



**Giving a Life that Matters** For young girls and boys in Andhra Pradesh, the only hope they have for a life that matters is through education, which provides the tools they need to support their families. A non-educated boy or girl in Andhra Pradesh can be subject to forced child labor or prostitution in order to help their families provide money to support themselves. This scenario is more evident with girls as they are perceived as a “curse” to their families when born. Many girls are aborted at birth among “untouchables”, which is a common name given to low caste families.

Currently, the literacy rate in Andhra Pradesh is 60.5%, which consists of a male literacy rate of 70% and female literacy rate of only 50%. For this reason, IREF has increased its focus on education for the female population in attempts to provide a life for girls that are faced with a degrading lifestyle.

For 2013, IREF is proud to announce young women constitute 53% of our students accepted, which we truly thank God for helping us identify His plan to better achieve our mission. It is the mission of IREF to “break the cycle of poverty in Andhra Pradesh by providing a Christian education to create sustainable change in young girls and boys to change community.”



**Value of Child Sponsorship**

Seven years ago, Srevanthi and Ramya Mereddy came to IREF at the ages of five and two. Life’s challenges for both of these girls were increasing at this time because their mother died at a young age and their father suffered from a mental illness. IREF accepted both girls into the primary education program and they stayed at the Lydia Children’s Home in Repalle. Life handed these two girls few options for a future and hope that they might live a life that they could be proud of. IREF’s child sponsorship program provided these sisters a future that included education, food, clothing, medical care and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the greatest tool to transform their lives. IREF’s child sponsorship program links children like Srevanthi and Ramya with charitable sponsors from all around the world to provide the essential tools to break the cycle of poverty that exists in their lives and “Give them a Life that Matters”.



The proud sponsor that has made a difference in Srevanthi and Ramya’s lives is Lilly Staar and her husband, Norm. “When I visited IREF in 2012, I saw firsthand that the culture does not value girls and educational opportunities are not afforded to women like they are in the U.S.” Lilly further mentions that she too knew what it is like to lose a mother’s love and through written communication with the girls,

she has tried to emphasize that God loves them and has not abandoned them. Lilly felt the need to put God’s Gospel into action and become a child sponsor in partnership with IREF. “I know Srevanthi and Ramya are each being affirmed as a child of God and flourishing in their educational abilities instead of feeling trapped in their place in society...Jesus came to set us free and I look forward to what He can do through IREF for MY GIRLS.”

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**IREF News & Events on Facebook**

We invite you to find us on Facebook! Simply, search India Rural Evangelical Fellowship and click on “Join Group”. We will add you to this closed group where about 200 members already get live updates and news feeds on events occurring at the IREF campus and surrounding villages.

We encourage current members of the IREF Facebook Group to add friends, family and acquaintances that may be interested in getting updates and news feeds about the organization.





**Financial Accountability** IREF is built on faith in Jesus Christ by loyal donors and sponsors, who serve as the catalyst for many young girls and boys to have the opportunity to be educated and work as agents of change to break the cycle of poverty in Andhra Pradesh. A financial update from the IREF Board::

To our faithful partners,

I want to make you aware of some giving facts:

- Along with the other IREF board members I have been serving IREF for almost two decades.
- I first visited Repalle in 1996. Since then the number of children and evangelists has more than quadrupled.
- Despite the downturn in the economy, IREF giving has continued strong. And although our expenses have gone up, we have worked hard to keep our overheads down – under 15%.
- A number of donors have faithfully been giving for many years. Some started when the recommend support levels were \$20 per month per child – now the suggested amount is only \$40 per month per child.
- We have added over 400 new donors in the last five years, but unfortunately the number of donors has stayed constant.

New donor statistics:

Count of Month	Month												Grand Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
Year														
2008							3	4	2	6	3	14	32	
2009	41	1	4	1	5	5	1	1	4	8	5	9	85	
2010	1	4	17	7	7	2	1	10	3	1	3	2	58	
2011	1					4	16	2	5	4	28	15	75	
2012		3	3	12	19	12	12	12	6	9	30	25	143	
2013	60	11	5	1	2								79	
Grand Total	103	19	29	21	33	23	33	29	20	28	69	65	472	

We need to significantly increase the number of donors! We have been working to update our printed donor materials and communications. And soon there will be a new website which will take credit cards. All this is to attract and retain new donors (and younger donors).

But we need your help! The best way for us to reach others is **YOU** – personal contact. We need **YOU** to tell others about the ministry of IREF. One way to do this would be to join the IREF Facebook group and share it with all your contacts.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership with the ministry of IREF.

~ Bill Hampe – IREF Financial Secretary

July 2013  
continued...

India Rural  
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