



One By One

Year 18 Issue 1 (Triple Issue)

June 30, 2018

“The reason most people give up so fast is that they look at how far they still have to go, instead of how far they have come.”

Author Unknown

My Apology

I have found that the best way is often the direct way.

I apologize.

This newsletter comes 9 months after the last one which is too long...far too long.

Excuses can be made: getting lost in the need of the day-to-day, surviving hardships, and the excitement of each of our students' accomplishments... but no excuse is good enough.

Thank you to all our One! International donors and supporters who tirelessly continue to support us.

Please know that you are appreciated beyond words and that we would not be able to do the work we do without you.

Tania

Celebration 2018— Putting the Pieces Together

In this truly puzzling state of the world, “Putting the Pieces Together” was a perfect theme for 2018. With puzzles on each table, puzzle themed speeches and a giant puzzle collage put together by the end of the night, the theme really came alive.

We faced extra challenges this year: donor fatigue and a still recovering economic downturn, it is a true testament to our family of supporters that we managed to raise just over

\$30,000 after expenses. An amazing result allowing us to start 2018 in a position of strength and stability.

Cold weather and a blizzard (an annual tradition) didn't keep anyone at home. We warmed up together with the joyful energy in the room: conversations were animated and upbeat, wonderful music was heard in the background, the decorations were beautiful, the



generosity and support of the guests was inspiring.

A huge thank you and congratulations to the Celebration Planning Team, and the volunteers/performers of the night for producing such a positive and encouraging atmosphere.

Without the success of this Celebration, One! International would not be able to do as much with the children and families in India; it would not be able to achieve many of its accomplishments.

Thank you to all volunteers and guests.

Together, we will continue putting the pieces together and making the world a better place in whatever ways we can.

Our First University Graduate!

Ekta Kanaujiya joined One! International back in 2009 as a part-time student. She was shy and soft-spoken as a teenager. Though she is still quiet, it is quiet confidence now.

In 2013, she graduated from Grade 10 and we hired her to work with the PreStep children as client staff.

Despite the stresses of part-time

work and family responsibilities, Ekta never let her dream of studying go. She saved her monthly salaries which allowed her to pay tuition.



She attained Grade 12 Graduation (the first in her family) and is now, One! Inter-

national's first student to become a university graduate. She has a Bachelor of Commerce Degree. She says it is not enough—she wants to pursue an MBA!

Ekta is our newest professional staff member—her client staff days are gone!

She is a wonderful role model for young students—especially girls who get discouraged along the way—she has proven that anything is possible.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Fresh Energy in a Brighter Place: Khar School Moves

After 13.5 years at Ganesh Kripa building in Khar Danda, it was finally time to move on. It wasn't a tearful good-bye. After years of deteriorating relations with the landlord, it was time for fresh energy and the prospect of a place that would better suit our needs.

We were apprehensive at being able to move on time. Khar school acts as the hub for all One! International operations and over the years we have managed to accumulate a lot—including over 3000 books!



better feeling than being surrounded by books and knowledge. It is better organized and has already been used more than it ever has in the past.

The biggest issue we have is a bit of a noise problem. We are brainstorming solutions that we will try.

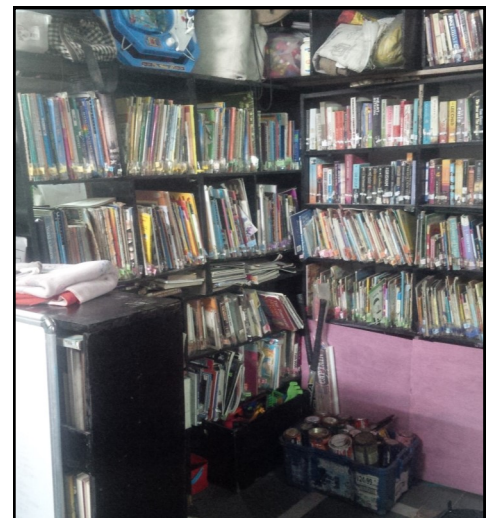
A telling sign of how far we have come is a bit of a funny one—the toilet! We have two toilets—one western toilet and one Indian toilet (squat). In the past, staff and older students refused to share with the younger children. Since no one



Now, two months on, we are in love with our new home.

