



# St Jude's News

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Garden of hope for graduates

Story page 4



Winrose lights the way

Story page 6



Making the most of it

Story page 8



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Thank you for sharing our newsletter  
with your family and friends



## Sustaining the Fight Against Poverty

Our Alumni gathered for an annual reunion

*Continued on page 2*





**It was a spectacular night —144 of our graduates gathering in celebration and recognition of where they have come from, where they are now, and where they are going.**

The Alumni reunion dinner took place at Sisia Primary Campus on a Saturday evening. A throwback to their school days, graduates arrived in style – on the school buses they caught each day, some for more than a decade! Many graduates saw their return to St Jude's as a true homecoming.

School Founder, Gemma Sisia, bursting with pride, officially opened the ceremony, hosted in the Sisia Primary Campus dining hall.

"It is amazing to see you all here, welcome back. You have already made a significant impact on the community in your own ways, and I hope you use

tonight as an opportunity to reconnect over a delicious meal, and most importantly, to have fun together," Gemma said.

Formal proceedings began with an awards ceremony, during which 16 graduates were acknowledged for their exceptional contributions to society and their personal achievements.

Enock, a 2015 graduate studying towards an Economics degree at Rochester University, was awarded for his continued school spirit and enthusiasm for St Jude's.

"I have been a part of St Jude's community for 15 years. It feels like home. I am thankful for this event, bringing us all together again with Mama Gemma. It is our responsibility to offer support in any way we can and spread the word about our school, the school which helped to raise us."

Alex, St Jude's first graduate to sponsor a St Jude's academic scholarship, also received an award and echoed Enock's sentiments during his acceptance speech.

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"I know that all of us are grateful for the opportunities this school gave us. We must not take the opportunity for granted. I met Abie, the young boy who my donation supports, just a few days ago and that moment affected me in ways I couldn't expect. St Jude's is like a family and, through sponsorship, I remain connected," he shared.

Alex studies Engineering and Pre-Medicine through a scholarship at Stanford University. One of the teachers he credits for his success is Smith Secondary Campus Headmaster, Mr Mcharo, who attended the event and enthusiastically spoke of his hopes for our graduates.

"St Jude's produces some of the best young people in Tanzania. I always knew Alex would do great things. And to see students like Hosiana, a Beyond St Jude's Scholar studying Medicine at the University of Dar Es Salaam, and achieving a GPA of 4.8 — we are overjoyed for her," Mr Mcharo said.

Among the attendees were a number of current Form 5 students who had been volunteering with school activities that day. For them, attending the event was a chance to reconnect with their older peers and look with anticipation to their own bright futures.

"It is so inspiring [to see the graduates]," Form 5 student, Faith, grinned.

"I admire them greatly because they all have a huge heart, and the hope to give back to others. I know one day I will join them," she insisted.

Will you join our impressive graduates in giving back?

Empower young leaders to fight poverty through education and make a donation to St Jude's.



Full of heart: Sifuni, a 2016 graduate, received a leadership award from Gemma Sisia.



Sweet Reunion: Alumni were treated to a delicious evening!





# Garden of Hope for Graduates

**A returned visitor reflects on  
his 14-year-commitment to St  
Jude's**

Kevin first visited The School of St Jude with his wife, Mary Beth, in 2004, when only a few dozen students were enrolled. They had met Gemma's brother, Dan, on safari in South Africa, who informed them of his sister's dream. The young couple, intent on pursuing their own shared dream to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, decided to pay St Jude's a visit during their stay in Arusha.

It was a visit that changed their life, and later on, the life of Musa, who was then a brand new student at The School of St Jude.

During a recent return visit to St Jude's, Kevin was reunited with Musa and his family, who had the opportunity to express their gratitude to Kevin and Mary Beth for their support that has enabled him to graduate from high school. Currently, Musa is voluntarily teaching mathematics at a government school in Moshono.

