



NEWS FROM HOINA HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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York College Students Make Mid-Winter Visit

*By Michael Foster
York College
Student*

Throughout my college career, I've always heard my friends and my professors stress that relationships are important; they will make the difference in life. As the only male student to travel to HOINA this winter on the York College trip, I was a little hesitant at what to expect when I arrived.

The first night I met my roommate, Chris, who happened to be the brother of one of the girls traveling on the trip. I felt as if I were reliving my first college roommate experience. After meeting him, we decided to take a tour of the HOINA campus and headed over to the boys' home. There we met a group of the older boys playing cricket, and they had us jump into the game right away. It was quite an experience to try to adjust from playing baseball for ten years of my life. However, after this game, I headed back to the room and slept like a baby until the next morning. Little did I know that morning that I would meet two guys who would forever make an impact on



Micheal, Michael, and Maryadas on one of our early morning walks.

my life: Micheal and Maryadas.

On the second night, after dinner, Chris and I once again had some free time to go out to play with the kids. One of the older boys asked Chris if he played chess, so we headed over to the library to play a game. As the game progressed, another boy came over to me and asked me if I wanted to play a game called "SOS."

This game consists

primarily of trying to spell SOS all across a sheet of paper divided into many boxes. Each player alternated writing a letter, either S or O, trying to create the letter combination. Whoever succeeded in creating the combination of letters got another turn to attempt to make the combination. As the game progressed, we got to talking and finally introduced ourselves. I went first and told him my name, Michael, and then his face lit up! He replied with, "My sweet name is Micheal!" We kept talking as the game continued, and he told me that he was in sixth standard, which was the group I later happened to be tutoring during their study hours. Our

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Ravi Teja loves HOINA

conversation carried on, and we talked about topics such as Africa, Michael Jackson, and the song “Waka Waka.” After about 90 minutes of game play, we finally ran out of squares on the 8 x 11 sheet of paper. As we tallied up the score, it turned out that the final score was 68-45 (let’s just say a Micheal won). Looking back at that piece of paper, I was amazed at the amount of SOS’s filling up the sheet. I asked Micheal if I could keep the sheet to take home, and he agreed. Also, I asked him if he would autograph it so I could show everyone this game back home. Here is where I found something interesting; he signed his name switching the *a* and the *e* in contrast to how I spell my name.

After talking for a few more moments, he brought out his school notebook and asked me to autograph one of the pages in it. I showed him the difference in our names and then headed back to the staff house because it was approaching ten o’clock at night. For breakfast the next morning, our group traveled over to the boys’ home,

where we had all of our meals. Towards the end of the meal, Micheal came into the dining hall and sat down with his group of friends. As I continued to eat, I looked over to see him smiling as he pulled something out of his pocket. It turned out to be the piece of paper I had signed the night before. At that point I was very touched that he kept something like that so close to him, and I knew he would be someone whom I would become very good friends with while being at HOINA.

Day three arrived, and I was still trying to master the game of cricket, which I’ve done a couple research papers on while in school. Even so, I still have no idea of how the game works. One of the boys, Maryadas, looked at me with a puzzled look on his face and said, “Baseball?” I laughed at his comment and nodded, and he laughed back at me and approached to show me how to properly stand with the bat in front of the wickets. From that point on, I seemed to get better and better each time the ball was bowled to me.

Thanks to him, I’ve probably altered my baseball and golf swings. I’ll have to wait to find out this spring. After our match I thanked him for helping me out, and then I was surrounded by a whole group of older boys who joined our conversation. As time went on, I could tell that Maryadas seemed to be the leader of this group of older boys. He was my “in” to being accepted as one of them. For the rest of the trip, besides Micheal, this would be the core group I would hang out with while being on the HOINA campus.

