

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great JOY for all the people.'" Luke 2:10

Dear Friends of HELP:

2015 truly seems like a blur! It's been a year of very little travel, but many international visitors due to the presence of the Mercy Ships; an international university group; the advance team for the Logos Hope (another ship); and a one-month volunteer stint for Colin's brother and sister-in-law. Anthony Radford (seen "jumping for joy" with our boys in the top right photo) did a lot of construction and repair work at HELP, especially on our water system.

We are very grateful for the financial assistance that has allowed HELP's ongoing expansion to support Malagasy secondary school students, including 27 university students! Both our sponsorship and school canteen have a higher percentage of older students, as we have identified them as HELP's niche. We continue to explore new ways to assist motivated Malagasy teens and young adults to change their future via education and by making better life choices.

We are eagerly looking forward to the arrival of the Logos Hope, the world's largest floating bookstore, on December 23rd. We've had many meetings with their advance team and are planning visits for our students on their ship in December and January. We are also collaborating together on a special program for the leper community we serve and are excited that the Logos Hope has offered to do an on-ship tour and dinner for them.



When we think back over 2015, two young women come quickly to mind. For privacy reasons, I will call the first girl (pictured left) Benedicte. Like many of our students, Benedicte is living with people she is not related to and has more or less been abandoned by her parents. One Monday morning she showed up at the gate breathless and trembling. She had been sexually assaulted over the weekend and her "foster" parents had thrown her out thinking she was at fault. This young teen showed so much courage as we helped guide her through the social service system and mediate between her and her foster parents, as well as confront the man who had attempted to rape her. What will always stay in my memory is how she came to us a few days later and shyly thanked us for standing up for her and helping her when no one would listen. Giving a voice to the powerless may be one of the most

important things HELP does.

Pintsana is in her early twenties, but we have known her since primary school and have watched her blossom into adulthood. Upon finishing her first year of nursing studies, she returned to Toamasina to find a clinic that would allow her to do an internship. Finding no position in town, she ended up at rural clinic about three hours inland. As we read the positives marks and comments in her clinical grade book and heard the praises of the doctor where she interned, we felt like proud parents! Pintsana knows what it's like to struggle in school, as she took the end of high school exam twice. She is now a mentor to the other young women we have sent to join her at university.



It is a privilege to watch these Malagasy young people overcome personal challenges and grow into confident young adults. The success of all of our students would not be possible without the many financial, clothing, school supply and other types of donations HELP's receives. We know that there are many needs in the world and we appreciate that you have chosen to give financially and/or materially to HELP.

Wishing you JOY this Christmas and holiday season – and PEACE as we enter 2016.

Feeling very blessed,

Kim & Colin RADFORD

on behalf of the students & patients assisted by HELP Madagascar

www.facebook.com/helpmg

[Included below are several links related to our letter:

<https://www.mercyships.org/>

http://www.omships.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=406&Itemid=449&lang=en

<https://theshoethatgrows.org/> The Logos Hope is donating 50 pairs of these shoes for our youngest and poorest students. They will be distributed on 12 January 2016.]