



St Jude's News

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Top Building Hope: Mr Sherwin with the new Form 5 students from Masabeda Secondary School joining St Jude's this year.

A Headmaster's Hope

Meet the government school Headmaster who went above and beyond to help his students join St Jude's

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Left Building Hope: Mr Sherwin with the new Form 5 students from Masabeda Secondary School joining St Jude's this year.



Right One Year On: Mr Sherwin meets with Form 6 student Febronia who was the first Masabeda student to join St Jude's last year.

A Headmaster's Hope

Meet the government school Headmaster who went above and beyond to help his students join St Jude's

Over the past 17 years, word that St Jude's is creating the future leaders of Tanzania through a free, quality education has spread far and wide.

It even reached the tiny office of the Headmaster of Masabeda Secondary School, an under-resourced government school in a remote area of the Manyara region.

Mr Sherwia has been the only secondary school Headmaster in a village, where most families live on less than AU\$2.5 a day, for more than a decade and was so impressed with St Jude's that he became determined to do everything he could to help his students sit the St Jude's entrance examinations.

Aware that most of his cleverest students' families were unable to help their children make the long journey to the St Jude's Selection Day, the big-hearted Headmaster decided to step-in with a touching selfless act. Taking it upon himself, he organised for a bus to take his students all the way from Manyara to Arusha, a journey that takes over five hours.

"I knew these students could really succeed if they were given more opportunities. Unfortunately, we cannot provide what St Jude's do and these students have the talents to make the most of the quality education St Jude's offers. The school should be very proud of what they do and the resources. St Jude's actually have enough teachers for each subject and a library filled with books, which means everything to the families in my community who cannot afford the bare basics," Mr Sherwia explained while visiting St Jude's Secondary Campus.

His assistance has certainly paid off. At the start of the school term, Mr Sherwia travelled from the village with three of his former students so he was there to witness their first day at St Jude's after they were selected to join the new Form 5 cohort last month.

Among the trio is aspiring doctor Editha, who beamed with pride wearing her crisp, brand new uniform.

"I feel very smart and I am already feeling at home in the boarding house. I can see why Mr Sherwia encouraged us to strive to get here. He held tests for students that helped us to do well. I would really love to thank him for the support he has given us all along because he has impacted our lives and now we are sure that we are in a good position and heading to achieving our dreams," Editha smiled.

Spending her first night in the St Jude's boarding house was also a highlight for fellow new Form 5 student, Pendaeli, who previously slept on a cow skin on the floor of her mud-hut home.

"My family have always wished so much for me, now that is finally coming true. I am already making friends in the boarding house and I hope to learn new things about myself. Not having to walk an hour to school and having a comfortable place to sleep will give me more time and energy to study," Pendaeli said quietly.

The new students will also have the support of Form 6 student, Febronia who was selected last year as the first student from Masabeda Secondary School.



"I love being able to use a computer and having a quiet place to study. I have enjoyed participating in extracurricular activities and I am so happy more students from my area can now have that too. It all started with Mr Sherwia," Febronia reflected.

The 20-year-old has improved her marks by 30% since joining St Jude's a year ago.

"I have noticed many improvements in Febronia since she joined St Jude's, she has more confidence and can express herself well," Mr Sherwia added, having caught up with Febronia on his recent visit.

Mr Sherwia hopes that Febronia, Editha, Pendaeli and Jeniva are just the start of many more students to successfully secure a St Jude's academic scholarship. He is determined to continue to provide assistance in whatever way he can so that more students from his rural community have the opportunity to become future leaders.

"I am so proud of the students that have been selected and I can rest easy that they will be looked after by the St Jude's community. I hope more students will be selected in years to come as I think St Jude's represents a good turning point for Tanzania's education sector," Mr Sherwin smiled.



Top A New Start: Pendaeli, Editha and Jeniva on their first day as Form 5 students at St Jude's.



Bottom Sharing In Success: Pendaeli, Editha, Jeniva and Febronia show their former Headmaster their new textbooks after he helped them join the St Jude's community.

You can help these new Form 5 students, including those from Masabeda Secondary School, whose academic scholarships are currently unsponsored. **Sign up to sponsor today!**



Alumni Spirit

Record number of St Jude's alumni return for reunion

With a sense of nostalgia, 246 graduates gathered in celebration and recognition of their St Jude's connection and all they have achieved since leaving the school gates.

