



NEWS FROM

**HOINA**

HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

P.O. Box 636, Brownstown, PA 17508-0636 • [www.hoina.org](http://www.hoina.org) • June 2023

## Crochet in the Library

*By Reilly Deckert, York College of Pennsylvania Student*

One of my favorite memories at HOINA was the night that I taught a crochet workshop at the girls' home. Some of the girls had been asking me about how I make some of the crocheted items I wear. I had planned to teach them all individually, but our trip flew by and we only a little time left at HOINA. Two nights before we left, I told the girls that I would be in the library if they wanted to learn. Each hook and ball of yarn were in use within the first ten minutes. Girls were on all sides of the table making little crochet projects. At the end of the night, all of the girls in the room had either finished a small project or had a larger project to work on.

I was proud by how fast all of them picked up crochet, but Mounika surprised me the most. I could not be more impressed by how quickly she learned very complex crochet stitches. Mounika already knew how to crochet a little bit, but she learned how to read very difficult patterns in one night! It was incredible to watch. By the next day, she had almost finished a beautiful market bag with stitches it took me several years to learn. Sushmita, Shravanti, Sweetie, Dena, and many others made bookmarks. They had not had any prior knowledge of crocheting, but they were able to properly count stitches and get them looking even. I do not remember which person it was, but one of the girls even added a tassel to her bookmark.

One of the other York College students, Abby, taught some of the little ones how to make little bracelets out of yarn. If I remember correctly, she wore one that the girls had made her for a while after. Paige taught some of the girls how to crochet around a hair tie to make scrunchies. Everything that the HOINA girls decided they were going to make came out beautifully. I have taught a lot of people to



Mounika and Reilly show off some of their handiwork.

crochet in America, but many of them stop halfway through and decide that it is too hard. The HOINA girls never gave up trying until they had mastered it. By the end of the night, most of the yarn was gone, and many little projects were passed around by students.



**From the President**  
Todd Becker

### Greetings!

My wife Letti and I live near Kansas City, MO. My siblings live in Minneapolis, MN, and northern Wisconsin. We are a full day's car ride apart. As a result, we see each other only a few times every year. I miss my brothers and sisters.

Similarly, life's circumstances spread the HOINA family throughout the country of India. The HOINA brothers and sisters—like my family—span five decades, having children, and now grandchildren. Some of them live in foreign countries, including the United States. I find I also miss my HOINA family. Even those I have not met. Are you like me?

Today's article reveals one small step the HOINA family took at the beginning of May to bridge the gap among the generations. I hope you enjoy it!



Pink shirts and HOINA hats for everyone!  
Every team needs a colorful uniform.

# HOINA Summer Vacation Work Program

*By HOINA President Todd Becker*

Young brothers, old brothers ... all brothers gathering in a single location to renew their bonds and to create new ones. All HOINA brothers. Representing five decades of men, roughly 20 HOINA graduates met in Bapatla, A.P, to pour into each other's lives and work side by side with 15 of our high school boys in grades 9+. Men who were HOINA boys in Thiruninravur, Bapatla, and Visakhapatnam traveled for a day or more from their current homes to be together.

The concept of bringing graduates together with current children to serve a community emerged at my first

meeting with Vijay Sekhar in March on the HOINA campus. In all of my interactions with HOINA brothers and sisters over the last ten months, I heard three consistent themes repeated. First, "When are you bringing another HOINA home to my city?" Second, "We need to have a reunion of all the brothers and sisters." Third, "What can we do to help?" Being new in my role as HOINA's president, the first question I found difficult to answer. The second question I would simply reply, "There are roughly 1,000 HOINA children. If we add their spouses and children, I don't know how we will find a location

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Some local workmen install plumbing (left) and electricity (right) to make the building more usable.

# Summer Work Program continued



The work group gives a thumbs up for the camera! Front row, left to right: Ganesh (Nishu), Satish, Arjun, Pavan, Ramana (Driver), Bhaskar, Narendra, Jayanth, Karthik, Hemanth Kumar, Lokesh, Siva, Swamy, Santosh and Ramu (Driver). Back row, left to right: Shadrack, John, Buchi Babu, Veeraswamy, Vijay Shekar (Manchodu), Henri, Chandran, Koteswara Rao, Sundar Rao, Rajesh, Vivek Babu (Rajesh Son), Madhu, Koti Reddy, Rajini Kumar, Srikanth, Israel, and Durgaprasad.

for all of us to gather. Even the HOINA campus is too small.” As Vijay Sekhar and I spoke, we determined we could create a work week, invite graduate men to work alongside current boys from our home, and learn from there. Hence, the first HOINA Summer Vacation Work Program was born.

Graduates Vijay Sekhar, Madhu Upala, Madhu’s wife Deepika, and his in-laws all worked tirelessly giving more than anyone could ask. They labored to create a work plan, spread word of the gathering, and ensure every detail was perfectly executed. I don’t want to forget two HOINA graduates and current campus leaders Shadrach and active Durga Prasad who assisted in getting our boys ready for the trip with trip planning and packing—from food to bedding—to make the 10-hour drive to Bapatla. They received great support from the HOINA Board, existing management, and staff to make the vision a



Welcome banners are a cultural tradition, and this event was no exception.

reality. The group spent three days together renewing bonds, sharing life lessons, and visiting the beach. Sadly, the actual work component of the trip was delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. We look forward to next year when they will gather and work again. I will be forever grateful to all of the unnamed helpers and those who spread the word among their brothers, who were all a part of bringing this program to reality.



The boys welcomed the chance to swim at the beach. In water, left to right: Lokesh, Pavan, Hemanth Kumar, Narendra. Standing in back, left to right: Jayanth, Arjun and Swamy.

HOINA is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization.  
**Contact us at:**  
717.355.9494  
Email address: [contact@hoina.org](mailto:contact@hoina.org)  
Website: [www.hoina.org](http://www.hoina.org)

This newsletter is published to inform our readers of the work HOINA does among the handicapped and abandoned in India.  
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**Send donations and address changes to:**  
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## Don't Forget Our Older Kids

V. Harika is a semi-orphan, whose father died from unknown causes. He was a fisherman, but after he passed away, life was hard for her mother to support them with her housemaid's wages. Seeing the family situation the HSBC bank staff recommended this girl to be admitted to our HOINA hostel. Harika has been with HOINA since she was 11. She is now 16 and in tenth grade with hopes to go into a medical field in the future.

HOINA leads children from whatever age we receive them all the way through upper education. We are always trying to match students with degree or vocational programs that make sense for their aptitudes and interests. If you would like to help support Harika, you can send your first monthly gift of \$35 to our office with the coupon above or by giving online at <https://hoina.org>

