

HELPING THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA SINCE 1971

ANGOLA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

www.angolamsf.org

Spring, 2026



IECA WOMEN'S SOCIETY OFFERS INTEGRATED TRAINING

With two decades of experience in offering workshops to women and youth, the IECA Women's Society has developed multipronged training modules. To finish out their 2025 program, they offered a course in Bie to 42 women and girls that covered sewing entrepreneurship, cooking, and pastry. They also offered training in sewing and knitting to participants at the Chilesso mission. As mentioned in our fall 2025 newsletter, a sewing centre has been opened in Lunda Sul province, where four women teach machine and hand-sewing in ongoing classes. This centre is generating a renewed interest in sewing across the program.



Pastry course in Bie



Sewing centre in Lunda Sul



Glossary >>>

- » **AMSF** Angola Memorial Scholarship Fund
- » **CICA** Council of Christian Churches of Angola
- » **IECA** Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola

AMSF IS GRATEFUL FOR DONATIONS

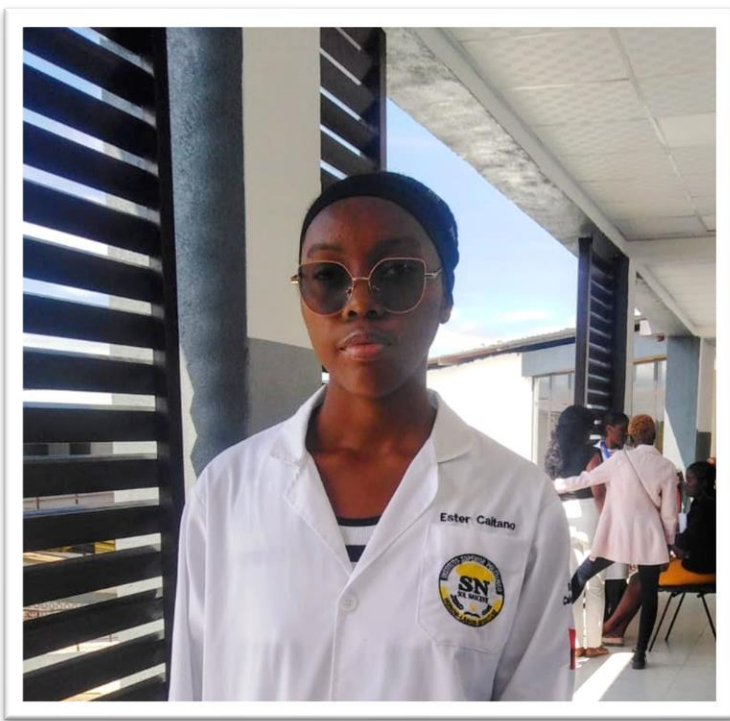
In memory of Dr Betty Bridgman, Bev & Tom Brown, Dr George & Phyllis Burgess, Rev Whitney Dalrymple, Edith Radley, Rev Etta Snow, Rev Carl Zurbrigg

In honour of and gratitude for Jean Burgess, Eleanor Ellins for her stellar volunteer service as AMSF treasurer, the 98th birthday of Rev David Gilchrist, Rev Joyce Myers-Brown

AMSF GRANT TO CICA ENABLES 16 SCHOLARSHIPS

CICA reports that the current scholarship recipients include 5 male and 11 female advanced education students. Their programs include accounting & management, biology, business administration & management, communication sciences, cardio-pneumology, health sciences, law, nursing, physiotherapy, psychology, regional & rural planning. Their places of study span five provinces and one placement in Zimbabwe. Since fall enrollment, one student sadly died in an accident and his brother was awarded the scholarship in his stead. Another student withdrew from a nutrition program, and her scholarship has been passed to another candidate. The letters of appreciation below speak for all the recipients.

I am **Luis Antonio Isaias Vasco**, a member of the Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola (IEBA). I am enrolled in the first year of psychology at the Catholic Superior Institute of Benguela (ISOCAB). I take this opportunity to thank CICA and their partners for the financial support that I have been given. Without this support, I do not know how I would continue. It helps with fees and the purchase of a cell phone for scientific research. Today I thank my God that CICA and its partners make up a part of my life. In this way, difficulties are minimized. Once again I thank you for the chance you have given me. Please don't stop here. Continue to help those in need. God recognizes the work you have been developing for the good of Angolans. I ask God to care for you and to increase the number of those who have been dedicating their time and taking from their own pockets in helping us. God bless you all.



