



The School of St Jude

St Jude's News

Thank you for sharing our newsletter with your family and friends

OCTOBER, 2015



Our Form 4 graduates were dressed the part during this month's graduation ceremony at Smith campus.

So much to celebrate as our Form 4s graduate!

Our 139 promising Form 4 students celebrated an exciting education milestone by graduating this month.

Proud parents, fellow students, special guests and staff made up the hundreds who attended the jubilant ceremony at Smith campus and enjoyed celebratory performances by the Ngoma Club, Africanas' group and traditional dance graduates.

"The stage that we're at has built us a good foundation," Form 4 student Christina said. "The education we've been provided has improved our chances in numerous sectors including political, social and economic."

Christina's words, spoken on behalf of her fellow graduates, are all the more striking considering the gross school enrollment rate in Tanzania drops from

93% in primary to a staggering 35% in secondary. Just 2.4% of the Tanzanian students who entered Standard 1 in 2002 completed secondary school.

Professor Patrick Ndakidemi, deputy vice chancellor of The Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology, was struck by the significance of the event.

He opened his speech by saying he was so excited he could cry, "because (the graduates) are the future". Prof Ndakidemi supported the sentiment by announcing he would personally give 1 million TZS Tanzanian shillings (\$637 AUS) to reward students for discipline.

Find out more about the day on page 2.

Help break the poverty cycle and encourage a future of education by sponsoring a St Jude's student at www.schoolofstjude.org/support-us/donate.html

So much to celebrate as our Form 4s graduate!

St Jude's founder Gemma Sisia encouraged graduates to take this time to carefully consider their opportunities.

"Every single university we've visited in Africa recruits on marks. It's as simple as that," she said.

"If you want to do medicine, you want to do engineering, or you want to do teaching... If you want to get into university you need to get very high marks in the subject you are studying."

Gemma also impressed the importance of aiming for a scholarship.

"The Form 6 graduates who finished in May and are doing community service are currently filling out scholarship forms," she explained.

"Many of the questions on the form are about what you have done, spirit-wise, that makes you deserving of that scholarship. How many community service hours have you done, how many hours have you given tutoring to younger students, how often have you helped people in your village? They're the types of things you need to get ready for your scholarship forms."

Vice-chairperson of the Secondary School Board, Jacqueline Mkindi, also had advice to share.

She said the "remarkable" performance of last year's 126 Form 4 graduates, with 70 distinctions and 55 merits, should be an inspiration to them all.

"The school was number three out of 146 schools in the region, and 24th out of 2322 schools nationally," she said. "It doesn't matter where you're coming from, what matters is who you become tomorrow. If you want be a success in life you have to be focused, you have to work hard, you have to continuously train yourself and you have to include those principals in each and everything you do in life."





We're proud of our award-winning students Amani and Penueli, who had their voices heard across the world.

Our students Inspire at international competition

Gemma Sisia, Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Albert Einstein, Usain Bolt, Oprah Winfrey and Gandhi.

These are just some of the inspirational figures featured by students from around the globe in the Inspire>Aspire international poster competition.

St Jude's student Penueli became an international finalist for her essay on Nelson Mandela, and our international winner Amani won with words inspired by our very own founder. Following the theme of Global Citizens in the Making, our two finalists were picked from 55,000 entries from 30 countries.

"It is part of the school passion to create future Tanzanian leaders," Amani said. "I really wonder about Gemma Sisia. She is not even from Africa but she decided to help me, a stranger. Her heart is full of grace that's why I chose her as my subject."

Amani, who is in his final year of school, said he would like to do "at least" a year of community service after graduating to demonstrate his appreciation for his free, high-quality education.

"When I am well financially, I will sponsor some children," the 21-year-old added.

Penueli, who is also in her final year, said she entered the competition for the challenge because she had never competed against students from other countries.

"I chose Nelson Mandela as he emphasized that we should take into consideration education to make change in our society," she said. "I really like his quote 'Education is the most powerful tool that you can use to change the world'."

