



St Jude's News

#see the change

MAY 2019



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Top Lifting the Roof: Graduating class perform their farewell song for guests.

A Rite of Passage

Largest graduating group in the school's history takes final step in Secondary journey. *Continued on page 2*

A Rite of Passage

Largest graduating group in the school's history takes final step in Secondary journey.

"Hold on, take a moment to celebrate. There is music in the wind, let's dance one more time. There's a rhythm deep within, let's dance one more time. One more time, sing a song, we will remember."

These were the stirring lyrics that rang out across the Smith Secondary Assembly Hall on May 25th as the Class of 2019 raised their voices in perfect unison, the joy palpable in the air.

Proudly singing their farewell song to the people that helped them reach a milestone unattainable for many young people in Tanzania – graduating from secondary school – they sang their gratitude for what had been and hope for what was yet to come.

Special guests, sponsors and donors from Australia, the UK and the United States, parents, St Jude's staff and students packed out the hall to see the school's fifth Form 6 year group walk across the stage to receive their leaving certificates.

St Jude's Founding Director, Gemma Sisia, honoured not only the students but the whole St Jude's community who have worked together tirelessly to create long-lasting change for the students throughout their 13 years of education.

"It is a wonderful celebration today, it's our largest Form 6 cohort so congratulations to all 169 of you. You have a future of opportunity stretching out in front of you. However, you wouldn't have reached where you are without a lot of people behind you doing a lot to help you on your way."

"You wouldn't be in this hall if it wasn't for the Smith family, we wouldn't have a school if we didn't have a School Board - Mama Maeda has never missed a board meeting, our Parent Committee who help bridge the gap between home and school and, of course, we are very humbled by the contribution of our sponsors and donors," Gemma said from the heart.



Top Founder's Message: Mama Gemma addresses Class of 2019.

Bottom Final Farewell: Graduates sang their gratitude, and danced in hope for what is yet to come.



She also recognised all of the staff, without whose contribution the school would not run. Managers were gifted the sought-after Tanzanian delicacy of a chicken and our hardworking Secondary Headmaster, Mr Mcharo, was gifted a cow! He has plans to share his gift with the whole school.

Primary students and the award-winning Ngoma dance club added vibrant musical items to the program and Mr Tsingay ensured the proceedings ran smoothly taking the role of Master of Ceremonies.

A highlight of the day was a passionate address from graduates Rahim and Zulfa, who reflected on the achievements of their year level and the challenges ahead of them.

"We would like to show our sincere appreciation to our beloved Mama, Gemma Sisia, for her hard work and kind hearted spirit. You have supported our education by working with donors and sponsors for so many years! Many of the sponsors and donors have crossed oceans to witness our graduation today and your work has made us stronger people." Rahim insisted.

The audience also heard from sponsor, Jenny Fitzpatrick, who spoke to the graduates on behalf of all of the school's sponsors and donors, particularly all that had travelled long distances to be part of the day.

"The graduation program is a wonderful experience and a wonderful chance to get to know our students. We would like to thank your families who have welcomed us into your homes and into your hearts. You are the future, enjoy your celebrations," Jenny beamed.

Before drawing the ceremony to a close, Mr Mcharo asked students to remember one important thing from their time in the classroom, "mathematics teaches us one important thing, every problem has a solution". Our graduates are now equipped with the tools to be a solver of problems; a receiver of opportunities and a beacon of inspiration.

It's all thanks to the combined effort of thousands of people worldwide, who see the change that is possible for our students. Celebrating 169 of our Form 6 students graduate demonstrates exactly how St Jude's is fulfilling its mission of 'fighting poverty through education'.

Congratulations to the Class of 2019, we are all so proud of you.



Top Largest Cohort: 2019 sees our largest group of graduates, 169 students.

Bottom Joyous Occasion: Graduates and all guests enjoyed entertainment from Ngoma Club and Primary students.

**Give more bright,
poor students the
gift of graduation
by sponsoring their
academic scholarship
today as part of our
2019 Annual Appeal.**





Creating Change: Edson with his family at their home in Maasai tribe heartland Nadosoito.

