



# BIZAA

BASIC INSTITUTE FOR ZONAL AFRICAN ADVANCEMENT



# 2020 Annual Report

Moving African children from the  
streets to classrooms

# Origins of BIZAA

## What's in a Name?

Educate a child and you strengthen the family.

Strengthen the family and you empower the community.

Empower the community and you change the world.

Growing up in Nigeria, Okey Anyanwu was blessed to be born into a loving family that valued education and had the fortunate and moderate means to send him and his seven siblings to good Christian schools. But walking to school each day, he often witnessed child laborers in the streets. As he grew to be a teenager, the draw and desire to help them also grew. Okey began giving away not only his own snacks and lunch, but also began begging for food from his classmates, a behavior the school's principal called "bizarre". From that point on the other children began calling him "Biza" and he is still known today in his hometown by that name.

Okey left Nigeria in 1999 to study in Malaysia, The Netherlands and Texas. In 2002 he settled in Minnesota to continue his studies, marry and start a family. As an adult now living and working in the United States, Okey never forgot his roots, or the people who desperately needed his help. In 2010, Okey, along with a core group of supporters, began the grassroots international outreach called BIZAA (Basic Institute for Zonal African Advancement), with a name that embodies the courageous beginnings of an effort that has changed his life, and the lives of the most forgotten among us.





## From the Founder's Desk:

### DEAR FRIENDS OF BIZAA:

This quote from Roosevelt speaks to the core of BIZAA's mission and reflects the convictions of our relentless volunteers and supporters. On this, our 10th Anniversary of impactful service to the youngest citizens in our Nigerian communities, it is my humble pleasure to present our 2020 Annual Report. Reflecting on the past ten years of our organization and its array of accomplishments, we can reasonably conclude that the theme for our 2020 activities ("It's working!") is quite suitable as you'll see in this report.

Within the first quarter of BIZAA's inception, we remarkably met all the short-term goals established at our first Board of Directors meeting on October 22, 2010. These goals included forming a monthly planning committee, incorporating as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, coordinating two successful mission trips, hosting our first annual Founder's Gala fundraiser, and moving our first group of at-risk children from the streets to classrooms through the generosity of our inaugural sponsors.

Our child sponsorship program has been working like a well-oiled machine ever since. In collaboration with Nigerian law enforcement, religious and community leaders, we've identified over 300 victimized children. Through the generosity of our American and Nigerian sponsors (a list that keeps growing), we now have more than 230 of these children enrolled in private schools in Nigeria. The highlight of our 2016 mission trip was the inauguration of BIZAA College of Technology, a vocational school that has graduated 14 children from one of its three-year programs in Information Technology, Electrical Technology and Tailoring. All of our graduates are currently employed and we're thrilled that one of them has joined our Nigerian BIZAA staff.

In the face of pandemic-related challenges, our Board and Planning Committee have made strategic plans to keep us moving forward and helping our at-risk youth. Our usual gala became a successful virtual BIZAA Bash fundraiser, and our website is also wearing a brand-new look to facilitate our outreach and marketing endeavors.

These success stories are a testament to the commitments of time, talent and treasure from our volunteers, sponsors, Nigerian staff and donors. You are all family to me, and I see your contributions reflected in the smiles of our BIZAA children. The joy of becoming a US citizen in 2019 validated my commitment to make the world a better place, one child at a time. So as we look forward with hope to the next ten years, I invite you to celebrate the joy of these accomplishments and recommit by becoming a child sponsor, a volunteer or a partner today. It's working, so let's keep it going!!

Thank you again for your continued support.

