



NEWS FROM HOINA HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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Finding Family in Unfamiliar Places

By *Rebecca Eddinger*
Guest from *Schreyer Honors College*

A home of happy, smiling, healthy and educated children is not what most people would expect to find in an orphanage, especially not an orphanage in India. However, this is exactly what you would find at HOINA. Each summer, a small group of Penn State students from the Schreyer Honors College steps out of the social bubble that is “Happy Valley,” and travels to India to volunteer with HOINA. The trip is preceded by a course in the spring semester which helps the students understand India’s cultural, religious, political, and economic setting. Following the three-week service experience, a course in the fall semester functions to make reflections on the trip. As one of the fortunate PSU students to have this experience, I found that like many service-learning endeavors, we, as Penn State students, returned with more than we were able to give to them.

Each day, we spent our time helping the staff with chores and projects around the home – caring for the babies in the nursery, helping to prepare meals, organizing the



Penn State Student, Rebecca Eddinger, works on an art project with the HOINA children.

library, and working on tile mosaics to brighten the walls of the home – as well as teaching English and nutrition lessons. When the children came home from school, we had a chance to play with them, help with homework, and do projects with them. During our trip, we were constantly surrounded with love from the children. “Akka! Akka! [sister]” they would say over and over, as they tugged on our arms to get our attention.

After only a few days, we had

formed many close relationships with the children and staff. With that, we began to learn some of the stories of how the children ended up in the care of Darlene Large and HOINA. Their stories were varied, but they were all heartbreaking stories of loss in their own right. Yet, somehow, most of these children were more content and confident than many American children. As I sit here in my room in America, typing on my computer, and surrounded by a room full of belongings, I am reminded of

“No problem, Mom. We can adjust.”

By Darlene Large
HOINA President

We at HOINA faced many challenges in 2009, ones we could not have imagined we would have to face five years ago. I know that many in our audience would agree with me. Through it all, my daughter Letti kept reminding me that God is sovereign and we must trust that everything that is happening is in His control. He allows it all to happen for His reasons. When I began our Precept Bible study in Isaiah, I began to understand. I would



“Mom” with some of the HOINA boys.

encourage all of you to read the Book of Isaiah. It is an eye opener. I kept thinking I was reading a newspaper about America and the world around us today!

My administrative staff and I sat down overseas in September and talked about how we needed to adjust our thinking about the future of HOINA. The kitchen staff told us that prices are very high. Last year they paid 35 rupees a kilo for lentils, and now they cost 100 rupees per kilo. Everything has gone up in price. They suggested when we bought the small piece of land next to our staff house that we use it for gardening purposes. We planned to grow more vegetables and fruits. We bought fruit trees and more vegetable seeds. Every staff person is now working a section of our 22 acres. Our teens and staff planted fruit trees first. We now have papaya, mango, banana, custard apples, grapefruit, guava and coconut trees.

We were able to downsize our staff last year. A number did not want to relocate with the girls to Andhra Pradesh State, which upset us initially. Later, we

saw this was a blessing in disguise. Instead of replacing gardeners, our other staff and our teens volunteered to do that work. During the construction work, our teens came to me for some simple jobs that they could do instead of having to hire outside workers. One boy said, “Mom, we heard about the job problems in America. We know it is very difficult now for people to help us. We can help, Mom. We want to do this. It is also good practice for us in our future life.”

The boys themselves

organized their group to help. I was so proud of them. They did a magnificent job.

Our kitchen staff volunteered to white wash and paint, and everyone helped to move the boys into their new home and the girls into the boys’ former home. It was not easy. When the boys moved into their home, there were no toilets. We had a septic tank problem that did not want to cooperate with us. The boys just smiled and said, “No problem, Mom. We can adjust.” They certainly did.

A number of you have visited us in India. Remember Bujji, our medical manager? He is now the boys’ home manager. He and our general manager, Anand, are a fantastic team. They work so well together. Every month he and Anand take turns checking on the team doing the medical work. Bujji trained them before he left the Bapatla area to come to our main campus.

Our staff have remained flexible through changing circumstances. Our children remain grateful as do I. God bless each of you in the coming year. 🙏

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JAN/2010



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Finding Family

Continued from page 1

the single trunk each child owned. Several times, I watched the girls cherishing their trunks – organizing and reorganizing the small stack of clothing, hair clips, and photographs. However, it was obvious the most treasured thing anyone had in the HOINA home was family.

