

## DEAF ACTION NEWSLETTER - MAY 2014

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### OUR KENYA SCHOOL - BEST OUT OF 48 DEAF SCHOOLS!

**CONGRATULATIONS** to the students, teachers and parents at **Immanuel Christian School for the Deaf** for this great achievement. Each year our deaf students in Kenya sit the same government examinations as hearing students sit. The only difference is the questions can be signed to them and a little extra time is allowed for deaf students. Our school gained the highest overall passes compared to the other 48 deaf schools in all of Kenya. What an achievement for the school and students!

The requirements for graduating from Kinder to Primary School are also quite demanding but 7 children graduated from Kindergarten last year and commenced Primary Education in January. This school also excels in the sporting area and were second overall in the County sports, and after the Regional competitions 3 students will go on to the National level.

A new girls' dormitory was built a few years ago so it is the boys' turn for a new one now. We are very grateful to all supporters who have contributed to this new boys' dormitory.

The brick work is finished and the dorm is nearing completion. The roof has recently been added and the rendering and inside lining will soon be finished.



The students are very thankful for such comfortable dormitories with mosquito nets in the wet season lessening the danger of malaria from mosquito bites.

There are more than 10 students who have graduated from ICSD now studying at **Kuja High School for the Deaf** and we hope they will be future leaders of the deaf in Kenya. **Thank you to all our sponsors of students in Kenya.** Education is making a huge difference to their lives, greatly improving their chances of employment in later years.

### RWANDA and ZAMBIA

Education for the deaf is very expensive in many African countries and we are sorry we cannot support more deaf students. But I am pleased to report that Uwimana who is an orphan of war is progressing very well at High School in Rwanda. She also taught herself to use computers, and has gained many information technology skills. Hastings in Zambia comes top or second top of his grade each term and is a very worthy student. Chabanya's family are extremely grateful that a school was found which

## **OUR DIRECTOR at LIGAO RETIRES after nearly 20 YEARS**

The Fishermen of Christ Learning Center in the Philippines celebrated their 29th year of providing education for deaf students, combined with the retirement of Director Mrs Chi Luna in March this year. Hundreds of deaf students have studied there over the years and many have continued their friendships through deaf communities in the area that have been established since the school started. These communities are very important for the deaf. Many students have made lifelong personal friends and can seek advice from older deaf people.

It was a very special day and 25 students graduated; 5 from kinder, 5 from elementary and 15 from high school. Neville made a presentation to Chi with thanks for her dedicated work. The end of a school year is a very memorable time especially for the graduates and their parents.



The next day all the students, teachers, staff and some parents spent a day at the beach at Bacacay. It was a relaxing day to finish the school year and say goodbye to teachers and friends.

## **BORONGAN and BACOLOD**

Neville Muir, our Founding Director recently travelled to Samar Island to visit our deaf friends and see what has changed since Typhoon Yolanda devastated this area of the Philippines in 2013. Little progress has been made in some areas and many people are living with blue plastic protecting their homes that they cannot afford to rebuild. There are now hillsides of 'sticks' that were palm trees and a ship has been driven up on to a road! No lives were lost on Samar Island but many people in the villages have no jobs and are struggling to rebuild their homes. Our dormitory has been repaired and the Borongan deaf community is meeting again.



**BACOLOD NEWS:** Albert and Kim are our leaders in Bacolod. We are very grateful to Kim's family who have offered to loan the money to purchase the dormitory in Bacolod. The amount now paid as rental will be sufficient to pay the loan off over some years. A new social worker who will advise and help our students has been appointed.

## **DEAF MINISTRIES INSTITUTE at DAVAO, PHILIPPINES**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO DMI DAVAO!** The Philippine Department of Education has now granted them authority to conduct their own Elementary School as well as Kinder, Secondary School and the College levels already approved. Their Graduation Ceremony was in March and 16 students graduated. There were 5 college graduates who have completed their bachelor degree, 7 secondary graduates and 4 elementary school graduates who will commence secondary school in June.

A special Night of Nights concert was presented to local and international guests in January and it highlighted the high level of performing skills that our deaf students learn.

Even the little ones and a deaf and blind boy presented dances from different parts of the Philippines. It was an excellent concert.



*Although it is now*

All the visitors will remember it for a long time. Drums or music that can be 'felt' by the deaf students were used to keep their signing together.

*school holidays in the Philippines there are 20 students who live at the school in Davao full time. They were foundling babies or are orphans who are cared for full time by the dedicated Director and family.*

*Many of the teachers and other staff in our schools give a lot of their free time and love to these deaf students who have no direct family to care for them out of school hours.*

## **MYANMAR**

There are now 34 deaf students attending the 2 schools in Yangon and Kalay in Myanmar and making good progress in their learning. Overseas visitors were warmly welcomed in January. English has been added to their curriculum and the students enjoyed learning some Australian signs. The students from the Kalay school performed songs in sign language at a church in Kalay and also in Kyainn village prior to school finishing



**Thank you for your interest in our deaf students and your financial support. It is greatly appreciated.**

If you would like more information please contact Jenny Reid at [jen-ny.reid@deafmin.org](mailto:jen-ny.reid@deafmin.org)

## 14 STUDENTS STUDYING AT TERTIARY LEVEL IN UGANDA

Past wars and epidemics in Uganda have left many deaf children without parents and little hope of education. But 14 of our sponsored students are now attending universities in Kampala and Mbale (with an interpreter), or Teachers' College, or suitable vocational training courses in Uganda.

Congratulations to our young deaf teachers who have gained positions as deaf Teachers of the Deaf. They still need to complete higher teaching examinations after they have gained experience in the schools, and some do not receive any payment yet. This photo shows one of our deaf students now teaching at a new deaf unit for 20 children, but he is not being paid a salary! His Certificate was not issued in time last year for him to be allocated a paid position for this year!

He will have to wait another year. The families are poor and cannot pay any school fees. However all that does not lessen his zeal to serve the children he teaches.



He cultivates crops to support himself and is happy to teach for free this year. His certificate has now been accepted and he expects to be put on the payroll next year.

*Deaf Action Uganda has commenced meetings of parents, guardians, teachers and older sponsored students where their educational needs can be shared. Parents and Guardians are advised how they can help students study at home. Many adults in Uganda tell us they have not had a good education themselves, but appreciate assistance so they can communicate with and help the children in their care.*

The young children at St. Mary's School for the Deaf are orphans or come from very poor families who can't afford to pay school fees. Thank you sponsors.



Education makes a great difference to deaf children. They come to school with sad little faces but leave with skills, knowledge and the ability to communicate with deaf friends.

**THANK YOU to all our loyal SPONSORS and SUPPORTERS. Many deaf students could not go to school without your support. You might like to pass this newsletter to someone else who is interested after you have read it. Thank you.**

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