



One By One

Year 24 Issue I (Double Issue)

May 31, 2024

“JOY is a decision. A really brave one, about how you are going to respond to life.”

Wess Stafford

Monthly Giving Gives Life to One!

Depending on the year, 20-35% of One! International’s funding has come from monthly donations.

From \$10-\$250, donors give what they can; every dollar counts. THANK YOU to our regular donors for sustaining the life of One! International.

Please become a monthly donor if you can. The base they have created is what One! International is built on. Click [HERE](#) to reach our partner for donating, CanadaHelps.

Thank you for sharing this request with your friends and followers!



Never Going to Give Up

July 8th will mark 25 years since I first set foot in India in 1999. I have been fortunate every day since, learning from the country and the people, that have allowed me to call them family, and it home.

The next year will be a difficult one as we realign, adapt and prioritize what are our most important goals. Severe financial constraints have already forced us to cut back rental space and reduce staff by 35%.

The challenge, is to limit the damage to our ongoing programs, as much as possible. At this time, we are opting to keep the educa-

tion and social work programs the same, but instead limiting all extracurricular activities. We will reduce the children/families served by only 10%.



If there is one thing that the One! International community has taught me over the years, it is TO NEVER GIVE UP.

Kokila faced a life-threatening stove accident that left her forever scarred mentally and physically—she has never given up.

Countless mothers face daily struggles of domestic abuse, extreme poverty—but they never give up for the sake of their children.

Hundreds of students over the years have shown me, that despite innumerable obstacles in their way, they have never given up and they have thrived.

Therefore, after 25 years of learning from them, I will never give up. There is more work to be done; children and families that need help. As long as I am able and capable, I will. I have to give—sometimes even just a smile can make a huge difference.

We have one year to find new paths, a new life...we are never going to give up!

Ahmedabad



After a two-year gap, we were able to organize a much needed annual trip for the staff and students.

This year, 114 participants



(89 students, 25 staff) boarded a train that took them to Ahmedabad, Gujarat, for a 3 day visit which allowed the students to learn about new cultures, history and local attractions.

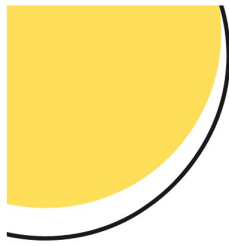
Split in groups, making their own food, cleaning up, and following a strict schedule are only some of the ways the children learn about healthy family and healthy living.



When it was time to head back home, everyone had their heads and hearts filled with wonderful memories.



An adventure filled with practical learning at the cost of \$30 per person.



Expressing gratitude
to our
amazing donors.



THANK YOU
THANK YOU
THANK YOU
THANK YOU
THANK YOU



*Your support makes a real
Difference in our community.*

Happy 80th Birthday Naniji!



August will be 25 years since mom (Marilyn!) first heard the insane idea of One! International. Without hesitation, she jumped on board and has since been One! International's grandmother—Naniji!

Through all the ups and downs, tears & laughter,



she has never wavered in her dedication to the children and parents of the One! International community. She has dedicated endless hours as a volunteer to the tedious tasks of running an organization. Without her, the dream of One! International would never have been realized.

On June 10, she will be celebrating her 80th birthday. Raise a glass to one of the most incredible women in the world!

Vijay's Corner—

Message of Optimism and Resilience

“Looking around the negativity going in India and around the world, it makes me change my Social work perspective. Till now, I thought that social work is to help the needy by providing them basic necessities like food, shelter, clothes, medical facilities etc. which helps the poor come out of poverty and live a better standard of living. But today, I realize that only helping with basic necessity won't help the world to become peaceful and safe place to live in.

Many give excuses to select the wrong way to lead a life. Some individuals may resort to negative actions or behaviors, either intentionally or as a result of challenging circumstances. Excuses and justifications for wrongdoing are often

used to rationalize harmful actions, but it is important to recognize that everyone has the capacity to make choices and take responsibility for their behavior.

Hence Social work now has a bigger role to play in today's generation. Losing hope in good things is the biggest weakness that is getting into most of the people now a days.

We need to show the true essence of social work and try to educate the children, parents and all other members of the community about the way to keep their mind balanced during difficult times and be positive and do things that is right.

So, Social work needs to be done in broader way by more community outreach, listening to people's problems

patiently, making sure that they feel cared, continuous observation on the behavior of the people living in the community.

