



HOINA
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NEWS FROM
HOINA
HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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Adorable smile calls out for sponsorship



Lanka Ajay Kumar

Lanka Ajay Kumar was born in June of 2003. He came to HOINA in July of 2007 at the age of four.

Ajay Kumar's parents, Mr. Patrudu and Ms. Lakshmi, were married in 2001. Mr. Patrudu worked in the fields for a daily wage. After two years of marriage, Ajay Kumar was born. Another child was born two years later. In June 2006, the mother was cooking and the kerosene stove fell on her and caught

fire. She died three days later. The grandfather tried to take care of the boys, but then approached HOINA seeking admission for them.

Ajay Kumar is in lower kindergarten at a local English medium school. He says his favorite game is cricket. When he is grown Ajay Kumar wants to become a policeman. He is described by HOINA staff as active and smart, with a smiling face. ♿

Prayer request

Word has been received that Shaunna Barnhart, a dear friend and supporter of HOINA, is battling cancer. Shaunna oversees the Pennsylvania State University Schreyer Honors College students who travel to India each year.

Please remember her with your prayers and cards of support and encouragement. You may send them to:

Shaunna Barnhart
237 Lower Coleville Road
Belfont, PA 16823



“Happy Long Life to You”

by Haley Chutz

Few may know it, but this is actually the second verse of the “Happy Birthday” song—at least as sung by the girls of the HOINA hostel in Chennai. Go ahead, try plugging the words into the traditional song. You’ll see they fit quite nicely! Now imagine 50 grinning girls standing in a circle around the blushing honoree, near shouting in a glorious out-of-tune chorus, and you’ve got a HOINA birthday celebration.

Last month, I had the pleasure of making my second visit to this little oasis in southern India. The first time I went was in 2005 as part of a service-learning class through the Penn State Schreyer Honors College. This time, I went back for a visit during more extended travels. I knew from the first joyful cry of, “Akka!” that things hadn’t changed too much. I was again welcomed as a sister.

One quality that has not changed and that all the girls at HOINA share is lovingkindness; a tender and benevolent affection for each other and for me as a guest. This is a testament to how the girls are being raised. Something is being done right. Older girls help



The boys and girls REALLY loved the bubbles.

care for younger ones and younger ones clumsily try to do the same for anyone slightly smaller than themselves. Girls often gave me their own sweets and jewelry, preferring me to have them rather than enjoying them themselves. These girls, whom I was hoping to serve, were pampering me! I made them smile with jump ropes, sidewalk chalk, and a Rainman-like memory of their names; they gave me a lesson in generosity of spirit, acceptance, and joy in the face of difficulty.

Plenty of things have changed at HOINA though. I was amazed by the progress I saw—beyond the campus improvements, a more structured schedule, and some new staff. New babies are learning how to walk on chubby legs. Girls I knew as babies have become schoolgirls. Schoolgirls have become teenagers. I heard that my friend Chandrakala, who was just leaving for nursing school last time, is now married with a baby. Ponseca, who made beautiful henna designs on my

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“Happy Long Life to You”

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Learning to blow bubbles with the help of an older child.



Entrance to HOINA and the fence that surrounds the property.



hand, is now in her second year of college earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts. It is inspiring to see these young women venture into the world! Seeing how all the girls have matured emphasized to me that HOINA is not like other hostels or orphanages. This is a family—a home filled with love, color, and kindness. The girls really grow up here, and the hearts of Mom Large and the staff show through in every corner.

Unlike my last trip to India, this time I left HOINA on foot with just a backpack. My cousin and I walked to the suburban train in town and proceeded to travel in this style through much of southern India.



Always smiling—the children have a happy home at HOINA.

Traveling in this way allowed me to deeply experience the country, in all its beauty and its filth, and put HOINA into a new context.

I saw young children sitting in piles of dirt and garbage on the side of the road playing with rusty scraps of metal. Smudged, half-dressed kids followed me and lightly scratched my elbows as they begged for a few rupees. Teenagers who couldn't go to school persistently tried to sell me cheap junk.

In Bombay, one of the most metropolitan cities in the world, 55% of the population lives in the slums. The poverty everywhere is devastating, and most of these children will never be offered the education they need to pull themselves out of it. I had a new appreciation for what HOINA does after contrasting this hopeless poverty with the life the HOINA kids now have.

One can't experience all this without thinking of Mom Large, the source of HOINA and its

beating heart. She is perseverance personified. Despite numerous obstacles, she works harder than ever to run and improve the organization, mother to hundreds. During my visit, she was planning a Leap Year party where she would give a gift to each girl. She smiled at the thought of their faces upon seeing a huge pile of shiny presents. One morning she left to go shopping for the gifts and didn't return until well after 10 p.m., exhausted from the city's chaos, smog, and vendors eager to cheat a foreigner. She is indomitable, working to provide for basic needs and for those extra touches that make kids happy. “Now they'll know I won't have to do this again for another four years!” she joked. Mom refers to herself as HOINA's heart. A heart works behind the scenes, its work often going unnoticed. However, it is a crucial source of life and an abounding source of love, just as she is. ♿

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 E-mail: _____
 Account Number (on your mailing label): _____

I want to sponsor a HOINA boy/girl (circle one). Here is my first monthly gift of \$30.

I want to support Gautam in the Triathlon. Here is my donation of \$ _____.

Mail coupon to: **HOINA**
 PO Box 636
 Brownstown, PA 17508-0636



ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE

05/08



Man running triathlon to raise funds for HOINA

by Gautam Ranji

On July 20, 2008 I will be participating in the New York City Triathlon (1 mile swim, 25 mile bike, 6 mile run). While my primary goal will be to finish (and survive 30 minutes in the Hudson River), I am also trying to raise money in support of HOINA.

HOINA operates two orphanages, a girls home outside Chennai, and a boys home in Visakhapatnam (both in southern India). HOINA supports abandoned, abused, and orphaned children—from infancy to adulthood—providing housing, food, clothing, medical care, education, and vocational training. Since HOINA's doors first opened in 1978, the organization has sheltered more than 1,000 children.

HOINA's graduates have gone on to successful careers as educators, artists, engineers, and business professionals. In addition, HOINA operates a free medical clinic which 15,000 women and children annually and a mobile medical unit which serves 35 villages.

My goal is to raise \$5,000 for HOINA. This money will be used to fund general operations for both homes, as well as for capital projects, including the construction of a new girls' home and hospital



Gautam Ranji (right) is pictured with his father, Sampath Ranji.

on the same campus as the boys' home.

I will also be racing in memory of my father, Sampath Ranji, a passionate philanthropist and long-time supporter of HOINA.

Donations to HOINA can be made by:

- 1) online donation at the following link: www.justgive.org/giving/donate.jsp?charityId=19434 or
- 2) sending a check to HOINA, P.O. Box 636, Brownstown, Pennsylvania 17508-0636 USA. If possible, please specify that the donation is in support of my fundraising campaign.

Any size donation will make a meaningful difference to these children. Thank you in advance for your support. ♿

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