St Jude's alumni, from the very first graduating class in 2015 to those who completed Form 6 this June, arrived back at St Jude's in style – on the school buses they used to catch each day on their way to school! They gathered at Sisia Primary Campus for dinner, speeches and dancing, the dining hall made special with tea-light candles, colorful flowers and bright tablecloths.

School Founder, Gemma Sisia, made a stirring speech to the crowd who listened intently.

“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 know our alumni program can go from strength to strength because of you. It has always been my dream that in the future, I want you serving on the board of our school, or even helping us run the school,” Gemma said passionately.

Gemma also launched Alumni Spirit, an initiative through which alumni can give back to St Jude's in the spirit with which they received their free education. This can either be contributing financially towards unsponsored scholarships, or by giving their time to come back to St Jude's to volunteer in various school departments.

“Through this new initiative the cycle of fighting poverty continues. We have crunched the numbers and if 75 alumni give just AU\$3 a month that would sponsor the scholarship for one student's entire education. You can support a young student through a journey that you are now finishing,” Gemma explained to the gathered alumni.



Top Reunion Record: 246 graduates attended the alumni reunion, the most in the school's history.

Bottom Reminiscing Old Times: Alumni enjoyed entertainment and speeches throughout the night.





Top Alumni Advice: 2016 Head Boy, Sifuni, advising current students during a Career Day workshop.

Bottom Arafa Returns to School: 2017 Alumni, Arafa enjoying the reunion dinner after addressing current students.



Around 65 alumni signed up to the Alumni Spirit initiative after Gemma's stirring speech, excited to start giving back to St Jude's now that they are undertaking the next stage of their journey, whether that be as an intern, immersed in higher education or with a budding career already underway.

For the first time the reunion was also coupled with St Jude's Career's Day, held earlier in the day with secondary students. This meant that alumni could join industry professionals to give advice to current St Jude's students about their future.

The invited professionals, representing Tanzanian industries, encouraged students to pursue their passions, while alumni and 2016 Head Boy, Sifuni, shared these words to those following in his footsteps.

"Back when I was at St Jude's, I learnt things that led me to where I am right now. I got love, skills, confidence and all that can make you different from the rest. Take every opportunity that you get here at St Jude's, there's a lot in store for you. Explore the resources leaders offer you because it will guide you to good ends. I believe that in the next five years the graduates sitting here today are going to be a community of very highly skilled people, who are confident St Jude's professionals."

Arafa, a 22-year-old St Jude's tertiary scholar who travelled from her University in Dar Es Salaam for the event, motivated students too.

"Your greatest resource is the people here, it's the people that can help you get to where you want to go. While you are here at St Jude's try to make the most of your opportunity as there is so much to explore," Arafa shared.

St Jude's aspiring engineers, doctors, scientists and entrepreneurs then gathered in smaller workshop groups with the industry professionals to consider and discuss the best pathways to their dream jobs.

The events across the day and into the night truly brought the school values full circle and spotlighted the St Jude's school spirit, as our alumni make their impact in the wider world.

Will you join our impressive alumni in giving back?

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





Lucky Seven



Repeat visitors are excited to see St Jude's enter new era, with a dedicated girls' school to grow the number of graduates

Australian pharmacy managers, Margo and Tina, have seen many changes at The School of St Jude after visiting seven times and both admit they've 'fallen in love' with St Jude's.

"I am amazed at what this school has accomplished and the progression to now. I can see a lot of the hard work coming to fruition, especially with the number of Tanzanian staff there are now," Margo enthusiastically explained.

The bubbly duo have become passionate about fighting poverty through education and, as sponsors of the academic scholarships of two female students, have marveled at the changes they have seen in the students' lives.

"When I went to visit Angela at home for the first time seven years ago I nearly pulled down the tin shed her family lived in because I sat down too fast on the bed and the curtain came down! It was a single room made of tin with a dirt floor, but the family were so grateful. Now the family are in a brick house with a concrete floor and whilst they still don't have a door, their level of living has certainly improved which is really heartwarming," Tina smiled.

"13-year-old Christina was a shy little girl when I started sponsoring her scholarship, but now she is very mature. At the first home visit all those years ago it really struck me how fortunate it was for Christina to be accepted to St Jude's. They are now in a three-roomed house compared to one room when I first came," Margo added.

With Margo's support and the commitment of her St Jude's teachers, Standard 7 student, Christina, has become a strong performing science student and her ambition to be a future leader just keeps developing.

