



## Protecting and Educating Girls to Empower Them

African Soul, American Heart is a family with ties that reach from Africa to America, to Canada, and around the world.

ASAH was inspired by Joseph Akol Makeer, a Fargo Lost Boy of Sudan, who met Deb Dawson in 2007 and told her of his dream to help orphans in the village he escaped as a child. Together with Kevin Brooks, they formed a board of directors, applied for nonprofit status, and started supporting three boys in 2008.

The ASAH dream developed into an after-school program for 11 orphaned girls in 2011. In 2012 we built a boarding school serving 23 orphaned girls from six villages in Duk County. In 2014, the world's newest nation became embroiled in tribal war. Our school was destroyed and the ASAH students ran from their villages. Loyal staff and others searched refugee camps in three countries. As we found them, we moved them to a

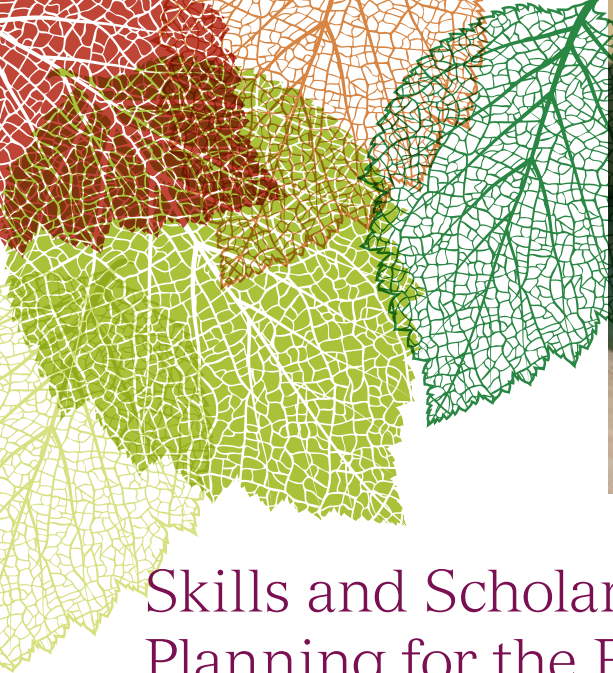
rented compound in Moyo, in northern Uganda.

In January 2017, our 44 female students were accepted at St. Noa Primary and Secondary boarding school in Zana, a suburb of Kampala. Our three boys were accepted at another top school. These last two years in a stable educational environment without the danger of war has enabled our students to experience safety and some healing from their losses.

Our goal today is to prepare our students to leave ASAH with skills and credentials to support themselves. Some students will be directed toward vocational training, while others may go to college. One day, they will give back to others.







## Skills and Scholarship Fund: Planning for the Future.

The ASAH students are growing up. Three students completed two to four-year college degrees in our Kenya program. Our first high school graduate at St. Noa in Uganda, Deborah Yar, is a top student. In 2018, she is finishing her first year of a nursing program. This December, four more students—one girl and our last three boys—will graduate from high school. We

await their final grades which, coupled with their interests and goals for the futures, will determine their eligibility for a college or vocational program.

ASAH is proud to have come this far. We have educated these young people, protected them from the endless war, from disease, from early marriage, and from dangers too numerous to mention. During my September visit, I found they're no longer shy to talk to me. They pose questions, and they speak up to let us know what they need.

The ASAH board and I are determined to ensure these young people have a chance to succeed in the world where they live. They can read and write, but it's imperative that they have access to higher education to learn a skill or earn a degree that will enable them to support themselves—things we often take for granted in our own country.

Please consider contributing to our Skills and Scholarship Fund, which will be dedicated to higher education. With education beyond high school, the ASAH students WILL change their world—their own lives, the lives of their individual and extended families, and the lives of people from or within their homeland.



