



NEWS FROM

HOINA

HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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We All Smile the Same Language

By Khushi Iyer, York College of Pennsylvania Student

When you think of the word *language*, what comes to mind? Communication? Perhaps English, French, German, Mandarin, or Spanish cross your mind? Languages have always had a sense of beauty that have a unique way of bringing people together.

While being born and brought up in the United States in an Indian-American household, where my mother's family was from western India and my father's family was from southern India, I continuously had a fun concoction of cultures happening at home. Growing up, I always had a great sense of pride when my friends at school would ask me to speak to them in any of the Indian languages I knew. Sometimes they would think I just made up words and did not believe I could speak two Indian languages fluently (Hindi & Gujarati), and understand a third (Tamil), on top of English. It was uncommon.

Prior to visiting HOINA this past late December until mid-January, I tried my best to learn a small amount of another Indian language (Telugu) from my Telugu-speaking neighbors



Khushi and Ganesh sharing a smile.

as this is the primary language for the state of Andhra Pradesh, and HOINA's children. Upon my arrival in Andhra Pradesh, I immediately knew my Telugu would not suffice. Although the kids at HOINA speak English, I kept feeling this sense of guilt—"Why should someone stop speaking his or her language and accommodate me in their own home?" It simply felt wrong.

From a young age, I have always wanted the superpower to heal

someone through a simple hand hold, or the power to speak every language in the world. In those first two days at HOINA, I wished I had the power to speak every language.

I got so caught up in the idea that I could not speak the same language as most of HOINA's staff or some of the younger children, I was completely missing the big picture. We all smile the same language! Even though I

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Smile continued

could not speak to the dhobis each morning as I popped by to greet them as they did laundry nor say more than “Good morning,” “Good afternoon,” and “Good night” to the security guard, I was always greeted with the warmest and biggest smiles. I looked forward to them each day. Through those smiles, I felt so loved and would feel like we had the greatest conversations.

The love continued to be felt through the children, and I would like to tell you about a remarkable friend I made during my time there. Ganesh, lovingly called “Nishu”, is one of the most obliging boys at the home. When I went over the first day to cut vegetables for the kids’ meals, I saw him meticulously sweeping the dining hall floors. Some of the other older boys tried to have him come over to say Hi, but he would just shake his head No and continue his chores. Each day I would smile at him, and more and more I would get a bigger smile back. Although neither of us fully ever understood one another, by the end of



Our dhobis, Atchayamma V. (front) and Simhachalam J. (back), doing laundry and greeting everyone with a smile.

my time at HOINA we were making each other laugh out loud! It would always make me smile the most when I heard Nishu say “Akka, kucho,” or “Big sister, sit,” with a little hand pat next to him. His genuine smile continues to radiate even through a picture,

which just shows how all the smiles at HOINA transcend into love.

I feel nothing except bliss as I know there have been relationships created with my dear friends at HOINA through a sweet smile because we all do smile the same language. :)



Bruno Mural

Pictured here is our last featured York College of Pennsylvania student who visited our campus in the winter. Paige Miller is a talented artist who graciously spent her time painting this colorful portrait of one of our beloved HOINA dogs, Bruno. Our expanse of whitewashed walls always make great canvases for mural painters. Our thanks to Paige for leaving her mark on our campus!

Sweet Sibs Need Sponsors

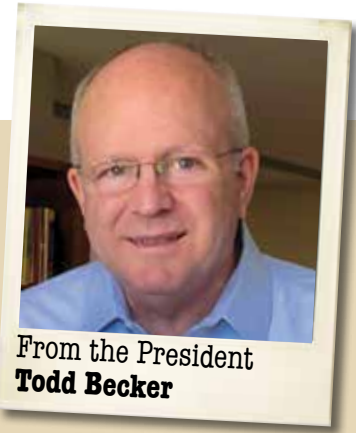
This month, we are in need of sponsors for a pair of siblings.

Rishitha Sri and Ritwik's parents were married in 2012 after they met at their place of employment. Three years later they were blessed with their daughter named Rishitha Sri. Three years after that, they had Ritwik. Soon thereafter, the children's father was found to have a hole in his heart. After hearing the news, the



mother abandoned her husband and her children. Ritwik's father searched for his wife, but he was not able to trace where she was. In the midst of this stressful situation, he had a stroke and went for bypass surgery two times to repair his heart. A HOINA supporter in Kothavalasa personally recommended this family to HOINA. Because of the father's poor health and economic situation, HOINA admitted these two siblings.

Would you consider sponsoring one or both of them? Your monthly gift of \$35 cares for one child. We are grateful to add children to our HOINA family and share your love and generosity with them. You may set up a monthly recurring donation at www.HOINA.org/give, or return your first gift with the coupon on page 4.



From the President
Todd Becker

Greetings

Today, I bring a personal update in addition to organizational news. HOINA's founder, "Mom" or Darlene, depending upon how you know her, experienced a significant decline in her health over the last 4 months. Darlene is now living in long-term care at John Knox Village very close to my home. Please remember her in your prayers as she works through another transition in her life. She no longer has access to a phone and doesn't use email. You can send her a card or short note at the following address:

Mrs. Darlene Large
600 NW Pryor Rd, C-203
Lee's Summit, MO 64081



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:

HOINA

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U.S.A.

The official registration and financial information of Homes of the Indian Nation (HOINA) may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling, 1.717.787.1057. Registration does not imply endorsement.

HOINA Sponsor and Contribution Coupon



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

- Please use this gift of \$ _____ to help replace HOINA's vehicles.
- I want to Sponsor a HOINA boy / girl (circle one). Here is my **first** monthly gift of \$35.
- Here's my gift of \$ _____ to help fund the general expenses of HOINA as we care for the children.
- This gift of \$ _____ is in honor / memory of (circle one)
(please print the name and address of person): _____

Mail coupon to: **HOINA**
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OR please consider donating online at www.hoina.org

All donations are tax deductible.



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Over Halfway to First Vehicle Purchase!

A few months ago HOINA President Todd Becker highlighted the need to create a special vehicle fund. The Mahindra small white van is the first requiring replacement. The van functions as a utility vehicle for moving small groups of people, and a lot of cargo on a daily basis. The primary work horse on campus, it carries lunch meals to our children at multiple schools 6 days per week, makes trips to town for supplies, and transports injured staff and children to the doctor, among other things. We need \$10,000 for a new van. Over \$5,655 has already been donated. Would you be willing to make a one-time donation to help us reach our goal?

