



St Jude's News



The Class of 2025: 166 students proudly crossed the stage, bringing the total number of Form 6 graduates to 1,500+ since the first class graduated in 2015.

 Our Australian fundraising partner is registered as The School of St Jude Ltd, and is responsible for all funds raised in Australia.

 Our American fundraising partner is registered as American Friends of The School of St Jude, Tanzania, Inc., and is responsible for all funds raise in the USA.



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Celebrating the leaders of tomorrow

It was a day of celebration and pride at the Form 6 Graduation



Reimagining the future: The Class of 2025 have been able to reimagine a future filled with endless possibilities – for themselves, their communities and their country.

Future doctors, engineers, nurses and entrepreneurs. These were just some of the aspirations echoing around Smith Campus this month as students, sponsors and invited guests came together for one of the most anticipated events on the school calendar: the 11th Form 6 Graduation.

The graduation marks a key milestone in the Tanzanian education system, which is divided into three main stages: seven years of primary school (Standard 1 to 7), four years of secondary school at the Ordinary Level (Forms 1 to 4), and two years of Advanced Level secondary education (Forms 5 and 6).

The School of St Jude hosts three graduation ceremonies annually, corresponding to these three main levels, along with a special celebration for alumni completing tertiary education.

This year, 166 students proudly crossed the stage, bringing the total number of Form 6 graduates to 1,500+ since the first class graduated in 2015.

Attendees enjoyed vibrant cultural performances by current students, tributes to dedicated staff members and reflections on the achievements of the Class of 2025.

A special highlight of the ceremony was a joint address by Angela Bailey, who was St Jude's first volunteer teacher when the school opened in 2002, and her father, John Bailey, a long-time supporter, current board member and the school's legal counsel since 1997. He sponsored the scholarship of one of this year's graduating class.

"Life can take you to places you never imagined existed. To our sponsors and donors, we cannot say how much your support has helped us achieve our ambitions. We are grateful," says Nickson, Form 6 graduate, in his farewell speech on graduation day.

“Our teachers, thank you for all the endless effort that you made towards our performance. Our parents, you have always been our pillars of strength. Thank you for seeing the light that sparkled in us.”

The Class of 2025 had much to be proud of, excelling in various extracurricular activities, particularly debate and public speaking.

Notably, graduate Mwajabu Hoya earned national recognition after winning gold and being named Tanzania’s best public speaker at the National Debate Championships. The school’s debate team also celebrated a major win, earning the title of Best Debate Team in East Africa in 2024.

In another milestone, the Class of 2025 became the first in St Jude’s history to receive personal laptops earlier this year, a significant step in supporting their future academic and professional pursuits.

The next stage for graduates is pursuing higher education at various universities and colleges. Many choose to apply to the Beyond St Jude’s Scholarship Program (BSJSP), which supports graduates with tertiary education.



A fond farewell: Form 6 graduate Nickson delivers his farewell speech, thanking the St Jude’s community and congratulating the Class of 2025.

As part of this program, they will undertake community service placements for a year, volunteering as teachers in understaffed government schools, or at various placements throughout St Jude’s. Then they go on to access higher education supported by St Jude’s sponsors and donors.

Through the holistic education offered at St Jude’s, the Class of 2025 has been able to reimagine a future filled with endless possibilities – for themselves, their communities and their country.



A walk down memory lane: John Bailey, long-time supporter, current board member and St Jude’s legal counsel since 1997, shares reflections of the school’s early days as he addresses the crowd.





A journey of giving back

Earlier this year, alum Anna returned to St Jude's to sponsor a student scholarship

It's been ten years since Anna stood proudly in her graduation gown as part of the first-ever graduating class of The School of St Jude in 2015. While much has changed since that milestone moment, Anna's connection to the school has remained strong - coming full circle earlier this year when she started sponsoring a student scholarship.

"In January, I started sponsoring the scholarship of a Standard 1 student named Careen. I came to the school and had the opportunity to meet her. I can't even describe the experience. It was just incredible," says Anna.

For Anna, sponsoring Careen's education stemmed from a desire to give back – both for the education she received and to support her community.

"When I was a student, there were people who were generous enough to sponsor my education, and now I have the chance to do it for somebody else. It's more than financial support; it's holding someone's hand on the path to becoming like myself, and even more," she adds.



Proud moment: Anna at her graduation ceremony in Dar es Salaam, where she earned a Bachelor of Commerce degree majoring in Accounting.

Anna's commitment to giving back began well before this year. After graduating from St Jude's, she spent a year teaching at a government school through the Community Service Year (CSY) program that places volunteers in government schools across Arusha and nearby regions, as well as in various non-teaching roles within St Jude's. Since the program's inception, St Jude's alumni have taught more than 170,000 government school students.

