



# NEWS FROM CEBU

## — UNITED NATIONS DAY —

*When* you work with kids, you learn to notice the little things: a child's first loose tooth, a child answering an addition question correctly, a child trying for the second (or fifth) time to read a sentence. At the Cebu Children of Hope School (CCHS), there are many little areas of growth and success happening every day. It's inevitable when

great anticipation. On this day, the teachers prepared their classrooms to look like different countries of the world. The students moved around to the different rooms and learned about countries such as Kenya, Bhutan, Switzerland and Romania. Each student received a "passport" that was stamped as they "visited" each country. They

It's easy to see why this is one of the favorite schooldays at CCHS.

This year, we saw special growth in one particular student. His first year with us was difficult. He witnessed some of the worst parts of humanity in his short life before arriving at CSC. These experiences caused him to be distrustful of the

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*At the Cebu Children of Hope School, there are many little areas of growth and success happening every day.*

you are working with some of the greatest kids in the Philippines!

Recently we celebrated United Nations Day at CCHS. This is an annual celebration that the kids always look forward to with

played a game and created art from each country, and they even got to sample native foods. The children voted for Mr. and Miss UN Day, and the winners were crowned in a special ceremony.

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## — LEADERSHIP Update —

-Jill Grasley, Interim US Director



CSC is excited to welcome Ben Bonnett and his family back to Cebu. Their presence at CSC is significant for a number of reasons. First, Ben and Mari are returning to the Philippines after having served from 2003-2005. They understand the joys and challenges of this work, and they are choosing to serve in this way again.

Secondly, Ben and Mari are passionate, smart and caring people. They have amazing leadership skills and a deep love for the children at CSC. We know that God will use these important skills to deepen and extend CSC's impact.

We are in a period of transition at CSC as we search for a new President. Despite this, CSC continues to be a strong organization in so many ways. Ben and Mari are just one example of this. **They represent the next generation of younger folks who care so much about the work that they are stepping up to lead.** We also have incredible Filipino leaders in Cebu. Several of them have been promoted to major roles this year, and it is humbling to see who God has placed along our path.

Our strong financial position is yet another indicator that God is leading this work. This is the most vital time in our year financially, as over 30% of all our giving comes in the last month and a half of the year. We are heading into this season slightly ahead of budget. We still have a long way to go. We need to raise \$620,000 before year-end, which seems like a huge mountain, but we know God cares about the children and this work-- and we know you do too! ■

*Please pray with us that we will have the resources we need to continue the work in the Philippines. Thank you for your care of this ministry and a special thanks for those of you who give. Your gifts are changing lives!*



# PRAYER REQUESTS and PRAISES

## PRAISES

- Many of our children have been matched with families! This includes older children and siblings who have been waiting for years for a family. We are thankful for God's answers to these prayers, and we pray for the upcoming transition for these children.
- We continue to partner with Habitat for Humanity International as they work to build homes for 60 of our employees. The project should be nearing completion in the next few months. This is a huge blessing for many of our employees, and we are thankful for this opportunity.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

- As we near the end of year, please pray with us that God works in the hearts of those who care about this ministry and that God will provide precisely what is needed for us to do our work well and meet the financial needs remaining for 2017.
- Our search team continues the process to find a new President at CSC. We are confident that God has someone lined up to lead this organization into the future. Please pray with us for this process.
- Our Field Director, Paul Healy, had a heart attack in early October. He has been recovering well and is almost back to work full time. We are thankful for the responsive medical treatment he received and the recovery he has made so far. We pray for continued strength and healing.



