From Kenya, with love...
Glimpses from the 4HIM Mission Trip

by George Johnson Jr., director of integrated marketing and public relations

Twenty-one representatives from Oakwood University consisting of students, and staff, and a few non-Oakwood volunteers, arrived in Kenya on June 11 for the 2014 4HIM Overseas Mission excursion. Under the direction of Ronald Pollard, missions and campus ministries director for Oakwood University, this is the second time an Oakwood delegation is visiting Kenya, specifically working in the areas of Nairobi and Mombasa. They will be in Kenya until June 30.

During the day, the volunteer missionaries have worked in the communities on specific projects in orphanages and a medical clinic. After the projects are completed each day, the volunteers are divided into various churches for evening revival services. There, the missionaries participate in preaching, singing, scripture reading and praying. Along with Pollard, preachers for the Kenya excursion include Aisha Allsop, LETC coordinator; Bright Baah, sophomore theology major; Gerard St. Hilaire, MAPS student; Kimberly Pearson, assistant chaplain; and Oneal Thomas, sophomore business management and theology major.

Yesterday's mission activity centered around the 30 children who live at the Canaan...
Orphanage in Mombasa, Kenya. At this facility, the volunteers helped to wash clothes, prepared veggies to be cooked, mopped floors, helped with educational lessons, as well as giving bathes.

Every evening, the student and faculty missionaries are given time to journal their reflections of that day’s activities based on a reflection question. The questions are causing the missionaries to look more at their spiritual walks and how they could be strengthened. Tuesday's reflection stated: If I lived in the circumstances of the place I am serving this week, how would that impact my faith?

Here are a few responses from the missionaries:

"I think I would have a lot of questions about God's love towards me and my life, however, this doubt could diminish the more I prayed to Him and read His word." - Bright Baah, sophomore theology major

"My faith would be real and raw and not so much commercialized or entertainment-based because the churches here have so little that they are forced to be authentic." - Kandace Clark, sophomore marketing major

"My faith would have to be stronger in order to live in these circumstances." - Tori Allen, sophomore political science major

"While serving at the Canaan Orphanage, I immediately felt sorry for the children because of their living conditions. If I were one of the children there I know that would constantly be reminded of rejection. My faith would grow because I would witness first hand that someone loves me enough to select me and call me their own." - Pecolia Desmuke, senior nursing major

"I believe I might be less closer to God. I would possibly be unhappy with how my life was because of the poor living
environment conditions." - Nitisha Dunlap, junior elementary education major

"I would have to have hope that there is life beyond what my eyes can see." - Caleb Miles, senior psychology major

"If I lived in an orphanage, I would have a dire need for love like none before. I would love for someone to tell me and show me the love of God. Love is so important to have and to feel." - Alyce Hendricks, junior nursing major

"I feel my faith would be stronger because I would have to rely on God for everything." - Oneal Thomas, sophomore business management and theology major

Stay tuned to next week's edition of insideOakwood for more news from the 4HIM Kenya mission excursion.

About Oakwood

Oakwood University, a historically black, Seventh-day Adventist institution in Huntsville, Alabama, has as its mission to transform students through biblically-based education for service to God and humanity.