



NEWS FROM HOINA HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

PO Box 87, St. Charles, Missouri 63302 • www.hoina.org • February 2011

Nittany Lions in India



PSU Schreyer Honors College students in India. Back Row, from left to right: Christen Buckley, Andy Goga, Maggie Cox
Middle Row: Adam Jacob, Dana Ray, Kamachi (HOINA staff, holding the Penn State Nittany Lion), Sarah Bednarcik, Mark Blashford
Front Row: Melissa Rock, Meryn Oswald

*By Mark Blashford,
PSU Schreyer Honors College*

While studying abroad at HOINA this summer, I was privileged to dig trenches, tile walls, build a bridge, and remove termite-damaged windows by punching holes through cinder block walls. I had the unique responsibility of hand-washing my own clothes in buckets. I got to experience the incredible heat of both the southeast Indian climate and food. But above all, I had the opportunity to spend three weeks interacting with Indian orphans on a very personal level.

On the final night of our trip the boys had an impromptu dance party in the dining area of the boys home. This culminating event was so appropriate at

the time because it served as the perfect outlet for the emotions that I believe we all felt. Twirling and stomping, jumping, and flailing our arms in ways that we imagined American hip-hop artists might, we, the male Penn State students and our newly-made best friends, laughed and sweated away our anxiety about parting. We reveled in the excitement and mutual celebration that we had had for three weeks while exchanging cultural perspectives. We focused on the fun that had characterized our tutoring sessions and cricket matches. We danced like equals.

When I had the chance to chat with anyone at the orphanage, our conversations were often among the most honest and open discussions I have had. On the final day of our trip,

Mom Large Arrives in India

HOINA President Darlene Large is safely in India after 43 straight hours without sleep. She always loves getting your letters. Her email is sometimes unreliable, but she finds that good old snail mail works just fine! Write to her at:

Darlene Large
c/o HOINA Campus
Kothasunkarapalem
Kothavalasa Mandal
Vizianagaram Dt. 535 183
A.P.
India

Her email is the same: hoina@sbcglobal.net Feel free to write to her either way. She will be there through March. HOINA's Papa Bruce will join her for a month in the Jan-Feb time frame. Pray for his safe travels as well.

the boys said goodbye on their way to school. I will never forget the bleary-eyed looks that they gave us. Without words they said, "Don't forget us." Today, how could I? If there is one thing that I learned through participating in this unique program, it is the importance of friendship and perspective. I now see the world with some of the insight of an Indian orphan, a best friend on the other side of the world.

Faith & Love in Action

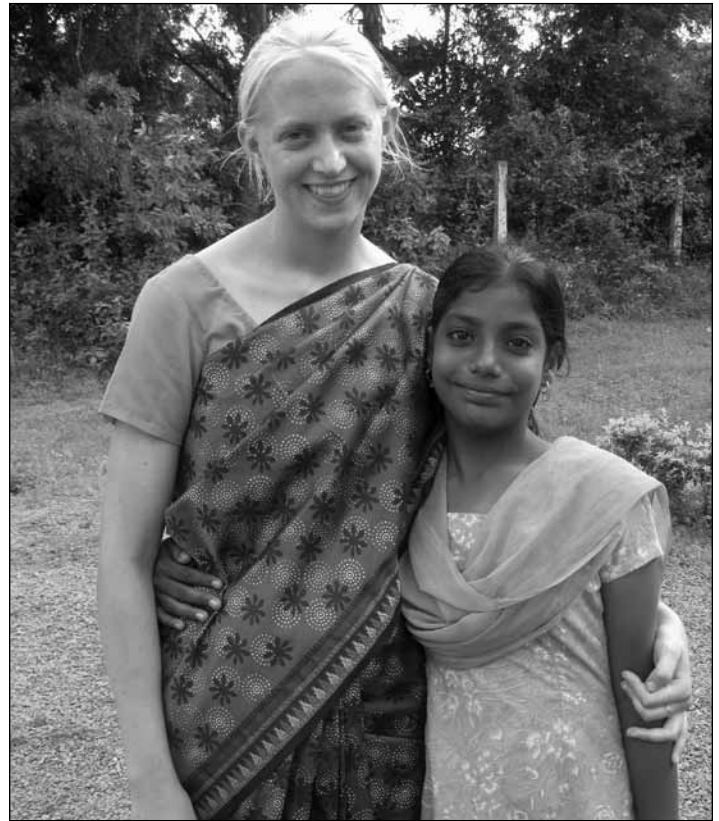
By Sarah Bednarcik, PSU Schreyer Honors College

While the rest of the Penn State group was visiting Mr. Anand's church, I was being taken by Mom to Apollo's, the hospital in Visak, for a case of pink eye, that I had awoken with that morning. While having eye problems was frustrating, as it was definitely not in my plans to get sick while in India, I was being prayed for and encouraged by both my family in the United States and by many at HOINA. Walking from breakfast at the boys' home in the early morning humidity on my way to leave for Visak, I was stopped by Joshua, who asked about my health. One of HOINA's past students, current tailor for the home, and a person with one of largest unending smiles I have ever seen, Joshua listened to my explanation of why I wasn't going to church and encouraged me with prayer that my eye would be cleared up by that evening. Joshua not only brought my spirits up, as my eye did clear by that night, but also was such an example of the joy, faith and compassion I had encountered at HOINA among the staff and students in my three weeks there.