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"Before this visit to St Jude's, I had never even heard the man's [Musa's] voice, it was amazing. He knew exactly who I was, I knew who he was, and this is after more than a decade of correspondence by letters. The whole experience of meeting him as an adult blew my mind," Kevin said.

"I had the opportunity to visit Musa's home... I had no idea what to expect, but kept an open mind. Musa's family were warm and welcoming, they gifted me with a rooster, prepared me food, and heaped thanks upon me for helping their son to receive an education."

"Through sponsorship, we have affected areas of Musa's life we never imagined. They live very modestly but had previously been exceptionally poor. Because we were paying for Musa's education, the family saved enough money to build a home," he added.

Kevin was wildly impressed with the development of St Jude's since his visit 14 years ago, and especially, the inception of a Community Service Year program.

"It's important for Mary Beth and I to continue supporting Musa's scholarship into his Community Service Year, because I'm aware that people can be given a great education through high school and when it's over, they have no integration. This is a brilliant part of Gemma's master plan, because these graduates have fertile ground to grow from rather than being left on cold pavement outside the door."

"A highlight from this visit was hearing Musa talk about the students he teaches in the government school. He has four classes and teaches 200 students a day. He can do this because of the education he received at St Jude's. Musa wants to study Wildlife Management and this experience helps him apply leadership skills. It's on-the-job

training; the apron string is not totally cut, and these young leaders have the chance to function in an administrative body rather than only receive from it." Kevin enthused.

Kevin believes the success and growth of Beyond St Jude's reflects the booming developments at St Jude's over the past 16 years.

"There have been many small changes which culminate in huge change. When Mary Beth and I first came here, Angela was one of the only teachers, and now she is Deputy Director. The School only had two small vans for transport, and now there's an entire bus fleet. I have visited 70 countries and have only met a few people who can execute a vision with as much passion, talent and selflessness as Gemma Sisia," Kevin acknowledged.

By continuing to sponsor Musa through his Community Service Year, Kevin and his family make it possible for hundreds of government school students to have a teacher for one of their major subjects. In turn, they are helping Musa to obtain professional skills which will help him pursue his dream job in Wildlife Management; a key economic sector in Tanzania.

"We are shaping and educating kids, allowing kids to go and be leaders. To shape their society. This is why I want to keep sponsoring. It's allowing things to blossom, things that naturally grow, when you pull the weeds back and let it happen."

**Help a young adult like Musa to change his community. Contact our Beyond St Jude's team: [sponsorbeyond@schoolofstjude.co.tz](mailto:sponsorbeyond@schoolofstjude.co.tz) and find out how you can support one of our graduates.**



Golden chance: Musa has enjoyed a free high-quality education for over 10 years, thanks to Kevin's support.



Back in the day: Kevin, in 2004, cooking outside the then visitor house - now our Purchasing office!







## Winrose Lights the Way



**Catch up with Winrose, who's studying in the USA!**

In 2017, Winrose wowed St Jude's supporters all over Australia when she accompanied Gemma Sisia on her annual fundraising tour.

With grace and humility, Winrose spoke to thousands of people about the impact that her education at St Jude's had on her life. At the time, she was newly accepted into the MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program at African Leadership Academy, which enabled her to reach a previously improbable dream:

studying in the United States to become an aeronautical engineer.

As a part of her scholarship, Winrose will return to Tanzania at no cost each year during her summer break, during which she undertakes community service projects and internships and reconnects with her family, friends and culture.

Winrose took the time to visit Sisia Primary Campus this month and share some insights about living in the United States, what she has learnt and what she hopes for St Jude's students in years to come.

"I came to St Jude's from an under-resourced government school when I was in Form 1. St Jude's was a huge stepping stone for me. It prepared me for the opportunities I am currently enjoying. At St Jude's we were taught to think outside the box. We participated in events such as Career Day, we had mentors, library facilities – all the resources we needed to succeed," she said.