My name is **Ester Selita Suingui Caetano**, a scholarship holder from the Evangelical Pentecostal Mission of Angola (MEPA) and a first-year student in the Cardio pneumology course at the Sol Nascente Institute (ISPSNHbo) in Huambo. There are moments in life when words seem too inadequate to express what the heart feels. This is one of those moments. I know all too well the weight of life difficulties. I know what it means to look to the future with a desire to grow, yet with resources running low. Without financial support, my dreams were in danger of remaining just that—dreams. But God, in His infinite mercy, opened a path where I had seen no way forward. It was through CICA and its partners that this path became a reality. The support I received was not just financial. It was a gesture of love for your neighbour; it was you believing in me when I

needed it most. Thanks to that support, I am able to pay my tuition fees, I have the tools to study and research, and I can wake up every morning knowing that I am not alone on this journey. Today, with a heart full of gratitude and hope. I dream of completing my studies and becoming a healthcare professional capable of serving my country and my people. And I know that every step I take will also bear the generous mark of the hand that has reached out to me. I pray that this will not stop. There are many young Angolans with the same dream and the same desire to grow — they just need an opportunity. God sees every sacrifice made with love and will certainly reward all those who have dedicated their time and resources to transforming lives. May God bless you all.

UPDATE FROM AGRONOMY STUDENT ABRANTES CHIGALULE



Abrantes transplanting eggplant

perspective on Angola's main crops. Rural Constructions helped me identify which structures a farm needs, where they should be located, and how they should be built. Agricultural Business Management expanded my understanding of the administration of an Agricultural Production Unit.

These theoretical insights were transformed into practical learning during an internship at the Methodist Mission of Quêssua between February 15 and March 1, 2026. It has been fundamental to my professional preparation, allowing me to consolidate in practice many aspects that had previously been learned only in theory.

- In Horticulture, I acquired techniques for vegetable cultivation, having observed crops of eggplant, cabbage, and lettuce already established in the soil. I closely followed the preparation of the land and learned about transplanting procedures, and the necessary care to ensure optimal development. I also participated in the establishment of an onion nursery.
- In Swine Production, I took part in the management of the Mission's farm facilities for pig rearing. I learned about feeding, hygiene, and health, and recognized how important pig rearing can be in improving rural livelihoods.
- In Cattle Production, I learned about feeding and pasture management, and the essential role of livestock in sustaining families and contributing to the local economy. The same applies to the goat herd on the farm.

Dear Scholarship Donors,

It is with immense pride and gratitude, I share my experiences of the 7th semester of my Agronomic Engineering program. This period represents the final stage of a dream that once existed only on paper. It is now, by the grace of God and through the support of the generous donors, about to be fulfilled – the completion of my curricular plan and the preparation for my future mission as an Agronomic Engineer.

At the academic level, I achieved consistent performance, with an average of 75% across all subjects. This was possible thanks to the continuous support of the scholarship which allows me to dedicate more time to learning and practical activities.

Every course enriched my knowledge of agriculture. Horticulture and Food Crops provided a technical



Abrantes treating a piglet

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PATIO SEWING CLASSES FOR QUESSUA AREA GIRLS

By Ruthie Schaad, Quessua outreach education co-ordinator

Shortly after we came to Quessua, I started sewing with some girls from our villages. My first objective was to introduce the sewing of washable and reusable feminine hygiene kits to help the many girls who cannot afford to buy commercial products. Some girls now come back to sew components that have worn out or as often happens, have been stolen.

I then started teaching basic sewing to girls of 8 years old and up. We work informally on our patio, and I like it that way.

It reduces pressure and the girls work at their own pace. (I often wish there were more of me so that I could reach more girls!) Girls advance depending upon their abilities and interests. We make new things, mend clothing and adjust clothes that are donated from mission teams since the sizes are often big. The school batas (smocks) are frequently brought for mending, have buttons sewn on and have symbols ironed on to them.



Quessua farm worker's daughters sewing by hand

I first teach basic hand sewing and try to show girls that a lot of mending can be done by hand since they don't have machines at home. During these informal sewing sessions, I also teach girls about menstruation, health and hygiene, protecting and valuing their bodies, and making choices. When they start their periods they are not embarrassed to come get a kit and some even help make their own in advance.

Sewing empowers the girls and helps them feel valued in

their world of cooking, cleaning, carrying water and childcare, and where traditional and peer pressures are so strong. This empowerment increases their confidence and assertiveness. What I teach these lovely girls with such challenges in life is a drop in the bucket, but I plug away, reaching whom I can and knowing that these students will in turn share their knowledge with others.



