

FRIENDS OF AMA NEWSLETTER- DECEMBER 2023



Dear AMAs, Sisters, Families and Friends!

Advent and Christmas greetings to all! As we know, the season of Advent can be taken over by busyness with buying gifts, baking, holiday parties, etc. The Church invites us to enter into this season of preparation in a deeper way by pondering Jesus' coming into the world, and our expectant hope of his coming again. Jesus is truly humankind's greatest gift!

Our AMAs, today and over the years, have been "gifts" to the people they serve and the Sisters with whom they have shared their lives. We want to thank you, our donors who have supported the AMA mission for over 65 years. We pray that with your continued support, both financially and with your prayers, our young people will continue to build up God's Kingdom here on earth.

My wish and hope for each of us over these next four weeks is that we will accept the invitation to reflect on the wonder of God's plan to break into the world with his gifts of peace, hope, justice and love.



What's inside

Director's letter	Page 1
Thank you Donors!	Page 1
Jillian Boes reflection	Page 2-3
Anita Chacko reflection	Page 3-4

*Thank you
Donors!*

*"Every act of
self-denial makes
room for God."
-St. Marie Eugenie*

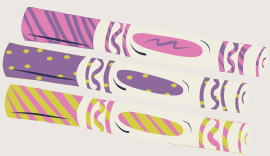
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Jillian Boes - Newcastle, England

Two months at Kids Kabin have already passed in the blink of an eye. They say "time flies when you're having fun," but it soars when no two days look the same.

Due to capacity and demand, all of our kids can attend one after-school session per week. So, each day brings new kids, and with different kids come different dynamics and challenges. Each session has its own little group personality, which keeps me on my toes. The Monday session I lead is completely full, and half of the kids are related. I can always count on busy woodwork and art rooms during that session, as well as some big personalities to keep engaged. The early Tuesday session is generally calmer since most of the kids are a bit older and are generally more sure of themselves since they know what they like and who they want to hang out with. Our Friday session is, frankly, a toss-up. We can count on high energy and at least two kids in the drama room, unlike the other sessions where drama is not so popular, but we can never predict who will get along with whom, or just how determined a few of them might be to spend the whole session running through the hallways.

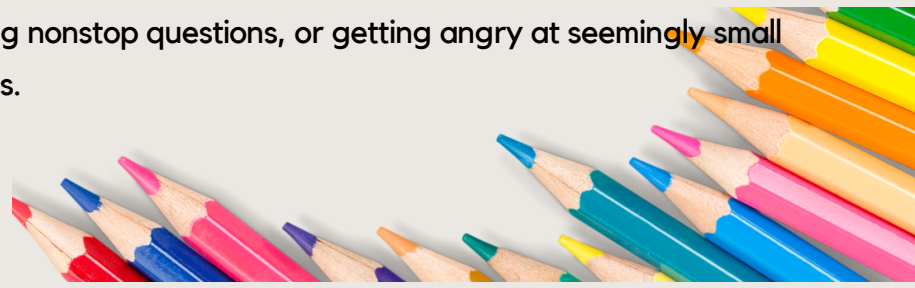
"Time flies when you're having fun, but it soars when no two days look the same."



The kids always love smoothies from the smoothie bike!



Now, we still have to factor in one very important thing: each kid is a whole, unique person *-*gasp.** They have good days and bad days, different learning and emotional needs, ever-evolving relationships with friends, schoolmates, and family members, personal interests and dreams, and so on. (Not to mention, they have much longer days than I do, with school starting before I am usually out of bed). It's simple, yet I am constantly forgetting this when I get frustrated that a kid keeps running around, not listening, asking nonstop questions, or getting angry at seemingly small things.



Jillian Boes - continued

All these moments, especially the challenges, are consistent reminders of why I am here, and why these kids need this space. Some of them need access to free resources to be creative. Some just need a calm, safe space away from school that they might not get at home. All of them need to be welcomed, encouraged, and celebrated for being themselves. It's a pretty awesome thing to be part of.



"All of them need to be welcomed, encouraged, and celebrated for being themselves. It's a pretty awesome thing to be part of."

Jillian with a group of children picking up litter around Kids Kabin. Kids Kabin is a community hub for Cleanup UK.



Anita Chacko - Worcester, MA

St. Marie Eugenie says that our life must be a constant "yes" to God. It is a "yes" that bears the weight of unwavering trust despite uncertainty and fear. It is a "yes" that requires constant listening amidst noise. It is a "yes" that requires us to seek His will over our own. That "yes" is what led me to Worcester, MA as an AMA.

While I was first uncertain of what Worcester held, in the month that I have been here, it has completely stolen my heart. The diverse people and organizations that I get to work with have been a constant reminder of the immense love and sacrifice of Christ.



I work at St. Peter's food pantry in distributing food. We spend Tuesday organizing and sorting through donated produce, and Wednesday distributing the food. Hundreds of cars and people begin to line up as early as 5 A.M., with many families being non-English speaking immigrants. However, despite the language barrier, I have learned that so much can be communicated and that showing them that they are loved and cared for requires no words.



Anita Chacko - continued



"The diverse people and organizations that I get to work with have been a constant reminder of the immense love and sacrifice of Christ."



I also have the privilege of working with elementary students and preschoolers. I help out with after-school clubbing, reading to them, and doing different learning activities. I have found myself to be the center of a very entertaining game the preschoolers like to play where they guess my age. Currently, the consensus is: 1.) Ms. Anita is much too tall to be seven years old, and 2.) Ms. Anita must be between 8 and 69 years old. Working with them has been a wonderful reminder of the innocence, curiosity, and child-like nature that is in all of us.

Whether it is a 4-year-old preschooler or a 50-year-old migrant, every single person I have interacted with has molded my heart. The immense generosity and kindness that I have seen people of all backgrounds and ages have shown me how much Christ works through people.

As I continue my service here, I trust more and more the circumstances that I find myself in and the people God allows me to meet. I cannot wait to see how I will continue to say "yes" in my time here in Worcester!



The Sisters love spending time with our AMAs, and vis a versa!