Setting it up was a challenge as it is one large open space. Necessity is the mother of 'innovation' for us! We have been able to divide the space into 8 'classrooms', a lunch area, a kitchen, two bathrooms, a fantastic library and an office.

Ashok, our Math teacher and amateur carpenter, made movable classroom dividers. Each room has been painted a different colour with matching boxes (which act as desks for the children), and the students have T-shirts (uniforms) that match their room (step).



The library (double what is shown in the picture) is incredible. There is no

wants to use the western toilet, everyone is sharing the squat toilet—parents, children, babies and students of all sizes. And it is clean! Even in the middle of the day, the toilet is spotless. The simplest of things can tell a larger story. It is great to see everyone taking pride in their new school and working together.

Without complaint or hesitation, every member of the Khar team started hauling books 250m down the road to our new place. Everyone banded together, not stopping for a second. In just four days, we managed to not only get out of the old place and have it cleaned, but into the new place and preliminarily ready for classes!



Our new school is a bit smaller than the old one, but it is brighter. It gives us hope for what's to come!!

Vijay's Corner— Dear Daughters

Vijay just finished year 2 of his 3 year Law Degree. With this degree, he feels he will be better able to advocate for One! International families. He misses being able to spend every day all day with the students:

"I dedicate this article to all the sweet daughters of ONE! but before I begin, I want to thank all the sons of ONE! for taking care of the daughters. You are no less important. That is why I call each of my daughters 'Beta'(son) as well.

I am the luckiest person to have get to work with so many talented and incredible daughters. Flowers, who have made my life colourful. Pearls for whom One! is the shell, beneath which they feel safe and secure. Their sweet smile gives me strength to move forward and continue this difficult work of change.

Today I am having a busy schedule with my studies and not been able to give as much time. I feel very sad about it. But remembering their sweet smile it relieves my sorrow.

When I get stressed of my studies , I close my eyes and remember

I want to share a few sweet memories of mine, that the daughters of One! gave me:

Mansi bugging me incessantly but never missing a day of homework.

Varsha telling me her funny stories.

Ekta never allowed me to sleep without having dinner during my time living at the NS school.

Muskaan: All the staff and children fell asleep in the train during the Kaniyakumari trip but Muskaan stayed awake helping me to care of everyone like a sister or a mother.

Khushboo (ex-student) sent me a birthday wish, sharp 12 A.M.

Babli introducing me as her father to her husband.

All these moments have really made my life so beautiful that I can't imagine to leave this world without paying back all this love and care to others.

I want to give a message too... All those parents who want their daughters to get married at a young age treating them as a burden; all those parents who don't want their daughters to study for higher class; all those parents who want their daughters to sit at home and do household work...

Daughters are the most precious and sweetest gift you will ever have. Cherish them."

- Vijay

Update: Kokila and the Love of her Life!

You may recall the teenage girl that was burnt in a gas-stove explosion 7 years ago. She is now the mother to a beautiful 1 year-old boy, Kamlesh. She is a wonderful mother, proven by the beautiful smile and contentedness of Kamlesh.

When she was 18, Kokila was married (arranged) to a man 10 years older than her. Her husband and his family abused her both physically and mentally; she ran away. Her mother forced her to go back to her

husband. Kokila knew she deserved better, she kept running away.

Now she is happily divorced and thankful that her ex-husband did not try to fight to keep Kamlesh.

Despite her struggles—being a single mom, having visible scars and not having a supportive family—Kokila is happy and smiles every day. Being around her makes us smile. We all learn from her positive outlook on life and try to emulate her.



Village Project

We have decided to temporarily halt our village project with intention to resume at a later time—possibly in a different village.

Shashi (in picture) and the rest of the Vangaon team (Varsha, Navneet & Vijay) have decided that the effort, time and travel (2.5 hours each way) was not worth the amount of time that they were able to spend with the children.



Our 2 years in Vangaon has been a fantastic learning experience. The learning curve was exponential, teaching us of the special needs and

requirements of rural communities.

