



NEWS FROM

HOINA

HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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Guests Share the Love at HOINA



By Dr. David Fyfe

HOINA Vice President; York College of Pennsylvania

My last trip to India was in January of 2020 just before the start of the pandemic. I normally return to India every other year with students from York College of Pennsylvania, but due to the travel restrictions we were not able to come until now. I always notice a lot of changes on campus after my time away, and this year was no different. They have created beautiful shaded sitting areas (all from trees that have been planted over the past 20 years) and have expanded a portion of the stream running through campus to create a small lake. Bright colors are everywhere, and the grounds are well maintained. As I scanned through the faces of the children I noticed many familiar faces and some new faces who have joined us over the last few years. A couple of the young boys I once knew as adolescents are now young men with facial hair, and I had to look twice to confirm it was the same boy I remembered from previous trips. In India they typically use titles when greeting people. One additional change that has occurred



Left to right: Joshana, Tejaswini, and Keerthana share a happy hug after getting their gifts for "second Christmas." The love of HOINA sisters is a beautiful thing.

on my last two trips is the title with which the children greet me. While I am still called "Anna" meaning brother by all of the staff and children who know me, a few of the newer small boys have greeted me with "Uncle," which is a term used to show respect for "older" people whom they are not familiar with. So, if you are ever wondering when you are "older," just come to India to see how the children greet you!

This year I returned with my tenth group of students who chose to give up their winter break to come to HOINA to volunteer for about three weeks. The class, International Service-Learning, provides an opportunity for students to learn about India by volunteering at HOINA. They meet weekly during the semester before the trip to learn about HOINA and Indian history and culture. Right after Christmas

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this year, we met at Dulles airport for our long journey to India. After several flights and more than 30 hours of travel, we arrived at the HOINA campus around 9 p.m. We were welcomed at the front gate with large banners with each of our names and then greeted by dozens of smiling faces at the front entrance to the girls' home. Although we were all exhausted from travel, my students were immediately energized when they stepped off the bus and the girls grabbed their hands and greeted them as if they had known them for years. In less than five minutes of entering the HOINA campus, the students understood that they are now part of the HOINA family.

One of my favorite activities at HOINA is celebrating the holidays with the staff and children. At HOINA the children have a celebration on Christmas Day and celebrate a "second" Christmas on Three Kings Day.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, each child receives a special gift of their own. The smaller children often ask for toys or games and the older children request a wide variety of items such as backpacks, bibles, sport shoes, watches, and electric razors. In addition to their special gift, each child also receives a shoe box containing candy, balloons, soaps, toothbrushes, razors, deodorant, handkerchief, nail clippers, pencils, pens, rulers, and a variety of other practical and fun items.

This year's celebration was also very special because of the number of visitors to the HOINA campus for this



Many thanks to the York College students who handled the complicated task of filling the children's Christmas boxes.

event. In addition to the York College students, four members of the U.S. board of directors and two Trustees on the Indian Board were in attendance along with HOINA's Executive Director Glory Janes and her parents.

The celebration began with an opening prayer and singing by both the boys and the girls followed by recognizing a dozen of the staff who have done such a tremendous job over the last several months in beautifying the campus and taking such good care of the children at HOINA. HOINA President, Todd Becker, provided a reading from the book of Matthew about the significance and meaning of Three Kings Day followed by the giving of gifts to all of the children.

The gifts, wrapped in brightly colored foil wrapping paper, were sitting on the stage when the children arrived, and you could see the excitement in their eyes as they waited patiently to receive their gift. Staff members read off the kids' names one by one as everyone clapped and cheered while each child came to the front of the chapel to receive their gift. This year the members of the U.S. board, the Indian Trustees, and the York College students took turns handing out the gifts to each child. With their gift in hand, they returned to their seats and waited patiently for all of their HOINA brothers and sisters to receive their gifts. In the past we would have a countdown and all the children would tear open their gifts simultaneously and beam with pride while showing off their new treasures. However, as this year's ceremony occurred on a school night, the boys and girls took their gifts (and a piece of



HOINA girls are excited to be opening their gifts.

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cake) back to the courtyard of each home and opened their gifts there. What I have found remarkable every time I have been here for this celebration is how grateful the HOINA children are for what they receive. While the gifts are modest by U.S. standards, the children of HOINA are extremely grateful for what they are able to receive thanks to the generosity of our donors.

This year marks my 20th year of being involved with HOINA, and I have been blessed to visit many times over the years. Words cannot express how caring and compassionate the staff are in both the care of the children as well as to guests who arrive on the HOINA campus. I have loved watching the children



Durga Prasad is thrilled with his cricket bat, while Sai Sudhakar and Dileep happily join the rest of the boys in opening their presents provided by our donors.

grow up and become young men and women who are now coming back to campus to visit and telling me about their jobs and family. A special thanks to all of our donors and sponsors who make it possible for HOINA to operate. I know long-time readers of our newsletter have heard it before, but the HOINA campus really is an oasis that is different from any other orphanage or hostel in India. I am already looking forward to my next trip to India in the coming years.



Left to right: N.S.R. Krishna, Indian Trustee; Tom Yohe, U.S. Treasurer; Todd Becker, U.S. President; Glory Janes, Executive Director; David Fyfe, U.S. Vice President; David Yalla, U.S. Board Member; and G. Vijay Bhaskar, Indian Trustee.



From the President
Todd Becker

Greetings from India!

I arrived two days ago in time to celebrate All Kings Day with the Trustees, Staff, and Children. For fans of *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien, I would call this second Christmas. A grand celebration was held as only India can produce with their exemplary hospitality, graciousness, and kindness.

Upon arrival I found the campus to be radiant from what I left in early November. Fresh paint, new LED lighting on the walking paths, and new artwork on the external pillars are just some of the many improvements the staff undertook led by India Trustee G. Vijay Bhaskar. I am very pleased with the new changes and the work ethic which is displayed.

Please keep me in your prayers as I am abroad for the next couple of months.

HOINA is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization.

Contact us at:
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This newsletter is published to inform our readers of the work HOINA does among the handicapped and abandoned in India.

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Name: _____

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- I want to Sponsor a HOINA boy / girl (circle one). Here is my **first** monthly gift of \$35.
- I know many needs exist on campus to keep HOINA running well. Let my gift of \$_____ help fund the general expenses of HOINA as it cares for the kids.
- This gift of \$_____ is in honor / memory of
(circle one)
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OR please consider donating online at www.hoina.org

All donations are tax deductible.

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Share the Love by Sponsoring a Child

Sometimes a HOINA sponsor must stop sponsoring for some financial reason, and we have a child who has been with us for some time who needs a new sponsor. Sometimes a relative comes forward (even a parent who may remarry) to reclaim a HOINA child. Various reasons exist for needing to reassign sponsorships. The pandemic certainly upset the apple cart, as we say. As Executive Director Glory Janes continues to update and certify our lists, we ask you to be patient with us.

With that said, our feature child this month, Chaitanya is looking for a sponsor! His mother asked for our help after she lost her husband to a heart attack. She and her daughter are currently living with her parents. If you can find it in your heart to spread some love, please send the coupon above back to our office with your first gift of \$35/month. Of course, you can set up a monthly online donation at our website: www.hoina.org. Thank you for your generosity.

