



NEWS FROM

HOINA

HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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Splashing, Spelunking, and Seeing the Sites

By Julianna Orkin, York College of Pennsylvania Student



Cooling off on the rocks at the waterfalls. Left to right: Todd, Isabel Cox, Kate Snader, Abby Piotrowski, Khushi Iyer, Piper Johnson, Paige Miller, Julianna Orkin, Sarah Beck and Reilly Deckert.

My name is Julianna Orkin, and I am a Mass Communications major at York College of Pennsylvania.

On our winter break visit, we had a tourist experience in India. Our York group went on a trip with the HOINA staff and a few of the boys to Araku Valley, a tourist attraction that is located about 3-4 hours from HOINA. Most of the day's agenda was a surprise, but we knew we were headed to the Borra Caves. Beyond that, we didn't know what to expect.

Our day started bright and early around 7 AM. We boarded the bus, and HOINA Executive Director Glory Janes, Executive Board Vice President Dave Fyfe, and Treasurer Tom Yohe all woke up early in the morning to see us

off. Todd Becker, the President of HOINA, came with us as did two of the HOINA boys and two of the staff (Parvitra and Vimila). The bus brought us to the train station in Kothavalasa, where we boarded the train for Araku Valley, a three-hour ride. The train ride was very different from trains in the US, with people everywhere and a lot of people not wearing shoes. The cultural differences were interesting as well, as people just begin speaking to one another even if they don't know them. The seat rows were long and people were also sitting above us so that everyone could fit. Out the expanse of windows, the HOINA staff were pointing out the small villages and pretty scenery to us as the trip progressed.

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Seeing Sites continued

When we finally made it to Araku, the HOINA bus met us at the train station. We then drove a little more to our first stop: the waterfalls. The scenery was lovely, and we had the chance to walk around while the HOINA boys helped us over the slippery rocks ensuring that we were safe. We sat down on the rocks for a photo and got to put our feet in the water for a few minutes, which was quite refreshing since it was warm outside. We wandered around a bit and then made our way to our next stop: the Tribal Museum. We saw various exhibits that demonstrated how indigenous individuals lived in the area. After this, we headed off to our next stop: The Coffee Museum. I think this may have been my favorite part of the day. Seeing the process of how coffee is made in India was fascinating, and we had the opportunity to purchase chocolate and coffee. Is there any better combo? The staff bought all of us coffee to try, and it was absolutely amazing. The day was getting long, so I think we were all grateful for the caffeine pick-me-up. Next on our list of stops was the Galikonda viewpoint. It was BEAUTIFUL! We could see so much of the natural land and greenery prevalent in India. We stayed for a few minutes, then headed to our final stop, the Borra Caves.

The stone caves were exquisite, and colorful lighting effects enhanced the natural stone. We took lots of group photos in the caves and of the caves as we climbed tons of stairs, getting a workout for sure. We also had the chance to see the wildlife of the area: monkeys and large bats. We explored for a couple of hours, and then it was time to head back to the HOINA campus. The day was absolutely exhausting, but I loved getting to see so much of the Araku Valley.

Our drive home was about three hours along winding roads. Even though we were exhausted, little sleeping took place since we had a singing marathon the whole way back home while trying to get photos of the monkeys. (We think that Todd especially enjoyed our singing.) Once we got back, we had dinner with everyone who was still awake on campus and then went to sleep to get ready for the next long day.



HOINA Vice President David Fyfe with our kids on the bus. As you can see, a new bus would be greatly appreciated.



A view of Araku Valley



Khushi Iyer and HOINA President Todd Becker cross a bridge at the Araku Valley waterfalls.

Greetings From Our President

I recently arrived home from spending three months in India. My efforts focused on building the HOINA leadership team and addressing high-priority maintenance items, including waterproofing the cement building roofs, replacing windows and screens where appropriate, and exchanging water pipes due to calcification.

The HOINA vehicles are also aging, requiring significant repairs, and/or replacement. The first vehicle requiring replacement in the very near future is the large school bus. HOINA has two buses for moving children and staff to school; on field trips; to “the city,” of Visakhapatnam, which is 1.5 hours away; etc. The buses are used daily six—or even seven—days per week and are crucial to our work as you can see in the picture at left.

As the miles accrue, HOINA eventually will need six figures over the next several years to completely update the fleet. Are you willing to partner with us to reach our goal of half of that amount in the next three months? You can donate online as well and note that your gift is for vehicles. Please use our secure online giving platform: <https://hoina.networkforgood.com/projects/109342-general-giving>



From the President
Todd Becker

Seeing Sites continued



Article author Julianna Orkin poses with Reilly Deckert and Abby Piotrowski.



Sarah Beck and Piper Johnson perch on an upper berth on the train ride to Araku Valley.

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

Contact us at:

717.355.9494

Email address: contact@hoina.org

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

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Help Us Help Her

Sometimes our children need a sponsor due to things happening on this side of the ocean. L. Susmitha's sponsor passed away recently. While this young lady is currently wrapping up her 10th year in school, 10+1 and 10+2 await her as she would like to be a doctor someday. Fortunately upper schooling in India is less expensive than here in the U.S.

Would you like to sponsor this teen as she heads to junior college? Please return the coupon above with your first monthly gift of \$35 to our office in Brownstown, PA. You can always set up a recurring transaction through our website as well. www.hoina.org We appreciate your generosity!



Susmitha when she came to HOINA



Susmitha today