



NEWS FROM HOINA HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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Mature, Passionate Learners

by Sarah Mason
York College Student

As a junior Human Services major at York College, I have always loved working with other people. When I found out about the opportunity to volunteer at HOINA for two weeks, I immediately knew I wanted to go. While there, I gained 200 new brothers and sisters as well as a second home. I never imagined how much I would learn from the children and how much of an impact they would have on me.

If you have ever seen a high school biology course that is teaching about human reproduction or a middle school sex education class, you know that bringing up either of these topics to children and adolescents is a sure way to fill a room with awkward tension and giggles. Even at the collegiate level, my peers, who would consider themselves adults, often giggle and become uncomfortable when anything about reproduction comes up in conversation or in the classroom.

While at HOINA, we had the opportunity to study with the children every evening. During one of my biology study sessions, some of the girls asked me to explain pregnancy to



Some of our HOINA girls and Sarah Mason take a selfie.

them. They asked about how fertilization works as well as where each step of fertilization in the female reproductive system takes place. Initially, these questions caught me off guard. After taking a minute to realize what had just been asked, I realized that I had six young ladies with genuine curiosity in their eyes, sitting around me waiting for an answer. Unsure of what reaction to expect, I began to explain a diagram of the female reproductive system and the process of fertilization. After the explanation, none of the girls seemed to feel self-conscious or to have gained

Mature, Passionate Learners continued

a case of the giggles—unlike my expectations from my experiences in the United States.

The following evening, I was studying with the boys, who were also learning about reproduction in their biology class, and they asked specific details about pregnancy. Their questions were related to the placenta and umbilical cord as the boys wanted to understand how babies received nutrients. Again, I had to take a moment to grasp what this group of nine adolescent boys had asked me. Once more, they all gathered around me, patiently waiting for an answer, wanting to learn and understand. As I began to give an explanation, I noticed there were no snickers or blushing, embarrassed faces. This group of male students listened intently and asked numerous follow-up questions to clarify what they did not understand, just as the girls had done the night before.

I was completely shocked by these experiences and how mature these children are. They all showed great respect as they waited for me to process the question and listened to my answers attentively. They kept eye contact during the entire explanation, making it easy to see their craving for knowledge as well as how much they wanted to clearly understand the new information. From both study sessions and other conversations, it became clear to me how much they all value their education and how seriously they take studying and learning. Each child also showed a passion to genuinely understand the



Sarah takes a break from her study session with Shalini.

information they were learning, not just in biology but in all their classes. I have never had such a mature conversation about the anatomy and physiology of human reproduction. Through this experience, I was able to learn how mature these HOINA children truly are.

Upon returning to the States, these study sessions have shifted the way I view my own education. Though I try not to, I easily fall into the trap of taking my education for

granted. It becomes easy to not study for an exam, skip a class, or not give an assignment my full effort. Seeing how dedicated the HOINA children are to their education and their genuine passion for learning has changed the way I view my education. I am incredibly grateful to them for teaching me how valuable education is and how much I take my education for granted. I will never forget my time at HOINA and the life-changing experiences I had.

Summer Birthdays Times Two

This month's child sponsorship features two dear brothers, who both need a sponsor to provide for their food, clothing, medical care, and education, which HOINA provides beyond high school as a student is able to study. Eleven-year-old P. Manoj Kumar, was born on June 3, 2006; and his brother, Ramcharan Teja celebrates his tenth birthday this year on July 10.

The boys have a sad, yet common, tale of how they came to our home. Mr. Ramana married his niece, Mrs. Sri Lakshmi in June 2005. This was the second marriage for Mr. Ramana as his first wife died in 2002. He worked as an electrical lineman in Vepada village, but he was an alcoholic. Due to his alcohol abuse, he did not attend to his work duties properly. In 2013, he became sick, and he died on December 3. After Mr. Ramana passed away, his widow Mrs. Sri



Lakshmi lived with her parents along with the children. Since the grandparents are poor, they requested admission for the two brothers into our HOINA home.

Can you send your first monthly gift of \$35 to care for just one of these boys?

Final Exam Time for HOINA Girls and Boys

In India, 10th standard (grade) is the end of formal high school education. From there the students move on to 10+1 and 10+2, which is somewhat similar to our junior college. Our students will be having exams all month, and they are very crucial for a student's placement for further education.

As our American students prep for ACTs and SATs, HOINA kids are drilling daily to be ready for their big tests. Please be in prayer for them all month, as this is not a once-and-done exam. They will sit for days as they take taxing finals in multiple subjects.



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

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April 2018

Please use this gift of \$ _____ toward the HOINA General Fund or where most needed.

I want to Sponsor a HOINA boy / girl (circle one). Here is my first monthly gift of \$35.

This gift of \$ _____ is in honor / memory of (circle one)

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Our 10th grade girls prep for exams. See story on page 3.

