



St Jude's News



Living the Dream: Holylight now works as an IT consultant at one of the world's largest organisations.



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Uniting in Compassion

A new initiative at St Jude's is helping local hospitals around the community.



Here to Help: St Jude's students waiting in line during the blood drive.

One of the most enduring cultures at St Jude's is the spirit of compassion and helping those in need. Throughout the year, students and staff support the community in various ways.

"Every other weekend, our students are out volunteering at an orphanage, cleaning the marketplace, or sharing their skills and knowledge with students from neighbouring schools," says Focus, a staff and mentor of Interact Club at the school.

This year, St Jude's launched another impactful initiative to support the community, particularly patients in need of blood transfusion. In March, the school introduced a bi-annual blood donation drive for eligible staff and students to voluntarily participate.

"We saw the need to step in and help local hospitals around our communities replenish their blood banks," says Irene, who helped organise a recent blood drive at St Jude's. "From medical emergencies and accidents,

to supporting mothers during childbirths, our hospitals could always use the extra blood units," she adds.

The first round saw 81 volunteers, including students at St Jude's Girls' Secondary School and staff participate in the blood drive. The turnout was so good that it earned St Jude's special recognition from Arusha's largest referral hospital as the biggest blood donation drive by a single institution in its history.

"It was a pleasant surprise," says Irene excitedly. "We only had a few weeks to organise the drive and had initially estimated the blood drive to only take a few hours. In the end, it lasted the entire day! It was wonderful to see the St Jude's community coming together once again in support of such an impactful program," she adds.

The blood donation drive was a collaborative effort between St Jude's welfare and academic teams, with support from Arusha's biggest referral hospital.



Getting Briefed: St Jude's students at an information session ahead of the blood drive.

"We wanted to ensure that the drive was organised efficiently," says Irene. "The hospital helped organise an information session for our students and staff ahead of the drive and the school arranged a special lunch for everyone who donated their blood," she adds.

Fatuma, one of the talented hosts of our monthly podcast, was one of the 63 students at St Jude's Girls' Secondary School who participated in the blood drive. Beyond the podcast, she is an incredible athlete aspiring to become a P.E. teacher and understands the importance of donating blood in saving lives.

"I first learned from my sister, who is a nurse, that blood can be used to help people, particularly mothers during childbirth," says Fatuma. "So when this opportunity arrived, I immediately volunteered," she adds excitedly.

It's also quite fitting that the record-setting blood drive happened at St Jude's Girls' Secondary School during a month dedicated to celebrating women.

Soon, St Jude's will conduct another blood drive at Smith Campus and continue supporting local hospitals with extra blood. It's part of a new tradition at St Jude's where students and staff unite to save lives.



A Happy Donor: Fatuma smiles as she donates blood at the drive.

Your support goes beyond our students and their families, impacting the community in various ways.
Donate Today.



Challenging the Status Quo

St Jude's alum reflects on her inspirational journey of succeeding in a male-dominated field.



Living the Dream: Holylight now works as an IT consultant at one of the world's largest organisations.

Like most students joining St Jude's in Standard 1, Holylight's favourite place was at the sports field. She loved playing football and carried that passion throughout her secondary school years.

"I immediately fell in love with the PE lessons and particularly enjoyed playing football," says Holylight. "I used to give it my all, rain or shine!" she adds with a smile.

The resources and opportunities at St Jude's paved the way for Holylight to try out different activities and develop various skills throughout her 13-year spell. Some of her fond memories include exploring her creativity in art lessons.

"Even though I don't remember creating the best art pieces, there was something magical about seeing your own artwork displayed on the walls of the classroom," says Holylight.

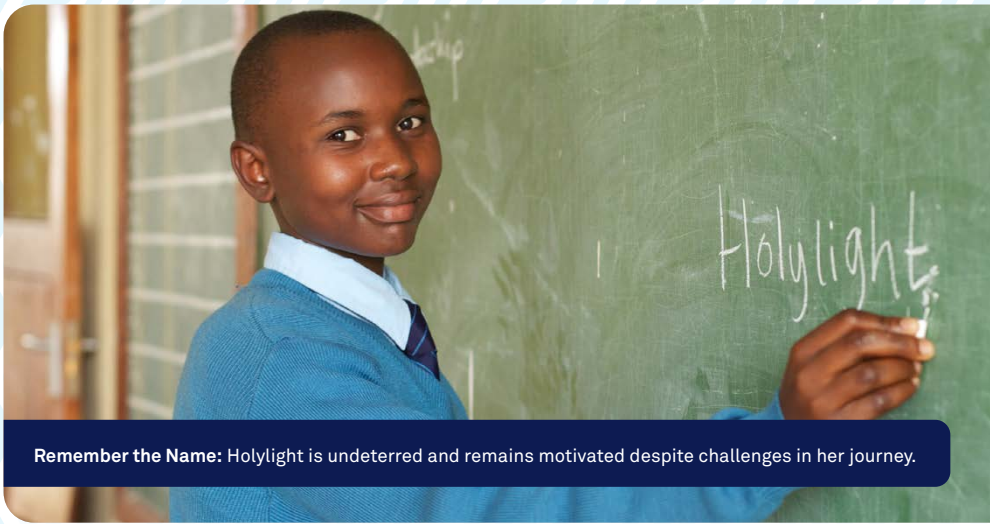
In addition to art and sports, Holylight spent her time sharpening her computer skills, particularly typing. She still remembers playing the old penguin typing game and Ubuntu Operating Systems in her early St Jude's days.

This experience inspired Holylight to start developing a passion for computer studies and upon graduating from secondary school, she was confident in choosing a career in IT.

"The fact that I had an opportunity to engage with computers from a young age greatly shaped my choice of career," reflects Holylight. "St Jude's offered an environment where learning was not just a process but an experience."