Mila with a bag she made



Mila and Gia repairing choir robes



Another talented sewer Amelia, making masks during COVID. She is now in 7th grade in the afternoons and thus doesn't have time to sew as much.
Note: Ruthie writes sewing terminology on the blackboard.

DR JOHN KAKOLIO, ON AN EYE HEALTH CAMPAIGN

AMSF has been providing some moral and financial support to Dr John Kakolio as he upgrades his ophthalmological skills in China. During a two-month break in his residency training, John chose to travel back to Angola on what he calls “a mission to bring sight and hope to underserved communities”. Herewith an edited version of his report.

I returned to my homeland briefly with a profound purpose. The goal was to conduct three outreach campaigns to bring essential eye care to communities with limited access to specialist services. These outreach programmes represent more than medical intervention - they embody hope, dignity and the transformative power of sight restoration. Each patient represents a story, a life that can be profoundly changed. I assembled a team comprising an anaesthetist and a theatre nurse but at the last minute, my anaesthetist fell ill, leaving me to not only conduct consultations and perform surgeries, but administer anaesthesia as well. MAF <https://maf.ca> ensured transportation across remote provinces with their aircraft.

Our first destination was Luena in Moxico Province. Within ten intensive days, we successfully performed 110 ophthalmic surgeries whilst conducting 555 patient consultations.

MAF then flew us to Kuito in Bie Province where we conducted our most extensive campaign. Over ten days, we performed 188 surgeries and provided 755 consultations. While there, I supervised the clinical skills of newly graduated nurses trained through the Basic Ophthalmology program which is funded by Christian Blind Mission <https://www.cbm.org>. The nurses received hands-on-guidance in visual acuity assessment, history taking and examinations. They demonstrated excellent clinical capabilities delivered with compassion and have been prepared to provide essential eye care services in remote, underserved communities.



Trained nurses provide essential eye care services in remote communities with limited specialist access



During the five-day campaign in Waku Kungo, Kuanza Sul Province, we successfully performed 77 surgeries and conducted 360 consultations.

Even brief interventions can create lasting impact in underserved communities. The numbers represent real lives transformed. Each surgery restored vision. Each consultation prevented potential blindness. Each interaction built trust in healthcare systems. The cumulative impact of 375 surgeries and 1,670 consultations extends far beyond the campaign data, creating ripple effects throughout families and communities.

Following the completion of the 3 cataract campaigns, I travelled to visit my father who is recovering from illness. His resilience mirrors the determination I witnessed in our patients - proof that hope and healing persist even in challenging circumstances.

I have now returned to China, carrying with me invaluable experiences that will shape my future practice. The lessons learned – about resourcefulness, adaptability, and the profound impact of accessible healthcare – will forever influence my approach to ophthalmology.

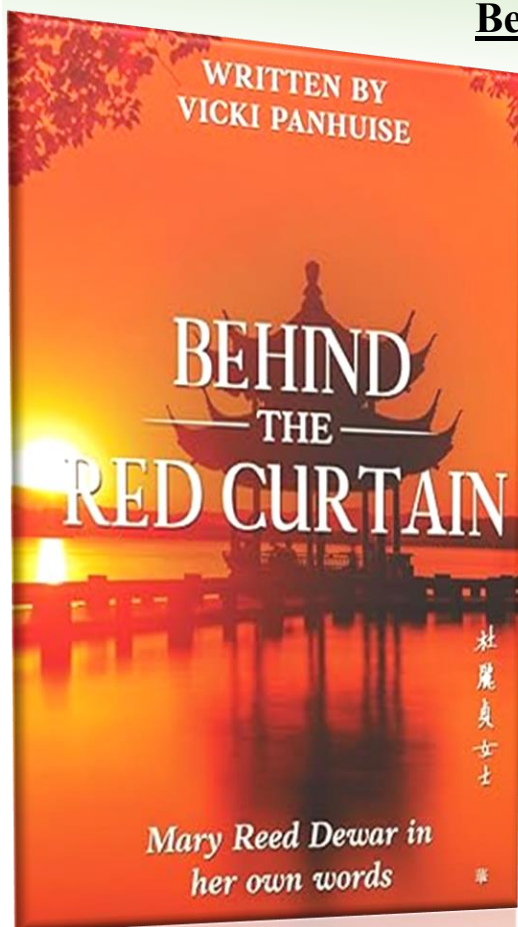


Dr John Kakolio with a patient

Behind The Red Curtain: Mary Dewar in Her Own Words by Vicki Panhuise

Reader Review by Nancy Henderson, AMSF member and regional rep

A note of explanation lest you be confused about why a review about China is appearing in the AMSF newsletter: After working in China, Mary Dewar became a missionary nurse in Angola. She has been an AMSF member for about 20 years, including serving on AMSF's Board, and still is involved, at the age of 103.