A delicate balance has to be maintained between government, village council and the villagers themselves. In our time in Vangaon, we saw there was no balance between the government school and the village council, creating obstacles to reaching our goals. We feel our precious resources can be used better elsewhere.

The team is determined to try again as they truly believe that rural work is crucial to improving their India.

University Dreams Program

Times sure have changed around One! International.

In the beginning, we had to convince the children they could draw anything that they wanted not just what others suggested.

Then we had to convince them that they could graduate from Grade 10.

Then we had to convince them to pursue Grade 12 studies.

Then to get a university degree—they always chose BComm (Bachelor of Commerce) because it was the cheapest and the easiest.

Now, our One! International students—some of whom we gave their first pencil—are dreaming of careers. Careers of their choice with respect to their likes and abilities.

How far we have come!

With the help of Children's Hope India, we have created a University Dreams Program. Students apply for loans in order to pursue further studies that they would otherwise not be able to afford.

The five students to benefit from the new program :

Jeetu—a student of Nallasopara since day 1, he is studying to become a mechanic.

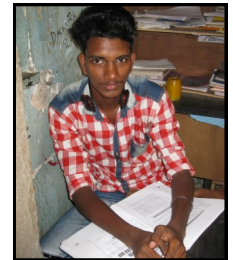


Sunil—he has put off his dream of becoming an Ayurvedic doctor for 2 years due to family issues, but this year his journey begins!

Vicky and Varsha—due to financial reasons, brother and sister stopped studying after Grade 7. A year later, they found One! International and have been excelling ever since. Vicky will start his Computer Science degree this year and, Varsha, her social work degree next year.



Sanjay—Following his best friend Vicky's example, he will start his Computer Science degree despite helping to take care of his father who is terminally ill.



Volunteer Corner

This year, we have been lucky to have volunteers from age 15 to 75! Proving that no one is too young or too old to give their time and energy in helping others.

Marilyn and George Spilchen returned to see the growth of One! International from the ground. It is always special having them at the schools where the students and staff call them Naniji and Nanaji (Grandma and Grandpa).

Lisbeth (One! International Director from Australia) spent two months, achieving a mammoth amount of work in such a short

time. She has volunteered numerous times since 2004—an integral part of our family!

Gail and Dallas first volunteered in 2013. This time around, Dallas dived into her classes as if she never left and was often seen singing and dancing. Gail spent most of her time soothing crying babies and showing the PreStep

mom's how to be loving and caring but equally strict!

Our youngest volunteer, Chloe (15 years old) was gentle, hard-working and full of enthusiasm:

"Volunteering for One! International was genuinely a life changing experience. I have never felt more at home so far from my home. The kids are so kind and funny and you can't help but smile when you're around them. Not only that, but the bond between the other volunteers and I is something I will never forget."

- Chloe



Grade 10 and Grade 12 - The New Normal!

Varsha and Sanjay joined our growing list of Grade 12 graduates this year, while Azeem (left) joined Dashrath and Jeetu in graduating from Grade 10 on the first try—an elite club.



Though graduation is wonderful, we also want to celebrate those who are persevering despite age and responsibility.

We have a re-evaluation request in for Ashok. If the result comes back as expected, he could become a Grade 10 graduate at 26 years of age.

Three mothers continue to strive to graduate:

Reshma (28), single mother of 2 year old miracle baby Sanaiya, wants to be a good role model for her daughter.

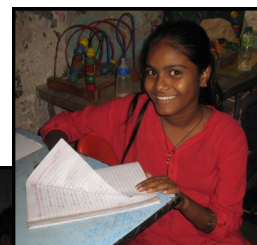


Mallika (23), mother of 3 year old Saloni, is in a stressful marriage but determined to become a nurse one day.

Kokila (20), who has always struggled with learning, is still determined to try to pass one subject at a time.

Past students Dilshaad (25) and Raje-shree (20) are also determined to graduate from Grade 10 and then get their teaching certificates.

Our newest Grade 10 students: Pooja (15) and Sohail (13). Sohail must wait



two years before he is of age to write the exams despite being ready now!

The students of the school don't question any more being able to reach Grade 10, they know they can.

Sports Day Fun!

Due to the open space layout of the new Khar school, we were able to have our sports days in house this

year—and the staff and students say it was the best sports day ever.

