



The School
of St Jude

St Jude's News

Thank you for sharing our newsletter with your family and friends

SPECIAL ROTARY EDITION



Rotary and St Jude's—a special partnership

As we begin 15 years at St Jude's we're excited to celebrate Rotary's impact

Rotary and St Jude's have worked hard together to fight poverty through education in Tanzania.

Around 1,800 students are receiving free academic scholarships at St Jude's today and our first two graduating classes are already making a difference in their communities thanks to the partnership between St Jude's and Rotary.

When the Rotary community crossed paths all those years ago with a young woman with a big

heart, \$10 in her pocket, and a dream to fulfill, little would they know that the alliance would eventually change the lives of so many families.

As we celebrate 15 years, our partnership with the Rotary community remains one of our most treasured assets to this day.

In the words of St Jude's founder Gemma Sisia: "We couldn't have made it without the Rotarians."



St Jude's and Rotary

It has been 15 years since the foundations were laid out and bond—like the school we built together—is stronger than ever!



Q & A with Gemma



How did St Jude's get involved with Rotary?

Before St Jude's I'd only really associated Rotary with sausage sizzles at the country shows and sponsoring picnic sites — which was very ignorant. It was my dad who pointed me in their direction — and, I tell you, he could not have led me down a better path.

Rotary clubs were quick to open their arms and let me share my mission before The School of St Jude ever existed. Wherever I spoke, the good people who make up the Rotary clubs immediately got behind me. From there, things started to snowball. Before I really had a clear picture of what The School of St Jude would become, Rotary supported my mission of fighting poverty through education, and it has been a loyal supporter since.

You've spoken at hundreds, maybe thousands, of Rotary clubs throughout your years spreading the word of St Jude's. What is the benefit of speaking there time and time again?

Rotarians have been willing to support St Jude's however they could, whether it be financially, by word of mouth or physically coming over and lending a hand. Some members I've spoken to many times at these events, as they genuinely want to know how we are going and to hear the progress in our mission of

fighting poverty through education. It's ever so encouraging.

What really stands out when it comes to Rotary's support of St Jude's?

Rotarians have an amazing knack for sticking to their word once they've pledged support to a cause. They like to see things through, and go to amazing lengths to ensure a project succeeds.

To have teams of volunteer Rotarians journey all the way to Tanzania to help physically lay the foundations for what we then hoped was "the little school that could" is a perfect example. This hands-on support was followed-up with container-loads of supplies to get our students off to the best start we could hope for. These huge "care packages" took a lot of effort from both them and us, but were so worth it. Today we still get lots of Rotary groups visiting the school but instead of building (as they did such a great job at teaching the locals that we no longer need outside physical assistance with building), it's more of an immersion experience.

Seeing such a successful project is an experience that helps reinvigorate their excitement and it's a great advertisement for people who had never known much about Rotary.





Making it official: Interact president Lisa, District Rotaract representative Anthony Mapande (head of Rotaract in Tanzania and Uganda), Rotary district assistant governor Anna Rweyemamu, St Jude's teacher Mzee Tarangei and Rotary Coordinator Seb Cox.

It's official— we're making a difference

Our Interact and EarlyAct student clubs embraced by the global Rotary community

Our Earlyact and Interact clubs are now official members of the international Rotary family!

Their initial hard work was officially recognised with a celebratory event filled with fanfare, songs and inspirational words late last year.

This "Installation" event featured guests from Rotary groups in the Netherlands and Belgium, and those clubs closer to home welcomed them with open arms.

"To the students of St Jude's, I recommend you to ask us, as your local Usa Rotary Club, if you need help with your community projects as we will be there to help you," Usa River Rotary President Rebecca Saunder said.

Rebecca spoke about the benefits of the global Rotary

family and, along with our school founder Gemma and fellow local Rotary district assistant governor Anna Rweyemamu, gave certificates to each of the EarlyAct and Interact students.

EarlyAct is for students aged between five and 13, and St Jude's is the first club of its kind established in East Africa, while Rotaract is a Rotary-sponsored service club for those aged 18 to 30.

Each elated EarlyAct and Rotaract student received a certificate, handshake and praise for their hard work to set up the clubs and become officially installed. Gemma was clearly impressed by their achievement.

"All of our students involved in Rotary really put St Jude's values into practice, they represent the school wherever they go," she said.



It's official— we're making a difference

Our EarlyAct students value their newly-recognised club, as they spoke of what they would like to achieve with Rotary over this school year.

"I want to have more kindness in our community," Anthia in Grade 3 said.

"I need a clean environment and more children to play with," Noreen in Grade 6 said.

