



Newsletter

Ilula Orphan Program

December, 2016

We are happy to share with you the news of December 2016

- ✓ Examination hall progress
- ✓ IOP staff trip to Amani and Nzihi Orphans homes
- ✓ IOP Preschools graduation
- ✓ Christmas Party at IOP
- ✓ Secret friends and Christmas presents
- ✓ IOP staff trip to Mikumi National Park
- ✓ Volunteers Page

THE EXAMINATION HALL

Monthly Update

IOP TZ is pleased with the progress of contributions for the completion of the examination hall from different donors. We have currently received 80,000,000 TSH. We extend a heartfelt thanks to IOP Netherlands for their donation of USD 6000 which is about 20 million Tanzanian Shillings, IOP USA for donations from various individuals totaling 6 million Tanzanian Shillings (USD 2630). We also thank Bell & Carlene Bate for contributing USD 14,500. In addition, we are grateful to the IOP sister school in Norway, Kragerø Secondary School, for donating 24 million Tanzanian Shillings (NOK 93,000). During the IOP international meeting in Luxembourg, several pledges were made to see that IOP completes the construction tasks. We thank different friends and supporters who donated other funds in December 2016. Thanks to Fovea Foundation for supporting IOP with NOK 280,000(USD33, 091.37) in December 2016. The amount gives IOP the great and firm hope that construction of the examination hall will be done to an end.

IOP has been able to accomplish the following activities; Roofing and Purchasing and installing inside door frames and shutters.

The work is in good progress as pictured below. Congratulations to friends and supporters who made it possible for the hall to reach this far. You have been friends in need and friends indeed. We look forward to using the hall for examinations for the first time and for the third graduation ceremony in our hall. This is a big step in the right direction!

There is still much left to make the hall and surroundings fully completed including electricity installation and wiring, construction of toilets, ceiling boards, painting, tiles, landscaping and drainage. We thank all friends who have done the great works to make this construction activity a success. We shall keep you updated until the end of the construction. Together we can make the world a better place.



THE IOP STAFF TRIP TO AMANI AND NZIHI ORPHANS HOMES

On 3rd of December 2016 the IOP staff visited the orphans homes in Nzihi and Mbigili. This was part of the campaign on 16 Days of Activism on Stopping Gender Based Violence. The day started well where we had to do shopping for the Amani Center and buy things for the four boys we support in the Nzihi orphans home.



On the trip we had IOP staff, a representative from the Kilolo District Police Gender Office, one volunteer from IOP Norway committee (Elisbeth Dokmo) and journalists from Azam TV. It was a productive day as we visited the different projects at the “home” like drip irrigation, children clubs, green house agriculture, and many other activities. We had great fun as we played with children at the Amani Orphans Home. To visit children in the other orphanages was great. After spending time at the Amani orphans home we moved to Nzihi orphans Home in Iringa District to see the four boys

who were taken to Nzihi after being abandoned by their father. When we reached Nzihi village we met with other orphan children and played with them. The money used to buy food and clothes for the children in the orphanage together with the four boys was contributed by the SUFH group (Global Safari Class 2016/2017), volunteers and the IOP staff. Thanks a lot to the SUFH group, volunteers and IOP staff members for contributing to make our trip great. We are thankful to IOP staff for taking their time to visit the children despite having other responsibilities to the children living at the IOP Center. It was a great trip and learning. It made us meditate more on taking care of the orphans and the community at large.



2016 IOP GRADUATIONS

This December IOP celebrated the graduation of our Pre-school and Kindergarten students. After a year filled with learning, playing, and growing, our children are ready to advance to the next stage of education. In honor of the progress and success of the students, each school held a graduation ceremony to celebrate.

Sollerud Kindergarten

In its very first graduation since it opened in March of 2016, Sollerud welcomed parents and members of the community to witness the success of IOP students. The ceremony was hosted by IOP's Head of the Department of Education, Justine, in which he graciously honored 21 kindergarten graduates. US volunteer Jake Richers, was the ceremony's guest of honor who provided the event with a speech wishing the young graduates best wishes for their academic future.



The pupils are having lunch on graduation day

Throughout the ceremony Sollerud students participated in a presentation of skills that they have learned throughout the year such as the center's own Delila who recited the English alphabet and Witness who confidently sang to all of her guests. Awards were presented to students who excelled in areas of mathematics, English, and cleanliness, among others. IOP Center's Stella received the award for Best student in Leadership! Wearing graduation caps, all

graduates received their certificates from Sollerud School. We wish all of our children the best of luck in primary school.



The graduates are singing on graduation day

Kids' Corner Pre-School



On the 21st of December, Kids Corner Pre School honored 24 graduates in a wonderfully hosted ceremony in Isele. The event began with students presenting skills that were learned throughout the year such as naming all countries in Africa and counting in English. The ceremony moved to the village hall which was beautifully decorated by Kids Corner staff and filled with family members excited to experience their graduates move forward to the next step in their education.

Graduating children entertained the audience with song and dance, wishing a farewell to their fellow students. The afternoon was filled with music and dancing provided by Deogratius and two very enthusiastic Masters of Ceremonies who aided in support of Kids Corner by fundraising for a new computer.

Closing the ceremony, head teachers and staff provided cake to all children and guests and presented certificates to Kids Corner graduates. All in attendance shared a celebratory meal together that had been beautifully prepared and served by school cooks.

We wish all Kids Corner graduates the very best and many blessings as they transition to the next level of schooling. We are very proud of you!



