

Autumn Newsletter 2019

EDITORIAL

It is great when dreams finally come true. One such dream for Rehoboth has been to capture the abundant sunshine in the Philippines and convert it into energy to help run the Home. You will see that this dream has now become a reality thanks to some specific and generous one-off gifts.



Another dream is that all those who come to Rehoboth, whatever their background, will know that they are loved and valued and can have a future full of hope and meaning. This is our prayer for all the youngsters, and especially for the new residents whose stories you will read. Many factors contribute to this outcome – dedicated staff and volunteers, regular support by individuals and churches, generous monetary gifts to maintain the day-to-day work of the Home.

Thank you to all who play a part in this – those who have specifically contacted us recently and those who have faithfully been part of the wider Rehoboth family for years. It really does make a difference.

Philip Thompson, RCHT Chairman

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

For a number of years now we have been investigating and planning to install solar panels at Rehoboth. We have many hours of sunshine in the Philippines and we are keen to take advantage of this!

There are many benefits of solar power and one of the most important is that solar energy is a clean, green renewable energy source, and we at Rehoboth are keen to promote the use of sustainable energy in our local community. Alongside that we can significantly reduce our electricity bills and if we produce enough power we can also sell any excess electricity produced back to our local electricity company reducing our bill even further.

We are very pleased to say that following a donation given specifically for our solar project, alongside a couple of donations from Rehoboth supporters, we have been able to fulfill our dream of installing solar power at Rehoboth. So far we have installed a 3kW solar unit at the girls' house/office and another smaller 1.5kW unit at the boys' house. We plan to continue the project into the garden, installing a solar pump there so that we can increase our vegetable and fish production particularly during the dry season.

We have already seen a reduction in the electricity bill and are excited to see over the coming weeks and months how much more we will save. Thank you to all who have helped make this project a reality.



NEW FACES

This June saw another wave of new admissions at Rehoboth, all with a disconcerting thread of abandonment and rejection running through their life stories.

Two families brought their young sons to Manila from other islands and then abandoned them. Danilo went to sleep in a jeepney with his mum and when he woke up she was gone. He then went searching the streets for her, only able to speak the dialect from the place he came from. Finally, he was taken in by a barangay captain and stayed with their family until his behaviour became too hard to handle due to bad influences from his peers. Danilo was then sent to two institutions before ending up at Stairway Foundation, who provide an alternative programme for the most marginalized and endangered street children in Manila. He was referred to Rehoboth this year so that he could finally start school and make a new life for himself; he is 14 years old and currently in Grade 1.

Justin was taken to a family friend and then his mother left - he hasn't seen her since. He was made to work for the family, beaten often and finally ran away. Justin experienced life on the street before he was picked up and taken to an institution in Manila. Then in 2016, he transferred to Stairway Foundation for rehabilitation and help. This June, he was referred to Rehoboth and has just begun in Grade 1, despite being 13 years old. We are working hard with Danilo and Justin to try to get them fast-tracked through school.



Another boy, Jonel, was born to a young teenage mother who herself lived on the street. She was taken into an institution where she tried to raise her son but after 18 months, gave him up for adoption. He has been in care ever since and was transferred to Rehoboth this year to continue his education. He is now 11 and finally on the international adoption list - maybe one day he will find his 'forever home'.

Another new resident to join us in June, recently had a very happy reunion with his mother whom he hadn't seen for 7 years. Kian's mother was sent to prison on drug trafficking charges when he was 6 years old and he was left with one of his mother's acquaintances. Unfortunately, she too was arrested and Kian soon experienced abuse at the hands of her partner and then further abuse for the next two years as he moved around between different families. In 2014, he was placed in an institution where he finally found a stable home and was able to continue his education. In June, he was referred to Rehoboth and within a few weeks, our social worker, Sherwin, took Kian back to the place where he used to live and after a very long day searching and asking questions, someone finally recognized him. Kian's mother was located in a town in the north of the Philippines and finally reunited with her son. She is currently unable to provide for him but hopefully Kian will be back living with his family again soon.



It is a joy for us here at Rehoboth to be able to give each of these four boys a hope for the future.



A HELPING HAND

Hello Readers. My name is Jeremiah Hatch and I am a United States Peace Corps Volunteer. I am here with the Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) sector. I spent most of my first year here working with an out-of-school youth programme on the island of Negros. I arrived at Rehoboth Children's Home in June of this year. At the moment, I am still a fairly new arrival and haven't initiated many activities or projects, choosing instead to observe and become more familiar with all aspects of the day-to-day operations.

An interesting fact about myself is that this is my second time to serve in the Peace Corps. I was an education resource and community development worker in South Africa from 2006-2008. Currently, I am spending a large portion of my time here during the week providing one-on-one and small group tutorials to the children at Rehoboth. It has been a rewarding experience for me and I enjoy teaching the youth here. The children make great students and actually WANT to learn. They arrive early for lessons, stay late and ask many questions. As a teacher in America before coming to the Philippines, I rarely had the opportunity to have such excellent students.

I only have about one year left in my service to try to make a lasting sustainable impact here within my new community. My hope is that I can make some small difference in the lives of those I interact with and form lasting relationships that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. The months are going to fly by and with tutorials, writing grants, facilitating life skills lessons, assisting with events, piloting a youth development programme in the community and possibly assisting with a women's livelihood programme, among others; I have many ways to contribute to the important work taking place at Rehoboth Children's Home.



DOING YOUR PART

"Unselfish and noble actions are the most radiant pages in the biography of souls." David Thomas

My name is Jerome and I am a REAP student. In my vacation last July I was involved in a volunteering activity at Rehoboth so that I may not only help others but also help myself to become a better teacher.

I learned how to apply the knowledge acquired in college about how to have an effective approach and style in teaching during my tutorial sessions at Rehoboth. As a student taking up Bachelor of Secondary Education, majoring in Science, it is quite hard for me to teach children from the age of three up to thirteen. Despite this struggle, as a future educator, the most important thing I learned was, including examples of real-life situations related to the topic to make the lessons more engaging. Through this method, I am confident that my future students will not only remember the concept of the lesson but also the application of the lesson in reality. I was overwhelmed when I saw the development in the learning progress of the children that I taught.

It serves as my motivation to continue my studies and to strive more so that I can inspire and educate more children. I promise that I will come back to Rehoboth to continue what I started.

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***We have changed the names of some of our children for privacy reasons.**