



NEWS FROM

**HOINA**

HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

1175-B S. Aspen Ave. Broken Arrow, OK 74012 • [www.hoina.org](http://www.hoina.org) • May/June 2025

## School's Out for Summer

*By Glory Janes, HOINA Manager*

The month of May is not only the ending of spring and beginning of summer, but also a month to celebrate many other events in the U.S. May holds many titles: Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage month—to celebrate the culture and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Cinco de Mayo, and also the Jewish American Heritage Month. Did you know that May has been named National Mental Health Awareness month? A few more well-known and popular “holidays” that occur in May are Memorial Day and Mother’s Day. Of course, our science fiction buffs look forward to Star Wars Day on May 4th.

While all these are so relevant to us here in the U.S., most of these are not celebrated in India, except for Mother’s Day, which is celebrated worldwide on the same day.

We also frequently quote that “April showers bring May flowers” here in the U.S., but in India it’s more like, “April exams and results bring May applications and admissions.” What does this mean? Last summer



Relishing a fresh watermelon at a picnic is a sure sign of summer.

I wrote a brief explanation about the educational milestones in the Indian education system. Let me give you a quick refresh:

Tenth standard is the graduating grade in Indian education. Graduating high school students must then decide if they want to go into Math (engineering and computer fields), Biology (doctors, nursing and other healthcare fields), Commerce (banking and office jobs), Polytechnic (skilled trades), or Arts courses at this point in their education careers. Their choice will

place them into an appropriate group accordingly for the next two grades of Intermediate College (called 10+1 & 10+2, the equivalent of our American 11th and 12th grades). After these two years, those who want to go into engineering and healthcare have to take an entrance test (NEET, EAMCET, IIT, etc.). The rank they get determines whether they get admission into an aided government college or not. If they score higher marks, then the option

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is to go into a private college, which is more expensive.

This year, we have 16 students who have taken the 10th standard exams, and 12 children who have taken the Intermediate exams (12th grade) in March. By the time you read this article, the results will have been announced during the last week of April. If all goes well, HOINA will have 28 graduates! Most of us have only one or maybe two students in our homes to plan for. To figure out the education and career paths for 28 kids requires a lot of research, brainstorming, counseling, and planning.

We start this process in January of every year by meeting one-on-one with each of the upcoming graduates to identify their area of interests and goals. Even after coming back to the U.S., Todd and I make sure we have regular meetings with the managers and house parents to plan the next steps for these children, according to their interests and capabilities. Thank God for Zoom and other apps that make communication so much easier now.

As we all know, waiting for results is challenging. Likewise, having so many kids sitting idle isn't exactly good for their mental or physical health, especially for teen girls and boys. At HOINA, participating in learning life skills and enjoying recreational time are key elements to help attain and provide holistic growth and to balance the rigorous six-day academic weeks of the school year.



Housemother Vimala teaching the girls how to knit.

As the coming season's temperatures will likely soar into the 100-110+ degree range, we try to use this time for some structured activities and also some unstructured pursuits, depending upon what everyone can manage in such hot weather. The staff keep our kids busy with many activities for recreation and also learning (or re-learning of) some life skills with the help of the core care team. This year our Housemother G. Vimala and Asst. Housemother Sridevi, brought in a new hobby—knitting. All the girls seemed to love learning how to knit and making their own little keepsakes.

Other activities to keep our vacationing students busy are painting, helping the kitchen staff in meal prep and cooking, English speaking skills, storytelling, skin care and hair care, playing dress-up, game time, picnics, and watching movies. Usually, the boys play cricket and more cricket, while the girls enjoy watching T.V., cooking, and chatting the most. Just as in America, summer break is the most fun and relaxing time of the whole year for the kids.



Keethana showing the square that she knit.

Once the results arrive, we begin the usual process of applying to colleges in certain fields of interest and then waiting to hear if students are admitted. You will most likely hear more details about the results

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Sridevi applies a turmeric face mask on Aswini to moisturize her skin.



Personal care lessons include coconut oil hair treatments to nourish hair and keep it shiny, an ongoing practice for Indian women.



The HOINA boys make the campus brighter with a fresh coat of white paint.

and courses in which some of the students enrolled in a coming newsletter.

We've all heard the famous saying "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime." That truth is exactly what we aim for at HOINA. With your generous support and partnership, HOINA has, thus far, taught not hundreds—but thousands—of young men and women just this: to live a life of independence, passion, responsibility, and dignity. Thank you, and Happy Summer!

## Greetings!



From the President  
**Todd Becker**

As progress in India rolls forward, so does HOINA. I was on a call late one night recently (India's morning) with HOINA's management team and two representatives of UltraTech Cement. UltraTech is one of the top cement-producing companies in India with locations throughout the nation. They are building a new grinding and packaging factory on a 150-acre campus located just over a half-mile behind our boys' home. The highly automated plant will operate day and night with cement aggregate coming by rail, additional raw materials coming by truck, and completed bags of cement exiting by truck.

Last night's call informed us that the villagers along the road are upset with the heavy traffic. UltraTech's solution is to build a new road which will end up running alongside HOINA's compound wall for 50+ meters. This road will face a constant flow of 80-100+ truckloads per day. From HOINA's perspective, their solution will subject us to constant noise, dust, and diesel exhaust as it enters our campus. The existing noise and light pollution from the 24x7 construction process is already significant. The villages HOINA is part of are no longer sleepy, little farming communities. We now have two large steel plants, a brick factory, and a soon-to-be cement grinding operation. Progress in India is moving forward. I just wish it were not on HOINA's doorstep.



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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### Send donations and address changes to:

HOINA

PO Box 7167

Lee's Summit, MO 64064 U.S.A.

Email financial questions to: [info@hoina.org](mailto:info@hoina.org)

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Meena showing off her knitted square. See Page One.

## Schedule Change

Editor's Note: Annually, we lighten our summer workload by combining two issues. This year, we are combining our May and June issues (a bit early) to accommodate family celebrations, travel, and the fact that I am having eye surgeries during May and need a break from the computer. Please watch your mail for the July issue. I appreciate your prayers.

– Letti Becker