Overcoming the Odds

Meet the new Form 1 student taking the next step to create change for his community.

The path to The School of St Jude has been tougher than most for new Form 1 student, Edson.

Born with 'knock-knees', his legs have grown angled inwards and the teenager is in pain with each step he takes.

The spirited student refuses to let his limitations define him. With sheer determination, Edson trekked two hours from his home in the Maasai tribe heartland, Nadosoito, to his under-resourced government primary school for seven years.

Whilst he was often late, unable to walk at the pace of his classmates, Edson never missed a day. As the oldest son he also herded cows after school to support his family.





Life-changing Year: Edson stands strong ahead of his operation to help correct his painful condition.

Edson recalls being labeled a “hopeless cause” by many but he was quietly working towards a better life.

“A letter was brought to my primary school promoting the selection day at The School of Jude and this became my motivation. The life for my family is very hard here because there is hardly any water. I want to change this,” Edson explains.

As Edson’s family continued to struggle without water, their supply diminishing at the distant fill up taps as the borehole dried up, Edson improved his grades to a standard that saw him pass the St Jude’s Form 1 entrance exam with flying colours.

Before he knew it, St Jude’s bright yellow bus arrived at their traditional mud-hut home, one hour south of central Arusha and he was set for the ride of his life.

Recalling that day, Edson’s mother, Helena, becomes emotional, hugging her son tight as he rejoined his family during the midterm break.



“Edson was an obedient child; he did not used to talk much and behaved well. He loved to go to school despite having problems with his legs. I feel so encouraged and proud now he is at St Jude’s. He has told me how the school is providing him with a good place to sleep, eat and study. It means a lot to us because he will help to eradicate the poverty around us here.”

Reaching secondary school is an achievement in itself for Edson and his fellow Form 1 classmates who joined St Jude’s from government schools in January. It is estimated that only 30% of secondary school aged Tanzanians are in education. This statistic is reduced even further in remote Maasai areas, but Edson is part of changing that trend and inspiring others in his community to change it too.

Edson’s teachers say he’s already thriving in his favourite subject, English, and has even started to teach his brothers and sisters the language. In this way the whole family can benefit from the education Edson is receiving, providing opportunities for them beyond their small village.

“I love The School of St Jude because they have a lot of teachers and a big library. I am now sharing what I am learning with my family and tribe,” Edson proudly shares.



Poverty to Professional: Edson is already thriving in his favorite subject, English.

It's truly been a life-changing year for Edson. Not only has he secured his place at St Jude's, the school's welfare team has also reached out to doctors at a nearby medical charity, who have agreed to perform an operation to help correct his painful condition.

"I am not scared of the operation as I want my legs to be straight," Edson announced with that same determination crossing his face once more.

While in his mother's eyes there is a sense of relief.

"We went to the local hospital and were given tablets as treatment but they never worked and I didn't have the money to take him to the special doctor that they told us to see. I am so thankful the school is now helping us find treatment," Helena says as tears start to well in her eyes again.

The post-operation recovery is expected to be six weeks of bedrest but Edson knows this is just a small hurdle in achieving his ultimate goal.

"I see myself as an electrical engineer so I can bring electricity to our village, either that or a teacher, like my mother wanted to be," Edson quietly shares.

A dream that with his tenacious attitude, big heart and bright mind, he can certainly achieve.



Family Impact: Edson's family benefits from his quality education too with the teenager teaching his siblings English.

The path to his chosen profession is a lot brighter now for Edson, as is the outlook for his whole family, thanks to The School of St Jude, fittingly named after the Saint of hopeless causes.

A label no one will ever call Edson again.

Edson's academic scholarship, like a number of our new students, is not yet sponsored. His place at St Jude's is covered by general donations. Sponsor or donate today to see the change in the lives of students like Edson when they benefit from a free, high-quality education.





Top A Change in Direction: Ojungo at his family's home before joining St Jude's.

Bottom The Next Step: Ojungo during a career guidance session with Guidance Coordinator Elibariki.



Finding The Right Path

Our Career Guidance Program helping more students move onto their dream careers!

