

DEAF ACTION SCHOOL NEWSLETTER - DECEMBER 2017



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THANK YOU SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

There are about 350 deaf students currently attending our schools for the deaf in the Philippines, Myanmar, Kenya and Uganda. The parents, teachers and students, are grateful for your financial support and prayers for our schools. Our schools could not continue to offer education to disadvantaged deaf children without your generous support.

I would like to explain why our deaf students are not better letter writers; deaf children need to learn sign names of all objects before they can learn to write and spell words, and use words in sentences. Children with hearing learn words from birth. This is one of the extra difficulties for the deaf child, and means that it takes them much longer to learn to write letters; but they love making Christmas cards for their sponsors!



**CONGRATULATIONS to DEAF MINISTRIES INSTITUTE!
SILVER ANNIVERSARY at Davao in the Philippines**

The 25th Anniversary was celebrated in October with guest speakers, visitors and many special activities for the students. This school is a special place and provides Kindergarten to College education including a bachelor degree for deaf students.



Balloons were released at the front of the school, and the students made many cellophane flags and decorated the indoor basketball court for a special Anniversary Dinner. It was a wonderful time that the students will remember as a highlight of their years at school.

These students at D.M.I. Davao range in age from 6 to 29 years old. Some have never been to a school for the deaf before, and two are returning students who have missed 1 or more years of school due to family hardship.

There are many small isolated towns on Mindanao Island and sometimes families cannot even afford to bring their children back to school. These students have all settled in well and are very happy to have deaf friends at school.



BACOLOD and BORONGAN DORMITORY in the Philippines

These two dormitories give 30 deaf students aged 5 to 25 the opportunity for a good education. They attend government hearing schools that cater for deaf students; and this integration is proving to be successful. The dormitories are very happy places and the children love having deaf friends. Most students travel home at the weekend; but those from remote villages do not travel home so frequently. Some parents visit the dormitory and learn signing; and the dormitory house parents send pages of signs home to encourage parents to learn signing.

The government encourages all organisations to celebrate Disability Week every year in July, and two of our deaf students were chosen to represent their school in the Provincial Athletics Meeting. United Nations Day was also celebrated in October.

A neighbour of the dormitory has given the school the use of his vacant block of land, and the students are now making a vegetable garden.



They then help in the kitchen to prepare food they have grown and learn many life skills to allow them to care for themselves when older.

Fishermen of Christ Learning Center at Ligao in the Philippines

The new school year started in June with 78 students including 15 studying Year 12 in Senior High School. This is the first time Year 12 has been offered since the government made it compulsory for secondary schools to offer Senior High School, as well as Junior High School.



Parent and teacher discussions, Nutrition Week activities and World Teachers Day are some of the school activities in the first few months of this school year. Two extra High School teachers have joined the staff and a new full time English teacher is learning sign language to replace the English teacher who left.

Visitors from Korea and Australia provided help for the school including a special recreation day for all students, teachers and staff at Oh Lala Resort. Everyone is very grateful for special celebrations that the school cannot afford. A new Organic Vegetable Garden has been started with the donation of seed by the Department of Agriculture. The farm continues to provide some finance for the school through the sale of pigs, crops, dressed poultry, fruit, vegetables and milling of rice for other farmers in the area.



The school was chosen by the Alpha Phi Omega organisation for a Christmas treat with a visit and special lunch as a surprise for the children.



Jollibee came and gave food and treats to every child and the children were thrilled to receive such unexpected gifts.

Muir School for the Deaf at Kalay in Myanmar

There are 36 students now enrolled at Muir School; 21 boys and 15 girls. Some new young children started school in June. The school year started well for all students and the government has now relaxed some rules so the children are happier and the Muir School is now allowed to extend classes to Grade 11.

There were 5 new boys and 1 new girl. Learning is fun for the new children with lots of games and love from 'sisters and brothers' at school.

It is interesting to note that 3 of these new children have deaf relatives so their deafness is probably hereditary. The students who already know some sign language advance quickly so two of them have started in grade 2. It is also an indication of the degree of hereditary deafness among the villagers in this area. The other causes are diseases like malaria, hepatitis, meningitis and tropical fevers. There are very few doctors within travelling distance of the small farming villages in the Chin area and traveling difficulties to obtain medical help often means children are late receiving treatment and become deaf.



Mang Hlei Sang completed High School in 2016 and was an excellent student. Thank you to his sponsors who are now sponsoring a different child. Now he is working for the disability program of a non-government organisation in Hakha in the Chin area. He is also tutoring Tin Lun Din who has left school because she is needed to look after her mother who has become paralysed. Thankfully she is continuing her study and might be able to return to school at a later date.



The school has started a Pig Project and the children feed kitchen scraps to the 6 school piglets. They are growing well and will soon be ready for market. The students water and weed the garden and prepare and eat the fresh vegetables, which promotes good eating habits and skills for adult life.

STUDENTS at SCHOOLS for the DEAF in UGANDA



Education is changing the lives of our deaf children in Uganda. Thank you to the sponsors and supporters of deaf students there.

Peter K. (left) completed Senior 4 at **Wakiso Secondary School** and is now learning Catering at the Mbale Secondary School, Vocational Training Centre, 225 km north east of Kampala. **Arajuba O.** completed Senior 4 at Mbale and is now learning Carpentry and Joinery there. The 2 boys have each other for company.

Jordan, Alan, Kenneth, and Solome are progressing well at **Ndese Primary School**, at Mukona, an outer suburb of Kampala.

St Mary's School for the deaf in Mityana is about 60 km west of the capital Kampala. The 4 disadvantaged deaf children there have lost one or both parents. On the International Day of the Child the students gave a "Presentation of Thanks" to an audience of parents at the school.



Sam M. was attending St. Mary's school but has moved to Julina School in a different part of Mityana. He loves playing football.



Rachel Suzan, Winnie and Simon Peter K. are all working hard and progressing well in their study at **Wakiso Secondary School**. Thank you to the sponsors and supporters who regularly support this excellent school for the deaf and all our other students in Uganda.

Immanuel Christian School for the Deaf at Ringa in Kenya

We are very pleased to announce that the Early Childhood College has now commenced on the same campus as the school, and 6 deaf students have commenced their teacher training. This is an integrated course so deaf and hearing trainee teachers learn together, and the hearing students learn signing. The student teachers will be able to join the classes at I.C.S.D. for teaching practice with the qualified teachers.

Class 8 recently sat the government examinations and we hope many of them will go on to secondary education at Kuja High School for the Deaf as in previous years.



Our students are very grateful to attend school. They know that education is their opportunity to lead successful lives. They also learn life skills, and older boys are required to wash their own clothes. They usually turn this activity into fun.



Sadly a lady who worked as a cook passed away suddenly a month ago. Tropical diseases like Malaria are an ongoing problem for our staff in Kenya.

Work continues on the new Classroom building as the end of the year comes closer. Painting, electrical works, tiling and paving are being completed.

PLEASE NOTE: We are careful to ensure your donations go to the student, school or project you have named



Thankfully 2017 has been a disaster free year, with just some storms that are regarded as normal in the tropical countries of Myanmar and the Philippines.



ON BEHALF OF ALL OUR OVERSEAS AND LOCAL STAFF, I WOULD LIKE TO WISH YOU A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A SUCCESSFUL NEW YEAR.

Jenny Reid: Voluntary Sponsorship Coordinator

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