



The School
of St Jude

St Jude's News

Thank you for sharing our newsletter with your family and friends

FEBRUARY, 2017



We're coming to a town near you!

Gemma and our graduate Winrose are flying high with a visit to Australia

Generous Aussies are about to find out how they have been instrumental in providing life-changing education in one of the world's poorest countries.

Former Australian teacher Gemma Sisia opened the gates to The School of St Jude 15 years ago in Tanzania and now, thanks to the support of thousands of Australians, 1,800 promising yet impoverished students have access to a free, high-quality education.

Gemma and one of the inspirational students,

whose life has been changed by generosity and the belief that education can combat poverty, will be in the country this month to share their story.

Winrose Mollel graduated last year at the top of her class and was the first St Jude's graduate to be accepted into university through The School of St Jude's partnership with The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program at ALA.

Later this year, Winrose will head to Trinity College in Connecticut, USA, to begin living her dream of becoming an aeronautical engineer.

Our school has only managed to be a success thanks to people like you! Come along to an event to hear from Gemma and Winrose about the amazing impact you are, or can, make today. Go online and see the events where they will appear in March at www.schoolofstjude.org/support-us/upcoming-events



We're coming to a town near you!



Big presentation: Gemma and Winrose are looking forward to sharing the impact St Jude's is making.

"Being offered a scholarship at St Jude's has changed my life," Winrose said. "It has made such a difference and given me the assurance that I could achieve my dream, which I never had before at my government school."

Like many people in Tanzania, Winrose came from extreme poverty, growing up in a rural village where she helped her farmer father raise her younger sister and shared household duties after her mother passed when she was in primary school.

Most girls in similar situations in Tanzania have no choice but to drop out of school, but Winrose was committed to getting an education.

As a primary school student, she walked 2.5km to school each day, shared a desk with five others, had no books, no meals and sometimes no teacher, but she was pushed by a desire to make a brighter future for her family.

"Sometimes I got so hungry during the school day that I developed stomach ulcers. It was hard to study when there were no teachers and no books," Winrose said. "Now, thanks to St Jude's, somebody who didn't know me - had no idea I existed - decided to sponsor me and I'm so thankful and proud to say it has been a good investment."

In Tanzania, 66.6% of people do not reach secondary school and less than 3.2% make it to the final two years of school. Winrose and her fellow St Jude's graduates are proof that we are making a difference in the fight against poverty in Tanzania.

"The School of St Jude now has about 1,800 students who have a real chance to escape poverty because they receive a free, high-quality education," Gemma said. "It's a dream that we've worked hard on, and these amazing students and their families would never have had the opportunity without the support of so many Australians."

Give Gemma and Winrose a true blue welcome this March!



Education opens doors: Winrose valued the opportunity she was offered. Here she is at St Jude's six years ago.





Direct impact: Designer Connie, pictured here with Vivian (whose home she visited), has joined St Jude's and is seeing first-hand the difference we're making in fighting poverty through education.

Visit brings our impact home

Connie's loving her Shillington Design Safari adventure here at St Jude's

I just came from a home visit to meet the student newly-sponsored by Seesaw (the wonderful graphic design and branding geniuses who have partnered with St Jude's to help us achieve our new look on a pro-bono basis). She's in Grade 1 and doesn't speak much English yet, but I communicated with her by drawing pictures of trees and animals in the window condensation, eliciting some smiles. It was pouring outside which created pools in the dirt roads, but after a bumpy ride, the student, the translator Mzee, and I made it.

Seeing the mother swelling with pride over her daughter going to St Jude's was a beautiful experience. It showed me that her education matters not just abstractly, the way it might for you and me, but in a way that will completely change and uplift the family. (She's already passing on information by tutoring her younger sister.) There's hope in the mother's eyes when her daughter shares her aspirations to become a doctor but not without the recognition that it'll be hard work which she makes clear to me.

As a designer, it's a unique experience to see the direct impacts of the organisation I'm working with.

