

Masindi's new academy trades despair for dreams

GEOFFREY SERUGO

Over the weekend, the Aliguma Foundation officially opened the Sunny Magezi Academy at its 15-acre Aliguma Foundation Sports and Empowerment Centre (AFSEC) in Kinuuma village, Masindi district.

The event, graced by the area's top leaders, religious heads, US Exchange alumni, community members and the youthful residents of Masindi, marked a powerful new chapter in the Foundation's mission to 'transform lives through sports, education and enterprise.'

The academy, named in honour of the foundation's founder and CEO Ritah Aliguma's late parents — Steven Magezi Nyakana and Sunny Nsungwa — stands as a tribute to their legacy of compassion, resilience, and belief in education.

"This is a school the country can learn from," said Ritah Aliguma, emphasizing that sports, skills and education will be equally prioritised. "We are introducing an integrated learning approach — hands-on, skill-based and talent-driven — to make education relevant, affordable, and transformative."

The guest of honour, Ronald Aled Akugizibwe, MP for Buruli county, planted a tree with other officials to promote nature conservation and duly hailed the initiative.

"This school is a beacon of hope. Ritah has done what many could only dream of. Education is the greatest gift one can give, and this is proof that development can start right here in rural Uganda."

The district education officer, Monica Kiiza, pledged swift government support:

"This school will be registered and

certified immediately. It has every requirement of a model school, and as Masindi district, we stand ready to support this dream."

The pupils of God's Care Community School in Acholi Quarters, which is Sunny Magezi Academy's sister school, showcased their excitement through a vibrant series of activities that painted the day with colour and joy.

The day was truly alive. Dressed in their new uniforms, the children staged short skits, recited poems, and sang songs celebrating education, discipline, and the legacy of Sunny and Magezi.

They also took part in games of camaraderie — showing oneness, participated in cultural dances, and storytelling sessions about the newly-elected facility, each performance reflecting the school's early commitment to nurturing both creativity and confidence.

The crowd — a blend of parents, community leaders and dignitaries — cheered every act with emotion, proof that the academy had already begun inspiring the young minds it was built to serve.



Academy founder Ritah Aliguma (R) takes guests on a tour of the facility

Sunny Magezi Academy will offer both national and international curricula, with a focus on talent development and skills acquisition. The first 50 parents to register their children received free uniforms as part of an inclusive community drive.

Representing the U.S. Exchange Alumni Network, Immaculate Owomugisha Blessing, the network's President, lauded Aliguma Foundation's impact:

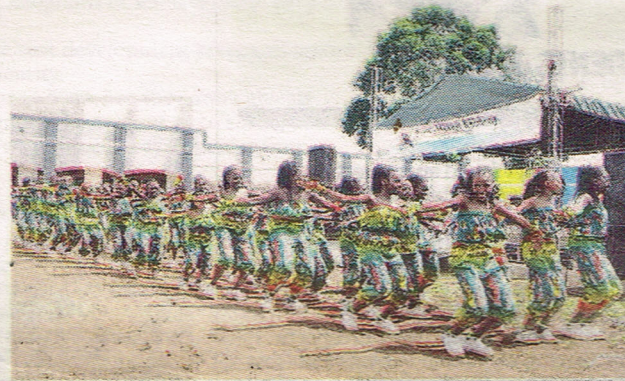
"What we see here in Kinuuma is breathtaking. Partnerships like these show that global ideas can spark local transformation. Our dream is to nurture young Africans who will rise as future leaders and champions."

The day concluded in celebration

as Kinuuma FC defeated the neighbouring Kabutukuru FC 3-1 in a friendly match at the newly laid AFSEC football pitch.

Farouk Muhinda, Tony Katusabe, and Sula Asimwe scored for Kinuuma, while Vincent Achala netted Kabutukuru's consolation — in a match that was organized Councillor Ismail Mukoiko — good friend and volunteer with the Aliguma Foundation.

The academy's launch follows the Foundation's third consecutive UEFA Foundation for Children grant, part of a €5 million global package supporting 72 projects in 80 countries for 2025 — reaffirming Aliguma Foundation's place among Africa's most impactful community-led initiatives.



Learners entertain guests