



May 2021

THANK YOU for all the GIFTS donated through the CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE.

Christmas Gifts are very special to our schools and projects because they give the 'extras' that are not usually covered in general support, but are also greatly appreciated.

This is where the 2020 gifts were sent:

The laptop donations were sent to the Ugandan Sponsorship Coordinator to use for his work.

Kenya school received funds for beds, mosquito nets, towels, uniforms, shoes and toiletries.



The school in Beni has many needs. They were very happy to receive donations for school stationery, books, uniforms and sports equipment. The students now have books they can write in, and soccer uniforms so they can play soccer!



The motor bike donations were sent to Alain, in Beni. He had no transport and he needs to visit deaf families in the villages near Beni.



The finance for farm animals, tools and trees was also sent to Beni for the kitchen garden and farmland to grow food.

The Small Business Grant and the sewing machines were given to the Adult Sewing Workshop in Kenya that provides employment for deaf workers.

THANK YOU!



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OUR NEW SCHOOL at BENI - D.R. CONGO



This is Alain, the Principal of Beni School for the Deaf in THE CONGO. It is through his perseverance over several years that there is now a school for the deaf in Beni!

The school started in rented buildings in a different place in 2011 with 150 students; because there was peace in D.R. CONGO at that time. In 2013 the government built 4 classrooms on the present school site in Beni. But in 2014 terrorists started killing people in the surrounding area and then in Beni. Many adults and children were killed and people tried to hide from the killings. Alain our Principal lived in the centre of town where there was security and survived the killing. In 2017 Ebola started and this killed about 2,500 people in the Beni area. Alain lost his parents and 2 deaf relations from Ebola. Today insecurity continues with the addition of COVID 19; and life is very difficult, especially for deaf people in the area.

Andrew Miller, our Australian Coordinator, interviewed Alain electronically from Australia and has written this introduction:

"Alain Kalungwana is a man who shows on his face both his compassion for those under his charge and the weight that his responsibility brings. Living in one of the most dangerous countries in the world, his daily concerns are clearly on a different level from ours."

One of 9 children, Alain was not born Deaf. He lost his

hearing at the age of 4 so today he can speak a little but can hear nothing. Despite this, Alain has done remarkably well educationally. He completed his primary schooling at a local government hearing school before attending a secondary school for the Deaf. His outstanding results there saw him enter university from where he graduated with a degree in pedagogy.

A man of this talent typically wears many hats. Alain is not only the Director of the school and leader of the Deaf church, but is a vital member of the Deaf Action Board in DR Congo and is its treasurer, too. (The school and church in Beni came under DA and DMI auspices in 2014.) Serving under D.R. Congo DMI Director Papy Muteberwa, Alain is a key player in DA's operations.

In D.R.Congo, life is hard and they need help. They need learning resources, security and food. But Alain is grateful for the support that he and the school receive from DA. This means everything to him. 'The school is beautiful, and the kitchen farm has begun to produce crops' he says. "We have two very fine classrooms and an office and these allow us to teach, feed and nurture our students. Thank you so very much."

Andrew's full interview is available on the Deaf Ministries International webpage at www.deafmin.org **Please go to the BLOG section to read more of his interviews** of workers and students in our schools. Beni school now has over 60 students, but sadly about 15 children (that's one quarter!) have lost one or both parents through the hardships of war and illness! Some of the teenagers at this school are still in junior grades because there was no school for the deaf previously. Many students walk one and a half miles to and from school each day. Now the school is well established, we badly need sponsors for these students.



THANK YOU to everyone who has contributed to the Hot School Lunch Program at Beni. We have committed to support this project until December 2021 and are very grateful for your donations to continue the hot school lunches. The School Kitchen Garden has started to grow vegetables, including cassava for carbohydrates, leeks, tomatoes, cabbage and spinach, for their lunches.

COVID-19 has had an impact on all of us around the world. Some countries have been impacted more than others, but every country has felt the effects. Many people that DMI support in developing countries are still struggling harder than most. Lock-down for them means no work, no income, no food. We are keeping this appeal open because we are still receiving cries for help from people who need access to staples to feed their families.

To donate:

www.deafmin.org/donate (Click on Food Emergency button)
or
Bank Transfer (details on back cover) use "food emergency" as ref.
or
Fill out enclosed form and send to Deaf Action (details on back cover)

Immanuel School for the Deaf - KENYA

At the end of 2020 the Kenyan Government issued 'Covid Regulations' that were needed before schools could open in 2021. These included the availability of 2 Covid Isolation Rooms for sick children to stay in at school until they were taken for testing and medical treatment. Other pandemic requirements including temperature testing, hand sanitation, running water for hand washing etc were included. Our school did not have any spare rooms that fitted this need, and it appeared the school would not be able to open. However this was made possible with generous donations from Barry and Gail Topple in Australia, and Ps. Michael Gantt and supporters of the 'Kenya Development Fund' in the USA. Everyone at the school; staff, students and parents; were overjoyed when US\$ 6,000 was quickly raised by these supporters

and transferred to the school within a few days. The building of the 2 rooms started and the school opened as planned. Kenyans can move quickly when needed!