"Her goal for the seven years I've known her has always been to be a doctor. To imagine her going to university really pulls on my heart strings," Margo shared through teary eyes.



Top Friendly faces: Margo and Tina with the students whose academic scholarships they sponsor.

Both women have already witnessed many landmark years in St Jude's history.

"I am amazed how the school is always evolving. We were thrilled by the launch of the Beyond St Jude's program shortly before our last visit, and now we've learnt it has a team of eight helping hundreds of alumni. It's quite amazing that St Jude's will have their first university graduates this year," Tina reflected.

Both couldn't be more excited to see St Jude's enter a new era with a girls' secondary school to be opened in January next year. The reconfiguring of existing campuses will enable St Jude's to increase the number of graduates and stack the odds in favour of girls. In a country where girls from a poor rural area will only receive 3.7 years of schooling, and less than 25% will have received some secondary education, the new school creates the opportunity to redress this imbalance.

"For more women to have an education is just phenomenal. I think it's a fabulous idea. When you talk to Tanzanians they see that gender inequality is present but progress to address it is slow. It will be special to see the girls' school up and running on our next visit," Tina and Margo discussed as they walked by the facilities that are now being transformed for the new project.

As St Jude's works to make a bigger impact on more Tanzanian students and their families, Margo and Tina are vowing to continue to spread the word of the life-changing work they witness every time they visit.

"I think our role as sponsors is to create that ripple effect and I am finding that each time I go back to Australia it's the younger generation that are really interested in projects like this," Tina explained.

"You can expect us to visit as long as we have a heartbeat," Margo laughed looking around the school that her, and thousands of other generous supporters from around the world, have helped the local community turn into reality.

Join Tina, Margo and the 1,100+ visitors that stop by St Jude's each year and witness the exciting new era for yourself.

Contact our visitors team to arrange a visit.



Top Feeling at home: Margo and Tara (friend and fellow visitor), visit Christina and her family at home.



Middle In the thick of it: Tina, Margo and Tara soak up the atmosphere at the primary assembly.



Bottom Reading time: Tina takes some quiet time out in the library with students at Sisia Primary Campus.



Tailoring A Better Future

Team of tailors take on their biggest challenge yet with a record number of uniforms to be made this year.

Among the steady hum of sewing machines, a group of hardworking tailors are busy making the thousands of uniforms needed to clothe The School of St Jude students each year.

The uniform is an important part of starting school life at St Jude's and receiving it is often when it truly becomes a reality for new students that they're about to begin their journey with a nation-leading school.

Seeing the new students wearing her work is the highlight for tailor Miriam. Being employed by St Jude's has meant she can afford for her daughter to continue her schooling, something Miriam sees as a necessity in a country where girls' education is not prioritised.

"My daughter has reached Form 3 and I am happy that I can support her as she goes onto higher levels of education and have the opportunity to achieve the career she wants," Miriam shared, while industrially sewing her way through the 40 rolls of fabric needed for St Jude's secondary students' school uniforms.

As a working mum, Miriam is passionate about having more educated mums in Tanzania.

"Families can improve their situation if women have the skills and education to have greater independence and earn more money," Miriam explained.



Top Sewing with Pride: Miriam sewing one of the nearly 5,500 new uniforms made each year.
Bottom School Spirit: Standard 1 students trying on their new uniforms.





Top Job Opportunity: Daudi is one of 5 tailors employed by the school.

Bottom Uniform Record: Students receiving their new uniforms that will be produced at a record number this year.



With this belief, Miriam is excited to be given a new workload, making more uniforms than ever for the new secondary school for girls set to open in January next year. The reconfiguring of current facilities will mean that in future years even more graduates will be donning the school colours.

“We are happy to have the extra work as it means more students are getting an opportunity to enjoy this free education. We might even need some more tailors, which means more secure jobs for the community,” Miriam smiled.

Having a secure job has also had a hugely positive impact on tailor, Daudi, who has worked at the school for seven years.

“I have been able to build a house for my children, put them through school and buy them textbooks. Their uniforms aren’t as good as my work though,” Daudi joked.

Daudi and the team have been carefully piecing together over 5,500 uniforms each year, which includes boarding, school and PE uniforms for new students and replacement uniforms as current students get older.

“Yes it’s a big job but we have great morale in our team. I look forward to coming to work each day and I love hearing about the students that have worn our uniforms for years finally graduating and going on to higher education,” Daudi smiled, looking over at his fellow tailors.

