



NEWS RELEASE

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OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL'S EDUCATION QUALITY PROGRAM ANNOUNCES 2019 AWARD WINNERS

LONDON – February 26, 2020 – For the second year, Opportunity International's Education Quality ('EduQuality') program is recognizing schools within the program that have demonstrated the most significant innovation and determination to improve the quality of education for their students.

Winning schools were evaluated based on their ability to implement their school development plan, and creatively use limited resources to maximize the impact of their learning environments. The award committee looked for approaches that both engaged and benefited the school community, students, and families.

The EduQuality Awards were established to acknowledge the schools most dedicated to the advancement of high-quality education. Eligible schools must be enrolled in the EduQuality program, are currently accessing a School Improvement Loan from their local Opportunity partner financial institution, and must be in good standing with their loan repayment. Award winners receive a cash prize and wall plaque for their school, which is presented during their respective awards ceremonies in February and early March 2020.

2020 WINNERS

First Prize (\$5,000): Pax Junior School, Uganda

After learning about the value of having a school development plan during an EduQuality School Leadership Professional Development workshop in June 2018, Pax Junior School decided to begin a process of drafting a 2018-2020 school development plan. While Pax improved across a wide number of areas in 2019 related to education quality, they identified Child Protection & Safeguarding as a top priority for improvement. Their plan of action included appointing a child protection officer, setting up an annual training and review process, and creating policies for child protection, fire, and safety. Since implementation, the school community has expressed confidence and clarity around the safeguarding of students.

Second Prize (\$2,000): Kireka High School, Uganda

To ensure students are benefiting from engaging, child-centered teaching practices, Kireka High School selected Teacher & Lesson Oversight as the primary focus in their school development plan. To implement a more supportive oversight structure, the school provided teachers with a cluster workshop facilitated by an Opportunity Education Specialist to learn best practices, created an Academic Board for accountability on all classroom activities, and incorporated classroom supervisors to oversee the quality of instruction and work given to students. As a result, students report a better understanding of their lessons.

Honorable Mentions (\$1,000 each):

- Acropolis Maranatha Academy, Ghana
- Busia Trust Secondary School, Uganda
- Solid Rock Foundation School, Ghana

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Opportunity International's Chief Executive Officer, Atul Tandon said, "Education opens doors for young people—and is key to breaking the cycle of extreme poverty. We are honored to celebrate these schools for their exceptional work bringing high-quality education to students in Africa and equipping young people for today and tomorrow."

"We are thrilled to acknowledge the hard work of these schools on their journey to improving the conditions for learning. The awards are also a reflection of the support provided by Opportunity Education Specialists to the schools," responded Renée McAlpin, Global EduQuality Manager.

ABOUT OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL EDUFINANCE

Opportunity EduFinance, with headquarters in London, United Kingdom, partners with financial institutions around the world to help them develop, launch, and manage sustainable education lending portfolios. EduFinance's technical assistance services enable financial institutions to launch or improve their education lending activities, focusing on the development of two flagship education lending products: School Improvement Loans and School Fee Loans. EduFinance currently has more than 53 financial institution partners in 22 countries, through which more than 12,000 schools and 103,000 parents are currently borrowing, benefiting an estimated 5.2 million children globally.

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