So the school opened fully in January 2021 with 90 students. During 2020, the 21 Grade 8 students were given individual assistance and continued their study with work supplied by the school. They will sit for their Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education exam this month. These students are high achievers and are expected to pass the K.C.P.E. and be offered enrolment at Kuja High School for the Deaf. Our Kenyan school gained the highest results out of all schools for the deaf in Kenya again in 2019; and we hope all the students will pass again this year, even after a difficult 2020.

The Exam Class with the Principal and Deputy Principal, and a government teacher who will oversee the exam



ISO room in progress



ISO room complete



Students in UGANDA



In UGANDA the Grade 8 students will also sit for their annual Ugandan Primary Certificate government exam this month. They also worked at home and returned to Mulago School during the latter half of 2020. They are **Yuba, Samuel, Brian** and **Kenneth. Solome** is continuing her study at Mulago School for the Deaf but is not ready to sit for the school leaving exam yet.

Sylvia continues her Internship at the Endiro Coffee Lounge and has even been acting as Assistant Manager

there! We hope she will be given actual employment when her Internship finishes, and her dream is to start her own coffee shop. **Peter** also continues his Catering Internship work experience and has been commended for his commitment and hard work. They are both expected to complete this final step and graduate later this year. **Winnie** is looking for a Hair Dressing Internship placement close to home so she can commence her practical year of work and finally receive her Hair-dressing Diploma.

Simon has also returned to his course in shoe repair at Ruti Vocational School, so all students in Uganda are back to their normal school routine! It is very satisfying to see our deaf students persevere and achieve



education and training that we hope will allow them to support themselves. Jordan and Allan have recommenced their carpentry training at the Ugandan National Association of the Deaf Vocational College and Rachel has commenced training in tailoring at the same vocational college.

Schools Update - PHILIPPINES

In the PHILIPPINES, schools were closed in March last year and the government education department designed a Module Learning System. This included 'Computer Modules' for on-line learning for students who had a computer and Internet access at home; but not many of our deaf students were able to learn this way! 'Work Modules' were also available for schools to print and give to students to complete at home.

Both of these options were difficult for many deaf families, and some children have missed school due to the pandemic. Teachers returned to schools on June 15th, 2020, and started to prepare and print the Work Modules wearing face masks and observing distancing rules. The school year usually finishes in late March with holidays until June; but the government has extended the 2020/2021 school year to allow time for students to complete their work for the year. Parents are now also allowed to bring their children to school for testing and assessment.

Deaf Ministries Institute for the Deaf - Davao, Mindanao Island

Davao is a large, busy city on Mindanao Island, (the southernmost island of the Philippines). Country roads are poor and transport to villages around the island is limited, so parents have not been able to come to the school frequently to collect Work Modules. Also very few students live in areas with Internet communication! Sadly, this has greatly limited the educational opportunities for students at D.M.I. Davao during

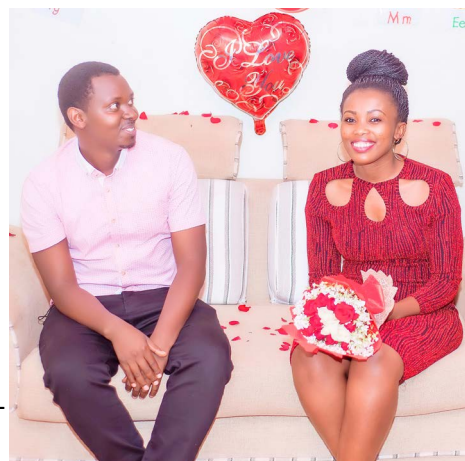


Gabriel

2020. Some parents have collected Work Modules and teachers are correcting the finished work. Some students who need ongoing care are boarding at the school and working there on a regular basis. Gabriel, the deaf and blind young man with additional physical problems continues to live at the

A reason to celebrate - RWANDA

There is some wonderful news from RWANDA. Alphonsine is 30 years old now and nearing the end of her university study. She became engaged last year and recently married her sweetheart Arsene who is also deaf! He has been the Treasurer of Deaf Action Rwanda and on the board since 2014. Alphonsine is now in her 3rd year of her Business Management Degree, but still needs to complete one Year 2 subject and an internship next year. When Alphonsine finishes her study, it is thought that she will run the office in Rwanda, where she already works in a voluntary capacity.



school and is given full time attention by his carer, Glenn. Gabriel uses a wheel chair if needed and Glenn gives him daily physical exercises to try to strengthen his legs. Gabriel still loves shape matching games and other familiar activities. Thank you to his sponsors.

