



### **Giving Circle serves meals at RISE shelter**

The Giving Circle continues to provide meals for those living at the RISE shelter, showing love and support for those in need. We are always looking for volunteers to provide meals, or assist in serving, on Thursday nights at RISE. Contact our coordinator, Rachel Dwyer, through our web page, [www.thegivingcircle.org](http://www.thegivingcircle.org)

### **Giving Circle launches General Appeal**

The Giving Circle has launched a Fall fundraising campaign through the platform GiveButter. Links can be found on The Giving Circle's Facebook and Instagram pages. Additional funds are needed to support local projects and increased educational expenses in Uganda, as more of our students leave primary school and go on to HS, trade school and college.



## **Mooncatcher Program Again Makes a Difference**

For many years, The Giving Circle has partnered with The Mooncatcher project, which distributes reusable menstrual pads/kits to young girls so they may stay in school and avoid social stigma. The program, directed by long-time volunteer Elle von Wellsheim, is well received when The Giving Circle travels to Uganda.

This year, Zoe Poli — a college student at RPI — and her mother, Dr. Kim Poli — demonstrated how the menstrual kits work to a class of young girls. Here is Zoe's account of what happened next:

“After my mom and I finished our menstruation class and demonstration of the Mooncatcher kits, the school nurse, Lydia, approached me along with



## **Giving Circle mobilizes to save a life (really!)**

The message from Giving Circle-Africa director Moses Wambi was urgent.

A Busoga student, Joy Akao, who is HIV positive and has asthma, had fallen critically ill and had been rushed to the hospital by ambulance with breathing difficulties.

Her family did not have the funds to pay the hospital, doctor and ambulance bills, and her sponsorship account had run dry due to previous medical expenses.

The Giving Circle instantly approved funds so Joy could get the care she needed.

To demonstrate how important even the smallest donations are, the total cost of Joy's life-saving treatment was about \$210.

Well done all!

a student. The student was a teenage girl who needed a kit because she had her period. Her name was Esther, and she was clearly very shy about admitting this information — evident from her fidgeting and how she hardly looked up from the ground as we headed to the headmistress's office where we had unloaded the suitcase of Mooncatcher kits earlier in the day.

When we got to the office, it was Headmistress Lydia, Nurse Lydia, Esther, and myself. I closed the door to give Esther some privacy. After I handed Esther one of the kits, I decided I had to tell this girl what had just happened to me less than an hour before, in order to make her feel less embarrassed about needing a kit.

All four of us burst into laughter as I told them that my period had just started as I was actively teaching the menstruation class earlier. I explained how I stood at the front of the classroom demonstrating and talking, acting entirely normal, while having cramps and bleeding from my uterus without any menstruation products on.

We all acknowledged the extreme irony and coincidence in the timing of this event, as if I had willed my period to happen.

After hearing this, Esther was visibly more comfortable, and smiled as we walked back out into the school courtyard.

Although I had initially intended to keep my moment of unpreparedness private, I was so happy that I could make Esther feel better about her situation.

Also, after sharing this with the three Ugandans, I felt more comfortable about the experience and had less of a desire to keep it a secret from other members of The Giving Circle group.

Instead I shared it with several other members the team and we all had another good laugh about it.