



2023 Represent Foundation Strategic Plan

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Mission Statement

Our mission is to increase access to higher education for students from Malawi. We aim to do this in two ways:

- Providing scholarships to Malawian universities
- Establishing a relationship with select American universities and community organizations to establish a full scholarship specifically for Malawian students

Background

Malawi country facts (source: [United Nations](#), [CIA](#))

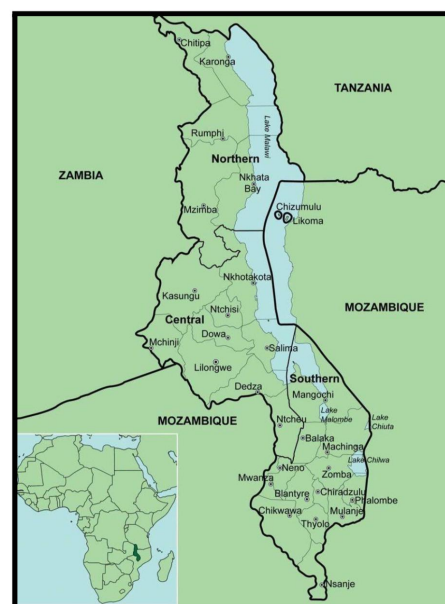
Population: 21,279,597

Ethnic groups: Chewa, Nyanja, Tumbuka, Yao, Lomwe, Sena, Tonga, Ngoni, Ngonde

Languages: English, Chichewa, Chiyao, Chitonga, Chilomwe, and others

Why Malawi?

Founder Brooke Marshall served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Malawi for 2½ years, and has maintained connections with the [Peace Corps](#), [EducationUSA](#), and members of the Malawian government. Board Chairs Tawonga Zakeyu and Director Freza Kaipa are from Malawi and were educated abroad through the [MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program](#). They have an intimate understanding of Chewa and Yao culture, as well as firsthand experience with international university education.



Source: "The Genus *Aloe* L. *Asphodelaceae* Alooideae in Malawi." Courtesy of Dr. Ronell R. Klopfer

Why education?

In Malawi, a bachelor's degree qualifies an individual for stable, lucrative employment. Malawian cultural norms are such that wealthy individuals financially support the rest of their family. One of the most common means of support is paying costs associated with education. Thus an investment in the educational/financial empowerment of one individual could theoretically mean that all the children in their family complete secondary school. Additionally, educating students from a poor background empowers them to use their skills and firsthand experience with poverty to help drive positive, Malawian-led change from within their community.

Why Malawian universities?

Educating students at Malawian universities allows them to stay close to friends and family in their home culture. Additionally, a year of education at a public Malawian university costs between \$450–\$600. Therefore, a relatively small amount of money could go a long way.

Why American universities?

For a select few students who have the talent, drive, and sense of adventure to study abroad, an international education is a tremendous opportunity. American universities have the resources to truly develop students' skills, giving them a cross-cultural perspective that could be a valuable driver for change in Malawi or America. A degree from an American university confers enormous professional clout for the student, qualifying them for jobs in some of Malawi's most competitive sectors.

As of 2022, there are [42,518 students from sub-Saharan Africa studying at U.S. institutions](#) — just 342 of whom are Malawian¹. In fall 2021, total undergraduate enrollment in the U.S. was [15.4 million](#)², which means **students from sub-Saharan Africa constitute just .0026% of the American college population.**

Moreover, financial aid for international students is limited, which means the majority of those students come from wealthy backgrounds. The number of poor African students studying in America is so low that they simply don't show up on traditional statistical models. This is not a reflection of their abilities. If these students have the will to pursue education in the face of poverty, hunger, and illness, just imagine what they could do with the educational resources of an American college campus. And imagine the perspective they could provide to their American classmates. American universities produce tomorrow's leaders, businesspeople, journalists, and international aid workers. Imagine how much fuller their education would be if they viewed Africans as peers, not abstract concepts.

2022 Goals Review

Goal: Increase access to higher education for needy Malawian students.

Objective: Provide scholarships (including \$618 for tuition, housing, books, and stationary, and \$188 for food/living expenses) for 6 Malawian students in 2022.

¹ OpenDoors Report on International Educational Exchange, https://opendoorsdata.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Open-Doors-2022_Region-Sheets.pdf

² National Center for Education Statistics, <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cha>

Outcome: Provided scholarships to 2 students in 2022 and 3 students so far in 2023 (with 2 candidates under review as of the writing of this Plan).

Notes: We were successful in implementing a scholarship application on representfoundation.org, but without boots on the ground in Malawi, recruitment proved difficult.

Objective: Assess efficacy of scholarship program to ensure money is being used for education and that the education students receive will prepare them for adequate employment.

Outcome: Shifted away from providing scholarships to Teacher Training Colleges and toward public universities; sent tuition directly to universities.

Notes: We were unable to meet in person with public Malawian universities in 2022, but have reached out over email in 2023. Students have been instructed to send school reports to The Represent Foundation.

Objective: To create a scholarship for two Malawian students at an American university starting in 2024.

Outcome: We have not yet created the scholarship.

Notes: We were able to establish guidelines for selecting a partner school, but due to time constraints, we did not reach out to colleges. It is our hope that we can accomplish this goal in 2023.

Goal: Remain financially solvent.

Objective: Raise \$6000 in 2022. Establish partnerships with giving organizations to secure \$10,000 per year by 2024.

Outcome: We raised \$6,696.84 in 2022. As of July 13, 2023, we have raised \$5,645 and forecast receiving another \$6,500 by the end of the year.