A buzz filled the Smith Campus assembly hall as more than 50 supporters from Australian enterprise software company TechnologyOne helped steer 100 Form 5 students on the right career path.

Every St Jude's student involved soaked up the opportunity to learn how they can make the most of their high-quality education, engaging in 'speed careering' with the talented international visitors.

"Students asked lots of questions about what we studied and how we got to where we are. I hope I imparted on them that within every industry there are many different opportunities. You don't have to stick to the same job. University gives you endless opportunities and pathways. I see a very bright future for these students," TechnologyOne's, Ben Malpass, beamed during the sessions.

The visitors, who are at the peak of their professions, also offered advice on CV writing and interviewing techniques, a part of the career guidance curriculum.

"It's a priority for the school for students to be job ready. Speaking with professionals helps open the eyes of our students to all the possibilities within each course of study. Students start selecting their education path from Form 2 so they need guidance quite early. They might be the best students at advanced mathematics but they may not know how to have a conversation with someone during an interview or have critical thinking. Having extra lessons and professional talks in place is fantastic; students are becoming more engaged," St Jude's, Deputy Director, Angela Bailey, expressed.

Those extra regular career guidance classes are now possible after the appointment of full time Career Guidance Coordinator, Mr Elibariki, this month.



“Career guidance is growing at the school. Before coming here, I worked at a college so I am able to give students a real insight into what to expect in higher education and help them make informed choices. We use different theories to work out each student’s strengths and what career would suit them. We are doing job market research so we can tell our students the thriving and growing industries they can enter into,” Mr Elbariki explained.

One of more than 1,000 secondary students to benefit from the extra expertise is Form 6 Graduate, Ojungo, who admits that before St Jude’s his life was already mapped out for him.

Despite loving science from an early age, like many Tanzanian children, his only career opportunities were presented by his parents who struggled to support the family themselves. Life was tough, living in a mud hut home without electricity and water supply. Ojungo recalls an endless cycle of wanting to “break out”.

Fast-forward a decade and ten years of St Jude’s high-quality, free education and things look very different. Ojungo credits the career advice outside the traditional classroom, as well as what he learnt in it, to his success.

“The career guidance team is transforming people’s lives; thanks to this department I have decided to study Biochemistry at University. The staff helped me identify my strengths and I want to do research into different chemicals that help the world at large. Most Tanzanian students don’t have a chance to ask someone for career advice and if I didn’t have that, I could have selected the wrong areas to study and found it difficult to get employed,” Ojungo reflected.

Showing how the future scientist can now see the possibilities that come from achieving his full potential, one career guidance lesson at a time!

Top Helping Hand: Tech One staff during ‘Speed Careering’ with Form 5 students.

Bottom Informed Choices: Students benefit from career advice from Tech One staff.



Help us to continue to offer our students the support, advice and helping hand that they need to go onto the next chapter of their lives by [donating to our 2019 Annual Appeal.](#)





Left Rookie Reporters: Form 5 students Salma & Abdul will represent St Jude's on Australian Television.

Right An Interview to Remember: Salma introduces Mama Gemma during the news piece.

Behind the News

St Jude's to feature on the ABC's flagship childrens' news program.

Our students and school have been beamed onto screens across Australia. St Jude's has featured on long-running Australian news television program, Behind the News.

Australia's national broadcaster has been running the show since the 1960's and the segments are a part of classroom lessons for the majority of upper primary and lower secondary students in Australia. The program is also an important and accessible resource for regional students because the content is streamed online.

St Jude's was approached to feature on the prestigious program by Producer, Emma Davis, who visited the school last year while touring Tanzania with her family.

Standard 6 students were invited to audition to represent the school as 'Rookie Reporters'. The students' pride in their education and their English skills shone through during the process. Our Marketing team then had the hard task of selecting the two students who would help St Jude's come to life on Australian television screens.

Charismatic students Abdul and Salma explained the moment they found out they were chosen to present on behalf of St Jude's 1,800 students.

"I couldn't believe it; I started practicing straight away. The project has really helped me become more confident," Abdul shared.