Normally, I finish a project and move on to the next without much feedback beyond a short email. Working on location at St Jude's has been completely different from working remotely in Melbourne—I see the full life cycle of St Jude's mission when I work with interns who have graduated from the school. Their stories of rising out of extreme poverty to receiving acceptances into international universities are almost unbelievable.



'Beautiful experience': Connie loved meeting Vivian's family.

We're currently looking for enthusiastic, talented people to join Connie and help us spread the word, so apply today at www.schoolofstjude.org/join-us/current-vacancies.html



Staff Spotlight: Marvellous Miriam

Our community service intern is aiming to be inspirational

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.

Lawyer. Fashion designer. Inspirational woman. That's what St Jude's graduate Miriam envisions when she thinks about what she will be 10 years from now.

"So many girls (in Tanzania) fall into different traps, they are facing so many problems in life and they can't help themselves," Miriam said. "Here in Africa, so many women miss out on a lot of opportunities because people do not believe in them. I want to be a different woman, I want to show my fellow African women that we can do so many good things."

One of seven siblings raised by their mother, Miriam received a life-changing opportunity when she earned a St Jude's scholarship as a Grade 2 student.

"My mum has been through a lot of hardships, and raised all seven of us (children) by herself. She was struggling hard for us to live a good life and had to fight for us to eat, be dressed and go to school," she said, adding that her education at St Jude's gave them all hope. "My mum is an amazing, strong woman but looking at what she has been through, I didn't want to live that life. I was the luckiest to come to St Jude's. What I got here I would never get anywhere else in Tanzania. I have seen what my little brothers have been going through (in government schools), and sometimes they can't even get books.

"My school time (at St Jude's) has been like heaven, which is something so many kids don't get from their school."



What a woman: Miriam with some of her creations.



Fulfilling and fun: Some of Miriam's latest creations, available from events in Gemma and Winrose's 2017 Australian visit.





Staff Spotlight: Marvellous Miriam

After graduating in May, Miriam chose to give back for her free, high-quality education by volunteering in the St Jude's business office.

She's one of the most creative members of our team, and her formidable drive has helped her succeed with various projects here in the past six months – one of which has been producing the jewellery line available during Gemma and fellow graduate Winrose's 2017 Australian visit.

To Miriam, who also designs and makes clothing, creativity comes naturally. However, she said it's the hard work and a "can do" attitude that is allowing her to become the successful and inspirational woman she aspires to be.

Miriam said amazing, inspirational women "trigger her spirit" and she wants to do the same for others.

"I was researching inspirational women and read about women like Oprah Winfrey and Michelle Obama," she said. "But then I sat down and thought, no, my mum is the best. She made me who I am today, and I can see what she has achieved with my own eyes. There is no one else like her."

She said her good fortune of having other inspirational female role models in her life, like St Jude's founder Gemma Sisia, has helped her make decisions in life that will get her closer to the future she dreams of.