As an Interact member, Eric in Form 2 has really taken the club to heart. "I wanted to join our Interact club to have the opportunity to help people around the world and to build friendships among those living around me," he said. "I heard about Rotary from the community work they do. Rotary came to my aunt's village for a project that helps preserve the rain, so I decided to join Interact and help too."

Rotary is strong at St Jude with over 70 members across both groups and room to grow. Keep an eye out to see what they achieve next!



Mission accomplished: Form 4 student Nickson is proud to be part of the official ceremony.



All smiles: Form 4 student Edgar appreciatively accepts a club pin from Arusha Mt Meru club President Anna Rweyemamu.

We're proud that our Interact and EarlyAct clubs are now officially part of the global Rotary family. You can help spread the word about our school, and how it has thrived thanks to our Rotary relationship, by hosting a fundraiser. Get in touch with our fundraising contact in Australia on 0458 691 668, or go to www.schoolofstjude.org/support-us/fundraising-events.html and register your event online.





Reduce, reuse and recycle

EarlyActors recycle old textbooks and materials into paper mache masterpieces

Just as the hands of skilled Rotarians built our very first classrooms, the little hands of EarlyActors are now keeping busy with projects that continue to do our school proud.

Late last year EarlyAct students, from our entry-level Rotary-associated club designed for students aged between five and 13, busily made the most of our disposable waste by creating paper mache artworks as a gift towards Arusha Mt Meru Rotary club.

"I like art because I am creative!" Grade 6 student Noreen (pictured above) proudly explains, showing off her elephant sculpture. "It's good to recycle paper instead of putting it into the rubbish bin."

EarlyAct president Miriam, along with Noreen and fellow Grade 6 student Mariam took piles of discarded paper and busily cut, mashed and mixed it with glue. They molded, sculpted and fashioned the clumps into

shapes and animals.

Mariam molded the paper mulch into the word 'EarlyAct' to make a sign for the group.

"After it is dry I will paint the letters blue and yellow as these are the Rotary colors," she said.

St Jude's staff member and Rotaractor Jacqui supports the EarlyActors during their sessions.

"This project will help us protect our environment by reducing waste," Jacqui said. "I like seeing their passion and how they want to do everything themselves. This is a great group!"

The group's environmentally-friendly artworks received the Rotary seal of approval when they presented their first piece, a sculpture of the Rotary emblem, to the Arusha Mt Meru Rotary club.

Keep an eye out on our blog and newsletter in the near future for more projects our EarlyActors are getting stuck into!





Group effort: St Jude's Interact and Oldadai Secondary School students gathered for the presentation. (Front row, from left) Oldadai headmaster Urio Godson, Rotary Coordinator Seb and Beyond St Jude's team member Avity Mushi.

Interact project done and dusted

Interactors make blackboard dusters to support local schools in need

The St Jude's Rotary office was filled with the sounds of craftwork as Interactors got busy with their latest community project.

"We are making blackboard dusters to give to schools. I think I have made over five so far!" explains enthusiastic secondary student Eva.

As well as being a practical show of goodwill for a local school, who can then prioritise their limited budget on providing more books for their students, the blackboard dusters have another benefit. They are made out of recycled foam from old mattresses and help reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. The soft, spongy material is perfect for a new life as a duster!

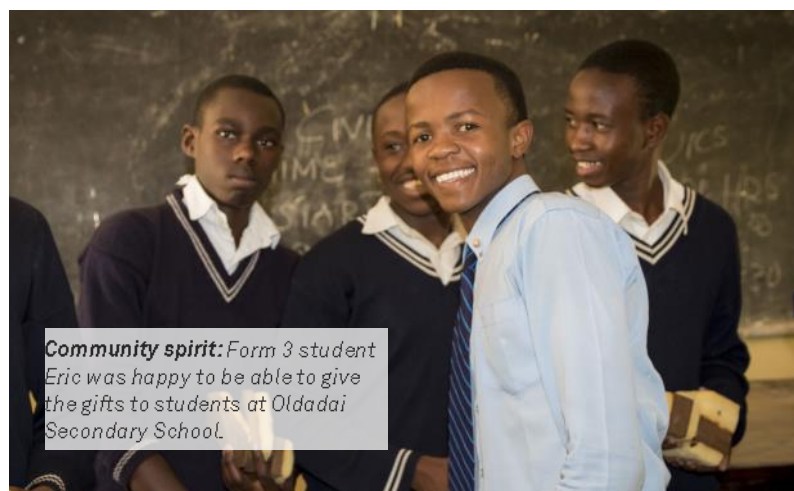
Once a mini mountain of dusters had been made, our students hopped on a St Jude's bus to give them to two neighboring schools in Arusha - Oldadai and Njiro Secondary Schools. The smile from Oldadai Secondary School headmaster Urio Godson shows they were well received!

