



Dear friends and supporters

As we enter the festive season, we would like to wish you and your families a wonderful time together. Everyone at the Nicolas Robinson School sends their greetings for wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.

Our video newsletter gives a few of our recent highlights, and we have been busy for the last 6 weeks, in Mekele, preparing for some more. Our 5th batch of hospitality trainees started their course a few weeks ago and a few of these are being sponsored to do the course. We are getting geared up to start our ICT training and we hope an expert from PUM (Dutch training organisation for technical schools) will come and help train our trainers in early 2019. Another volunteer from the same organisation has offered to help run an entrepreneurship course with strong practical aspects and we hope that will happen in the Spring.

As we leave, we thank the Tigray Development Association for their support in drilling a (water) borehole for us. This will enable us to have a much more reliable supply of water as well as enable us to grow herbs and vegetables all year round for our cooking training. They have 120m to drill, so the water is not flowing yet!

In October, Max and I had the chance to meet Feven, our student who is studying at United World College in Thailand. We will send you our interview with her and some of her teachers, early next year. We are also busy preparing a few students who have ambitions to study overseas once they finish grade 12. This is a learning process for all of us and since all the students need full scholarships, it is quite complicated. We hope at least one of them has a chance to fulfil their dreams! Some of their personal stories are very moving, and we never cease to admire these students for their focus and ambition when they come from such hardship.

We continue to seek new sponsors – we have more than 500 students sponsored now – some have gone on to University and their sponsors continue to support them. We are still looking to place about 20 students with sponsors for this school year and so if you have a friend who can help us, please let us know and connect us.

For a completely different way to help, our cooking course continues to grow and we are always grateful to have more equipment. If you have any equipment (which can be transported in a suitcase) and is in good condition, please let us know and we can arrange to take it to Mekele to support the students. Also, nice cook books, in English, with good illustrations are very helpful.

As so often seems to happen, Max and Kathryn are leaving their return from Ethiopia until just before Christmas, and so we send you our apologies that this newsletter will be the closest we manage to Christmas cards this year! We want to say how much we continue to appreciate everyone's support. We have been helped in so many ways: fundraisers large and small, advice on medical matters, networking opportunities and support of our children, as well as many individual personal donations. We thank you all and please know that your support is making a huge difference to the children in Mekele, as 100% of all donations go to the project in Mekele, no money is spent on administration or travel or charity running costs.

Our very best wishes for the festive season and a very happy and healthy 2019

Kathryn and Max

<https://youtu.be/DJuGUKsrWik>

Dec 2018