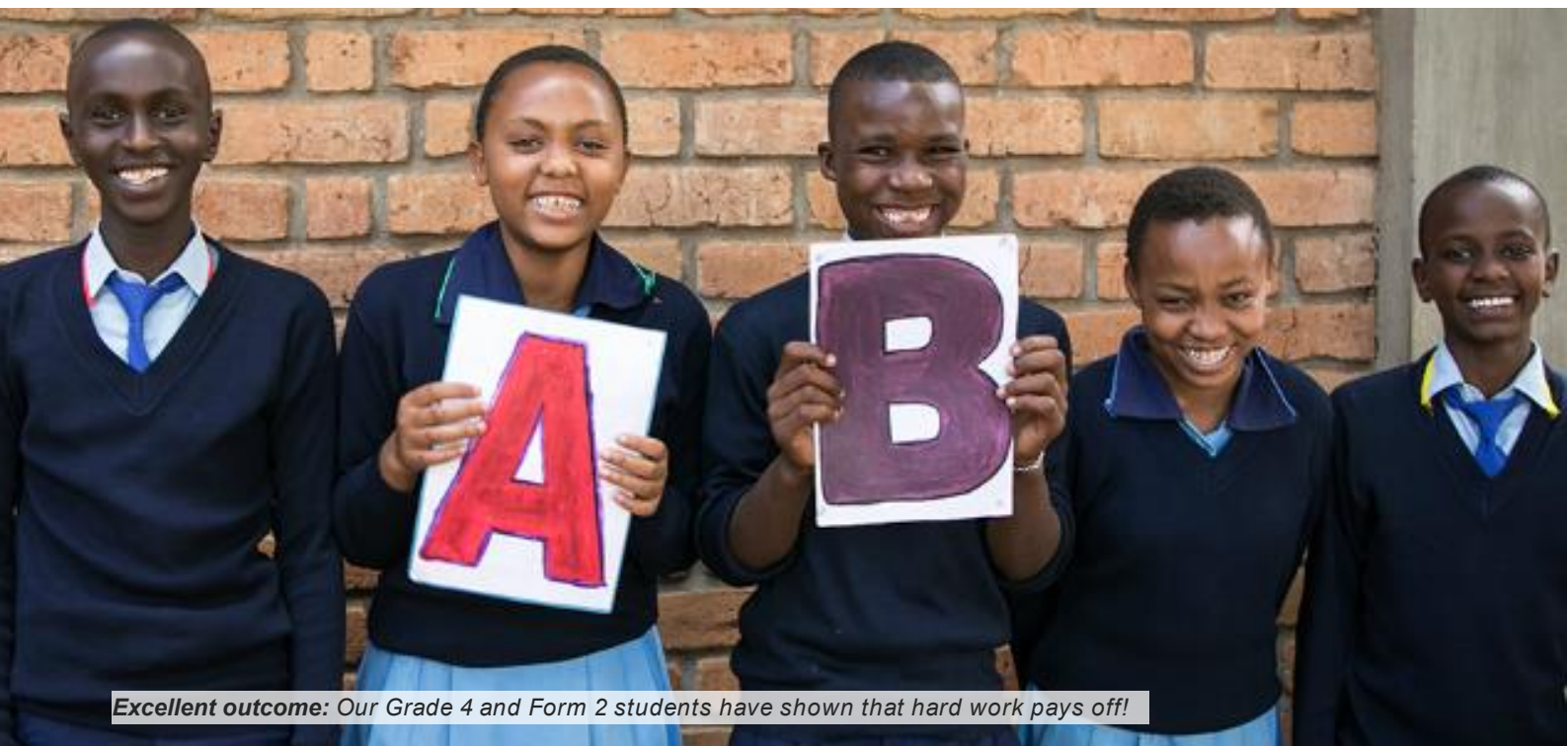
"Professionally, I want to be a lawyer and I can still be a designer (on the side)," she said. "Ten years from today, I'll be a lawyer, a designer, a wonderful mother and an amazing wife. I'll be an inspirational woman."

Miriam's wonderful work is available during Gemma and Winrose's visit to Australia. Look out for the colourful table of goodies at each event, and tell your friends where these hand-crafted pieces came from!



National success for our students

Grade 4 and Form 2 students achieve outstanding results in national exams



Excellent outcome: Our Grade 4 and Form 2 students have shown that hard work pays off!

Our students have continued to impress academically, with outstanding results across the campuses in recent national exams.

It's been another successful year for our Grade 4 students, this year ranking first in the district, second in our region and in the top .04% of the entire nation. 87.6% of the students achieved the top grade in the difficult exams. In 2016 our Grade 4 students also achieved impressive results, ranking first in the district and third in the region.

George Stephen, our Primary Headmaster, could barely contain his enthusiasm. "Our school managed to maintain the first position in two consecutive years in the district, which is not easy with the competition from the Arusha municipal schools," he said. "We did it again! This performance has made me feel very successful both as a teacher and the leader of the school."

Not to be outdone, our high school students have also achieved some stellar results.

Our Form 2 students aced their exams, with 96% achieving the top possible mark. This included 133 students topping English, and 121 for biology.