As the students and school continue to grow, each uniform continues to be made in-house, reminding every student that their free, quality education is due to the generosity of St Jude’s international family of supporters.

Our school uniforms instill pride and fellowship in our students.

Donate today to help keep our students in uniform and our tailors in thread.





Creating Change

St Jude's alumnus leads the way in educating Maasai communities against early marriage

Standing in front of his community leaders, elders, parents and peers with a strong message about eliminating early marriage from his village, St Jude's graduate, Lomnyack, epitomises a leader driving change.

Whilst home on his holidays from university, where he is studying Civil Engineering, he called a community seminar to raise awareness about the importance of education and the long-term benefits of keeping girls in school, not just for themselves but their family and community too.

Lomnyack has had every chance to excel with his free, quality, St Jude's education, but the story is very different for many in his remote Maasai village, Engalaoni. Only 50% of children there started secondary school in 2019, much fewer will complete it and only a handful have made it into higher education. The situation for girls is even worse, only half the number girls will finish Form 4 compared to boys.

These statistics prompted Lomnyack, as part of the Community Action project he is undertaking as part of the university scholarship he got because of his St Jude's education, to find out why.

"After my initial research, I found early marriage is a big problem facing the community. When I was in secondary school at St Jude's there were only five students left in my year level in the government school in my village. While I am at university I am always thinking back to my community. With my strategy for this project I think our team can help have early marriage eliminated in five years," Lomnyack said confidently.

Lomnyack has enlisted the help of current Form 6 St Jude's student, Lotoishe, and other young men from Engalaoni village to stand in solidarity against the issue.

"Girls aren't the only ones responsible so it is important, as young men, to stop this. I learnt at St Jude's that girls are passionate to study but it is often the men that are stopping them. In the seminar, there were four girls who have refused at least four marriages each and they came to us. When I started the project there was a lot of resistance, not everyone was accepting what I was trying to tell them. I used my St Jude's journey as an example of why education is important," Lomnyack explained.

The community seminar was just the first step in Lomnyack's project, his team also plans to visit each family where child marriage has been raised as an issue to help educate them on the benefits of keeping girls in school. Then, with the support of the village leaders, Lomnyack will look to implement a local law against early marriage.

It's unprecedented progress for the remote Maasai village and Lomnyack credits St Jude's for developing his leadership skills.

Top Community Leader: Lomnyack educating his village about eliminating early marriage in the community.

Bottom Strong Stance: Lomnyack with community leaders who will help him introduce a law against early marriage in his village.





“Going to St Jude’s has made me a leader. Before the school I was passionate about changing my community but I didn’t know how. My leadership grew because I got to mix with different visitors and professionals from all over the world and it changed my mindset. Our Maasai village can lead the way and spread the message. Through the seminar I have developed a very strong team of young people and, together with my fellow St Jude’s graduates, in the future we can join together and say no! No towards bad practices in the community,” Lomnyack said passionately, looking out over his village.

St Jude’s aim is to develop community-focused leaders who can challenge the status quo and find solutions to drive change for their families and the millions of Tanzanians living in poverty. Now, as the 500+ graduates start to forge their own path after St Jude’s, their actions are showing that this hope is becoming a reality.

As Lomnyack mentors those that have been directly affected by the poor quality of education in his village, there is a feeling this may only be the start for this St Jude’s graduate and future leader.

“I want young women to have a future plan, not just getting married. I can see a lot of resistance but I hope to make a difference. Even 50% success is enough to make change in the future,” Lomnyack reflected.

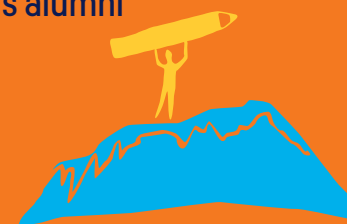
Left Making A Difference: Lomnyack credits his St Jude’s education for his leadership skills that are helping him drive change in his community.

Middle St Jude’s Support: Current Form 6 student Lotoishe who also addressed the community seminar with village leaders, elders, parents and students in attendance.

Right Maasai Movement: The boma’s (the traditional name for a Maasai dwelling) that Lomnyack will visit to educate families.

Will you join our impressive St Jude’s alumni in giving back?

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





The School of St Jude

Fighting poverty
through education



schoolofstjude.org