We should start focusing on a small community, and if we succeed in bringing the desired change in it, it can serve as a beacon of hope and inspiration for others to follow suit.

Despite the challenges and negativity we may face, there is always goodness and positivity around us. Just like a passing cloud, negativity can overshadow the brightness of positivity temporarily, but it will eventually dissipate. The sun of positivity will shine again, bringing energy, hope, and renewed positivity into everyone's lives.”

—Vijay

The Girl Who Never Lost Hope

In April 2023, the news came to our social work team that one of our students, an 11 year old girl, was missing. Her family had befriended a small restaurant manager. The girl worked in exchange for food that the family desperately needed. Her father was an alcoholic, and her mother was struggling to feed her four children on a meagre salary as a cook. All of a sudden one night, the man disappeared taking our student with him.

Our social workers could only witness the distress of the family. They guided and supported the mother to file a police case and tried

to console her as much as they could.

The news of the disappearance was devastating, not only for her family but the entire community. Everyone helped give as much information as they could to the police. The efforts made to find her and support the distressed family were truly commendable.

Months and months went by without news. The girl and the man were nowhere to be found. Regular police requests gave no new leads. After 9 months, we lost hope.

Until...

February 2024 brought overwhelmingly joyful news:

Our student was found!

She was 10 hours away by train, but that didn't stop Vikas Sir and her mother from reaching within 24 hours! She went through medical checks and police interviews, and seemingly endless protocol. However, when all was said and done, she returned home with her mother.

That's not the end, the police asked



if she and her mother would be willing to try to trap the kidnapper. On the second attempt, it worked! To everyone's relief, he is in jail—likely for the rest of his life.

She told us that she never lost hope. She was abused every day, but stayed focussed on getting home. She fought the abuse, spoke when she could and always stayed ready to run. In the end, she found an opportunity and acted.

A young girl who could teach all of us: **Never give up, never lose hope, keep fighting, it is possible.**



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Soccer Team Needing A Sponsor

ARE YOU GAME? This rag-tag group of budding athletes need someone to help their dream move forward. As a token of our gratitude for support, we offer you the exciting opportunity to name the soccer team, design the logo & more!



Amazing Energy at Gala 2024

Gala 2024, was a brilliant way to start the year. Like a family reuniting, there was a buzz in the crowd—a buzz of positivity, sincerity and hope.

Woodvale Community Hall is a fantastic venue. The staff were welcoming and helped in every way they could to make the night perfect.

Brianne was a wonderful emcee and the live sitar performance was very special. Live chats with Indian staff and students are always a highlight—a highlight not just for the Gala attendees but for the staff and students themselves (too excited, they never get any sleep before the 6am go time!).

The hand-made flowers and center pieces by our students, were carefully brought all the way from India—spreading joy through their vibrant colours.

A huge thank you to everyone who volunteered and attended. The night was a huge success; fundamental to the longevity of One! International and the work it does.



University Fund Update

We are very proud of our university students, but also in the sustainability of the program itself. Only 5 years old, the fund has already seen 3 students graduate and all three students responsibly paying back to the fund the money borrowed so as to enable other students to reach their dreams!

Current University Fund recipients:

Sunil—completing the final year of his MBBS (**Medicine**) studies in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Saurabh—set to finish his **Law** degree in June and write his bar exam later this year.

Sanjay—completed the first year of his BCA (Bachelor of Computer Application).

Khushboo—completed the first year of her MBA (Masters in Business Administration).

Sapna & Jeetu—completed the first years of their MSW (Masters in Social Work).

Abhishek—after waiting 4 years, will start his **Hotel Management** degree in July.

Vivek—completed two years of his BVoc in **Radiology**.

The students chosen have studied in the One! International schools and were junior client staff (work experience). They not only showed aptitude in studies, but had good work ethic and were focussed on a career.

Help Us Keep Nallasopara School Running

2024 will be a pivotal year for One! International.

Our major donor for the Nallasopara School will no longer be able to support us. While we are extremely grateful for the 19 year partnership that we had with them, it will create a huge void in our financials. In fact, our funds will be reduced by more than HALF.

With no other choice, we will be forced to cut back heavily, or worse, even shut down our Nallasopara school which has been running for more than 17 years.

The school has become a vital community centre for children (especially our 22 special needs students), their parents, and the greater community members. Without it, families will be impacted in a crippling way.

If you have any ability to help, or know someone or some business who can, please reach out to us. The children and families will be forever thankful.