Acting secondary headmaster Adam Myombe was very proud of the students and teachers who achieved the results. "I am very proud of what we have achieved with my team and students. I always feel honoured to be making a difference as part of the St Jude's family," he said. "Academic success is not just determined by how bright a student is, it is about the hard work they put in to achieve their goals".

These results continue the St Jude's tradition of impressive academic success. We can't wait to see what the rest of 2017 holds for our students!

In a country where the population averages just five years of schooling, and 66.6% of people do not reach secondary school, St Jude's is making an important impact. Join us in fighting poverty through education by donating today at www.schoolofstjude.org/donate or by calling Sarah in Australia on 0458 691 668.



Smiles to kick-start 2017

Our newest Grade 1s and their families celebrate their new lives with St Jude's

There's not a more exciting way to start the year at The School of St Jude than with Uniform Day.

The 50 Grade 1 students who made it through our most recent thorough selection process were recognized and celebrated by being fitted for and dressed in their very own St Jude's uniforms.

These underprivileged yet promising young students are now looking the part to spend the rest of the year making the most of their free, high-quality education.

In their new threads, the proud students were cheered and hugged as the celebration call of parents rang out loud across the school.

"We are so pleased to welcome a new group of keen young students to St Jude's. It's particularly exciting this year as we have now been welcoming young achievers such as these through our gates for 15 years," school founder Gemma Sisia said. "There really is no better way to start the school year than seeing the faces of these students and their parents light up on Uniform Day."

These students successfully passed rigorous academic testing and poverty assessment, which we conducted over multiple months, to be honoured with the scholarships. They were chosen from more than 700 eligible youngsters in the Arusha region, for their academic ability, social and leadership qualities and financial disadvantage.

"It's a fair and thorough process to ensure students and their families, as well as their sponsors, receive the upmost benefit of a St Jude's education," Gemma said.

The strict entrance testing is to ensure we reach the families who need your support the most.

In 2017, we are proud to be educating more than 1,800 in-need Tanzanian students throughout the



All smiles: Uniform Day is a joyous occasion.



Looking good: Head of Donor Relations Liz helps a student get into their new uniform.

Support our talented students and help secure Tanzania a better educated future by sponsoring today! Find out how here on our website at www.schoolofstjude.org/sponsor.html or by calling Sarah in Australia on 0458 691 668.

past 15 years, with more than 200 having already graduated Form 6.

Students who successfully retain their St Jude's scholarship throughout their schooling have the opportunity to graduate in Form 6 with a much higher chance of receiving a university education.

We can't wait to see what this opportunity brings our youngest bright students!





Amazing support: Rebel with her sister and our high achievers, who she treated to a trip to the USA, including Disneyland, last year.

Your chance to visit Rebel Wilson on set!

Donate money to charity and go into the draw to go to the Pitch Perfect 3 set

Our amazing school ambassador Rebel Wilson has agreed to be part of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to raise funds for our school, and reward a lucky winner with a prize package that includes meeting Rebel herself!

The winner and a friend can go into the draw to win an amazing Omaze prize package, which includes meeting Rebel Wilson and other *Pitch Perfect 3* cast members in the flesh!

All you need to do is go online to the Omaze website and make a donation. Profits from the competition will support The School of St Jude and two other charitable causes.



The package includes visiting the set of *Pitch Perfect 3* and being an extra in a scene of the film.

One of the world's biggest movie stars, Rebel has been a supporter of St Jude's since she started sponsoring a student 11 years ago. She visited our school here in Tanzania just a few years ago, and has proven to be a passionate ambassador of our mission to fight poverty through education.

Just last year, she treated four of our outstanding Beyond St Jude's Community Service interns to an all-expenses paid trip to the USA, where they visited Disneyland and went to a baseball game.

Don't miss your chance to enter this awesome competition and meet our school ambassador Rebel!
Go online to the Omaze website at www.omaze.com/experiences/PitchPerfect3 for more details.