About halfway through the trip, a couple of York students, including myself, had the opportunity to travel to the Jindal School, the boy’s school, to deliver lunches to the various HOINA boys who were attending. We had the chance to explore the campus and even to sit in on some of the classes. After one of the classes, I came across Maryadas, and he took me around and gave me a tour of his school. He introduced me to his best friend and then convinced me

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March/2011



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This gift of \$ _____ is in honor/memory of
(please give name and address of person): _____

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ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE

Nothing Lost in Translation

*By Angela Eikenberg
York College Student*

My Name is Angela Eikenberg. I am a Behavioral Science major starting my senior year at York College of Pennsylvania. Over winter break my fellow classmates and I volunteered at HOINA for two weeks. I can honestly say this was the most rewarding experience of my life. This trip was also my first experience leaving the country, and it was truly amazing. When I was in Middle School I developed a dream to help children in a different country, and I feel very blessed that I had this opportunity.


While at HOINA, Neeraja, was one specific girl who really amazed me. Neeraja is truly an inspiring girl, and she does not let her handicap discourage her. During study hours I helped Neeraja and Krishnavine with their English homework. Krishnavine struggled with some of her English, and would look to her friends for help translating. Neeraja encouraged Krishnavine to try her hardest to communicate in English with me. At some points Neeraja would help translate Krishnavine and my conversation for easier understanding. With Neeraja being by my side I was able to help Krishnavine with her basic English skills. If Neeraja wasn't there to help me, I do not think Krishnavine would have benefitted from my help as much as she did.

After helping these girls study, I was able to show them a picture album I had brought from home. As Neeraja and Krishnavine saw the photos, I narrated each with a short story. Neeraja then translated what I said to make sure Krishnavine understood the entire story for each picture.



Angie with Neeraja at the Christmas-in-January party at HOINA

Later on a few other girls came over to look at my pictures. Neeraja, in English, then began to narrate the photos for them, telling the same stories I had told to her only once. I could not believe she remembered so much.

Not only did Neeraja inspire me, but all of the children and staff touched my heart. These kids are the happiest and most polite kids I have ever met in my entire life. I have learned so much from my trip to HOINA, and I believe I am a better person because of my experiences there. I hope God has a plan for me to return to HOINA one day. 



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HOINA Sponsorship Program: Would You Help?




P. Anusha

Our HOINA sponsorship program provides food, clothing, shelter, medical care (including reconstructive surgeries as needed), and education (through post-high school technical training or college) for all of our children. Your donation of \$30 per month provides all of this! Would you consider sponsoring one of our great kids? So many need your help.

This month we feature P. Anusha, who was born on January 20, 2000, the elder of two children. Her parents were married in 1998. Her dad was a truck cleaner, and her mom was a housewife. They were very poor and lived in a small

hut. Unfortunately, Anusha's father was given to drinking too much alcohol. He didn't care for his family properly, and his wife was struggling to take care of the children with no income. When Anusha's father contracted HIV and declined in health, her mother asked HOINA to please take care of her daughter so she would have some chance at a good life. This 11-year-old was admitted to HOINA last June.

If you would like to sponsor her, please send your first monthly donation to our office with the coupon on page three. You may also decide to set up a direct payment option using our automatic debit form. The payments will then come to our bank directly from your checking account. You can find that form to download on our website: www.hoina.org. Please look under the "Donate/Sponsor" tab. A third option is to pay via a credit card, which is also available on our website. Thanks for helping the HOINA kids have a happier future. 

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to go to his Telugu class. That prospect really frightened me, but I decided to go check it out. Before class started, I sat at his desk with him and the whole class swarmed around me asking for contact information and autographs. The other York students had similar experiences. I found it to be a very overwhelming feeling to be surrounded like a celebrity,

and Maryadas noticed my discomfort. He grabbed my hand and pulled me out of the group and got me to where it was only he and his friends once again.

Leaving HOINA was definitely one of the most emotional things that has ever happened to me. In our final goodbyes, I exchanged some coins with Micheal, and then he pulled out a new piece of paper and signed it. His new signature spelled his name *Michael!* He

looked up and smiled and said, "This is how I will sign it now." Wow, what a feeling! A few minutes later, I turned to Maryadas and said my final goodbye. We exchanged contact information, so I hope to hear from him soon. As we got in the bus to head to the airport, the thought that crossed my mind was these relationships made a difference and will last a lifetime. 