

Dear Grassroots Supporters:

Many of you remember in 2007 when several of us from Greenmonte Fellowship visited Grippis Farm in Zambia for the first time. We met the people who had started Mango Grove Community School in 2006, and were currently making it all happen. As you may remember, a young couple from Lusaka started the school in the squatters' village, but they had no funds. One of the local women, Mrs. Banda, offered to let them meet with students in her dirt "yard" under the mango tree to do their studies. (Shown on right below)



They started with only 5 students. Mrs. Banda prepared lunches for the teachers and students every day. As the school grew, she continued to be the one who cooked lunch – and it was not an easy task. Cooking over a wood fire, she foraged for wood, cut it, carried it home on her head, carried the water from the watering hole quite a distance away, she ground the corn by pounding it with a large wooden instrument, cooked and stirred the very stiff corn mush until it was ready. There was massive hunger in the village, and one of the big incentives for the children to come to school was that they received a meal. For some children, this was the only secure source of food they had. Mrs. Banda has been a faithful hero serving the children of her village for 15 years! In later years, she also took on the role of custodian to clean and maintain the classrooms. The student population is now 600! Mrs. Banda still grinds and cooks the corn mush every day, but thankfully now she has helpers to prepare the lunches for so many children. Mrs. Banda was consistently full of love and kindness to all. She served with humility and gentleness, and persevered under all kinds of challenges. If she had not offered her yard, and her labor to get this school started, the thousands of children educated there may have never learned to read and write – let alone go to college, which many of them are doing! She is retiring at the end of this year. We would like to recognize her many years of service as one who served on a daily basis for so long! If you would like to contribute to a farewell gift, you can mail a check to Grassroots Heroes, PO Box 10, Mint Spring, VA. 24401. Please designate your gift to go to Mrs. Banda.

Thank you for helping us recognize a truly unique and precious Grassroots Hero!

Tanya Brenneman