



February 2021 | USA EDITION

## THANK YOU for SUPPORTING DEAF FAMILIES through the 2020 COVID PANDEMIC

*We are very grateful to our Worldwide Sponsors and Supporters who have continued to donate even though many experienced some hardship themselves during 2020. All our schools were closed in early April 2020, and the African and Asian governments also closed outdoor markets and roadside selling. Food prices then soared and many deaf people had no food. To help our deaf families, the school leaders bought food in bulk, and our teachers were kept busy delivering food parcels to hungry deaf families. We thank you for continuing your sponsorship during the pandemic, and are pleased to say that all our teachers have received their wages and been employed in some way at their schools.*

*The schools continued teaching in a variety of ways. Students worked online if possible, but very few of our students have computers or internet access at home, so teachers printed worksheets for students to complete at home, then corrected them at school. What a year that was!*

*January and February are usually low months financially, so we are in need of donations towards general funds that can be used in any school. Thank you.*

### Wonderful News for I.C.S.D. - Best Primary Deaf School in Kenya!

Once again, this school achieved the best results of all special schools for the deaf in the Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education national exam! Congratulations to the 9 students and their teachers. Kuja High School for the Deaf offered 7 students enrolment places and 1 student was accepted at Sikri Vocational College.

Schools in Kenya started confidently last year but they were closed by the government in early April as Covid spread around the world. This school is due to open again in January 2021, but the

government has ordered all schools to set up 2 Covid Isolation Rooms for students in case they get sick while at school and are waiting for diagnosis and transport to hospital. But this school does not have any spare rooms! However 2 past donors quickly offered generous donations when told about the problem! This school also needs rooms for vocational training classes, so these rooms could also be used for vocational training after Covid is brought under control.



If you would like to receive this newsletter by email instead of post, please email

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with the email address you would like us to use.

This option would greatly decrease our postage costs

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## Kenya news continued....

I would like to thankfully acknowledge the "Kenyan Development Fund" and friends of Ps Michael Gantt in the USA; and Barry and Gail Topple in Australia, for quickly offering finance to build these rooms. These donors have generously supported I.C.S.D. before, and we are very grateful for their support again.

## UGANDA, RWANDA, ZAMBIA and THE D.R.CONGO

In April 2020, the Ugandan government closed all schools. But they did allow primary students in their final year to return to school so they could study for the important Ugandan Primary School Certificate.



**Brian** Ssemujju, **Yuba** Ssekidde, **Sam** Mayanja and **Kenneth** Manana moved to Mulago School for the Deaf in Kampala so they could complete this final year and sit for the exam. These boys have now gone home to study over the Christmas holidays

and will return to school in February and sit their exams in a few months. Their families are very grateful to the loyal sponsors who have sponsored these boys for

many years, and also made examination entrance fees possible. Our workers in Uganda are continuing to deliver food parcels to the deaf families who have suffered greatly during the pandemic.

A special thank you goes to Brian's sponsor, Bonita, in the U.S.A. for an extra donation to buy school supplies for Brian, and bedding for him and his elderly Grandmother and her other grandchildren.

**Maliza** and **Hastings** in Zambia went home for Christmas. Both boys love their school and really appreciate the sponsorship that is giving them an education. They will return to school in February when schools in Zambia are expected to start again under Covid restrictions.



*Brian's Grandmother dancing for joy*

## BENI School for the Deaf - THE D.R.CONGO

The pandemic was not so extreme in Beni town so the school opened in October 2020 after a few months in lockdown. Students followed Covid guidelines using masks in the classroom. Thank you to everyone who donated for the hot school lunch through the Food Emergency Fund. It has increased the health of all the children, some of whom have lost parents in rebel raids in the area over the last decade.

As soon as school opens in 2021, they will start their 'School Garden' to grow fresh food that will be used in the cooked school lunches. Gardening is a basic work

skill in the Beni area, and we hope the school garden will eventually supply all the food for their hot lunches.



## Deaf Ministries Institute - DAVAO - PHILIPPINES



There was a big increase in Covid cases in the Davao City area last year and a 7pm to 5am curfew was put in place until the end of December. Davao is a large city and residents were not permitted to go outside their areas except for specific reasons. Almost 150 private schools in Davao closed, and only one third of the students at DMI Davao were able to continue their education at that time! This was sad news. Those students with internet access continued to study online but many of the students could not do this. People in the Philippines are hoping to return to school after Christmas and eventually have a Covid vaccination program.