"I hope that Australians watching the story will see the benefits of helping other people less fortunate than themselves," Salma added.

The duo quickly became naturals in front of the camera, mentored by an experienced cameraman and journalist who are part of St Jude's staff on the ground in Tanzania. Salma and Abdul proudly take viewers on a tour of their classrooms, library, art room and boarding house.

A highlight for Salma was filming with Founder Gemma Sisia, who grew up watching Behind the News at primary school herself.

"I felt honoured to introduce Mama Gemma and film with her. We owe her a lot," Salma grinned.

During the news piece, audiences were also transported to Salma's home in the semi-rural area of Usa River to meet her mum, Saumu.

"I liked taking the team to my house and getting to introduce my Mum to Australians. She was very proud that I was selected for this project and I hope people watching feel welcomed into my home," Salma explained.

The budding reporters hope that by sharing their lives and challenges with TV viewers it will help spread the message of how St Jude's is really making a difference, fighting poverty through education.

"I want people watching the segment to see that our school is leading the way in Tanzania and hopefully they will think about sponsoring one of my classmates or visiting the school," Abdul said from the heart.

If you didn't see the show on ABC3 you can catch up on the episode on [BTN's website](#).



Top Home Visit: Salma shows Australian TV viewers to her home.

Bottom Showcasing St Jude's: Abdul takes viewers to busy primary kitchen where the cooks prepare 3 healthy, hot meals a day.



See the difference St Jude's is making to our talented 'Rookie Reporters', Salma & Abdul. You can make twice the impact by [donating to our appeal now](#).





Top Aviation Ambitions: Dastan on the runway at Kilimanjaro International Airport.

Sky's the Limit for our Secondary Students

Educational excursion activates the next generation of the aviation industry.

For as long as 15-year-old Dastan can remember he's dreamed of soaring high.

His ambition to become a pilot started from studying picture books under a kerosene lamp – his family didn't have electricity at their home.

Dastan and his family live in one room in a compound in Lemara, a poor and densely populated area close to Arusha city, located near sewerage works.

Dastan was accepted into The School of St Jude in 2012 in Standard 1, an opportunity he knew he could use to make his dream a reality.

Seven years later, the Form 1 student has been able to take advantage of the resources at St Jude's and continue his reading in the fully equipped libraries to give him the best chance at a life in the sky.

Part of these extra resources included a school excursion this month to the Kilimanjaro International Airport, a bustling hub of regional and long-haul flights and aircrafts, where industry-leading pilots took Dastan under their wing.

"This has been the best day as I have actually seen pilots at work. I have learnt a lot more of the specifics, like performing the perfect landing and takeoff formations of planes. I would like to work for a big airline like we have seen today, as I would get to travel to new places. I even asked the workers we met today if they had any jobs going but they said I need to go to university first," Dastan laughed while admiring the jet landing on the airport's runway.

It's a plan that his father Maombe, who works as a security guard and his mother Soki, a factory worker couldn't be prouder of.

"They are so supportive of me and grateful for all the opportunities St Jude's is giving me. Before I started at the school life was pretty tough, but when I started at the school my life did a 360, to use an aviation term," Dastan smiled.

This aviation enthusiast was just one of the 150 wide-eyed Form 1 students buzzing from being inside an airport for the first time. None had ever seen an aircraft up close, let alone step on one to travel.



Right Humble Beginnings: Dastan with his family in their home at Lemara in 2012 when he was accepted into St Jude's.

“These practical experiences are part of what differentiates The School of St Jude from other under-resourced government schools. We certainly have many students who want to work in the aviation and tourism industries. Quality education is theory, but also practical, and once you take out students to excursions we are giving students motivation to achieve their dreams,” Head of Geography and General Studies, Mr Elimringi said, while ushering students through the airport.

Another highlight was a visit to the airport’s Bureau of Meteorology where students were able to see theories of weather and climate learnt in their Geography class come to life.

“Weather impacts our lives every day here in Tanzania, in almost every job, so meteorology is an important field to understand. I have been able to see how to measure weather practically and I was surprised they had to record rainfall on the rain gauge every three hours,” Form 1 student Beatrice explains, while examining the Bureau’s technology with Dastan.