Winrose believes St Jude's school values helped shape her into an empowered leader with potential to affect change in Tanzania, when she returns to her homeland after completing her university degree.

"It was instilled in us to be respectful and responsible. Our teachers always told us not to wait for someone to instruct you, that you have to have self-discipline and initiative. And also, that if you respect other people, you will have meaningful and healthy relationships. These are crucial guidelines for a good life," Winrose said.

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"There have been so many surprising things about American culture, the food, the people. The facilities at Trinity College, where I am studying Mechanical Engineering, are beyond anything I could have imagined. However, Tanzania is home and if we all move abroad after university, who will be here to raise our country up? I have to bring back what people have sent me to do. I am an example to others."

During her recent attendance at St Jude's Alumni event, Winrose had the chance to prove herself as an exemplary role model by speaking to our entire secondary school. She encouraged them to study hard so that they could reap the rewards of their free, quality education.

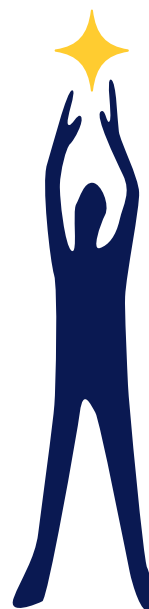
"I told the students to take their English studies seriously, because communication is the vehicle for positive change in modern society. The best practice is to read books often. I also told them that volunteering is a great way to show your appreciation, even if it is something as simple as cleaning up plastic on the streets."

When asked what she believes will secure Tanzania's future as a stable and, indeed, competitive economic and social leader in Africa, Winrose's answer came as no surprise.

"Education. Everything starts with knowledge and ideas and the mind. If you have the skills your society needs, you can solve any problem. We can have more doctors, human rights workers, engineers. It helps in building our mindset. People can take anything from you, but not your education that lights you up. If you have education, you receive the light, and you can shine it on other people."



Amazing ambassador: Winrose spoke at an event hosted by Australian Ambassador to the USA, Joe Hockey.



You can shine a light on one of Tanzania's future leaders, like Winrose. Spread the word about Winrose's tale of triumph by hosting an event for St Jude's!



Bright smile, bright future: Winrose started at St Jude's in 2011 for Form 1.



# Making the most of it

## Alumni exhibition inspires current students

St Jude's largest alumni gathering was recently hosted at Smith Secondary Campus. More than 700 secondary students gathered to greet their predecessors, who are currently studying at university, working in their desired fields, or completing Beyond St Jude's Community Service Year.

Graduates were thrilled to reconnect with their former classmates, and equally honoured to share some wise words with younger students. Many of them are now only months away from taking their final steps outside St Jude's gates and embarking on the future they have worked so hard to create.

"It was a wonderful day. We were not aware just how special it would be. An inerasable moment for students, graduates and teachers," Glory, a Form 6 student, shared.

"It was fun hearing from graduates about their experience at universities. Various representatives gave inspiring talks to the whole audience, then we moved into smaller groups and had the chance to speak to people studying in fields that are of interest to us," she added.

The event was especially inspiring for 26 new Form 5 students, who joined St Jude's from under-resourced government schools around northern Tanzania. For the first time, their eyes have been opened to future prospects.

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Hands together for Haruni: Haruni is just one of our graduates making a difference already!



Back in the game: The reunion ended with a sports bonanza between graduates and students.

Haruni studies Agribusiness and Agricultural Economics in Tanzania, as well as working part-time to gain experience.

Daudi, from the Class of 2015, spoke about the value of undertaking community service and nurturing one's passions. After completing his Community Service Year, Daudi was granted a scholarship through Beyond St Jude's Tertiary program, which

has enabled him to pursue tertiary education in Uganda.

After official proceedings, graduates and students enjoyed friendly rivalry on the football field and basketball court, showcasing wonderful teamwork and skill!

