

FIGHTING POVERTY THROUGH EDUCATION

Since 2012, the Rotaract Club of South-West Brisbane, Qld, has been helping fight poverty through education, by sponsoring Derrick Edward Sudi, a student at the School of St Jude in Tanzania.

ST JUDE'S provides free, high-quality education to 1800 children who would have otherwise missed out due to poverty and social pressures.

Australian Gemma Sisia is behind the development of the facility, which Rotary has supported from its very beginnings. Nearly 20 years ago, the NSW Rotary clubs of Armidale, Tamworth and Inverell, and Inner Wheel clubs raised \$20,000 seed capital to support Gemma's dream.

Armidale Rotarians further organised a team of dozens of volunteers to travel to Arusha, Tanzania, to build the first six classrooms. A group from the Rotary Club of Gosford North soon followed to build a second classroom block, enabling the school to open in January 2002. The Rotary Club of Erina later visited to construct a playground, and the Rotary Club of Brisbane Planetarium built the foundations of the library block.

Since then, clubs such as Rocklea and Armidale Central have sent containers with much-needed supplies, water storage tanks, school buses and solar water heaters.

And, of course, clubs provide funding to cover the boarding and educational costs of students.

Drawn from families who often live on less than \$1.25 per day, the pupils of St Jude's are shining examples of what students can achieve when they are given the opportunity to receive a quality education.

The Rotaract Club of South-West Brisbane has provided for Derrick Edward Sudi's education and boarding since he started at the school. He is now in Grade 7 and dreams of being a pilot.

Past president Emily Wood travelled to Tanzania in 2016 and had the pleasure of meeting Derrick and his family.

"It was wonderful to meet Derrick and see first-hand the positive impact of our sponsorship," Emily said. "He and his classmates are incredibly impressive. I've never met young people so smart and passionate about learning. I have no doubt they will go on to do great things."

To find out more about the School of St Jude, visit www.schoolofstjude.org. •