Both agree that their yearly excursions are preparing them for their future high-flying careers and already have plans about how they will share their good fortune with others.

“One of my wishes is to be able to give back to my fellow St Jude’s students once I am established, help them if they wish to be a pilot too,” Dastan explained, looking out onto the runway.

Certainly Dastan’s flightpath and future is brighter and less bumpy now, compared to the one he first dreamed about under the kerosene lamp; and it’s all thanks to his St Jude’s education.

Top Flight Conditions: Form 1 student, Beatrice, examines the rain gauge at the Bureau.

Bottom Educational Excursion: Form 1 students listen to the airport’s Head Meteorologist explain weather measuring tools.



Help our student's dreams get off the ground.
Sponsor an academic sponsorship today.



When Dreams Become a Reality

The story behind two of our standout Form 6 graduates.

Bursting with pride and tears welling in his eyes, graduate Evance describes what finishing secondary school means to him and his family.

“We have always dreamed about this day and now it’s actually happening. I’ve shouted out loud but also cried. We feel like WOW! There is now a way, there is hope.”

It’s a milestone that the 20-year-old doubted he would reach a decade ago while living in a two-room mud and stick home in Unga Limited, an extremely poor and densely populated area close to central Arusha. Like many Tanzanian dwellings, Evance’s home had no plumbing; water is collected from a tap for a small per-bucket fee and meals for his family of seven were prepared over a simple kerosene-fueled stove.

“My life before St Jude’s was tough, it certainly wasn’t the way it is right now. I will never forget the day I sat the entrance tests. I was with my mum who was unwell but she still gave me the chance by coming with me. I still remember when I told my mum I had been accepted, we couldn’t believe it and then we celebrated. She said I don’t believe my son actually has a bright future,” Evance beams.



Left A Dream: Evance begins school at St Jude’s in 2009 after being selected from a pool of 1,500 students.



Right A Reality: Evance graduates Form 6 with big dreams and a unique education that gives him an opportunity to achieve big.

The last decade of Evance’s schooling at The School of St Jude has all led to this point. He was determined not to be part of the two thirds of Tanzanian teenagers who are not in secondary school each year.

“It wasn’t until I met students from different government schools at a leadership workshop that I really realised St Jude’s has taught me to be bigger than I thought. People in the community respect and value St Jude’s students. It’s hard to find the words to thank my sponsor, it’s not easy to give to someone you don’t know. The most important thing I have gained from St Jude’s is the ability to see that you can help others,” Evance adds.

The bright graduate will first give back to his community as part of the Beyond St Jude’s Community Service Year before the school supports his plans to study graphic design at university.

“I have chosen to do teaching at an under-resourced government school, as I wanted to stretch my hand somewhere else and I want to help people beyond my family. I am full of plans and big dreams,” Evance says, looking out over the Smith Secondary Campus which has been his second home for the last six years.





Top Primary Progress: Zulfa during her first year at St Jude's and her first computer class in 2009.

Bottom Breaking Down Barriers: Zulfa is proud to be an educated woman and wants to continue to make change in her country.



Joining Evance in sharing his St Jude's quality education with less fortunate Tanzanians is fellow graduate, Zulfa.

"I studied at a government school before St Jude's with a lot of kids in one class, with not enough text books and sometimes we didn't have a teacher for a month. I want to change that so I have chosen to intern as a government school teacher with Beyond St Jude's. I only have one mission, to leave my community better than I found it," Zulfa smiles.

The 19-year-old who was raised by her grandma in Mwanama, a poor and semi-rural area not far from Arusha city, also wants to use her education to break down the barriers of gender inequality in her country.

"It is a great honor to be a girl who has been supported through her education and without being another mouth to feed in her family. Many of the girls my age are already wives and already have big families, but I am proud leaving St Jude's being an independent woman," Zulfa explains.

With plans to study Development Studies or International Relations and dreams to work for an international humanitarian organisation, Zulfa has these stirring words to share as she takes her first steps towards her bright future.