The younger Khar students (Prestep to Step 5) travelled for sports day number 1 at the Nallasopara school, taking advantage of the grounds. The students from both schools interacted better than ever.

The older Nallasopara students (Steps 6 to 9) travelled to Khar for Sports Day Number 2. The

games were split between the beach and the school.

The highlight for this year was the community challenge where the students and staff (in groups) solved riddles in order to give local vendors code words to procure the needed elements to build a cabbage man. One team was stumped by the pill nose and another couldn't get the bean eyes to stay on the head!



Volunteers Needed!

1) Event Planners.

Location: Edmonton and Area

Commitment: Flexible

Suitability: Age 16 plus

Screening: Interview

We are looking for people interested in planning fundraiser events, especially our annual Gala Celebration which takes place at the beginning of February each year. This particular event is well formatted, but requires individuals willing to take on some of

the components. We are hoping to explore new events as well.

2) Social Media

We are looking for individuals interested and willing to assist our Social Media Coordinator in posting to various social media sites.

3) Accountant (Auditor)

We are in need of an accountant that is willing to help us pro bono or at reduced rates.

4) International Volunteers (India)

Having had over 300 international volunteers at our schools in India, most teach English but they also perform various amazing tasks: assist trained teachers and social workers, build curriculum, skills training, etc. The volunteer day is 7 hours per week day and every other Saturday afternoon with a minimum commitment of two months. We have a medical volunteer program for doctors/nurses/dentists (minimum requirement 2 weeks).

Contact: info@one-international.com

Written by Tania unless otherwise mentioned.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Canada:

112 Garland Crescent, Sherwood Park, Alberta, Canada, T8A 2R2

Phone: (780) 467-6254

India:

Phone: (91) 98205-17805

EMAIL: info@one-international.com

Twitter:

@One_Intnl

Facebook:

/OneTaniaDidi

Blog:

On the Webpage

www.one-international.com

Trip to the Tip of India

85 children plus staff enjoyed the history of the southern most point of India, and



swam where the Indian Ocean, the Arabian sea and the Bay of Bengal meet.

Community Clean-Up

Inspired by the suggestion by Maya Didi (Children's Hope India), we spent the month of May cleaning up our local communities. We not only spoke to community members about the need for cleanliness to cut disease and improve health, but showed them by doing.

Every day, students and staff spent over an hour picking up garbage and cleaning sewers. In some areas, stagnant muddy water became running streams by the end. The students were proud of their hard work. We were proud of them for not complaining and understanding the need for their efforts.

One month on, most of the areas have maintained cleanliness. Two areas reverted to their previous state and the children's disappointment clearly expressed that they understood the

need of cleanliness and everyone's individual responsibility in community life.



Drugs and Violence

Unfortunately, there has been a noticeable increase of violence in our communities; from beatings to stabbings, cuts and bruises to death. One of the main causes of this increased violence is unemployment and the frustrations that go along with it.

Another cause for the increased violence is growing drug use. There has always been a presence of hashish and marijuana but we now have brown sugar (heroin) and crystal meth. This is new territory for us and we are countering it in every way we possibly can—providing counselling and early awareness sessions for the teens.

Journey to Canada

In celebration of their 10 years of dedication and hard work with One! International, we are excitedly awaiting the arrival of Vikas, Vijay and Mahendra in Canada.

Unfortunately, Mahendra's Visa application was rejected this time but we are determined to try again...and again if needed!



We are hoping Mahendra can join us for Celebration 2019 in January, and plan for Vikas and Vijay to join us for the summer of 2019.

Anil Sir's health doesn't allow for a trip to Canada, but we celebrate his 10 plus years with One! International.



Mama the Magical

I will never forget August 12, 2000, sitting in the sunshine on the hill at Folk Fest and telling my mom for the first time that I wanted to start a charity for street children in India.

Any mother would be in shock. Not mine!

She immediately supported the idea and asked how she could help.

Now, almost 18 years later, look what we have built together.

She has spent near full-time hours (sometimes more!) making my dream (OUR dream) come true.

Thank you will never be enough. You are inspiring. Without you, One! International would never have become what it is today.