Behind the Red Curtain brings to vibrant life the early years of Mary Reed Dewar from her birth in 1922 in New Jersey to her time as a missionary nurse in Communist China from 1947 to 1951. Author Vicki Panhuise, Mary Dewar's niece, grew up steeped in the stories her aunt told the family. She draws from letters, news clippings, and conversations that began when Mary was 102. Still vital with an excellent memory for detail, Mary relates the excitement of discovering her life's path as a nurse and missionary, and credits those who influenced her decisions.

As she grew up, Mary was disturbed by the casual prejudice around her against Jews, Catholics, and Blacks. At six, Mary and the family's Black live-in maid learned to read together by taking turns to decipher Bible verses. While Mary's mother eventually stopped this joint learning (peer teaching) across differences in age and race, it had a profound effect on young Mary.

A young liberal pastor at her church steered Mary toward a calling not just to believe, but to act. And her double major at Oberlin College in history and religion gave her an awareness of human suffering and a sense of duty. In China, she was determined to live as the Chinese student nurses did. In winter, they closed off most rooms to preserve what little heat they had. They ate basic foods, mostly vegetables and fruit they grew themselves, and walked and traveled in horse-drawn carts when trains were out of commission.

<https://www.amazon.ca/Behind-Red-Curtain-Dewar-words/dp/B0G6G865ZG>

Mary's description of travel from Beijing to her new assignment in Taiku is hilarious. She had to pack for a stay of three to four years and was severely restricted on how much weight she could carry--38 pounds. She put ten pounds of medicines in the duffle along with summer clothing, paper, soap, one pair of nurse's shoes, one pair of Chinese shoes, and other essentials. How about her winter clothing? Read the book to find out!

Always a lover of languages, Mary added Mandarin to her first loves of French and Latin. A bout of appendicitis as a teenager helped her realize how important nurses are to medical care. She honed her nursing skills in a rural area of northeast China during the beginnings of the Communist Revolution when supplies were limited and travel, difficult. Being a fluent speaker of Chinese helped Mary navigate this new country. Lest you think that "missionary" = "stodgy", Mary is a lover of music. She learned to play the violin in high school and brought her instrument to China. Frequent scenes of music and dancing with the Chinese nurses on the weekends illustrate her love of life.

I have a special place in my heart for Mary Dewar. After leaving China, she was sent to become a missionary in Angola, where I grew up. Her humorous stories about China captivated me at age 7. I loved the one about how her lipstick mystified Chinese guards. No matter your place in life, you will find this book full of humor and human sympathy. I look forward to reading about the next phase of her life, as a nurse in Angola.

Note: Video -THE POWER OF NURSES: 103 year old nurse, veteran, and missionary Mary Dewar spoke to Adelphi University nursing students and faculty ahead of Nurses Week 2026. <https://url.td/Jj4xd>