The graduates from Kids Corner are singing on graduation day

IOP CHRISTMAS PARTY

On the 18th of December, IOP held its annual Christmas party to celebrate the holiday before the Center girls returned to their villages to visit their relatives. The night was filled with music, dancing, stories, food, and laughter as the IOP girls, staff, and volunteers spread their Christmas cheer throughout the center. The celebration was hosted by our very own Master of Ceremony Justine, and Deogratus provided the musical entertainment, playing a variety of fun Christmas songs.



The night began with a blessing from Pastor Upendo Malaki, wishing us love and good health for the Christmas season and the upcoming year. Guests of IOP, such as volunteers and members of the Ilula community, received a warm welcome and were kindly invited to join the festivals. Throughout the evening, Berit and returning U.S. volunteer Jake, shared stories of Christmas spent in their hometowns and our hosts provided fun games and trivia for the children and staff to enjoy. The matron, Overnike Koko, celebrated the holiday with offerings of Christmas cake to the IOP family. Our cheerful center girls, dressed in festive costumes, entertained guests with holiday narration of famous Christmas stories. Following the cheerful performances, the children exchanged handmade gifts with each other and received holiday greetings from volunteers from outside Tanzania.



Our joyous night closed with the IOP family singing Christmas carols together in three different languages around our brightly lit Christmas tree. Everyone enjoyed a bountiful meal of rice, potatoes, meat, vegetables, and fruit kindly and carefully prepared by the center cooks. The IOP Christmas party was a wonderful way to celebrate the holiday and all the blessings we have received throughout the year.

SECRET FRIENDS AT IOP AND CHRISTMAS GIFTS

In an effort to celebrate the Christmas holiday, IOP Center staff participated in a gift exchange, spreading cheer and good wishes for the upcoming year. In November, each member of the staff chose one name at random to whom to offer a gift. Each offering provided warm wishes of good health, happiness, and faith for 2017. The gift exchange remained a surprise from each receiver, as staff didn't know who their secret friend was until they received their gift on December 23!



Christmas cards and presents for IOP staff as arranged by Berit Skaare

Through this small act of kindness among the staff, IOP has set a great example of generosity and compassion for the Tanzanian Community. We hope that this holiday everyone received many blessings and good faith for the New Year.

IOP STAFF MIKUMI NATIONAL PARK TRIP

The year 2016 ended with a fabulous trip to Mikumi National Park for 87 IOP employees. Ajolon Mgeveke was one of the employees that had a fabulous day at the park. Ajolon is 29 years old and works in the Human Resource Office in IOP.



This was his first trip to Mikumi and he said that it was a beautiful trip. He saw many animals including a family group of lions, male, female and kittens. In addition he saw giraffes, water buffalo, zebras, hippos, crocodiles and implalas as well as many smaller animals. It was interesting watching the giraffes and how they walk and eat leaves from the trees.

Although seeing the animals was great, Ajolon said that it was even more important for him to learn about the environment and that there was no trash on the ground in the park. He learned that people need to respect the animals and learn to be friends with them. He said that many people only see the animals in pictures, on money or on television. On this trip he got to see them in their natural environment and that animals are part of our lives, not our enemies. They should be our friends and not be abused. Ajolon knows that poaching is a huge problem in Tanzania and said that we need to educate people about the problems with poaching. Tanzania is famous for its wild animals and when they are needlessly killed it hurts all of Tanzania.



Ajolon also talked about how great it was to be with all of the other IOP staff members and spend time doing activities on the bus and at the park. Such activities helped create a sense of togetherness and a new spirit for the staff. It refreshes them and prepares them for the new year. Eating and drinking together helps create a strong family and he would like to see such activities happen every year. He ended the interview by thanking Berit for arrangements and **TEAM UELAND** from Norway for financial support.



VOLUNTEER PAGE

The end of the year had three new volunteers at the IOP Center. Victor and Kathy Starostka came from Pacific City, Oregon and Maura Secrets came from Sullivan, Indiana. They will be at IOP for two weeks and will work on a variety of projects during their time here including teaching English, teaching music, playing with the children, gardening, painting, distributing food to the foster families housing children in the villages and perhaps most importantly, learning about the Tanzanian people and culture. Of course some extra fun activities are planned for the group such as visiting the Masai people, visiting Mikumi National Park and doing some souvenir shopping in Iringa. Each of the volunteers said that they were really impressed with IOP and all of the many services that the organization provides. The group plans on being strong advocates for IOP when they return to the United States. Kathy and Vic brought many school supplies for the children at IOP and Maura brought dresses for the smaller children at the Center. Although she is only 15 years old, Maura has her own mission program and has coordinated the donation of over 2,000 dresses for children in a variety of countries. Kathy said that the highlight of her trip was seeing how joyful the children are as they sing and dance nearly every day. Vic said that he was amazed at the number of children in the different programs that IOP provides and his favorite part of this experience was learning about the different cultures. He also said that the climate is much nicer than he expected, not too hot and humid and there are very few mosquitos. Maura said that she loves working with the preschoolers and teaching them English words like lion and cat. She has learned a lot about the different cultures and different ways of life and is amazed at how little people have and can still survive. This trip has inspired her to come on other mission trips.



Maura, Kathy and Victor from USA arrived at IOP on December 31st, 2016

INITIATIVES

IOP has some projects that need fundraising and financial support!

- Funds to complete the examination hall and the girl's dormitory at the Lord's Hill High School
- Annual operating expenses of about \$49,000 for the IOP Center (Orphanage)
- Annual operating expenses of the IOP pre-school "Kids' Corner" \$10,500
- We have a good number of students waiting for Sponsorship so they can go to school.

Your decision to sponsor one girl or boy will totally change a life.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like more information about projects and/or sponsoring opportunities, please contact:

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