Notes: We did not receive a Rotary grant, host a fundraising class with Mighty Yoga, reach out to Yogi Tea or the MasterCard Foundation, or apply for federal funding. However, we did receive a grant from the Beacom Family Foundation, as well as a monthly recurring donation from Eliza Buckman/Melaleuca.

Objective: Increase visibility of The Represent Foundation.

Outcome: We created social media accounts for The Represent Foundation (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook).

Notes: We did not attend higher education conferences or write an article about our mission for higher education publications; *Liberal Education* expressed interest but ultimately did not pick up the article.

Goals, Objectives, and Activities

Goal: Continue to increase access to higher education for needy Malawian students.

Objective: Provide scholarships (including tuition and associated fees, as well as a 25,000 kwacha stationary stipend each semester) for 4–6 Malawian students in 2023.

Activities

- Recruit applicants through our website and through Peace Corps Volunteers.
- Review applications on a rolling basis.

Objective: Continue to assess efficacy of scholarship program to ensure the education students receive will prepare them for lucrative employment.

Activities

- Complete a Monitoring and Evaluation project following up with as many of our past scholarship recipients as possible to gauge their success.
- Email each of Malawi's 6–7 public universities to establish relationships and obtain official fee structures, course offerings, and school schedules.

Objective: Create a scholarship program for two Malawian students to attend an American college or university for at least one year. The ideal school will have the following qualifications:

- Willing to offer full financial aid to a minimum of 2 Malawian students, including:
 - If this is not feasible, The Represent Foundation will provide direct funding for books (\$1,000/year per student) and a living stipend (\$2,000/year per student) and partner with church/community organizations for room/board.
 - The Represent Foundation will cover fees associated with visas and travel (~\$3,000 per student).
- Willing to offer tutoring/counseling services for Malawian students.
- Provide an education that will significantly increase the student's employment potential.
- Possess a campus culture welcoming to Malawian students.

2023 Activities

- Reach out to Washtenaw Community College, Eastern Michigan University, and the University of Michigan to gauge the feasibility of this program.
- Reach out to the Ann Arbor Rotary to ask about lodging.
- Apply for a grant to cover associated costs. Potential funders:

- MasterCard Foundation
- The USAID BAA for Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Higher Education for Leadership, Innovation, and Exchange Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE): Higher Education Programs (HEP)
- Establishing Represent as a British Columbia extraprovincial non-share corporation may open up Canadian sources of funding; Freza Kaipa is looking into it

2024 Activities

- Establish a formal partnership with one university.
- Implement an application on representfoundation.org
- Utilize Peace Corps Volunteer connections to recruit applicants
- Select two students to receive the scholarship
- Reach out via email (or possibly in-person meeting) to the University of Florida and the University of Rochester (two colleges personally selected by Board Chair Tawonga Zakeyu) and to members of the Work College Consortium (a group of colleges that “engage students in the purposeful integration of work, learning, and service”). Member colleges include: Berea College, Alice Lloyd College, Bethany Global University, Blackburn College, College of the Ozarks, Kuyper College, Paul Quinn College, Sterling College, and Warren Wilson College
- Attend one higher education conference. Potential conferences include:
 - [American Association of Colleges & Universities Conference on Global Learning](#) (Jan. 17–19; rate??; AM@aacu.org)
 - [American Association of Colleges & Universities Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Student Success](#) (Philadelphia, March 21–23; rate??; DESSconferences@aacu.org)
 - [American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers Annual Meeting](#) (April 7–10; proposals due Sept. 15; rate??; meetings@aacrao.org)
 - [National Association for College Admission Counseling Conference](#) (possibly around Sept. 21–23; \$675; CustomerService@nacacnet.org)
 - [National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education Annual Conference](#) (possibly around April 12–15; \$750 nonmember rate; annualconference@nadohe.org)
 - [Enrollment Management Association Annual Conference](#) (possibly around Sept. 13–14; \$1,395 member rate; [members@enrollment.org](#))

- [International Association for College Admission Counseling](#) (possibly around July 11–14; \$425; admin@internationalacac.org)

2025 Activities

- Provide travel/visa arrangements for students selected for the scholarship.
- Serve as a liaison between scholarship applicants, Peace Corps Volunteers, the U.S. Department of State, the Malawian government, the American partner university, and host families.
- Disburse monthly living allowance.
- Meet with students on a monthly basis to check in on their progress.

Resources

People

Founder Brooke Marshall is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer with experience in teaching, mentoring, advocacy, journalism, public speaking, outreach, research, social media management, web design, and fundraising. She also planned and implemented a 5,085-mile cross-country bike tour to raise money/awareness about the potential of Malawian college students. She recently won a \$2,500 grant to start a small business and is currently in the process of forming an LLC.

Board Chair Tawonga Zakeyu has experience in research, outreach, and mentoring, including a year working with [Camfed](#), an NGO that seeks to educate and empower young women. She speaks fluent Chichewa, Chiyao, English, and Spanish and has personal connections in southern Malawi.

Director Freza Kaipa has academic and professional experience with fundraising, mentorship, academic research, social media management, and marketing. He speaks fluent Chichewa and English and has personal connections in central and southern Malawi.

Peace Corps Volunteers live and work in Malawi, immersing themselves in local cultures and working hands-on with students.

Financial Assets

As of July 13, 2023, the Represent Foundation has a balance of \$9,610.48. Major sources of funding include grants from the Cambridge/Smith Charitable Trust, the Beacom Family Foundation, and monthly recurring donations from Eliza Buckman/Melaleuca. Other sources of funding include occasional individual donations and sales of Brooke Marshall's book, *Lucky: An African Student, An American Dream, and A Long Bike Ride*. Half the proceeds of each sale — anywhere from \$1.71 to \$3.66 — go to the Foundation.