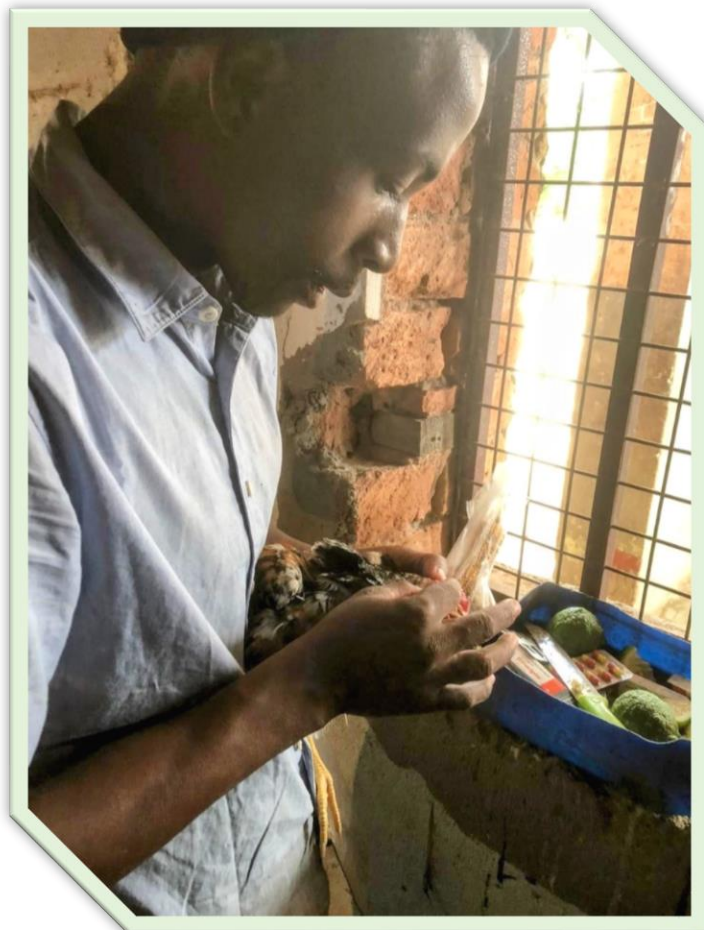
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- In Poultry Production, I observed poultry farming activities, from initial management to egg production. I understand how this practice can provide a practical response to the nutritional needs of local communities.
- In Rabbit Production, I was introduced to techniques for rabbit breeding, an activity with rapid returns and significant potential for diversifying animal production.
- In Fruit Production, I observed the cultivation of citrus, avocado, mango, and papaya trees.
- In Farm Organization and Management, I closely observed how Engineer Kutela maintained the organization and management of the Production Unit and ensured efficiency and harmony in the workplace.
- In Infrastructure and Machinery, I was able to carefully examine the essential components required for the proper functioning of an agricultural production unit.

This internship was a true practical laboratory. It enabled me to integrate theory with practice, strengthen technical skills, and broaden my perspective on the role of agriculture in community development. Living and working alongside dedicated professionals and colleagues was equally enriching, and I thank God for placing such inspiring people along my path.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mama Ruthie and Papa David Schaad for the warm hospitality they extended to me. I am grateful to Engineer Kutela Dieudonné, Engineer Cristiano, Brother Andrade, Brother Alberto Mbenza and his family, Brother Nando, and all those who, through their dedication and support, made my stay at the Mission an unforgettable experience.

Note: Fellow student Andrade dedicated a weekend to taking Abrantes to the spectacular Kalandula Falls and to an IECA Sunday service in the nearby city of Malange.



Abrantes treating a chicken



Abrantes exhilarated by the sacred Kalandula Falls

Every experience lived, every course completed, and every internship undertaken strengthens my conviction that I will be ready to serve with dedication, responsibility, and love for agriculture and for the development of communities. None of this would have been possible without the grace of God and the support of the scholarship donors, who have been instruments of hope and transformation in my life

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Abrantes preparing the onion nursery

**Note from
Ruthie Schaad,
Quessua Education
Outreach Coordinator:**

Ever since the arrival of agricultural missionary Diedoné Kutela Kutembo to rejuvenate the Quessua Mission Farm in 2015, one of the objectives has been establishing agricultural extension work with the surrounding Quessua communities. Village subsistence farmers have learned improved techniques to help them with the challenge of assuring food security

for their families. They have benefited from formal and informal trainings and received farm tools, seeds and seedlings for their dry season gardens. The cultivation and benefits of the Moringa tree and Chaya plant – both food security foods have been taught to many. Villagers feel welcomed at the farm to seek advice and help and farm workers visit the village gardens. Over the years, village groups have given back, providing tremendous support to the farm during crop



Rev Moma, Brother Andrade, Brother Seti, Abrantes, Brother Alberto, Brother Cancido and their respective families

harvesting time. Community outreach is an essential component of an agriculture mission and opportunities for student internships provide practical information and confidence to learners for their future in agriculture.

Note: An AMSF designated donation funded the costs of the two-week internship. We are grateful for the intense practical training and warm hospitality provided by Quessua Mission in a pilot collaborative training effort arranged between IECA and the East Angola Methodist Church.



Engineer Kutela Dieudonne, Abrantes, Rev Moma Coutinho, Luis Samacumbi, Ruthie Schaad and Quessua farm staff

How to Donate:

Donations may be made online at www.angolamsf.org, at <https://www.canadahelps.org>, or mailed to your AMSF Regional Representative whose addresses may be found on the AMSF website. Cheques should be made out to AMSF. They can also be sent directly to AMSF Treasurer, Eleanor Ellins, at: 2016-1333 Bloor St., Mississauga, ON L4Y 3T6