The 19-year-old said "believing in yourself" is key to inspiring others.

"If you dare to do something and put much effort into it you will always be successful," she said. "I would like to help people around me and teach those who didn't have the privilege of a quality education, like I have at St Jude's. I would love to share the knowledge that I obtain from St Jude's."

The Inspire>Aspire Commonwealth Awards was held in conjunction with the Commonwealth Games in Scotland last year, and was promoted around the world.

The UK and international winners and finalists were published in the Inspire-Aspire Official Awards Magazine.

Read published excerpts from the winning posters, including Amani and Penueli's work at <http://bit.ly/1PUtvPk>

Find out more about Inspire>Aspire at www.inspire-aspire.org.uk/about

Rotary friends help brighten Lightness' future

Overcoming adversity is what St Jude's is all about, and with the help of some dedicated individuals, senior primary student Lightness is proving that nothing can stop her from achieving her potential.

Due to cerebral palsy, Lightness is unable to use her hands, even for the most basic of tasks. Amazingly, the cheery 13-year-old has adapted to learn, eat – and even paint! - with her feet.

Lightness' determination and the support she has received through the school network means her future is bright, despite being in a country experiencing severe poverty and a lack of services for people with disabilities.

It all began when St Jude's sponsor and former special education teacher Noela Phillips heard of Lightness's plight.

The Brisbane resident reached out to Brisbane High-Rise Rotary Club's former President and CEO of Cerebral Palsy League of Queensland (CPL), Angela Tillmanns, who was about to embark on a Rotary visit to St Jude's.

Angela understood how specialized equipment could make a huge difference to Lightness' life, and aided the Rotary club's donation of an iPad to help her learning.

"On meeting Lightness, and seeing her determination to be the best she could be, it was easy to get involved," recalled Angela. "It was amazing watching her use her hands to make things happen on the iPad that we had taken with us. It was a great way to demonstrate to Lightness what was possible with new technology."

The Tillmann's family, backed by the expertise of CPL, are also helping Lightness reach her dream of being confident enough to eat alongside her peers, as she currently has lunch with the school nurse in her office.

Lightness is trialing a specially-designed spoon which attaches to her wrist, and with lots of practice supported by the St Jude's Community Relations team, we hope one day she may be able to feed herself.

The Tillmann's family covered the cost of CPL occupational therapist, John Pashen, to help buy the correct equipment and make sure Lightness and her teachers had the support to use it effectively.



Lightness enjoys sharing her skills at our recent ECA (Extra Curricular Activities) Day.

Rotary friends help brighten Lightness' future

"John supports many people living in remote areas of Queensland via Skype and has developed good skills in assisting people with disabilities via this method, so we had great confidence that he would be able to help Lightness and the staff at St Jude's," Angela said.

Brisbane GP Dr Gordon Mor, who is part of a medical team that visits St Jude's for annual student checkups, also delivered some additional equipment for Lightness.

"Dr Mor took a large bag of equipment over to Lightness to trial, as it is important to trial a wide range of equipment so we can get the best fit between the person and the technology," Angela said.

Based on Mr Pashen's advice, the Tillmanns also provided two specially-designed computer keyboards to enable Lightness to access computers at the same rate as her peers. She currently sits on a specially-built seat with her toes operating a larger-than-average keyboard. One day she hopes to master a special keyboard with a device strapped to her hands, whilst sitting in a seat beside her classmates.

Dr Pashen said he found working with Lightness inspiring as she is so motivated, shows a willingness to

try new technology and persevere with it.

"When we visited Lightness she proudly explained that she wanted to be an artist," Angela said. "Her work was exceptional so she definitely has a future there. However, with her academic ability, excellent English communication skills and the right equipment and support, she could definitely be a professional such as an accountant or lawyer."



Angela Tillmanns, Lightness and Louise Arvier working together.

Read more about Rotary's support for St Jude's here:
<http://bit.ly/1GOSINp>



Lightness working with art teacher Mr Kefis.

