



Dear Friends,

Why wait until November for Thanksgiving? We had our own thanksgiving time at COF in early March and sat together as a family, sharing what we were grateful for already in 2017. What was supposed to be 10 minutes of sharing ended up to be 45 minutes of unstoppable raising of hands to share what God has done this year. Kids both older and younger were grateful for God's blessings in all areas of their lives—their school, spiritual well-being, and their physical stature. They were thankful for the many visitors who have become “family,” new technology, lots of celebrations and special food.

This quarter has indeed been a super busy one packed with loads of opportunities and blessings. God is so gracious to us, and we pray that He would bless each one of you for being a part of this ministry.

Rosie is looking forward to visiting many of our supporters during her trip to the US this month.

Blessings,

Rosie and Anand

LEARNING WITH SMILE

In February 2017, two volunteers from Stanford University, Wilson Wang and Sawyer Altman, visited COF and helped us SMILE (Stanford Mobile Inquiry-based Learning Environment). They set up Chromebooks and tablets provided by a Quest Foundation grant to connect to the SMILE platform. SMILE provides offline access to Wikipedia for Schools, Khan Academy, computer programming tutorials, childrens' books, Bible for Children, and a question-sharing learning environment. The children started having computer classes, learning how to type, do research, and ask questions. The volunteers also ran storytelling workshops with the children, with each child writing his or her own story. The stories will be illustrated and shared with other children from around the world.

“120 children, 10 staff, 7 teachers, 4 volunteers, 2 buffalo, 3 dogs, 85 mosquito bites, 4 parties, 15 variations of biryani rice, 1 cup of sugarcane juice, 30 Chromebooks, 3 SMILE devices, 10 workshops, 14 days, 4 flights, and 1 bleeding heart later, I’m back in America.” This is the start of Wilson’s travel blog on his trip to COF. To read more go to: <http://www.hopeacademyindia.com/2017/04/hope-in-visakhapatnam/>



1001 STORIES

Sawyer also helped the COF kids learn how to write their own stories as part of a program called "1001 Stories." Below is an excerpt from a story Sawyer wrote about his time with the COF children:

"I was amazed by the kinds of things that I saw and heard from the students in Vizag. Many of the stories that I collected in Vizag revolved around the central moral that education was precious...One child illustrated this well at the end of his story. He wrote: 'A child without education is like a bird without wings.'"

ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR

We wrapped up our academic year at the end of April. This has certainly been our best year thus far, as we've seen steady improvement in both teachers' skills and student performance. ALL children have passed and have been promoted to the next grade. The children in particular are showing creativity and understanding in class projects, and in making presentations with confidence. The 10th graders have worked very hard and we are waiting for their test results. The Junior College exam results have been received and all performed very well.

A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE



Emily, a teacher from England, had this to say after completing an extended time teaching at COF.

"It has been such a blessing and an honor to teach English at COF. The 11 weeks that I spent here went by so fast (too fast). During my time at COF, I helped the children with sponsor letters, taught phonics to the younger kids and grammar to the older kids. I loved getting to know each and every child. Nothing could have prepared me for these hardworking and studious kids. They are all so eager to learn and it's clear they value education immensely. Seeing the children's unwavering devotion to Jesus has been so inspiring and humbling. It is clear the Lord is guiding and leading this school for His Glory."

FAREWELL TO VASAVI



Vasavi has been at COF for 9 years. When she first came she was very shy but it didn't take long for us to discover her potential. She soon took over as the best student performer and dancer at COF. She loved the stage, to choreograph songs, and to teach younger girls dancing and acting.

She got married on April 8th to a very nice boy, Srinu, whose family very much wanted Vasavi to be married to their son. She would have been married at a younger age, but through God's grace she has been able to finish junior college. When girls have a good education and upbringing, they are considered more desirable for arranged marriages. Her last day at COF was a teary one, and we miss her lots but we are happy for her and wish her the very best.

PRAISES

- Our staff members, Satya and Naidu, were blessed with a baby boy.
- Successful results of Junior College Students' tests.
- Computers, Chromebooks and tablets for use in our kids' education.
- The third floor of the boys' dorm is close to completion.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Good results for all the 10th grade students.
- Guidance for future studies for the 10th graders and junior college students.
- God's protection and good health to cope with the summer heat.
- Two more teachers for the next academic year.
- Rosie's upcoming US trip in May.
- High School Mission Trip from LOPC in July.
- Hope Academy project

MORE SPACE FOR THE BOYS

The construction of the third floor of the Boys' Dorm is nearing completion. The focus is on the interior work remaining to be accomplished. What a blessing this added space will be for our kids.



A BIRTHDAY—FOOD OR BEACH?

“What would you like to have for my birthday?” asked Anand. The answer wasn't cake, chocolates, special food, or balloons. It was rather one word—“Beach!” And so it was a trip to the beach, where ALL of us could be kids. It is one place where the smiles are the widest ever. The children had fun catching all kinds of fishes, playing in the water, jumping around in the sand and imagining swimming in the shallow water along the shore. Taking a big bunch to the beach is not as hard as it sounds as they are all always very well behaved.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Shopping is always fun...but for 120?

To shop for all the kids, we take a dozen children of all sizes to the shopping mall. When we return home, we see all the remaining kids waiting patiently at the gate. Then, joyful screams follow. We were able to get the best clothes and the kids sure did look great in them.



Christmas celebrations at kids' family villages

We were able to visit some of our children's remote villages and celebrate Christmas with them. The villagers were very grateful to COF for taking care of the kids from their area. It was a treat to visit their homes and learn more about their families and lifestyle. We hope to see the children of COF excelling and contributing to the welfare of the villages from which they came.

HEALTH CAMP

It was that time again, a few tears and screams for shots, but we all made it through it. It was an Annual Health Camp by the Faza Foundation and Aarif Hospital. All the children were checked for overall health. It's a blessing to have these doctors available to support the health needs of the children.

COF KIDS IN THE COMMUNITY

Recently, the kids got an opportunity to participate in events organized by the community. All our girls attended a women's awareness program where they learned many things and enjoyed playing games with other girls. In addition, a local charity organized an event—magic show, patriotic songs and dances—and invited all of our children. Of course our older

children's dance performances were excellent. Also, Vignan University organized a sports and cultural event for local school children, which included track events, memory games, cricket, speech, dance and singing competition. Our children bagged almost ALL the prizes. Wherever the children have participated and performed, the organizers said that our children were very well behaved, helpful, bright, happy and confident, with good English speaking skills.



LOPC YOUTH VISIT IN JULY

This July Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church will send 50 High School Students and 15 adult chaperones to Vizag to serve for two weeks at COF. The LOPC youth will work on finishing up the interior to the boys' dorm, and work on other "projects" around the children's home such as landscaping, and reorganizing the library. They will also spend time in classrooms working with the children and teaching lessons. Please keep this mission trip in your prayers, the trip dates are July 15-30.

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Please let us know your suggestions and feedback on our newsletter. Also, let us know if you want any information regarding the kids to be added in the next newsletter. We would love to hear from you. Also, if you have prayer requests, please send them to us; the children would love to pray for you. Send them to Rosie at rosie.anand@gmail.com.



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