



Celebrating 60 Years of Children Incorporated

Dear Friends,

Before joining the staff of Children Incorporated in 2003, I worked for another child sponsorship organization for over a decade. During that time, I occasionally heard about Children Incorporated from my then co-workers, but no one seemed to know a great deal about the organization founded by Jeanne Clarke Wood in 1964. Children Incorporated was often downplayed and written off as being rather insignificant in comparison to the much larger organization where I was then employed. Then, in 2002, when my position with that other firm was unceremoniously eliminated, I found myself seeking new employment. I loved nonprofit work and wanted badly to remain in the child sponsorship arena, thus when a former employee of the larger organization told me that he was then working at Children Incorporated and made arrangements for me to interview there as well, I was elated. I met with Mrs. Wood, her successor as president, Marian Cummins, and a couple of other employees, and I was hired on the spot. What I immediately discovered is that those who had tried to make Children Incorporated appear insignificant were wrong.

Within days of my hire, I knew what thousands of loyal sponsors had been saying for 39 years at that point: that Children Incorporated was an organization with incredible integrity, far-reaching arms, and a huge amount of personality. As I watched and listened to my co-workers interact with sponsors, donors, and a vast network of volunteer coordinators, I came to understand why so many had labeled Children Incorporated as “an organization with heart.” All these years later, I am still impressed by what Children Incorporated accomplishes and my hope for our future is that we will keep on meeting needs as we have for the last six decades, and that we will be able to meet many more needs as they arise. I also hope that we will be able to reach many new people with information about our work. I hope to share the message that Children Incorporated is an honest and dependable organization that matters greatly to thousands and thousands of children and their families. Cheers to 60 years and thank you for all you do to make our work possible!

From the heart,
Ronald H. Carter
President and Chief Executive Officer

Meeting with Chinna: A Higher Education Success Story

While visiting our affiliated sites in India this past fall, our Director of International Programs, Luis Bourdet, met with Chinna Ramavath, who is Dr. Ramavath now, thanks to support he received from our Higher Education Fund. Luis recounts his time meeting with Chinna while in Guntur:

“Chinna was one of the first enrolled in our program when he was eight years old. His father was a rice paddy worker, making about \$50-\$60 a month for the upkeep of the family, which is very difficult for him to support his family on,” said Luis.

“Chinna and his family lived in St. Francis in Mellavagu, which is a small rural community, about 60 miles away from the city of Guntur. Chinna completed his primary and secondary school in the area. After that, and with the help of Children Incorporated and his sponsor, Chinna was accepted in the School of Medicine near Guntur. Without our organization and our donors, Chinna would not have had a chance to even finish primary and secondary school, let alone attend university. He graduated as a doctor and a pharmacist and then worked as a government doctor near Guntur, and of course, his salary is a bit larger than his father’s now. Chinna is now a doctor working for the Indian government near where he grew up, helping his own community. We are very proud of him and all his hard work!”



Chinna is pictured filling out a dossier for one of his patients while working in the same village in India where he grew up as a sponsored child in our program.

COUNTLESS THANK-YOUS FROM FAMILIES IN NEED



For many families of children in our program, the holidays can be a time of stress instead of celebration because money for food or gifts just isn’t available to make Thanksgiving or Christmas special. Today we hear from our volunteer coordinator Anne Marie at Alleghany High School in North Carolina about how our sponsors helped ensure that families have a reason to celebrate Thanksgiving together this past year, all thanks to donations to our Feeding Programs Fund.

“I have always been amazed at how much sponsors help and support our students. On the last day of school before Thanksgiving break, each staff member signed up to personally deliver meals to our Children Incorporated families. The school also partnered with Food Lion and Lowe’s Hardware. Lowe’s donated cooler bags, and Food Lion prepared the bags for us to pick up and deliver. The meals consisted of turkey, ham, green beans, mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, rolls and an apple pie. Over the years, we have received countless thank-yous and even tears from our families when they receive the meals. Some families have told us that they did not know what they would have to eat over the holidays otherwise. Thank you so much for all that your organization does to feed families during Thanksgiving!”

An Interview with the Ruddick Family

Michael and Sandra Ruddick are a family that I, as the President and CEO of Children Incorporated, have had the pleasure of spending time with over the last 20 years, although their support of our organization far exceeds the time that I have been with the organization. I recently asked them some questions about how they became dedicated donors and what drives them to continue to be involved in our work so many years later.

RON CARTER: YOU STARTED WITH CHILDREN INCORPORATED IN NOVEMBER 1980. DO YOU RECALL HOW YOU INITIALLY FOUND OUT ABOUT US?

Sandra: I saw a newspaper clipping about Children Incorporated when I was 20 years old. Jeanne Clarke Wood was the founder and director at the time. The small nonprofit organization appealed to me since the children in the program were not orphans but had families whose parents needed a little financial assistance to help with some basic necessities and also with educating their children.

RC: WHAT LED YOU TO CONTACT US AND BEGIN SPONSORING WITH CHILDREN INCORPORATED?

Sandra: I just remember wanting to help a child in a small way that could make a difference. It impressed me that a sponsored child in the program received most of the donation and only a small portion was used for the organization's administrative overhead.

RC: YOU CURRENTLY SPONSOR A DOZEN CHILDREN. WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST REWARDING ABOUT CHILD SPONSORSHIP?

