



# The Atkins Family

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Serving in Guinea-Bissau,  
West Africa

January 2020

Amazing progress in the campaign to purchase the new base puts us within reach of being able to move!

## Moving Forward *by Jason*

We are excited to announce several updates to the campaign to purchase the new base which will house both our family and the new workshop! The owner of the land, a French man named Ian, arrived from France last week and we were able to sit down with him to lay the groundwork for an agreement.

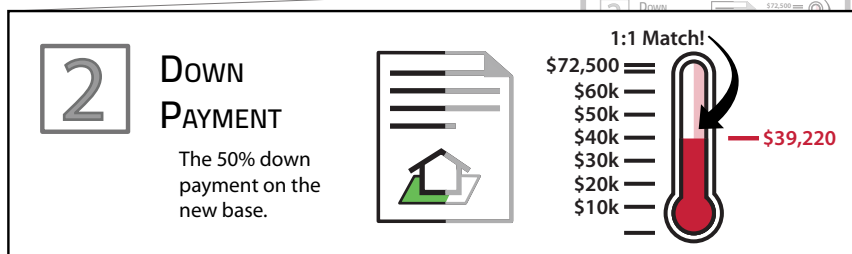
He is still interested in selling, and gave us a tour of some of the parts of it that we hadn't seen before, including his house, where our family will live. Though it needs some paint after the rainy season, the place looks to be in good shape. There are a lot of pretty trees and plants, including some papaya, mango, cashew, and pineapple! With 10 guest bungalows, there will be plenty of space for anyone who'd like to come visit!



until July, when he usually goes back to France each year. Fortunately, he would rather turn the place over and go back to France as soon as we're able to purchase it. He is caring for aging parents in France, and would like his young son to stay in one place rather than moving back and forth each year. This news opens up a big opportunity in the timing. First, because the WAVS mission house where we currently live is changing ownership in the end of February, and since we're moving anyway, it would be much simpler for us to leave before that complicated changeover process happens. Second, since we feel like we'll need to break our usual pattern by coming back to the US for a shorter furlough again in 2020, it would be great to move before we leave this summer, to avoid paying rent on an unoccupied house while we're away, and to be able to come back to a house we've already settled into rather than having a big move ahead of us.

The convergence of these facts seems like a window of opportunity. All that's holding us back from being able to make the down payment and move in February is the remaining funding. Would you please pray with us for the rest of the funding to arrive? Donations are still being doubled by the matching gift!

## New Base Fundraising Progress



This dovetails with another bit of good news. Thanks to some incredible generosity, the current phase of the fundraising, which is the 50% down payment, has made incredible progress! After donations are doubled by the matching grant, we are at \$39,220 of the \$72,500! This means that \$16,640 of donations (once they're doubled) are required to finish the down payment. While we recognize the size of that remaining amount, we are amazingly encouraged by the way God has worked through the Church thus far, and confident He will continue working things out in His timing.

We had wondered if Ian would likely prefer to stay



*On an unrelated note, we'd like to introduce our ferocious new guard dog, Rogue Fluffybutt Atkins. 🐾 (Name chosen by committee vote.) She's a German Shepherd / Black Lab mix.*

## Our Future Home *by Emily*

Though eventually it will be a great fit, getting ready to move is never easy—and, moving from our current house to the house on the new property, we'll be giving up an office, trading the kitchen we have set up just the way we like for a tiny kitchenette, and swapping a full bathroom for a tiny one with no running water (yet), which is a little daunting. There is a storage room connected to the house that we will annex to build a full bathroom and full kitchen. In the meantime, we'll get a shower into the tiny bathroom and I will cook in the hotel restaurant's kitchen (which is on the other side of the storage room).

The property itself has a beautiful, simple garden, ten cute bungalows, an open-air restaurant, and lots of fruit trees. It's a peaceful place and in addition to being great for hosting (missionaries and church workers from around the country, and groups from the U.S.), the stability of the shop being in a permanent place will be a great help in our ministry's continued ability to support and train local ironworkers and reach out to help projects like the drinking water filter factory.

## Back In The Shop *by Jason*

While we thoroughly enjoyed our time in the States seeing many of you and preparing the shipping container to send over, it has been very satisfying to be back in the shop with the work I missed! This month has been full of fixing things that had been broken while we were away. The hydraulic cylinder that's used by the drinking water filter factory to press lumps of clay into the shapes of filters had broken while we were away. Fortunately, in a counter-cultural reaction against fatalism, the guys let me know it had broken while we were still in the U.S., rather than waiting until we got back! So, we were able to bring a rebuild kit back with us and rebuild it right away. This is the second time that cylinder has been rebuilt, and seems to be suffering from grit and water leaking into the cylinder from the clay slug as it's being pressed. So, the students and I milled a little height off of the platform where the cylinder sits to make room for a new stainless cap to go over the rod. The cap has a rubber sleeve to keep any water or grit from touching the cylinder. Hopefully this will be its last rebuild! (The rubber is a piece of an old tire inner tube, the same place my favorite multi-purpose rubber straps come from!)



Another repair has been on my to-do list since long before we left last May, but my embarrassment over how long it took to get done also increases my relief at finally having accomplished it! The compressed earth block

machine that was sent over a decade ago has done some great work but developed a severe hydraulic leak a few years ago. It took a year for the parts to get over here since they had to come in someone else's shipping container, which ended up being held up by paperwork for months in The Gambia. Then, we were so busy last year, I just couldn't seem to find the time to set aside the week or two to work on it. Fortunately, coming back with fewer accumulated things waiting for me, I was able to dig into it this month. I'm happy to report after a major hydraulic rebuild, that the machine is working great again! Our hope is to use it to make the blocks for our new shop building, and once it's done with that, to get it back to helping build schools, churches, and other important development projects in Guinea-Bissau. And, now that we have a pickup rather than the Explorer, towing it around with the rototiller, all of the tools, and the buckets that go along with it will be even easier!



*It was a bear to get this machine torn down! I don't like it when you take something apart to fix and can't pinpoint for sure what is causing the problem. It's no fun reassembling something wondering if it's going to work right or not. Fortunately, in this case, the destroyed seal was obvious!*



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with "Atkins" in the memo.