## Fishermen of Christ Learning Center - LIGAO - PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines, the government set out strict guidelines that the teachers were expected to follow and report to the government about! Young deaf students who need face-to-face teaching were allowed to attend their school under strict Covid guidelines and work at single desks. Some older students worked online using computers if they had electronic access. The teachers prepared and printed 'Work Modules' for most students. Each Friday parents travelled to school and delivered the completed work for teachers to correct; and collected schoolwork for the next week. This pattern of work will continue in the Philippines until schools close in April at the end of their school year.



This was a lot of work for the teachers who were very glad to close for the Christmas break!

We would like to thank Stuart from Berwick Church of Christ and friends in Australia for collecting a generous donation to subsidise the salaries of the teachers in Ligao.

## Bacolod Dormitory - BACOLOD - PHILIPPINES



The Bacolod Dormitory is open and the students are working in the dormitory on computers and printed worksheets. Then their work is corrected by the teachers at Bacolod High School or the Special Education Center. Some students did not go home for the short Christmas break because public travel is risky. So the ping pong table donated by Jeff in the U.S.A. has been very popular! Thank you, Jeff! The children also enjoyed weekend activities with the deaf community in Bacolod, but they had to strictly follow the coronavirus guidelines and wear masks when they went out.

## Muir School for the Deaf - MYANMAR

Sadly, the Covid pandemic has increased in Myanmar especially in the capital city Yangon, but also in Kalay. No one from the nearby villages is allowed to go to Kalay and the school is closed until further notice. The 2 staple foods of rice and oil have been distributed to our deaf communities in Kalay and Yangon. We do not know when the students will be allowed to return to school; but the teachers are working on building renovations to bring the school up to the government requirements to comply with Covid rules.






Only 100 Masks Left!

Susi from our DMI Australia office has been busy making DMI face masks in her spare time outside of DMI's work hours. She would like to raise money towards operational costs for our General Fund.

She admits that sewing isn't usually her kind of thing as she would love to spend hours and hours cooking and baking! But during this time, sewing masks is her good idea to raise money.

**\$15**

\$15 each including postage. This will provide at least \$10 in profit, all for DMI. Her target is to make 200 masks, which means if she successfully sells all of them, she will raise a total of \$2000 profit for DMI! There are only 100 masks left to purchase so get in quick! The sizing can be found in the photos.









**TO ORDER:**  
Email Susi: [susiantitjai@deafmin.org](mailto:susiantitjai@deafmin.org).  
Include the size, quantity, and your shipping address.

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# The work of Deaf Action continues

## What now?

Many people are asking what happens to Deaf Action now that Neville is gone. Well, we've known for some time that this day would come and we have prepared for it as best as we can. There's simply no replacing Neville - the man was irreplaceable! But we do have a team in place to carry on his work and to carry his vision. We are keen, capable and committed to the task! Let me introduce the Australian team here. This year in each of our newsletters, we will present to you in more detail the various teams and boards that serve around the world, including Gunnar Delhi, who is the new International Director and the Head of DMI & DA. We are a devoted team who believe wholeheartedly in education of deaf people in the world. With your continued support, our work continues!

For now, let's take a brief look at the team in the International office in Australia:



**Andrew Miller**  
*National Co-ordinator*  
National Co-ordinator and director on the Australian Board. Andrew is the new 'face' of DMI Australia; and oversees our schools and churches in Asia.



**Rod Chapman**  
*Regional Minister of Pastoral Care*  
Rod chairs the Australian Board and has a pastoral role amongst the Deaf community in Australia, and amongst our schools and churches in Asia.



**Jenny Reid**  
*Sponsorship Co-ordinator*  
Jenny diligently oversees our child sponsorship program; communicating with the schools and other co-ordinators in AUS, USA, UK, Japan & Denmark



**Rebecca Muir**  
*Sponsorship and Administration Assistant*  
Rebecca has just joined the team and her role is to assist the sponsorship co-ordinator and help with admin tasks wherever needed.



**Susi Tjhai**  
*Finance Officer*  
That's the title but Susi is really our CFO in disguise and keeps all the funding going exactly where it needs to go.



**Amy Jack**  
*Communications Co-ordinator*  
Amy is responsible for making our newsletters look so great - and coming out on time! She also keeps all our social media purring.



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*Neville & Lill Muir*  
DMI & DA Founders