On a Sunday afternoon, about one and a half weeks into our trip, we organized an art project for the children. We had wanted the children to sit outside and draw what they saw around the home –

mountains, trees, cows, etc. Each of the girls I was working with drew a few pictures of their surroundings, but then they decided to create their own artwork. They sketched hearts and homes and wrote in bold letters, "I love Mom and Papa [Darlene Large and her husband, Bruce] and the Penn State Students!". We became a part of the HOINA family so easily, that I often forget we were only there for three weeks. However, during that short time, we were able to observe what it truly means to devote your life to others. 



Venkatesh enjoys some free time on the playground.

Annual Giving Statements

You should receive your annual giving statement from our HOINA office in Brownstown, PA, by the end of January. If yours does not arrive or if you spot an error, please alert Amy in our office at 1.877.994.6462 (toll-free) or 717.355.9494 immediately so she can take care of it for you. Thank you for your generous support of our work. We couldn't do it without you! 

HOINA is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization with international headquarters located at:

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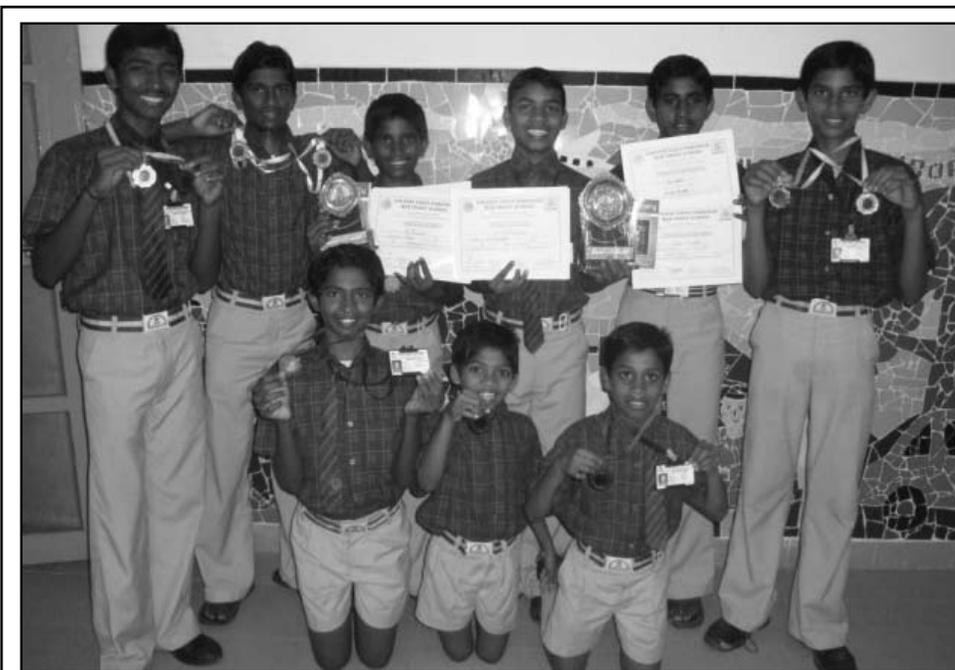
The parents of K. Upendra were married in 1990. His father worked as a painter, but later became an auto driver for a taxi company. A daughter was born in 1994 and Upendra, in 1996. His father was HIV positive and suffered with T.B. Later, it was found that his mother was also HIV positive. Upendra's father died in June 2008 while his mother was very ill, so the church pastor arranged for Upendra to come to HOINA.

Upendra is in the 8th grade in a government school. He does well with his studies and also is recognized for his singing abilities. Upendra wants to be a lawyer when he is grown. His favorite game is cricket. He likes elephants and the color green.

Thank you for giving a child hope. 



Koyya Upendra



HOINA boys take top honors

Left to right (standing): M. Issac (Relay and 400 meters); K. Rajesh (Relay and 200 meters); G. Israel (200 meters and writing skills in English); G. Anil (fancy dress and folk dance); S. Varun Prakash (folk dance); L. Kiran (Relay and 100 meters).

Left to right (kneeling): G. Anil Kumar (shuttle run and relay); N. Uday Kiran (100 meters); G. Akil (Relay and 400 meters).