Angela, St Jude's Deputy Director, oversees the Beyond St Jude's program and, with the Beyond St

Jude's team, has nurtured the growth of our alumni since our first graduates emerged in 2015.

"To see the program growing is exceptional. And the continued school spirit these young leaders wish to express is phenomenal. They really are reaping the rewards of their hard work and have taken best advantage of opportunities they received at St Jude's."

Would you like to give a Tanzanian student the opportunity of a lifetime? Sponsor an academic scholarship for one of our new Form 5 students and pave the path to a bright future. Sponsor today.





# The Best Journey of my Life

**Irene, St Jude's Marketing intern, reflects on her time at The School of St Jude**

I came to St Jude's for my first enrolment test 12 years ago, and I remember it as though it were yesterday. The year was 2006. I dreamt of wearing the beautiful navy blue school uniform and visualised the excitement of stepping onto a St Jude's school bus.

At student selection testing, we were instructed to read a story about two people named Peter and Jane. I recall nervously sharpening my pencil for a writing and mathematics test. I was determined to succeed. I remember exiting the school gates with one hand holding a letter of my acceptance and the other waving in the air as I cheered, while scanning the crowd outside for my mother, who was overjoyed. I knew I had to strive for success to maintain my academic scholarship.

Walking for the first time through St Jude's school gates as one of the students, I knew from that point my life had changed. The school buildings stood as tall as my dreams.

At St Jude's, I completed five years of primary school instead of seven because of my good academic performance. My teachers had enough faith in my abilities that they promoted me from Standard 2 to Standard 3 in 2007, and in 2009, I was promoted from Standard 5 to Standard 6. I graduated from primary school in 2010, much earlier than my fellow students that I was enrolled in with. This process validated my abilities and helped me to become resilient.

An unforgettable experience was when I had to write a letter to my sponsor to introduce myself. I was so young, not so fluent in English, but I wrote from the heart as well as possible. I explained my love for biology and my aspiration of putting a smile on people's face as a medical professional one day. I added to my text with a drawing of a bicycle.

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From start to finish: Irene has been a member of S Jude's family for more than a decade!



Glowing graduate: Irene with her graduation scroll at 2017 Form 6 Graduation.



Marketing star: Irene enjoyed meeting visitors, sponsors and donors as an intern in the Marketing team.

I couldn't believe it when my sponsor wrote back! I was so excited to learn he was a doctor too. He was a unique inspiration for me to fight poverty through education. He nourished my dreams and motivated me by giving me the chance to receive a free, high quality formal schooling.

I passed Standard 7 and continued into secondary school at St Jude's in 2011. School became tougher that year, and so did I.

I spent my free time reading novels and drawing cartoons. Reading improved my writing, speaking and conversational skills. We had access to so many resources that government school students do not have.

It was in 2017, the year I graduated from St Jude's, when I developed a keen interest in joining the Beyond St Jude's program as a way to give back through the Community Service Year.

I was lucky enough to be accepted, and after completing three months of national service, a mandatory requirement for some Form 6 graduates in Tanzania, I commenced my Community Service Year as an intern chemistry teacher in an underprivileged government school.

Would you like to support a member of the St Jude's family?  
Sponsor a young leader today!

I had two goals; creating self-awareness among the students and doing my best to help them succeed academically.

Halfway through my government school internship, I decided to try professional development of a different kind and joined St Jude's Marketing team as an intern. This gave me a glimpse of the broader St Jude's community. I know so much more about the efforts people make to financially support St Jude's, and I also know more about how we influence change through education.

During this time, the Beyond St Jude's staff empowered me every day. I applied for a number of scholarships and was accepted into the MasterCard Foundation-African Leadership Academy Scholars program. This month, I will commence my studies at the American University of Beirut in Radiology, fulfilling my dream of making a difference to people's lives as a health professional.

St Jude's has given me an invaluable reward: my education, for which I am forever grateful. This school is more than a school. It is a family that I am proud to be a member of.