Our students love to help others, so show your support for their community enthusiasm by helping fund their projects. Contact our Australian fundraising representative on 0458 691 668 or go online to www.schoolofstjude.org/donate.

Both schools are supported by our Community Service Year Interns (CSY) interns. Many local government schools do not have enough teachers, and a student to teacher ratio that makes effective teaching difficult. It is not uncommon to see over 100 children in one classroom.

Now that The School of St Jude has both intern teachers and a supply of blackboard dusters to help support our local community, we are sure our Rotarian students can build on this with their community project plans in the future.

Interact gives our students the confidence to present their ideas and the opportunity to get a project off the ground and out into the world.



Community spirit: Form 3 student Eric was happy to be able to give the gifts to students at Oldadai Secondary School.



Peace, love and Rotaract

Staff and friends unite in style to raise funds for youth empowerment

Rotaractors shimmied, twisted and mashed-potatoed at their 60s-themed bash to raise money for a youth unemployment program, Vijana Poa (which translates to “Youth is Cool” in Swahili) which provides workshops in entrepreneurship, and secures internships and support (including small start-up loans) to set up small businesses.

The far-out fundraising approach paid off, and Rotaract raised Tsh518,000 (about AU\$325) for the Vijana Poa project. It's a feat the club are particularly proud of, as they decided to focus on the program after considering the challenges facing the siblings of some of our students.

The Vijana Poa program was started by Rotary in Tanzania and Uganda and focuses on supporting unemployed youth, as this is a major challenge facing both countries. Currently in Tanzania the unemployment rate is 54% and Uganda at 64% (Rotary Vijana Poa, 2015).

Our Rotaractors, made up of members from 18 to 30 years old, will work with 10 unemployed student's siblings to help them start their own small business, or to earn an internship in a local business. They will start with a series of workshops in Swahili this month.

Our Rotaract club's fundraising evening featured a silent auction, live music and karaoke, as everyone danced along to the inaugural performance of the St Jude's Staff Band. Hilda (Marketing), Aziz (Accounts), Maggie (HR) and Francis (Photography) performed a circa 1960s set including 'Twist and Shout,' 'Hit the Road Jack' and 'Lean On Me.' Silent auction prizes, from Burundian coffee, soaps and tailored clothing, were donated.

Once the Vijana Poa project is complete, the youth will be supported and encouraged by Rotaractors to get an internship, start a business or gain employment.



Going bananas: Excitement at the silent auction.



Groovy baby: The St Jude's Staff Band of Maggie, Francis, Hilda and Aziz strike a fundraising chord.



Good job: Rotaract members, showing the Vijana Poa hand symbol, celebrate a successful fundraising event.

Want to keep up to date with our Rotaractors? Check out and Like their new Rotary at St Jude's Facebook page, at www.facebook.com/RotaryStJudes



Staff Spotlight: Sebastian Cox

Meet the man who set up our Rotary clubs and loves encouraging our students



Words of wisdom: Rotary Coordinator Seb Cox takes his turn, between St Jude's Interactors, to read to enraptured young students.

When you support St Jude's, you aren't just providing free education to the poorest and brightest students in Arusha. You're supporting almost 300 talented, dedicated staff members committed to fighting poverty in their community.

In our Staff Spotlight series you get the chance to meet these impressive members of our family.

Meet Sebastian – the young Aussie Rotaractor who has been busy building Interact and Rotaract clubs within St Jude's. He even started our EarlyAct club – the very first in East Africa!

Sebastian, known as 'Seb', had his first taste of Rotary in primary school. "I am from Canberra and when I was young I would go and watch the Rotary bicycle ride every year. I did not know much about Rotary other than that they were the bike ride organisers!" he said.

It was on a visit to our school in 2009 that Seb learnt more about Rotary, and its influence around the world.

The connection between St Jude's and Rotary is impossible to miss. The world famous Rotary wheel is painted at the front entrance of each of our campuses and the story of how Rotary helped us build St Jude's is told every time we recite the school's history.

Encouraged by family and the experience he had at St Jude's, Seb joined Rotary's youth organisation, Rotaract, in 2014.

"I joined (Rotaract) as I like the networking aspect of Rotary," he said. "How you can meet a different group of people than your normal social circle."

Two years later, 22-year-old Seb returned to St Jude's to bring Rotary's connection full circle.



Staff Spotlight: Sebastian Cox

He is now the Rotary Coordinator, building EarlyAct, Interact and Rotaract clubs within St Jude's.