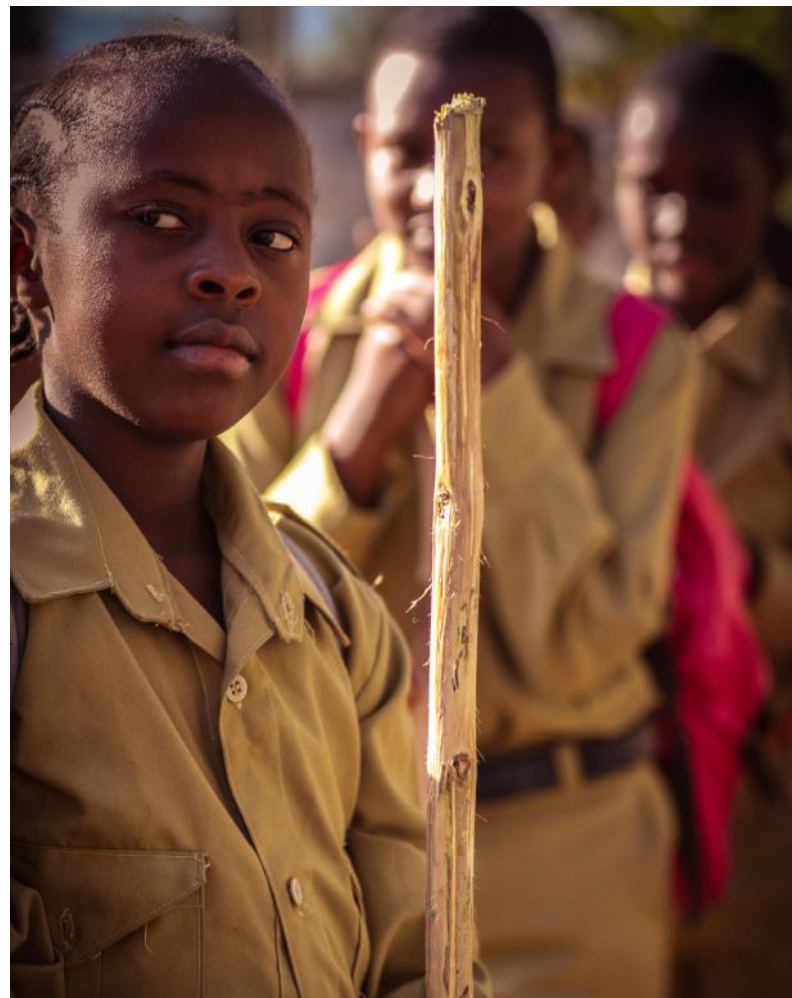
Hiking the great outdoors to learn about Tanzania



Nature, team work and the great outdoors were all part of the hiking experience some of our senior primary students enjoyed last month.

More than 20 students took part in a Twiga group hike around the local Moshono area to appreciate the local plant and animal life, as well as learn about hiking etiquette and safety.

Participants brought along trail maps, binoculars and sketch pads or journals to record their outdoors experience. They were given hiking etiquette guidance, including knowing the layout of your area, safety precautions to be taken, knowing your route and how to be mindful of others while enjoying nature.



Read about other St Jude's students following their passions, and see more photos, on our blog:
www.schoolofstjude.org/our-stories/our-stories.html



Emiliana (left) and Neema are fresh from three weeks of non-stop excitement at the invite-only STEAM Camp.

Full STEAM ahead for our women in science

"There is nothing more exciting than seeing a woman doing something she is passionate about," St Jude's senior secondary (Form 6) student Emiliana said.

And she would know.

Emiliana and secondary (Form 3) student Neema are fresh from three weeks of non-stop excitement at the inaugural, invite-only Women in Science (WiSci) STEAM Camp.

The two were among 120 eager young minds from eight African countries and the US, who participated in intensive workshops run by international industry leaders in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM).