UNITED NATIONS DAY *continued from page 1*

employees at the shelter and the teachers at the school. He was often disruptive and defiant. **On UN Day, when he and the other candidates entered the big room at the school and stepped on stage, this young man was barely recognizable. He was confident, answered questions with a smile, and looked out to the crowd with ease. All the adults in the room knew that standing on stage in front of his peers was a huge accomplishment for this boy.**

At CSC, we see wounded children come to know the God who is crazy in love with them. This young man's hurts are huge and many, but because of dedicated employees at CSC, he is beginning to see his worth and potential, little by little. ■



## — VISIT FROM STURGEON BAY —

*Long-* term relationships between churches and missionaries are becoming rare in this day and age. Church priorities for their mission dollars change often, and missionaries don't always stay on the field for extended periods. But for Children's Shelter of Cebu and First Baptist Church (FBC) of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, the relationship has remained strong. **FBC has supported CSC's ministry to homeless children in the Philippines for 26 years!**

In addition to regular monthly support, which is so important to the financial well-being of an organization like ours, FBC has responded frequently to emergency appeals and special projects. According to Paul Healy, "First Baptist has been amazing over the years. Through high and low times financially, they were willing to take special offerings and 'dig deep' to meet needs over and above their regular commitments." A year ago the

church experienced a windfall in terms of income at year's end and made the decision to give CSC an extra month of support to help us reach our income budget for the year."

Paul and Marlys and other CSC staff have visited the church over the years. One couple from the church adopted three CSC children, and various church members have visited CSC, strengthening the ties between FBC and CSC. But until recently, Pastor Cory Dahl had never

significantly over the years. It was a time of touring the facilities and interacting with the CSC staff.

Cory talked of being "overwhelmed" by his visit. "I heard a lot about CSC from many people, including CSC missionaries who visited our church, and they always talked about what a great place it is and the good work being done there, but I've discovered it is really much better than I ever imagined.

*"First Baptist has been amazing over the years. They were willing to take special offerings and 'dig deep' to meet needs over and above their regular commitments."*

visited. "I tried to get to Cebu more than once over the past decade," Cory reflected, "but things did not work out." Pastor Cory was finally able to visit CSC this fall and see first-hand what his church has impacted so

Experiencing CSC up close and onsite helps me much better appreciate the amazing work God is doing to change lives and bring hope to children, and the families with whom they will eventually live. This is an amazing place!!" ■



# -STAFF HIGHLIGHT *Ben Bonnett, Education Director*

*Fourteen* years ago, Ben and Mari Bonnett were teachers at our Cebu Children of Hope School. They fell in love with the ministry and the children they taught for two years. In 2005, they returned to the US after adopting a sibling group of six who had lived at CSC for seven years. Since then, they adopted two more boys from CSC and had two biological children.

Recently, they felt called back to the mission field but were not sure in what capacity. Ben

position in our school, as Shari Reasoner retired a few months ago. **Ben accepted the position of Education Director at CCHS and in September, he and Mari moved to Cebu with three of their children (Joshua, Johanna and Rylin).**

We are excited to have them back in Cebu. Ben has transitioned smoothly into his new role, providing direction for school staff, overseeing the educational and vocational needs of the high school and post-high school students, and

Ben has enjoyed seeing how the Filipino teachers continue to advance the application of the unique materials and teaching methods at CCHS. He especially enjoys working with our Principal Cris Tabra, who has been with the ministry for over 15 years. He has found the teachers to be a devoted group who care not only about the academic success of the children but also about developing them to be the people God created them to be. ■

*"As with any field of work, there are always ways to improve and new directions to venture. I hope to build on the solid foundation that is already present at the school by implementing a social-emotional learning curriculum. As a CSC adoptive father, I consider teaching social and emotional competencies, such as self-control, assertiveness, and empathy as equally valuable as the academic aspect of education. CCHS has been blessed with a great group of professional educators, and I am both humbled and thrilled to work alongside them."*

was looking for a way to use his experience and skills in educational leadership. Ben has a Bachelor's degree in Biblical and theological studies, a Master's degree in elementary education, and his principal's license. This fit so well with our need for a leadership

managing the pre-adoption academic needs for students who have been matched with their adoptive families.





Khrislouie  
←  
Sunshine  
→

# -KIDS' KORNER

## New Kids:

### KHRISLOUIE

Khrislouie has been at CSC for about a month. He arrived when he was only a few days old. His mother asked that we care for him, as she is not able to provide. He seems to be a pretty typical infant, especially when it comes to expressing his needs. He cries and makes a fuss when he needs something! Our child care employees work around the clock to care for him and the other children. We thank God that we get to be part of his life, and we are very excited to see him develop.