Sandra: Michael and I, along with our own children and our aunt, were warmly welcomed when we visited one of our sponsored children in Talca. Our own children took up a collection of Beanie Babies in their high school. We brought the Beanie Babies as well as school supplies with us on our visit. The children in the home each took their turn choosing a Beanie Baby and their excitement was touching. Although we cannot visit each of our sponsored children, we can imagine each child and their family's appreciation of our sponsorship.

RC: YOU'VE SPONSORED MANY CHILDREN WITH US OVER THE DECADES. ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC CHILDREN YOU'VE AIDED WHO STAND OUT IN YOUR MEMORY?

Sandra: A girl named Monica was the first child I sponsored in Chile. I was able to visit Monica at one time. I was traveling with a girlfriend, and we were visiting two additional friends who lived in the Santiago area where they were doing missionary work. Monica's family was gracious enough to invite us to have lunch with them. My friends and I weren't sure what to expect but were deeply moved and honored as we were treated as very special guests where the food was plentiful. I'll never forget the experience. Monica aged out of the program, obtained a good job and moved into her own apartment. Stories like Monica's are part of why Michael and I now continue to support many children.

RC: IF YOU WERE ASKED TO DESCRIBE CHILDREN INCORPORATED IN JUST A COUPLE OF SENTENCES, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Sandra: Though Children Incorporated is a small organization, their dedicated staff does much to improve the lives and futures of countless children around the world.

RC: THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND ALL THAT YOU DO FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES WE SUPPORT!



Michael Ruddick, myself (Ron Carter) and Sandra Ruddick are pictured at a Children Incorporated sponsor meet-and-greet in Chicago in 2019.

Clean Water and Healthy Living in Kentucky

Last fall, thanks to a wonderful proposal submitted by our volunteer coordinator Kelly at Salyersville Elementary School in Kentucky, we were able to provide water bottles to students as a part of a healthy living initiative started in the school district. Kelly shared that during the pandemic, many school districts either closed/shut down or greatly reduced the number of water fountains. This was originally done in an effort to halt the spread of COVID-19. However, many of those districts have decided to remove the water fountains altogether and to replace them with water bottle stations. This move is seen as more hygienic, reducing possible COVID transmission, but also the common cold, flu, RSV, rotavirus, enterovirus (hand, foot and mouth disease) and more. Outbreaks cause sick children and high rates of absenteeism.

Upon receiving the water bottles, Kelly wrote a note of thanks to Children Incorporated:

“Thank you again for the special gift, which provided water bottles for all our students. The timing was perfect, as Friday was Eagle Spirit Day for the last day of Red Ribbon Week. The students, and myself, are so thankful and excited. I am also sending you some pictures taken as I passed out the bottles. Thanks so much for all you do!”



INTRODUCING CHILDREN INCORPORATED'S GUARDIAN CIRCLE

In celebration of our 60th anniversary, we recently invited our donors to join our Guardian Circle, which allows our loyal supporters to give to our Special Projects around the world. These projects offer assistance beyond individual sponsorships. Our goal is to increase support to our affiliated sites so they can improve or expand their current operations. As a result, our volunteer coordinators are empowered to give even more support and assistance to specific children, families and the communities where they tirelessly devote their time and energy to the children in our program.

If you are interested in joining our Guardian Circle, please contact us today by emailing sponsorship@children-inc.org.



Returning Light to Young Lives in Liberia



Children in Monrovia, Liberia are receiving help thanks to educational outreach efforts and counseling.

As Children Incorporated celebrates six decades of providing aid to children and families, we want to highlight a special, one-of-a-kind program that we have been supporting for the last few years. The program is based in Monrovia, Liberia, and its purpose is to provide effective intervention for young women, specifically teenagers who have experienced rape and sexual assault. Liberia has experienced an epidemic of rape over the last two decades. Following a fourteen-year civil war, the country was left with deeply rooted gender inequality, and misogyny was and is quite prevalent. Rapes and sexual assaults intensified greatly after the war, with an astounding 600 cases reported over a two-month period in 2020. Grace Baptist Church of Monrovia is working to turn the tide of sexual violence, particularly among their teenage population. Their program provides community education about the frequency of such attacks, and through counseling and other outreach efforts, they provide a safe place where those who have been assaulted may go for treatment, both medical and psychological. They help victims return to and stay in school, while also advocating for justice and social change.

Robert Uttaro, an internationally known and respected rape crisis counselor, once said, “No matter how much evil I see, I think it’s important for everyone to understand that there is much more light than darkness.” Grace Baptist Church in Monrovia, Liberia is working hard to bring light into the lives of young women who have experienced horrifying darkness, and Children Incorporated is glad to be working alongside them in making this happen.

A Warm Partnership with Subaru

In January, Children Incorporated was selected by another nonprofit organization, Operation Warm, to receive 100 new coats for our Richmond children, thanks to its partnership with Subaru of America. Our staff welcomed two employees, Rachel and Michael, from a local dealership, Hyman Bros. Subaru, who brought the coats themselves to our office to then be distributed to children at our Virginia affiliated schools! We are so grateful for the support! Thank you, Operation Warm and Hyman Bros. Subaru!



Christmas Celebrated Around the World

Thanks to our amazing sponsors, children at our affiliated sites in 20 countries, just like the children in Guatemala pictured above, enjoyed holiday gifts and celebrations that they would otherwise have gone without. Thank you for providing for these children during this past Christmas!



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*Thank you for your generous donations to our
Clothing Fund this past winter!*