"I met different girls who are really passionate about science, and there was this lady, a mentor from Intel called Kay, who impressed me so much. When anything went really wrong with coding all the men would say 'where's Kay let's bring Kay in here'," Neema said. "I was very inspired by her and two counsellors from Rwanda, Elodea and Anabella. Those ladies, they are only 19 or 20 and are in university; they are computer majors and made me think I can do it if they have."

Sub-Saharan Africa lags behind the rest of the world when it comes to gender equality in STEAM fields. The UN's 2013 MDG Report shows the gap increasing as female enrolment rates in STEAM drop at the secondary and tertiary levels.



Emiliana (above photo, bottom row, third from right) and Neema (below photo, middle row, sixth from the left) enjoy STEAM camp with their international teams.



Sponsor a student like Neema or Emiliana and help them achieve more. Go to www.schoolofstjude.org/support-us/sponsor.html to donate or call 0438 783 035.

Neema and Emiliana are bucking the trend and proving they have plenty of promise, by taking out two of the three prestigious prizes during STEAM.

The first week of the camp, coordinated by Microsoft, saw the students design multilevel computer games. It was Neema's time to shine with her game being voted best of the week!

The second week had Intel build on the girls' programming skills by being instructed in engineering robots, and the third, themed around entrepreneurship and design, saw Emiliana's nous for problem solving awarded with a prize for creativity and innovation.

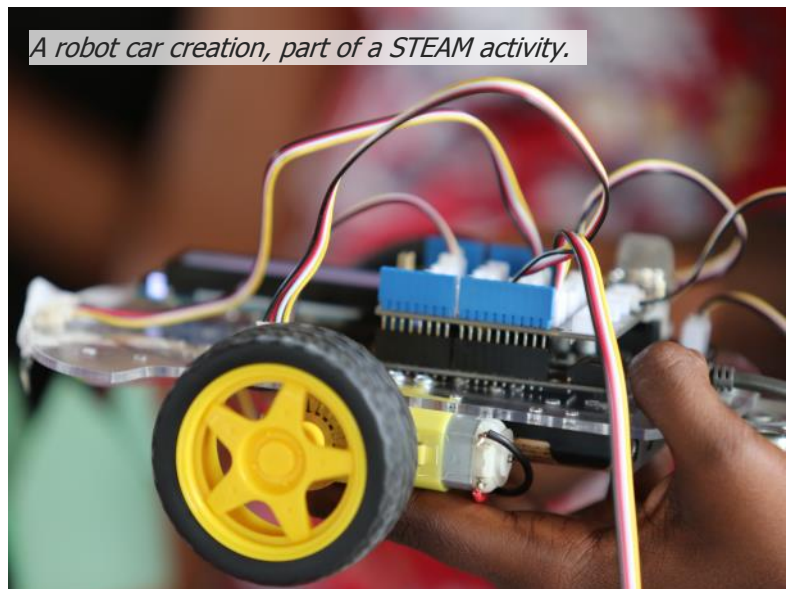
"We had to come up with a problem in society and show how we could use our knowledge of technology to solve it; my group solved a problem on deforestation which is a big problem in Africa," Emiliana said.

"Our focus was on Madagascar because in the last 20 years it has lost 70% of its trees; we designed a sensor, you could put in a tree and it could monitor around 400 other trees. When someone is trying to cut down a tree or burn in the area the sensor would alert officials."

Neema's group project addressed the prevalence and under reporting of rape in South Africa.

"We decided to make an app to help people report rape cases. The app had GPS which can show you nearby hospitals and clinics, psychology resources and it had a place for psychologists to volunteer and talk to victims," Neema said. "For the final presentations, Janet Kagame came, and we also had a letter from Michelle Obama with encouraging words."

"We were lucky to get that experience at the camp and we promised to share what we learned at our schools and in our societies," Neema said.



A robot car creation, part of a STEAM activity.



U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama has offered her support to the STEAM camp female young achievers.



Students who attended the camp also met Rwandan First Lady Janet Kagame (centre).