"It has certainly been a lot of work to get our school clubs off the ground," Seb said. "However, it has been so rewarding. Many of the students have been so enthusiastic and shown commitment to their club from the start. The school staff have been very supportive and have helped run EarlyAct sessions on Monday afternoons."

Rotary's motto this year is 'serving humanity' and how it is the people that spark the life of an organisation.

"Noreen, in Grade 6, is now famous among the Rotary in Arusha," Seb said. "She is only 11 or 12 years old, but she had the confidence to make a speech to the Rotarians of Mount Meru when our EarlyActors visited the club."

Noreen is a clear example of the importance of EarlyAct and Interact for our students. EarlyAct is aimed at primary schoolers, while Interact was set-up to interest high school students in Rotary. They present a great opportunity for students to develop a community service mindset at a young age.

"The community projects that the students do in Rotary teach them so many skills," Seb said. "They have to decide, lead and manage these projects and



Full circle: Seb started the very first EarlyAct club in East Africa here at St Jude's!



Rich in enthusiasm: Having a laugh while presenting to our EarlyAct members.



Working at St Jude's can be a very rewarding experience – just ask Seb! We're currently on the lookout for passionate people to help us provide a free, high-quality education to 1,800 of the poorest and brightest students here in Arusha, Tanzania.

Various roles are now open. Please see our website at www.schoolofstjude.org/join-us/current-vacancies.html for position descriptions and details on how to apply. We hope to hear from you soon!





Visit 2017: Brisbane High-Rise members Bill Phillips, Yvonne Robson, school founder Gemma Sisia and President Russell Postle with sponsored students Teresia, Loveness, Victoria, Angel, Nora and Emmy.

Thanks Brisbane High-Rise Rotary!

We're on a high due to the dedicated support of this Australian Rotary club

The 1,800 students currently being educated here at The School of St Jude are only able to realise their dreams thanks to our passionate and active support base, much of which is made up of dedicated Rotarians.

One such Rotary club, Brisbane High-Rise, is a fine example. The club and its close friends recently reached the milestone of 20 St Jude's sponsorships!

The Australian club has been a consistent and active supporter of The School of St Jude for many years and we couldn't be making the impact we are without Rotary members like theirs.

Noela Phillips, former special needs education teacher and wife of former Brisbane High-Rise president Bill Phillips, said club members have enjoyed travelling to St Jude's for the past few years to see the change they are helping us achieve.

"The School of St Jude's mission to fight poverty through education is an easy one to get behind, as good education is key to improving lives," she said,

adding that she and her husband are proud sponsors of graduate student Oliva.

"Bill and I have introduced over 40 Rotarians and friends to the school on trips (to St Jude's), and it's a great way to experience the impact St Jude's is having on the community."



In living colour: St Jude's supporter and Aussie personality Ian Skippen presents at the club's 2016 fundraiser.



Thanks Brisbane High-Rise Rotary!

Noela has recently become a Director on the board of the East African Fund, which is the St Jude's fundraising body in Australia.

The Rotary Club of Brisbane High-Rise was chartered in 1993 with 27 members and now has more than 50 active members, many of whom have worked on projects helping St Jude's.

Just last year, when Gemma and inaugural graduate student Dorice visited Australia to spread the word, the club held a sold-out fundraiser that resulted in over AU\$40,000 to 'Heat up St Jude's' through the purchase and installation of 13 solar heaters at Smith boarding campus.

The event was so successful they're planning another – a cocktail party – when Gemma visits Australia this year in March.

Brisbane High Rise Rotary club has also helped some of our most needy children through members and friends that have raised support.

The club's former President and recently-retired CEO of Cerebral Palsy League of Queensland Angela Tillmanns and her family, as well as Dr John and Louise Arvier, helped our Form 1 student Lightness overcome the challenges of schooling with cerebral palsy.

The Arviers and the club itself also helping our albino students with their associated vision problems, and Susan Rix has been a dedicated fundraiser for many vital projects.

We can't wait to see what a blast the club's late-March cocktail party will be this year, but if you're not in Brisbane, don't fear! Gemma and Winrose will be speaking at events across Australia, so find the nearest one to you online at www.schoolofstjude.org/support-us/upcoming-events.



Thankful: Noela and her sponsored student, Oliva, having fun at our very first graduation in 2015.



Sold-out: Last year's High-Rise fundraiser, which Gemma and inaugural graduate student Dorice attended, was a hit.



Job well done: Current club President Russell Postle checking out the solar heaters at our secondary campus, which the club successfully raised AU\$40,000 to buy and install.

