



sparkventures

FOUNDERS REPORT

FALL 2016

A LETTER FROM OUR COFOUNDER

Rich Johnson, CEO & Co-founder, Spark Ventures

With the end of the year comes a season of gifts and good will. During these weeks, Spark Ventures benefits, like many other organizations, as generous people like you support the causes they care about.

I want you to know that we don't take you for granted. You may give to Spark because you know one of our leaders, you've traveled to visit our partners, or you appreciate our strategic approach. But no matter your reason, you are a member of Spark's community and together we are part of a life-changing and world-changing adventure.

Probably the best gift that Spark can give to you is the assurance that your support has gone to good work. So, here are just a few highlights of what we've accomplished together in the past year....



A 6th year in a row of 100% graduation for Hope School Grade 7 students



100,000 cacao and plantain trees in Nicaragua generating jobs and future revenue to support Las Tías



A successful leadership transition for the team at Las Tías



70 travelers investing their time and talent in our cross cultural partnerships

This would not have happened without you, our engaged, strategic and philanthropic community. We are grateful to you.

Our commitment remains to connect people and resources in empowering ways that lift communities out of poverty.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. Wishing you all the best this holiday season.



Our annual fall event, Ignite 2016, gave us the opportunity to introduce an incredible young woman to the Spark Ventures community. Marvis Tembo is 17 and her visit to the US was her first time to leave Zambia (or even fly on a plane). She did an incredible job representing the many students our work supports, and we are sharing here an abridged version of the message she shared with supporters at our event.

I was the youngest of four children and less than two years old when my father died. His relatives grabbed our property and were left homeless with my mother, who was unemployed. In desperation, she left me and my three brothers. My grandparents took care of us in their small mud house. We ate only when food was available and could not afford to go to school. When my grandfather died, my mother returned, but by this time, the situation was desperate.

Teacher Loveness from Hope Community School lived in our neighborhood and knew of our difficulties. She asked the Hope leaders to assess our situation and my brother Andrew and I were admitted to Hope House Orphanage in 2005. For me, this was a dramatic change. I was assured regular meals and most importantly, I was enrolled at a nearby school. But even in this new home, we still struggled.

I remember in 2006, we had some special visitors - three men from Chicago. They helped make bunk beds for us and we had fun with them for 2 weeks. A few months later, we started to notice so many things improving at Hope House. Our menu was better and we received new gifts and clothes. We moved into a new house, had new mothers and a social worker who supported us. Since then, I look forward to meeting new friends from the U.S. with each group that Spark brings. We learn from each other, sing and dance with each other, and we work to make the world a better place.

In 2014, I graduated from Hope Community School and have continued to high school through a scholarship with our alumni program. Hope Ministries and our partners like Spark, have given me and many other children with similar backgrounds a hope and a future. We are rising above our circumstances with your help.

*I feel blessed to have been given this opportunity and my desire is to give back to society by helping other youth and vulnerable children like me. In the future, I will become a Teacher or a Nurse and have a great impact on my community. And to each of you who have supported me on this long journey - **I promise to make you proud.** Thank you for helping us to rise up. **Natotela!!***

sparkventures

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P.S. Top ways to engage with our work right now!

CONSIDER IMPACT TRAVEL WITH SPARK VENTURES IN 2017: SPARKVENTURES.ORG/TRAVEL



Impact Travel
sparkventures.org/travel

Zambia - Alumni + Friends Trip - January 22-30

Nicaragua - 5-Day Trip - March 15-19

Nicaragua - Sustainable Agriculture Trip - June 12-18



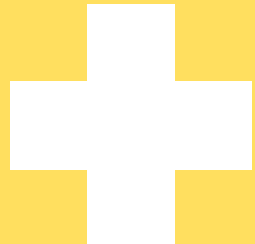
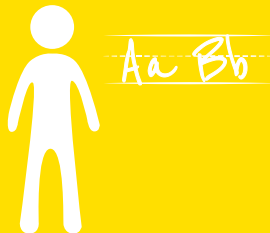




Zambia - 9-Day Trip - July 9-17

Nicaragua - 7-Day Trip - August 7-13

Nicaragua - Young Professionals Trip - November 8-12

Contact Arnold for details - aduijzer@sparkventures.org (or) 773.293.6710

GIVE A HOLIDAY GIFT THAT DOES GOOD THIS YEAR: SPARKVENTURES.ORG/HOLIDAYGIVING

 <p>MEALS FOR A MONTH</p>	 <p>TEACHING RESOURCES</p>	 <p>MALARIA TESTING</p>	 <p>MONTH OF TEACHING</p>
 <p>EDUCATION FOR A YEAR</p>	 <p>CONTINUING EDUCATION</p>	 <p>SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 5</p>	 <p>EDUCATION FOR 20</p>