



HELP Madagascar
Health, Education & Life-skills Projects
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Dear Friends of HELP Madagascar:

"You are filled with amazing, amazing potential!"

The very first session of Leadership for Life* repeats this concept over and over, illustrating it with a real seed and discussion on how many plants or trees can come from one correctly cultivated seed. It's an eye-opening lesson for those who have never thought about the resources that lie within each one of us. (*A powerful leadership training program that HELP has been involved in since April 2016.)

The longer we work in Madagascar, the more we see that positive change is not brought about through statistics and numbers. It's brought about by students understanding that their potential can be nurtured and grown through better life choices, education and training, planning, taking risks, and exercising perseverance. Some of the seeds of potential we have been honored to watch bloom this past year include:

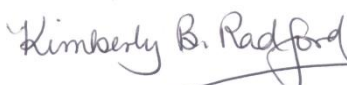
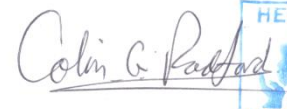

- Listening to an autistic nonverbal student slowly start to speak in entire (short!) sentences and learn to read;
- Watching many of our primary students blossom as they begin attending private school -- a more structured school environment is a boon to kids with chaotic home lives. We have been shifting many of our youngest students to a local private school over the past two years and see many positive results.
- Receiving the report cards of three young women who had transferred to professional school and seeing their incredible grades! These three had struggled in middle school but have obviously found their niche studying the hotel industry (1) and sewing and design (the other two).
- Witnessing two young men -- who were counselled multiple times for their excessive absences and negative behavior -- pass the BAC (end-of-high-school exam) and have a 180° change in motivation. Their new self-confidence and maturity are tangible!
- Celebrating with three timid young women as they passed their BAC and ventured to Antananarivo, found their first apartment and navigated the literal ups and downs of Madagascar's hilly capital. They are pursuing degrees in radiology. (If you have never visited Madagascar, this would be akin to coming from a medium-sized, laid-back town and moving to downtown New York City or Paris -- very daunting.)
- Hearing how our older HELP students are mentoring -- even tutoring -- younger students, as well as sharing their networking contacts to help other HELP students find success (with internships, employment leads, university housing, etc.).

It's an honor to watch potential unfold in our students. It reminds us that Christmas is all about potential coming from the most unlikely places -- a virgin mother, a courageous husband, a dirty stable, weary shepherds, foreign visitors, a newborn baby... Emmanuel... God With Us.

Thank you for giving HELP the opportunity to nurture the potential of these amazing children and young adults. It's a privilege to know them. It's also a privilege to be on the receiving end of so many generous donations raised by people giving of their precious time and resources. Thank you for the sacrifices you have made so that "our" kids can have a better future.

A Blessed Christmas to those who celebrate and to all of us -- may 2020 be a year to realize *our amazing, amazing potential!*

With gratitude,

Kimberly Baldwin Radford & Colin G. Radford
Co-Founders/Co-Directors