



# Changing Lives ~ One Student At A Time

Dear Alumni & Friends of Union Springs Academy,

Greetings! What a blessing it was for us to see so many of you catching up and sharing memories on our campus at our recent Alumni Weekend! It gives us a little glimpse of what heaven will be like as we look forward to Christ's soon return. Until then, our faculty and staff continue to play a vital role in the lives of our students in enlarging His kingdom! As principal of our Academy, I am truly honored to lead this charge and so thankful for the support each of you provide in this mission!

The 2025-2026 school year began with many evidences of God's ongoing guidance and many expectations for additional blessings to come! We currently have an increased enrollment of 109 students with more coming second semester.

For 104 years God's presence has been felt on our campus by students, staff, alumni and others passing through. Even at alumni weekend we heard several remark how USA's campus is holy ground. Our faculty and staff strive daily to reflect Jesus and encourage the students to choose Him. We look forward to experiencing God's power at work during our upcoming fall Week of Prayer, knowing that God will continue preparing hearts to accept Jesus and His gift of salvation!

We are so grateful for your faithful support to USA whether by volunteering at Renovation Weeks or throughout the year, sending care packages to our students, praying for our kids, or your financial gifts. Last year you answered the call to help us replace the heating system in the girl's dorm. The funding we received enabled us to replace the antiquated system with three high efficiency boilers. It will use half to one-quarter of the natural gas as the old setup, extending the life of our gas wells. GOD IS GOOD!



Last spring we purchased a 50-passenger school bus and recently added a Ford transit passenger van to our fleet. Thank you for making this possible! Updating our transportation vehicles remains a necessity due to our school's ongoing growth. What a blessing to have such a need!

As always, our greatest challenge is financial support to help students attend USA. With trust in God's great faithfulness, we invite you to help us reach our goal of \$400,000 for student scholarships. Praise God He's already provided over a third of this amount through gifts and pledges, but we need your help to raise the rest so every student can experience the life changing opportunity our school provides.

We invite you to give today to the ministry taking place here at USA! Every gift helps to change the lives of our students in preparation for the soon coming of Christ.

May the grace of God fill you with blessings as we work together to fulfill His mission here!

Blessings,  
Timothy Raymond  
Principal



## 2025-2026 USA Staff



### SCAN TO GIVE

Or see other payment options on the enclosed pledge card.



Thank you for supporting the Students at Union Springs Academy!

Back Row, Left to Right: Esther Baker, Donna Gilmore, Loren Nelson, Conner Coe, Timothy Raymond, Nick Metcalf, Larry Hubbard, Onyina Ben Kutin Boateng, Rafael Dias, Darrin Caster, Daniel Fults, Abel Sogaw Front Row, Left to Right: Armondo Tagalog, Deborah Barrera, Michelle Gomez, Susan Caster Silver, Sarah Laubach, Sue Ballweber Reed, Melanie Raymond, Jodee Fairbanks, Janica Caster, Julia Raapack Melo, Dennia Gomez, Dana Villarroel Not Pictured: Tammy Hubbard, Rachel Laird, Shandel Lawrence, Herb Mason, Jonathan Ogburn, and Elementary Teachers Melissa Metcalf and Mary Htoo

Union Springs Academy

# Student Testimonies

The story of Moses reminds me of my own story in so many ways. Moses was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter and grew up as an Egyptian prince, but that wasn't the whole story. His true identity was Hebrew and God had chosen him to deliver His people. Sometimes the beginning of your story may look confusing or painful, but God sees the full picture.



Alexis Wickey, 11<sup>th</sup> Grade

Like Moses, I was adopted when I was about four years old. Finding my forever home wasn't easy. I was in five different families before I was officially adopted into a loving, Christian family. Accepting what happened to me and understanding who I am has not been easy. I have had many questions like, Why am I here? Why did God let this happen to me? Is God real? But I've learned everything happened for a reason. Things I thought were bad actually helped me grow in trusting God's plan, and finding my identity in Christ Jesus.

"Finding my forever home wasn't easy.... I am so thankful God led me to USA..."

Even though my parents did an amazing job raising me, I was still very troubled. My biggest struggle was that I was angry at God and wanted nothing to do with Him. God had His eye on me through it all and I finally saw Him when I was about 12 years old. My dad, sister and I went on a mission trip to El Salvador where I met an older woman whose life and words changed my life forever. I expected her to be depressed and hopeless because not only had she lost the use of her lower body, she also lost her entire family and home to a flood!

Her new home was a tiny shack with only a hole for a bathroom, a blanket on the floor for a bed, and a small counter where she could wash her clothes. But what shocked me most was how kind and happy she still was. She greeted us with a smile and introduced herself warmly. As she shared her story, she said something I will never forget: "God doesn't always take the pain away. Sometimes He walks you through it so you know He's real." Those words stuck with me. When I got back home I realized I'm here for a reason. God has a plan for me! Because of her impact, I chose to be baptized here at the Union Springs SDA Church at the age of 13 and I've never been the same since. I learned that your identity is not based on how your life started, but on who you are in Christ in the end.

I came to Union Springs Academy for 10th grade, following in my parents footsteps. USA has had a huge impact on my spiritual journey. Through ups and downs, I've come out stronger because of the support of staff and students. I'm still learning and growing but I'm trusting in God's plan for my life. Everyone has different obstacles to overcome and lessons to learn, but with God anything is possible! At USA I am able to share my gifts for God by playing the piano for Les Chanteurs and I helped to recruit several students who are now at the Academy. When I see discouraged students, it is my heart's desire to offer encouragement by praying with them and sharing Bible promises for them to remember.

Looking back, I am so thankful God led me to Union Springs Academy where I continue to grow my faith and witness for Him. Thank you so much for the prayers and support you give our students so they can continue to grow in Him too!

*"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*  
Jeremiah 29:11



Zubad Gier, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade



I was born in South Sudan, a small country in East Africa. My family fled South Sudan to Ethiopia because war broke out. I spent most of my life in Ethiopia a young refugee. Things were not the same as before because I had to adapt to a new culture. Life was harder, not only for me but especially for my mom who lost her husband in the war. Eventually I had to accept the new culture and it just became home.

Schooling was tough because, as a Christian going to public school with all kinds of religions, they did not follow the same systems as I did. For example, I went to church on Saturday, but the school wanted me in school on Saturday for test reviews.

Three years ago, I was fortunate to come to the United States with my mom and siblings to begin a new life of opportunities and mostly to live in a safer place for my family. We quickly found the Westvale Adventist Church in Syracuse and were welcomed into the church family. One Sabbath, my brother and I found out about Union Springs Academy from alumna, Jann Cady, and we both told her how much we wanted to attend. I had no financial means to go but God worked through Ms. Cady to gather several church members to sponsor me, making it possible. I was so excited to be able to go to an actual Adventist high school!

"USA has truly changed my life! ... I look forward to giving back."

Here at USA, I have learned many things and met so many people who care about me. USA has truly changed my life! It taught me how to be a better student with a better attitude. USA and the staff helped me become a better person and a stronger believer in God. I am very thankful to be at USA today and I won't take it for granted. I am greatly thankful for all those who saw the potential in me and sponsored me. Words can't express how truly grateful I am. I look forward to giving back to students like me someday to help them attend this wonderful school.

*"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

1 Thessalonians 5:18