Okey Anyanwu, Founder

*"We cannot  
always  
build a  
future for  
our youth,  
but we can  
always  
build our  
youth for  
the future."*

Franklin  
Roosevelt





# Our Mission, Vision and Leadership



OKEY ANYANWU



MATT COOPER, MD



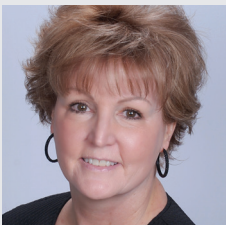
TREVOR LAMBERT



MICHAEL MAJERUS



MARCI SIERS



TERRY PROVO

Founded ten years ago in 2010, BIZAA is a registered 501(c)(3) international, non-profit organization dedicated to the empowerment of the youngest citizens of Africa. Our grassroots initiatives of providing educational scholarships are eliminating childhood labor and trafficking one child at a time. To date we've rescued over 225 children. Together, we're striving for a world with dignity, education, and opportunity for all. BIZAA will change the world by moving at-risk youth, one at a time, from the streets to the classroom.

## Our Mission

Provide education, technical training and job placement to African children in order to end childhood trafficking once and for all.

## Our Vision

- Form a strong and impactful coalition of religious organizations, schools and corporations.
- Initiate viable strategies to get underprivileged and vulnerable children off the streets and out of factories and farms, and return them to their families.
- Enroll children in existing educational institutions with demonstrated records of success.
- Create a vocational school opportunity for post-secondary students to continue their education.

## Board Members

- Okey Anyanwu; *Founder & President*
- Matt Cooper, MD; *Development & Corporate Relations Advisor*
- Trevor Lambert; *Board Chair, Corporate Network & Fundraising Advisor*
- Michael Majerus; *Finance & Budget Advisor*
- Marci Siers; *Secretary & Director of Communication*
- Terry Provo; *Mission Trip Coordinator*

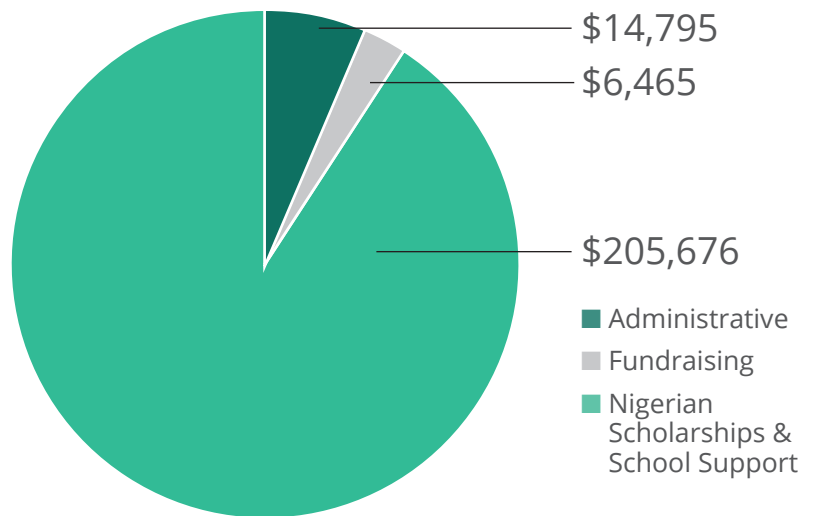
# Financial Spotlight

## Using Funding to End Child Trafficking

At BIZAA, we know that you trust us to provide at risk children in Nigeria an educational opportunity to get off the streets and into the classroom. It's important to us that all our donors and partners know exactly where their money goes. Though we are not a large non-profit, we do amazing work with the monies entrusted to us. Imagine what we could accomplish with more!

