

PROVIDENCE CHILDRENS HOME

Spring and Summer 2014 Update

Historic Joint Board Meeting

In April, the combined boards of PCH in Kenya and the U.S. met jointly for the first time at La Verne Heights Presbyterian Church (LVHPC) in California. Preparations for the meeting included getting passports and visas for several of the Kenya board members, some of whom had never been on an airplane. They bravely made the long trip and were rewarded with a wonderful adventure. Before the working part of the trip got underway, the Kenya board was treated with a trip to Disneyland, thanks to a gift from the PCH support team at LVHPC. They all had a great time and stories to tell to their families in Kenya. The timing of their trip allowed the two boards to participate in the California fundraiser, with the Kenyans providing an authentic song and dance in Kenya traditional dress. The joint board meeting was very eventful. Several of those present had never met before but all considered each other good friends in just a short 3 days. All found much more in common than differences and there were many plans identified to move PCH forward with common goals. All agreed that the value of meeting together justifies holding a joint meeting every year.



Valentine Goes to College

Valentine Kekoi, our recent high school graduate, was notified in April that she has been accepted to nursing school at the African Inland Church (AIC) Kijabe School of Nursing. This is a 3 ½ year program that begins in August. A College Fund has been created for those who would like to contribute to Valentine's college costs and those of the other girls who will be graduating from high school soon. There are currently eight girls who are scheduled to graduate at the end of 2015. Go to the Give tab on our website to learn how you can make an online donation to support this important opportunity for the educational development of the PCH orphans. You can also make a check donation and designate this fund.



Spring Mission Trip

At the end of March, a dedicated team of eight persons from Texas, Ohio, Tennessee, Georgia and North Carolina visited the PCH Kenya campus. Though the team was small in number, everyone was energetic and ready to meet the orphans and take on a few projects. This was the first outside group to meet most of the twenty-two newest girls, so it was expected that they would be shy because most could not speak English well. This was not an obstacle as the girls quickly attached themselves to the visitors. Several projects were completed, the largest being the provision of a ceiling and re-painting the walls of the school's Dining Hall.



But the time spent with the girls was the most rewarding for all involved. Devotions were held daily with each team member paired with several orphans. Each session was ended with the theme song, "Jesus Loves the Little Children." The orphans even helped make hand motions to go with the song by the end of the week, which was celebrated with the quarterly birthday party for those girls having a birthday in the first part of the year. The most unique part of the trip



was taking all 45 girls shopping for bathing suits. This was the first time many of the girls had ever been shopping for themselves and the escalator and elevator at the shopping mall were a new adventure as well. The team will never forget the giggles and smiles of the girls as each tried on and picked out the suit just right for them. There are dozens of pictures from the trip



on the Recent Photos tab of our website that capture the emotions better than words. Please contact Larry Watson if you are interested in going to Kenya in the Spring of 2015.



June Mission Trip

In June, thirty-five people from the Southern California region traveled to Providence Children's Home for ten days. This group is the largest mission team sent to PCH to date and included many youth and young adults, which is also a first for PCH. With such a large group, many projects were completed with over \$44,000 raised for them. The largest of these was playground equipment (see next article). Bibles were provided to the twenty-two new orphan girls with their names inscribed on the covers. All the other girls had similar Bibles given to them during the 2012 mission trip, which they still cherish. Each day mission group members teamed up with orphanage girls for worship music, bible study and prayer together as a way to support one another. The close relationships built were very obvious on the last day when it was so difficult to say goodbye. Students in grades 1-5 participated in art projects, science experiments, and learned new physical education activities. The enjoyment of watching children make and eat ice cream for the first time, learn the game of kickball, have fun with a PE parachute, and use color pencils for the first time was sight that brought tears of joy to the team. The team also brought ten cameras and two photo printers that were shared by the older orphanage children. They took photos during the time the team was there and created their own personalized scrap book of memories, something they all cherished. Three Psychologists/Counselors conducted team counseling sessions for the orphanage girls which for some was one of their favorite experiences.

Twelve teachers were a part of this mission team and conducted daily intensive staff development for the Providence teachers, grade 1-8 as an extension of the teacher training that was conducted during the 2012 mission trip. As with the Spring mission team, they went to minister and serve, and like so many other mission trip members before them, they came back feeling ministered to, and receiving a blessing rather than being the blessing. Providence Children's Home is a very special place that will do that to you. Read more about the trip on our website blog.



New Playground Equipment



As part of the June mission trip, two large playgrounds were constructed; one for the school and one for the orphanage. This was no easy task, as sand pits with retaining walls had to be constructed and concrete footers poured. For a while it looked like this project would not be finished in time. But with the help of local day workers and the hard work and dedication of the mission team men and women who coordinated this effort, it was completed without a day to spare. The dedication of the playgrounds and the faces of the small children climbing on the equipment for the first time will forever be etched in this team's memory.

Partnership with Wiltsey Middle School

Since starting their journey to become an International Baccalaureate (IB) School, Wiltsey Middle School, in the Ontario-Montclair School District near Los Angeles, has built a strong relationship with Providence Children's Home. Ten Wiltsey staff and teachers participated in the recent mission trip. Wiltsey students have been pen-pals and Skyped with the school and orphanage children during the past three years, and last year they raised money for a milk cow for the orphanage. As a part of an IB project, a group of Wiltsey students took it upon themselves to raise money and put together a pencil pouch for every PCH student containing two pencils, a pencil sharpener, an eraser, a ruler, hard candy treats and a personal note in both Swahili and English encouraging the PCH students to continue with their education. The theme was "Pamoja", meaning together. The personal message read "together we can accomplish great things". What a powerful message. Handing these gifts out to over 500 students was like Christmas in June!



Providence Children's Home



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