attained so much academically and this year I am sitting the KCPE. I remember Obama's word 'yes, I can' and believe in myself. I know that I am going to make my dreams come true and through Mekaela Academies support I know I will achieve my dream because in these schools, many students' future has been brightened. Many have become doctors, surgeons, engineers and even teachers. I know I will become part of this team.



Mekaela Academies,
my school, my pride, my future.

Phorester Esther Omondi
Manuel Alexander School

Challenges and Dreams

All your dreams can come true
If you have the courage to pursue them
especially in Mekaela Academies

All the time you should accept
challenges so that you may feel
the exhilaration of victory

After all the years is success
Doing ordinary thing extraordinarily well
Wow! What Mekaela Academies can make out of
you.

Mariam Mwabasi
Likunda Primary School



From the Founders' Desk

As if it Were Yesterday

From our first twinkle of an idea and humble beginning of our first school Manuel Alexander Primary School, more than 20 years have passed.

We faced many challenges and surprises, even disasters, but we always managed to turn the corner somehow, not the least thanks to the support of the community.

A short history of Mekaela Academies:

We opened our first school, Manuel Alexander School, in February 1996 after a building time of three years. The name was derived from the main donor's son.

In February 2001, we opened our second school with the support of Logitech in Germany which lends the school its name. It was later changed to Likunda Primary School.

Our first secondary school, Lulu High School, was completed in 2005. The first KCSE candidates graduated in 2007.

In 2007, Heshima Primary School joined Mekaela. The school is of a joint venture with Eine-Welt-Stiftung (One-World-Foundation) from Germany.

In 2013, Lulu High School and Likunda Primary School were almost completely destroyed by fire. Within less than a year, we managed to rebuild both schools.

In 2014, we "inherited" Ratinga Junior School, our fifth school from the Hinssen and Jacobs families and decided to run it as a "budget" school.

In 2015, another fire destroyed Manuel Alexander School and Heshima Primary School.



*The founders Frank, Micki and Stefan in 1998.
Little did they know...*

Within only six months both schools were rebuilt.

In 2016, Heshima Primary was converted to Lulu Girls School, our second secondary school which for girls only.

What began as a small seed has grown into a big tree which branches out in many directions. While education is still our core competence and the centre of our activities, we have ventured into many other areas trying to support ailing and needy people so as to improve their lives.

From 2011 to 2012, we carried out four "Fanya" hunger relief missions in Turkana which reached thousands of suffering Kenyans.

Also in 2011, we started an employment agency for family members of our pupils. Noble Domestic Agency seeks to give people jobs with an aim of assisting them improve themselves and their families. There is also MMMS in our schools, a scheme which provides free basic medical care to our students and pupils.

Very much has been achieved in two decades, as witnessed during our 20th anniversary celebrations which dozens of our alumni attended. It was lovely to see and hear what each of them has been able to achieve in their life so far. Many former pupils are still in contact with each other and are keeping the Mekaela Academies spirit alive. This brings us a lot of satisfaction. We are terribly proud of what our hard working and endeavouring students have managed to make out of their lives, all based on their skills and being industrious. It motivates us to keep going.

So what do the next 20 years have in store?

Based on our philosophy of helping people to empower themselves we envision a polytechnic for vocational training of students and adults, giving them the opportunity to build a life they may enjoy and contribute towards the development of our great country, Kenya.

There is still so much to do, so many ideas to be pursued, and so many setbacks to be digested. But together as a team, no, as the Mekaela family we will be able to achieve anything we aspire for, or at least most of it. The future is ours!



Graduands of 2016



Graduands of 2016





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- **MANUEL ALEXANDER SCHOOL**
- **LIKUNDA PRIMARY BOARDING SCHOOL**
- **RATINGA JUNIOR SCHOOL**
 - **LULU GIRLS SCHOOL**
 - **LULU HIGH SCHOOL**