### SUNSHINE

Sunshine arrived at CSC in August. Before coming to the shelter, she experienced abuse and neglect. At almost two years old, Sunshine is small and struggles to keep up with other kids her age. We suspect this is partially what leads her to cling to caregivers, although it's easy to see her excitement when the other kids are around. Sunshine fits her name well. She is a special ray of light at our shelter. We will continue to show her consistent, loving care. Please pray with us that she will begin to fully trust the care that we provide and that we can start to help her heal from some of her past experiences. We hope that God continues to bless Sunshine with strength as she develops too.

Hannah  
↓



## Leaving Soon:

### HANNAH

Hannah (14) made a significant transition this year into high school, but that's nothing compared to what's ahead of her. Before coming to CSC in 2013, she spent much of her life moving between family members and various foster homes in the Philippines. She has been praying for a family, and it is about to happen! Hannah will soon leave CSC to begin a new chapter in her life. It has been a difficult wait, full of many prayers, but Hannah endured with patience (mostly). She is a smart, funny, wonderful young lady, and we will miss her greatly. Even so, we couldn't be happier for her and are very excited about the new family that she will join. She will be moving to Minnesota. Please pray with us for her adjustment and for all the transitions into her new family.

Chosar, Cench, Charls,  
and Charleston ↘



### CHOSAR JAMES, CENCH MARIE, CHARLS KYLE, AND CHARLESTON

Chosar James (15), Cench Marie (13), Charls Kyle (9), and Charleston (7) came to live at CSC in 2013 after their mother died and their father was unable to care for them. All four children are delightful and engaging. Chosar is doing well in high school and enjoys playing basketball. Cench Marie loves to read and wants to be a teacher someday. Charls Kyle and Charleston love science and the experiments they get to participate in. This sibling group has been praying for an adoptive family for years. They have been matched with a family, and soon their new parents will come for them. We pray for the transition into their new life in Tennessee with their family.

## Special Highlight: Jacob

Jacob arrived at CSC in 1986 after being abandoned at an area hospital as an infant. Jacob has cerebral palsy, and his muscles are often tight and spastic. He is very bright but is trapped in a body that doesn't work particularly well. Over the years Jacob has learned a great deal and communicates using a soundboard computer.

This past fall he has been giving inspirational speeches around Cebu City. Recently he spoke at Southwestern University, Velaz College, and Cebu Normal University. All three of these groups were college students who are in courses for physical therapy, occupational therapy, or special education. **Jacob especially likes interacting with the college students during the question and answer time. He is thrilled to share his story and advice.** His ability to communicate with people entering these

*He is a remarkable young man and we are blessed to have him at CSC.*

fields will only help them be able to understand and interact with their patients better.

Recently, Jacob's doctors and the CSC medical staff have been concerned with his ability to eat. Chewing food is difficult for him, and he coughs a lot as he struggles to swallow. Doctors suggested a

permanent device on the side of his stomach, allowing food to go directly into the stomach.

After considering all the pros and cons, the medical staff and

doctors decided to operate. The procedure was scheduled recently, but because of other health complications, they determined it should not be performed at this time. He will try other options, such as taking his meals fully blended to see if this helps him swallow more easily. Please pray for Jacob in this time of uncertainty. Pray that God will give wisdom to the doctors and CSC medical staff as we move forward. Praise the Lord for the many opportunities Jacob has had to share his story. He is a remarkable young man and we are blessed to have him at CSC.

Jacob



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## — YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE —

**Each** child comes to CSC with varying needs and health complications. Many children have delayed physical growth due to lack of proper nutrition before coming to CSC. Occasionally, we have a child who is so delayed in growth that they need growth hormones.

An example of this is a 13-year-old young man who has been with us since 2012. He is very active and an absolute joy to be around. While he currently eats nutritious meals, before coming to CSC he didn't always have access to that. He is on growth hormone treatments to help eliminate some of the growth deficiencies caused by his malnutrition.

This is one of our many special projects that still need funding by the end of this year. **You can give now, as well as view other special projects like this one by going to our website: <https://cebushelter.org/donate>.**

On behalf of CSC and all the children who receive care because of financial support from people like you, thank you! ■