Good Old Times: Holylight enjoying a computer class in her early St Jude's days.



Remember the Name: Holylight is undeterred and remains motivated despite challenges in her journey.

The strong foundation equipped me with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to navigate the challenges in STEM fields,” she adds.

St Jude’s promotes the education and empowerment of girls at the school and tertiary levels. In January 2020, St Jude’s opened a girls’ secondary school to grant even more females the opportunity for free, quality education. The new school particularly encourages female students to participate in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) subjects for it’s recognised that more Tanzanian women leaders are needed in these fields.

In 2024, the Standard 1 and 2 intake of girls was 60%. St Jude’s also boasts an equal ratio of female and male students entering tertiary education in contrast to the national figures of approximately 1-to-28.

“Throughout my journey, I’ve often found myself in environments where women were underrepresented,” says Holylight. “One particularly vivid memory is being the only female in my master’s class, surrounded by seven male peers,” she adds.

Despite the challenges, Holylight successfully pursued tertiary studies in IT from one of Africa’s reputable universities. She went on to secure a highly sought-after internship at the World Bank, an opportunity she took concurrently with her Master’s research. While at university, Holylight helped develop an innovative prototype mobile application that aimed at helping victims of violence report incidents to legal and social stakeholders.

“At times, I would take the underrepresentation as a challenge,” reflects Holylight. “But I’ve come to see it more as an opportunity—an open call for more women to join the ranks of STEM professionals,” she adds.

Holylight is currently working as an IT consultant at the World Bank, where she is part of a team responsible for managing software assets. A typical day at work involves diving into huge volumes of data using a variety of tools and technologies. The scale and complexity of the datasets challenges her to think creatively and analytically.

Despite having a thriving career at one of the world’s largest corporations, Holylight is far from done.

“My ambitions are crystallised around academia. I’m particularly drawn to the realms of Generative AI and Big Data Analytics,” says Holylight. “I’m eagerly looking forward to more research and further studies in these areas,” she adds.

Holylight’s incredible story exemplifies St Jude’s mission and highlights how empowering females to receive an education and pursue their ambitions has a far-reaching impact throughout the entire country and the world.

Your support to St Jude’s empowers girls to discover their passion, pursue their dreams, challenge the status-quo, and emerge as role models for their communities. **Sponsor Today.**



Q & A with Grace

A St Jude's graduate and Community Service Year (CSY) volunteer shares her role in the scholarship application process.



Good Old Times: Holylight enjoying a computer class in her early St Jude's days.

Every year, St Jude's sends thousands of letters inviting high-achieving students across three regions of Tanzania to apply for a scholarship. To achieve such a daunting task, St Jude's incredible network of Community Service Year (CSY) volunteers step up. This March, the volunteers hand-delivered over 2,600 letters to 300 school headmasters inviting their top performing students to apply for a Form 5 scholarship at St Jude's.

In Tanzania, the final two years of secondary school are called Advanced Level (A Level); Form 5 and 6.

In this month's Q & A, Grace, a CSY currently volunteering at the Community Relations team at St Jude's shares her recent experience in letter delivery.

St Jude's conducts a fair and thorough scholarship application process to ensure each sponsorship goes to EXACTLY the right student.

Sponsor Today.

What do you do as a CSY volunteer in Community Relations?

My main role is to assist the team in various tasks and activities to ensure the Scholarship Application Day runs smoothly. Recently, I've helped my team in coordinating letter distribution in different areas.

How are you involved in letter distribution?

My involvement is two-fold: I assist in planning, coordinating, and corresponding with fellow CSYs on the field to address challenges and issues that require follow-up or consultation.

On the other hand, I also participate in letter distribution with fellow CSYs and travel to many schools to personally deliver invitation letters.

How was your recent experience in letter distribution?

It was an adventure! There are always challenges with navigation and roads particularly with the unpredictable weather – we saw it all this time around! We had to use different forms of transportation, such as the bus, motorcycles and bicycles, walking, and even hiked to get to some schools. Overall, it was a wonderful experience and a privilege to be a part of what's happening behind the scenes in the scholarship process.

Why are CSYs chosen to have this experience?

Firstly, as St Jude's graduates, we are living proof of the school's mission, so when people see us, they can visualise the opportunities and potential that await their children or students when they join St Jude's.

Secondly, we know a lot about the school! So we can answer questions and clarify to people who may have questions.

What do you remember from your own Scholarship Application Day at St Jude's

I only remember there being so many of us! And I feel very lucky to have secured a place!



Highlighting St Jude's impact on girls

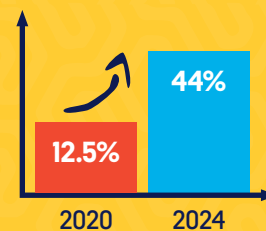
The numbers behind St Jude's commitment to empowering women and girls.



Women Empowerment: St Jude's fosters a culture of equal opportunity, empowering women to achieve their full potential and pursue their dreams.

St Jude's firmly upholds the principle of equal opportunity for all, regardless of tribe, family, or gender, in accessing education, resources, and opportunities. Over the years the school has taken intentional steps to create a supportive environment where women and girls can thrive and impact their communities.

First a quick note of the school system here in Tanzania; there are seven years of primary school from Standard 1 to 7, then four years of secondary school called Ordinary Level (O Level) from Form 1 to 4, and then the final two years of secondary school called Advanced Level (A Level), Form 5 and 6.



In 2020, when it opened, only 12.5% of St Jude's Girls' Secondary School teachers were female.

Now, we have brought it up to 44%!

52%

Of St Jude's students are girls



You can see the impact of your support is having in empowering our girls. We love visitors! [Visit Us](#)



Our girls' secondary school enrolls 480 O Level girls