"When I was teaching, I saw how strained and under-resourced most government schools are. When a student joins St Jude's, they are lucky to receive all these resources, from the teachers to the library and everything else. It's life-changing," says Anna.

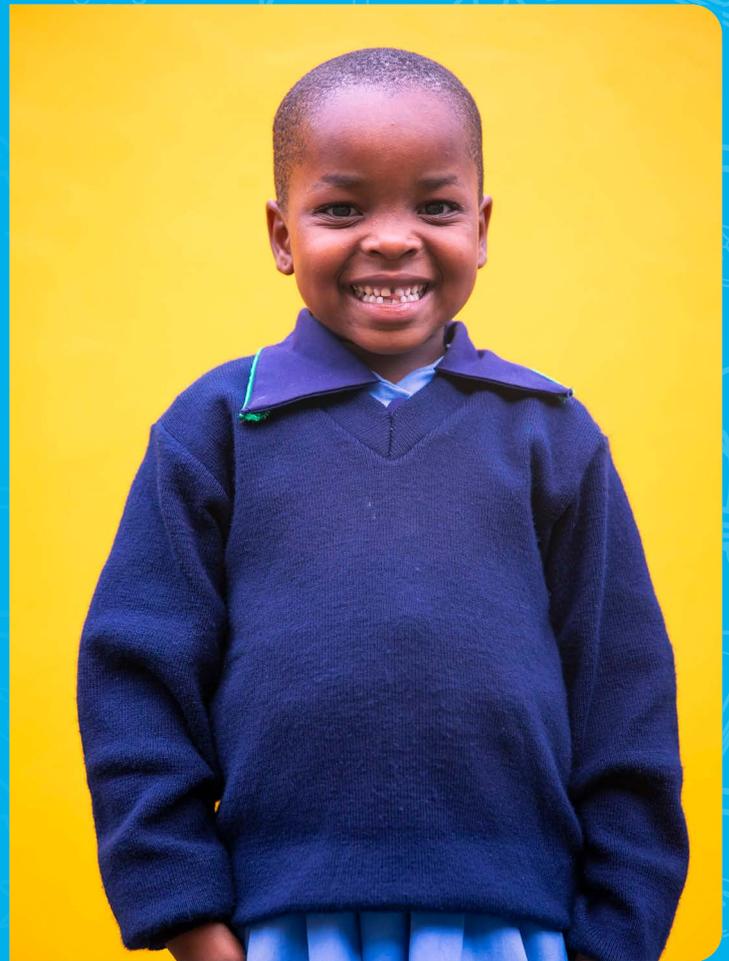
Anna knows this transformation firsthand. Before joining St Jude's in Form 1, she attended a government primary school where all her classes were taught in Kiswahili.



Full circle: When Anna was a Form 5 student at St Jude's, she had no idea that more than a decade later, she would be sponsoring a student scholarship in the future.



Bright future: In January, alum Anna began sponsoring the scholarship of Careen, a young Standard 1 student, continuing the cycle of opportunity.



“When I graduated from Form 4, four years after being at St Jude’s, I was the best student in English. The school shaped me in every way to be prepared for the future. Now, when I think about work, I don’t just think about getting a job and a salary; I think about how my work can change the world and touch lives,” she says.

Following her CSY, Anna earned a Bachelor of Commerce majoring in Accounting in Dar es Salaam before returning to Arusha to work in the St Jude’s Accounts team.

Having been both a student and staff member, Anna has gained a unique perspective on the school’s holistic education, one that goes beyond academics to develop well-rounded individuals.

“We weren’t only taught subjects like physics, chemistry and mathematics, but also things like entrepreneurship and the importance of giving back to our communities. It shaped me in a way that I was ready to face the world not only with academic skills but with life skills too which is really important,” she adds.

Late last year, Anna took on a new role with Toyota but remains closely connected to the school. She hopes that, in time, more alumni will be able to sponsor student scholarships once they are in a position to do so.

“Every year, we have around 150 to 200 graduates, and 20 years from now, there will be thousands and thousands of students who have graduated from St Jude’s,” she says.

“If just 10 to 15 alumni from each graduating class sponsor one student scholarship each, you can imagine how many sponsors we’ll have in 20 years, and the impact that will make. From having people sponsor us when we were young and then us as alumni sponsoring our ‘younger ones,’ it’s the biggest thank you there is.”



Will you help students like Careen to reimagine their future? **Support our 2025 Annual Appeal today**



Q & A with Laurel

Long-time supporter Laurel visits St Jude's to celebrate Form 6 graduation

This month, long-time supporter and American Friends of The School of St Jude (AFSJ) President, Laurel, returned to the school for the Form 6 graduation. On her eighth visit, we caught up with her to find out what keeps bringing her back.