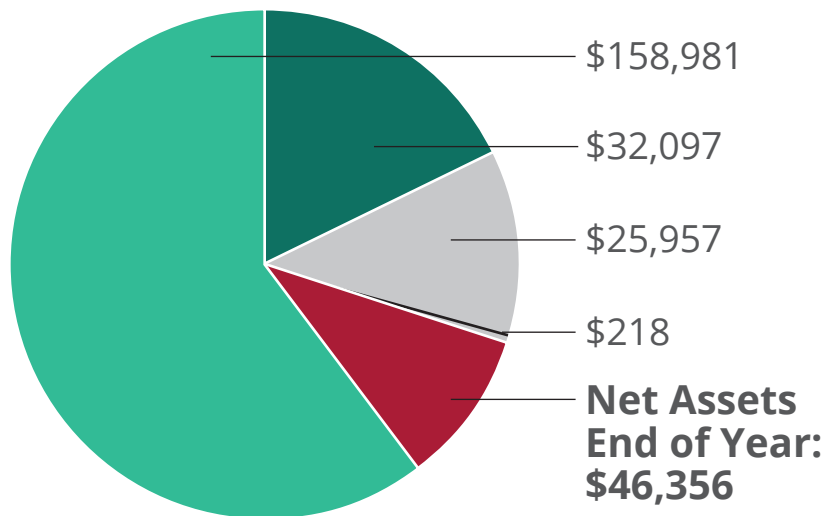
### EXPENDITURES

Administrative	\$14,795
Fundraising	\$6,465
Scholarships for Children and Vocational School Support	\$205,676
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$226,936</b>



### REVENUE

Child Sponsorship	\$158,981
General Fund Donations	\$25,957
Fundraising Income	\$32,097
Miscellaneous	\$218
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$217,253</b>



- Child Sponsorships
- Fundraising Income
- General Fund Donations
- Miscellaneous
- Net Assets End of Year

# The Heart and Soul of Our Mission

In 2020, our  
225 sponsored  
children were:

56%  
FEMALE

44%  
MALE

5-25  
AGE RANGE IN YEARS

ATTENDED  
13  
PRIMARY AND  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS,  
AS WELL AS THE BIZAA  
VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

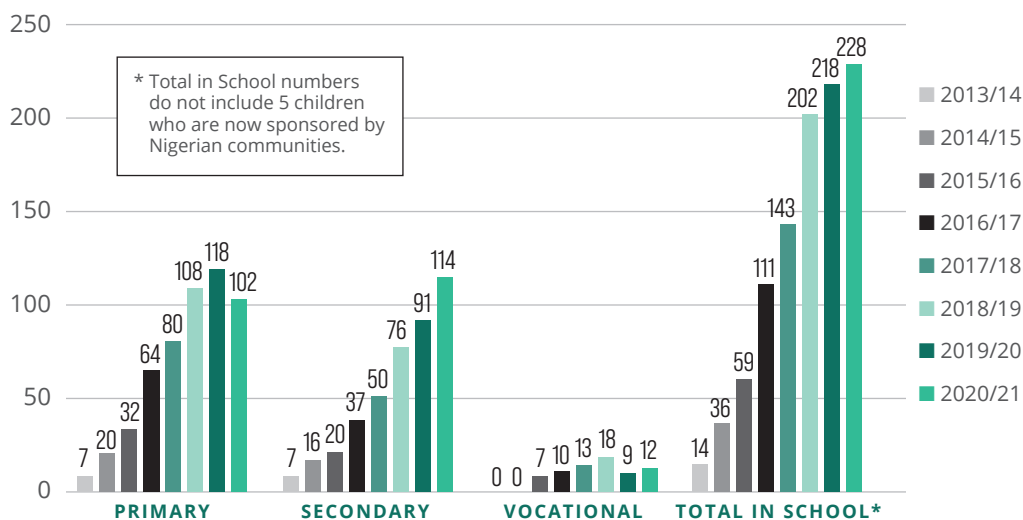
SUPPORTED  
LOCALLY BY  
11  
DEDICATED BIZAA  
STAFF

## Sponsoring Children and Clearing the Waiting List

Thanks to amazing supporters like yourself, BIZAA has been able to rescue hundreds of children from the streets, farms and domestic servitude, and set their lives on a new direction of education, learning, training and opportunity.

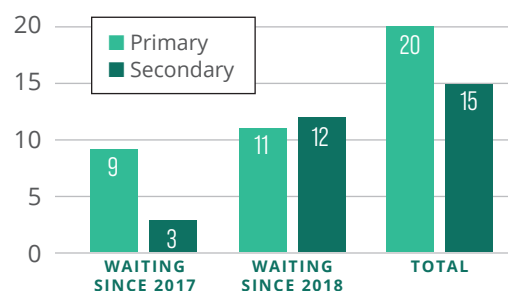
In 2016 we established the BIZAA College of Technology, which has offered post-secondary students additional learning opportunities and training in Electrical Engineering, Information Technology (IT) and Tailoring. In the spring of 2019 our first group of nine students graduated, and this year an additional four students graduated.