Indumathi, a young girl who I was blessed to befriend while staying in Kothavalasa, was also praying for me and hoping for my health to improve. Every time she saw me over the next few days, she would ask about my health, genuinely concerned about my eyes getting better quickly.

Mark Blashford, another Penn State student on our trip, explained their love for us well when he spoke at Mr. Anand's church that day. He referenced Mark 3, where in verse 34, it says "and looking about at those who sat around him, he [Jesus] said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother." Joshua and Indumathi showed me, through their love and compassion, that I have brothers and sisters at HOINA who care for me as their sister; and this impacted me, with their encouragement that one Sunday, and in a way that has changed my perspective since then. I went to HOINA, expecting to serve them, and yet came away blessed by the faces that reminded me that we should be continually loving and serving, learning to listen and be doing for others.

Satya, one of the younger boys at HOINA, would always make sure to say, "Good Morning, Sister," to me and then proceed to play thumb wars with me. In his own way, he was



Sarah gives a hug to Indumathi, one of the HOINA girls.

showing me his love – he wanted someone to say "Good Morning" to and to teach how to play games like cricket. Through his continually desire to befriend me and get to know his new sister, I started to see that I love working with people on a personal basis – getting to know them as individuals and learning to understand their perspectives.

As an architectural engineering major, I have always considered the fact that I would someday work in a corporation and would be interacting with coworkers and employees and other firms as a professional. While I still see that impacting my future, interacting with the kids and staff like Satya, Joshua, and Indumathi has led me to see different possibilities. Could I not work for an organization like HOINA, as an engineer, and get the opportunity to serve and work with people like Joshua or Mr. Anand? Employment in this way would allow me the chance to understand those for whom I am designing and building on a personal level and hopefully make an impact on their lives, as the students at HOINA made an impact on my life.

Looking back at my time at HOINA, I have been able to see that I can learn to love from girls like Indumathi and guys like Satya and Joshua, who regularly acted out their faith and love. I can be a student in architectural engineering at Penn State, and yet also be a servant of others. 🙏

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Feb/2011

Remembrances

Thank you to the many donors who choose to give memorial and honorary gifts. When requesting a gift to be listed in someone's memory or honor, please include the name and address of the individual or family so we can send them an acknowledgment.

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Sara Weaver

A Sponsorship for Your Sweetie?



Chukka Ravi

We're not sure when Chukka Ravi was born. He was found begging in Kothavalasa by Ms. Subhara, one of the HOINA housemothers. He did not know where his parents and siblings live. His right hand and right leg have been affected by polio. Ms. Subhara asked Ravi to come to HOINA which he gladly did. He came to HOINA in March of last year. We have been enquiring about his parents but cannot find them.

Ravi likes tigers. His favorite color is pink. He likes playing on the swings, and would like to be a policeman when he is grown.

The children love getting pictures and letters from their sponsors. If you would like to sponsor Ravi or any of the other HOINA children, please fill out the form on this page.

HOINA is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization with international headquarters located at: HOINA PO Box 87, Saint Charles, MO 63302-0087 U.S.A. Email address: info@hoina.org

This newsletter is published to inform our readers of the work HOINA does among the handicapped and abandoned in India. Edited by Letti L. Becker
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Send address changes to:
HOINA PO Box 636, Brownstown, PA 17508-0636 U.S.A.
717.355.9494 • Toll-free: 877.99.HOINA (4.6462)
Email address: admin@hoina.org
Website: www.hoina.org

The official registration and financial information of Homes of the Indian Nation (HOINA) may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling, toll-free in PA, 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



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The Stars Are Within Reach

By Roz Vinci, HOINA Sponsor

From my repeated visits, I've now become familiar with the villages, roads and most importantly the wonderful people and children of HOINA. I get so excited when I see the welcoming primary colored fence and know that the campus is minutes away.

I hear the children yelling, "Auntie!" before we get to the end of the driveway. What a way to end a two-day journey. I brought sweets (candy) with me and was ready to hand them out. When the girls saw me take out the candy from my bag, they took their cue. Immediately, they lined up, single file, according to height! Quite impressive and very polite. So for every girl it was, "Thank you, Auntie" with my reply ... 60 times of "You're welcome," sometimes actually saying their name. I did much better at remembering their names on this year's visit, I found.

Next, the girls absolutely insisted that I dance. After

two days of travel, they still wouldn't take no for an answer. Iswarya started the "program" dancing alone. She just won an intra-state competition of 50 schools and placed second. The girls watched intensely. "Auntie, you dance now!" Iswarya showed me some steps, and we put them together to a song



that they seem to play for every dance. At first, the girls giggled as I was silly and fooled around, then I actually did the steps as taught. Iswarya happily said, "Correct!" then the girls' giggles turned to cheers and clapping. As soon as we finished our dance, some girls raised their arms and stretched their hands so high as if trying to grab a star. Each waited for her hand to be picked so she could run to the "stage" (just a spot on the floor opposite the

group). The stage they saw in their minds could have been the Lincoln Center (or whatever an Indian equivalent would be!). When any one girl was picked, her face beamed and she danced with the joy as if she had grabbed a star! 