Creating opportunity: Long-time supporter and AFSJ President, Laurel with Beatrice, her Rotary club's sponsored student.

You've been sponsoring students since 2014. What first inspired you to start this journey with The School of St Jude?

I was president of my Rotary Club then, and I was intrigued after hearing a talk about The School of St Jude. We decided it would be our international project. We initially tried sending parcels with supplies, but then decided it would be better to visit the school ourselves. While a Rotary grant wasn't possible, we started meeting students and my club began sponsoring Beatrice, who graduated this year. So even though she's not listed as a student I sponsor, I financially support her through the club.

Some of the students whose scholarships you've sponsored have now progressed to the Beyond St Jude's Scholarship Program (BSJSP). How does it feel to witness their continued growth?

Watching them blossom and grow and work towards their dreams has been phenomenal. Take Abdullah, for example. When I first saw him in 2021, his artwork was done on graph paper, and he told me his real dream was to work in animation. With the help of the Art Program and other school staff, he created a portfolio, and eventually, we found a university in South Africa for him to study animation.

It's incredibly exciting to see him pursuing his passion. I have students who have gone all the way through to Form 6 and are now in tertiary education. I also have ones who are at the beginning of their journey like Jafari, who's in Form 3.

What has been the most rewarding part of sponsoring multiple students' scholarships over the years?

I think the most exciting thing is that they're all given an equal opportunity at St Jude's, yet they're all so different. Being able to sponsor multiple students, you see that they're allowed to become their own person. But the common factor is all of those values that are instilled in them at The School of St Jude; the idea that someone has helped you, now you get to help someone else. Watching them apply that through their own strengths is incredibly rewarding. Whether it's Elia potentially becoming a sportsman, Abdallah in his art element, Happiness wanting to be a bank manager or Samwel aspiring to be a doctor - the school equips them all to do different things, and that's what's most exciting.



A day to remember: Laurel with the Class of 2025 at the Form 6 Graduation.

How has your connection with the students and the school evolved since you began sponsoring in 2014?

Initially, I didn't know a lot about the school beyond what I'd read and heard. But because this is my eighth visit, I've gotten to watch the students grow up and evolve. I've also become involved on another level with the board of the American Friends of The School of St Jude, doing fundraising and tours. This has made me feel really comfortable and passionate about the school, making it easy for me to share what's happening here with different groups in the United States. My comfort level has grown to the point where I can now facilitate things like a FaceTime call for a friend's sponsored student to connect with them during graduation.

What would you tell someone who's thinking about becoming a sponsor or visiting the school for the first time?

You can't describe it. No matter what you try to tell them or what a picture looks like, it's not the same. When they come, they will be forever changed and they'll understand firsthand what the work of the school is. Until they're here, they really don't understand. Once they experience it, they can't help but want to sponsor and support a student, whether it's a partial or full sponsorship. I also reassure them about coming to Tanzania, the school will take care of them, they won't be on their own, and communication isn't an issue. The culture here, where people genuinely take care of each other and share, is something truly remarkable that you only fully grasp by being here.

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Kiswahili word of the month

Improve your Kiswahili vocabulary with our word of the month

Mustakabali

[moo stah kah bah lee] Noun, singular

Mustakabali means the future — everything that lies ahead, whether for a person, a community or the planet. It is the term you'll hear in speeches, policy papers and more formal conversations when people are discussing long term hopes, plans and responsibilities.

History

The word traces its roots to the Indian Ocean trade era, when Swahili merchants and Arab sailors exchanged more than just spices and textiles; they also swapped words. Mustakabali originated from the Arabic word *mustaqbal*, which means “that which is in front.”

Because the word was mostly used by educated people, *mustakabali* kept a formal, almost visionary feel. Today, it is still the go-to word in newspapers, parliamentary debates and NGO reports when Tanzanians or Kenyans reflect on their shared future.

How to use the word...

- » ***Tukilinda mazingira leo, tunalinda mustakabali wetu.***
By protecting the environment today, we safeguard our future.
- » ***Wasomi walijadili mustakabali wa uchumi wa kidijitali barani Afrika.***
Scholars discussed the future of the digital economy in Africa.
- » ***Nina matumaini makubwa kuhusu mustakabali wangu baada ya kuhitimu.***
I have great hopes for my future after graduation.



All eyes on the future: At our 2025 Career Day, students explored their *mustakabali*, thinking ahead about their goals, aspirations and the impact they hope to make.

You can use your new Kiswahili vocabulary by visiting Tanzania and The School of St Jude. **We love visitors! Come visit us**