

## MINUTE FOR MISSION

### **CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING GIFTS HELP STUDENT APPLY HEART AND MIND TO VEXING PROBLEMS**

Growing up in Rwanda, Joshua Karangwa often saw rural women and children carrying heavy cans of water on their heads for miles just so their families could survive. His memory of people engaged in this back-breaking endeavor pierces his heart and challenges his mind.

Joshua, a 2018 graduate of Presbyterian Pan American School (Pan Am) in Kingsville, Texas, wants to tackle water accessibility and other issues that confront the developing world. He is now a first-year engineering student at Presbyterian-related Schreiner University.

Joshua dreams of the day when women and children will no longer have to tote large water cans, whose average weight exceeds 40 pounds when filled. The task is exhausting and can lead to strained backs, shoulders, and necks.

“It’s an issue that I want to address by using all the means I have acquired,” Joshua says. He wants not only to design ways to make water more accessible, but also to help communities learn how to find their own solutions to problems like poor accessibility to water.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s Christmas Joy Offering helps Pan Am and other Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color prepare future leaders like Joshua to serve the church and society. Half of the offering supports the schools, and the other half provides assistance for current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial need.

While at Pan Am, Joshua enrolled in dual-credit courses at the Texas A&M’s Kingsville campus, where he studied mathematics, English, economics, and political science. His academic record enabled him to receive a full, four-year scholarship to Schreiner.

Joshua says his faith began to flourish at Pan Am. He grew up in a Christian family, but he says Pan Am helped him “to find faith on my own.” He relished discovering the different ways the diverse student body at Pan Am interpreted the Bible. “It helped me grow in a lot of ways, and it added perspective to my faith,” he says.

A well-rounded student, Joshua participated in three varsity sports—basketball, track, and soccer. He was also a student ambassador. In this role, he visited congregations and shared his story and that of Pan Am. As a student ambassador, he says he especially enjoyed learning from people in the congregations. “Most of them were from an older generation, and they have knowledge to share,” he says. “It was a fun experience.”

Gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering helped shape the character of Joshua, and continued support of the Offering will shape the lives of students like him as well as support church workers in a time of need.

### *Let us pray,*

*God of inspiration, you shape our minds  
in many ways.*

*You surround us with the richness of new  
ideas and teachers who offer lessons  
and support.*

*Bless all who are students.*

*Let them learn lessons well, growing in  
mind and character for leadership in the church and world.*

Amen.