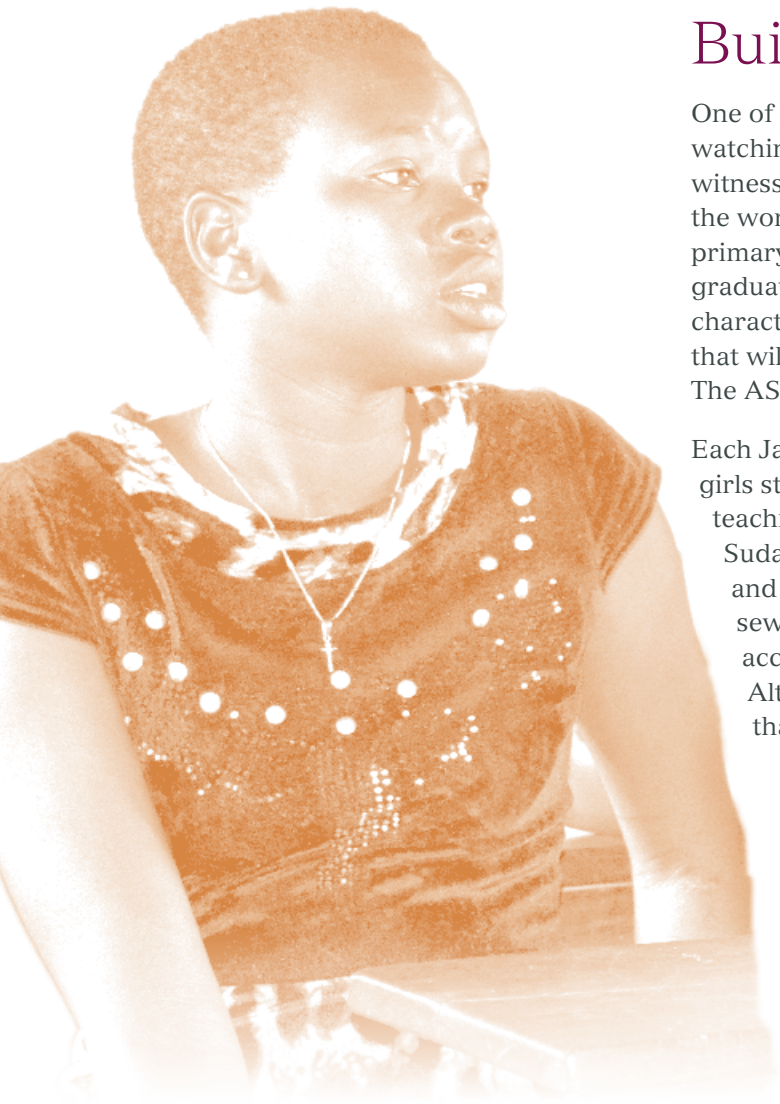
### ASAH Student Spotlight

## Rebecca Achol

Rebecca Achol is one of the first 13 ASAH students. In December, she'll be the first of them to graduate. When I met her, she was speaking at a program for parents. She said "Parents, you must send your girls to school. One day, you will see what they can do!" We've watched her become an adult. Rebecca Achol is the one others go to for guidance, and she's a leader in the local Sudanese church. We'll help her choose a vocational program in 2019. She'll be able to support herself and her family in the future.







## Building Character and Skills

One of the greatest blessings for me in doing this work has been watching the ASAH girls grow from little girls to women and witnessing them blossom as education and experience opens the world to them. In 2019, many of our students will move from primary to junior high and others to high school. Four students graduate. Instead of building structures, ASAH is building character, empowering our students to reach a level of education that will help them support themselves and their future families. The ASAH girls will change their world!

Each January during their year-end school break, the ASAH girls stay at ChildVoice International, a nonprofit dedicated to teaching vocational skills to vulnerable Ugandan and South Sudanese girls. In 2018 they learned to bake cakes, chapati, and buns. In January 2019, they will be introduced to sewing and tailoring. I'll be there to visit them once again, accompanied by Fargo tailor My-Thanh Thi Doan of Mai's Alterations, who will work with the students teaching them that they can earn a living mending and sewing clothing.





# Giving Hearts Day

FEB 14<sup>TH</sup>



2019

#GivingHeartsDay  
#CountMe  
#EmpowerFM

## ASAH participates in Giving Hearts Day

Giving Hearts Day is an online one-day fundraising event sponsored by the Dakota Medical Foundation, the Alex Stern Family Foundation, and the Impact Institute to support regional (ND and northwest MN) non-profits. The online giving platform enables donors to give anytime, from anywhere, on Giving Hearts Day. In 2019, the event will be on Valentine's Day, February 14. We look forward to participating again when so many hearts will be moved to contribute to worthy causes.

Join us by visiting [www.givingheartsday.org](http://www.givingheartsday.org)

## ASAH receives the Spark Plug Award

The Spark Plug Award is given to nonprofit organizations in our region that raise more than \$30,000 the first time they participate in Giving Hearts Day. We're honored to have won this award and thankful to the many donors who made it possible. ASAH looks forward to participating again on February 14, 2019.



Honoring outstanding performance in your Giving Hearts Day 2018 campaign



### Contact Us

Contact us with questions about ASAH or sponsorships, to schedule a presentation or photo exhibit, or to learn ways you can help.

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