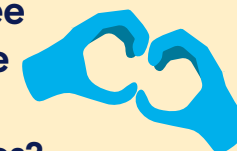


"I am one of the blessed ones. St Jude's has taught me to receive freely and give freely. I leave with 169 new friends and as part of the biggest class to be graduating Form 6 in St Jude's history, I know our class can certainly better our country."

Evance adds a pledge he will live by long after he walks out of the St Jude's gates for the last time as a student.

"If I were to tell Mama Gemma and our supporters one thing, I would say, I am really grateful. I want them to know that I won't let them down and will make sure that what I have gained from St Jude's, I will invest to change the community around me."

**Can you see
the change
in Evance's
& Lina's lives?**



**Help another student
like them to reach this
important milestone.**

**Sponsor an academic
scholarship during our
[2019 Annual Appeal.](#)**



Left Remembering Silvesta: The 19 year old will be remembered as a bright, funny musician by all those who knew him.

Right An Unexpected Friendship: Marilyn was connected with Silvesta's friends, Evance and Rahim, during Graduation Week.

Determined to Make a Difference

Queensland supporter shares a special message with graduates.

There was an unexpected friendship formed during graduation week between Toowoomba supporter Marilyn and two of our graduates.

Marilyn and her husband, David, had been sponsoring the scholarship of talented musician, and stand-out student, Silvesta until he sadly passed away at the beginning of his Form 6 year.

Determined to help honour his legacy, and help his fellow graduates in any way she could, Marilyn still travelled to Arusha for the Form 6 graduation ceremony of Silvesta's class.

As soon as she stepped onto the Smith Secondary Campus she was met by the warm smiling faces of Evance and Rahim who had been Silvesta's best friends.

"It was a total surprise that these two bright young men looked after me. They gave me a tour around the campus. Because of our afternoon I learnt more about Silvesta and I was also able to do some career counseling with them," Marilyn said.

With Rahim hoping to study Linguistics after his Community Service Year with the Beyond St Jude's program, Marilyn was able to impart some wisdom, with her background also in Linguistics.

The camaraderie between the three, continued through to graduation day. Marilyn was able to spend a heartwarming afternoon with Rahim and Evances' families and presented them with traditional Australian gifts.





For graduate Rahim, Marilyn's presence added something special to his big day.

"The best thing I've learnt from Marilyn is if something goes wrong you don't stop doing it, you keep going. She said that even though Silvesta is gone she won't stop helping St Jude's," Rahim recalled.

Since meeting Rahim, Marilyn has decided that she and her husband will sponsor Rahim's scholarship for his Community Service Year and will continue to be teaching, boarding and transport supporters.

The legacy of Marilyn's visit and Silvesta's memory will remain in the hearts of everyone at St Jude's.

"We were presented with some words from Marilyn and the document is now posted outside the library, so every student who comes and goes from the library can remember them both," Rahim smiled.

A gesture that brought tears to Marilyn's eyes.

"I am not just connected with one student, I now have three connections and I know they are going to make a difference to their country," Marilyn shared.



Below is an excerpt from Marilyn's words that every secondary student and visitor can read outside the Smith library.

"Over the years, we have supported the school and one of your students, Silvesta who sadly passed away in 2018. We observed through many letters we received from him, the change from a young boy to a young man with future aspirations who learnt through education, sport and music. We appreciate the opportunity given to us to support this wonderful young man and the school and importantly, its people - the teachers, the many support staff and the students. It has been a privilege that my husband and I have been involved with this school. We aim to continue to support the efforts of all those from The School of St Jude as they seek to assist all of their students to 'become moral and intellectual leaders in the country.' It is only through education that people can change the world. The students have the opportunity to become life-long learners from the skills they have acquired at St Jude's. The School of St Jude continues to educate and prepare their students to be noble citizens for their country."



Top Heartwarming Afternoon: Marilyn spent time with both students' families after the Graduation Ceremony.

Bottom A Uniting Bond: Marilyn and her husband will continue to be teaching, boarding and transport supporters, as well as sponsoring Rahim's scholarship for his Community Service Year.





The School of St Jude

Fighting poverty
through education



schoolofstjude.org