Democracy in action at Smith campus

On the cusp of Tanzania's general election, St Jude's secondary school students have seen their own democracy in action.

Senior secondary students Farida and Victor, have been elected by their peers as Head Girl and Head Boy at our secondary (Smith) campus for the coming year.

And they certainly embody the St Jude's vision for community-focused leaders.

"I know I am good enough to lead the people," 20-year-old Victor said, after his successful campaign. "I have always been around the people and I wanted to be their leader to address their needs. I want everyone at The St Jude's to enjoy being here, to the point where, when the students go on holiday, they can't wait to return."

Farida said she was keen to make an impact.

"I can bring change by being fair to (the students') matters," the 19-year-old explained. "I can make a change in school, and will gain many leadership skills."

Numerous St Jude's senior students ran for office, complete with a week of campaigning, and the results of the whole school's votes were announced last month.

Victor and Farida were given valuable guidance from the former Head Boy Sifuni, and former Head Girl Amina.

"(Amina) told me I'm supposed to have a positive relationship with everyone, including my fellow leaders, for this will make it easier to relate to them and talk about their matters," Farida said.

Victor, meanwhile, shadowed Sifuni to get the edge over his fellow candidates.

"I spent most of the time with him even before election, collecting some advice and ideas," he said.

Sifuni said the responsibilities of the Heads have increased recently and now include advising students, ensuring uniforms are neat and tidy, classrooms clean and students disciplined.

Farida and Victor said they expected the roles to improve their confidence and leadership skills, and were both aware that it would not be an easy ride.

Victor was diplomatic in explaining how they would handle the challenges.

"You know some students don't want to understand and follow school rules," he said. "I know this will be some of the difficulties but I am prepared to face them. We have different ways and if (a problem) is too big for me to handle I will pass that to the management."

He said school ideals were also reflected in the Head Boy and Head Girl roles.

"We are about bringing the new leaders of Tanzania. It is part of the school passion to create future Tanzanian leaders," he said.

Support a rising star today and sponsor one of our developing leaders. Go to www.schoolofstjude.org/support-us/sponsor.html for more.



Senior secondary students Victor (left) and Farida, have been elected by their peers as Head Girl and Head Boy at St Jude's for the coming year.

Politics up for debate at primary



Upper primary students enjoyed getting involved in the political debate.

Debate about the most hotly-contended presidential election in Tanzania's history didn't just come from those old enough to vote.

Our Upper Primary English department hosted the final of its three annual school debates, with the rousing subject of 'Who Would Make the Best Tanzanian President?'. The debate prompted students to educate themselves on Tanzanian politics and reflect on national policy and the qualities of good leadership.

In a country that has been ruled by the CCM party for the past 54 years, rival CHADEMA has proven to be a rare, worthy opponent to contest the current Government.

Hands held high, in either the form of a 'peace' sign for CHADEMA or a 'thumbs up' for CCM, the school audience was quick to show their support to the 20 or so students arguing their cases on stage.

CHADEMA's popularity rose to great heights in the area around St Jude's recently, as their leader is a former Prime Minister and CCM member who hails from the Monduli region of the Arusha district.

This popularity was reflected in the debate, which

focused primarily on CCM leader John Magafuli and CHADEMA leader Edward Lowassa.

Senior primary principal Peter Manjella said the English department encouraged students to focus on the qualities they wanted in a leader. Edmund Mutajuka, English Department head and organizer of the debate, has also been leading students in practicing their public speaking). The hour-long debate was critiqued by students and teachers alike, with the event more a chance to air opinions than decide on a winner.

Meanwhile, eight of our Form 6 graduates showed their community leadership by working at polling stations during the general election. We're proud of Alfani, Judica, Justin, Negi, Elizabeth, Hosiana, Erick and Mrema doing their bit to facilitate voting!

Peter, who passed on the news, said he was thoroughly impressed. "This is really leadership, these positions were really competitive," he said. "More than 6000 people applied for the 2860 positions, but they made it."

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