Fishermen of Christ Learning Center - LIGAO

In July 2020, 74 students were enrolled for the school year intending to work at home. This school is in an area where roads and the transport system is more developed, and parents were able to travel to school to collect new Work Modules each Friday and leave the completed ones for correction. This continued throughout 2020. Parents are now permitted to bring their children to school for individual assessment and testing so they can be credited with completing specific Work Modules during 2020.



RIGHT: COVID distance seating



Marcelino Quite - Ligao (written by Andrew Miller)

Marcelino Quite Jr carries a calm confidence and a gentle contentment. Yet this demeanour belies an unimaginably tragic background.

When Marcelino was born and his mother realised he was deaf, she rejected him and sent him away to live



with his grandmother. From that day, Marcelino lived under the lie that his mother had died and that he had no other family at all.

There were two saving graces in his life. The first was that his grandmother loved him. The second was that Marcelino found the DA Fishermen of Christ Learning Centre

in Ligao. There, he learned to sign, he made friends, and he experienced true love for himself. Yet tragedy would strike him again.

When he was in grade 4, his grandmother died and with no-one to sponsor him, Marcelino dropped out of school. He went without any education for years and became disconnected from the Deaf community.

At such a tender, impressionable age, one can only imagine the feelings of isolation and sadness that he experienced at that time.

The loss has clearly affected his educational progress. He was able to return to the school in grade four at the age of 17. He was 21 in grade six. Today he is in grade eleven and is 29 years old.

Then, less than a year ago, something remarkable happened. Marcelino heard from an aunt the truth about his family - that he really had a mother and father and brothers and sisters. It's an orphan's dream come true. But how do you cope with such news? What do you do with it?

Marcelino decided to go looking for his birth mother. When he arrived, unannounced, at the family home, he first saw his father napping in a hammock.

Then his mother came out, then his brothers and sisters and nieces and nephews. He was so surprised to see what a large family he had! They all hugged and kissed him, and they cried till they had no more tears to shed.

Muir School for the Deaf in Kalay - MYANMAR

Sadly, the unrest and rioting in Myanmar is making everyday life extremely difficult for our deaf communities, especially in Yangon where the rioting is more extreme. Food has been distributed to our deaf families and they are keeping away from crowded areas. Muir School at Kalay is in a northern country area, and was open earlier this year in line with the COVID restrictions, but many parents were too afraid to allow their children to go to school. It is now school holiday time, so we hope the unrest will decrease before the school is due to open again in mid-year. The high brick and concrete fence that was built around the school

It was a beautiful but bittersweet reunion as his siblings had had no more idea that he was alive than he had of them. They begged him to stay with them.

What to do?

Marcelino decided to stay at the school. While he was so happy to be reunited with his birth family and still visits them, Marcelino considers the school community to be his true family. With his birth family, even though he was glad to find them, he feels lonely because no-one can communicate with him. Here at the school, he can communicate with everyone, and shares a way of life, so he feels that this is more of a family.

Amazingly, Marcelino feels no bitterness toward his mother and no resentment toward his father.

After all he's been through, this is extraordinary; the result of the love and teaching he has received at the school.

Child sponsorship changes lives, and DMI brings real hope to those who had never known it.

BACOLOD Dormitory on Negros Island



The students who stay at the Bacolod Dormitory have been very restricted by covid travel regulations between areas. Some students have been living at the dormitory for lengthy periods and continuing their study. Others have not been allowed to travel to and from the dormitory due to lockdown. Damage

to the external roof of the dormitory has now been repaired and many thanks to those who contributed to the repair of this unexpected problem. The inside ceiling still needs painting, but further damage to the building construction has been halted.

last year has helped in securing the school and protecting our teachers and their families who live at the school.

THANK YOU dear sponsors for continuing to pay your sponsorship, because some of those funds have also been use to provide food for our deaf families. All our schools are trying to provide education for their deaf students, but this varies greatly depending on the situation in each country and local conditions. Our teachers have worked very hard and look forward to welcoming ALL their students back to school in the near future.



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If you would like to receive this in addition to the Deaf Action newsletter, please contact us at info@deafmin.org



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In the past when we regularly travelled to our schools we took birthday cards from sponsors to their students. However the COVID pandemic has stopped international travel. I also mailed cards from Australia in the past, but many students are not actually at their schools. So please do not mail Birthday Cards to us for forwarding to students until travel is possible again.

THANK YOU for continuing to support our schools for the deaf in these difficult times.

Warm regards,
Jenny Reid



Neville & Lill Muir
DMI & DA Founders