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT



While we're extremely proud of the progress we've made since our inception, there is still more work to do. Our current efforts are focused on finding sponsors for the several dozen children who have been patiently waiting to go to school. To sponsor a child please go to [www.bizaa.org](http://www.bizaa.org).

## CHILDREN ON WAITING LIST





## GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT Cyriacus A.

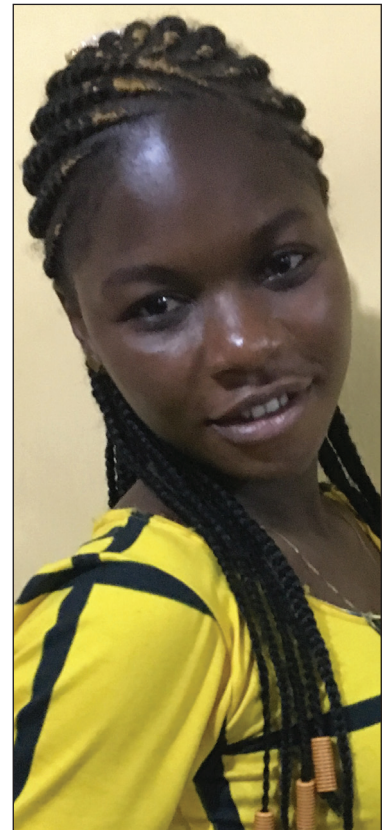
### *Paying it Forward*

Cyriacus was 19 years old when he was working as a child laborer. He had dropped out of school in his final year of secondary school and began weaving baskets and selling tomatoes at the local village market with his older sister in order to help support their family of nine. In 2015 Bill and Kathy Corwin began sponsoring Cy and he was enrolled as one of the founding IT students at the BIZAA College of Technology in Imo State. Shortly before he graduated, Cy was so determined to give back to the community that he organized basic computer classes for nearby public school students at the BIZAA facility. Local staff found him so resourceful that they strongly recommended that he join the team as paid staff after graduation. With Board approval, Cy has become the first graduate to be hired by BIZAA. Now 24 years old, he works at the BIZAA College of Technology as the Office Manager.

## GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT Vivian N.

### *Bright Student, Bright Future*

Prior to BIZAA, Vivian was a child laborer, working in the streets selling farm produce. Vince and Lucia Beacom began sponsoring her education in 2013 during BIZAA's inaugural year of sponsorships. Vivian, a hard-working student, successfully completed her secondary schooling and then, in 2015, enrolled in the IT program at the BIZAA College of Technology. In 2019 Vivian was the proud valedictorian of BIZAA's first graduating class, speaking eloquently at the graduation ceremony this past spring. Now 24 years old, Vivian works as a trained pharmacy technician.





# Partnership Spotlight: Stillwater High School BIZAA Club

## Students Helping Students

In December 2015, Okey Anyanwu was invited to speak on international outreach at Stillwater High School in Stillwater, MN. Following that presentation, two teachers were greatly impacted by the presentation and began sponsoring children. On Amnesty International Day in 2017, Okey presented again. Sensing fertile ground for an inaugural idea, he proposed the idea of starting a student club and recruited Kirsten Carter, a Spanish teacher, to head up the initiative. In 2018 the Stillwater High School BIZAA Club held their first meeting with 40 students and Kirsten acting as the club's advisor. They raised enough money to sponsor one BIZAA child.

But fueled by Kirsten's passionate mentorship and motivated club leaders, the following year club membership swelled to over 100. The club raised an amazing \$17,000 at two Stillwater BIZAA Nights, enough to sponsor five children. School faculty continue to sponsor two children and the impact of the club has prompted families and friends of the students to sponsor additional children as well. We applaud Kirsten Carter, BIZAA Club Advisor, and the dozens of students who've stepped forward to make a difference in the lives of other children.





# PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT: ProSource Technologies

When BIZAA set out to tackle the social injustices of child trafficking, we knew it would require a combination of both dedicated volunteers and key partnerships. In 2018 ProSource Technologies LLC, stepped up and became a key partner.

ProSource had been looking for opportunities to be socially responsible and give back to the greater world community. Greg Wheeler, an owner in the company, and his wife Sandy had been sponsoring several children through BIZAA for quite some time. It occurred to him that BIZAA might be an excellent opportunity for employees to get involved in a good cause; so in 2018, he invited Founder Okey Anyanwu to come do an informational presentation to employees.

The response was overwhelming! What better way to give back than to provide education and occupational training to those who couldn't afford it? Employees formed the "My Education Fund" and contributed enough to sponsor the education of three children. Four other employees stepped up and sponsored children themselves. A single simple invitation to come speak changed the lives of seven children forever.

Greg Wheeler says,

*"We believe strongly in the mission of BIZAA to promote education and job placement for the future generations of Africa. Our company, as a whole, takes pride in participating in this endeavor, and we look forward to seeing the heights reached by those helped through this program."*

BIZAA couldn't be more grateful for ProSource's generous support and employee involvement. If your company or organization would like to learn more about BIZAA and partnership opportunities, please contact us at [okey@bizaa.org](mailto:okey@bizaa.org).

## About ProSource

ProSource Technologies ([www.prosourcetech.com](http://www.prosourcetech.com)) is a professional consulting firm specializing in right of way/site acquisition, relocation, environmental, and disaster and emergency management services. Established in 1997 and headquartered in Minnesota in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, they provide service and support for a number of industries and clients, ranging from utilities and energy companies, to city, county and state government entities.

**ProSource**  
TECHNOLOGIES

# PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: Mission Trips

Some Pray.

Some Give.

Some Do.

Some Go.

BIZAA did its inaugural mission trip to Nigeria in 2013 and has done a total of six annual trips through 2018. In 2019 and 2020 the trips were postponed due to political elections and the worldwide pandemic, but these mission trips are a cornerstone of the work that BIZAA does. Okey Anyanwu, BIZAA's Founder, was born and raised in Nigeria, thus he has exceptional, first-hand knowledge of the Nigerian social, economic, political, educational and religious issues needed to lead these important journeys, which allow missionaries to connect with people who are the heart of soul of the organization. This eye-opening experience provides a hands on learning opportunity for both the participants and members of the Nigerian community who welcome them.

Our mission trips enable volunteers to participate in grass-roots efforts to improve communities. Examples of mission trip activities include:

- Meeting with residents and sharing the BIZAA message
- Visiting schools where sponsored children are educated
- Interviewing children rescued from trafficking and child labor
- Meeting with local officials and the families of sponsored children
- Distributing gifts and letters from sponsors to the children
- Dispensing donated health and personal care items to communities in need
- Participating in welcome ceremonies and meeting with community leaders

In 2016, Rachel Nee-Hall, an Emmy-nominated producer and director, traveled with the group to Nigeria and filmed their experience. The result was a one-hour 2018 documentary titled *"The Boy They Called Bizarre"*, a riveting look at how one soul started making a difference in the child labor and trafficking horrors taking place in Nigeria. The film, which was one of the featured films shown at the 2020 Waco Family and Faith International Film Festival, may be seen in its entirety at [www.bizaa.org](http://www.bizaa.org).





Those who've traveled to Nigeria on these trips have often described it as a life-changing experience. Because regular communication with sponsored children is still hampered by technological obstacles, these regular trips are critical for connecting with and assuring the children that BIZAA sponsors are supporting them and cheering for them throughout their educational journey.

**Please consider coming along on one of these impactful expeditions!**





# BIZAA

BASIC INSTITUTE FOR ZONAL AFRICAN ADVANCEMENT

*Thank You*

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