The Story about Emanuel Mathias

The case study of Emanuel Mathias shows that children can be role models for other children and that they can also be the best educators.

Emanuel Mathias Age 18

Emanuel arrived at Dogodogo in August 1997 from Mwanza in Northwest Tanzania. He first lost his parents when he was around 8 years of age. He and his two siblings, a brother and sister went to stay with his Grandfather. When he died the three siblings each left the village and went in different directions all in deep despair at so many losses. After working for 2 years selling eggs for a woman who gave him lodging and food in exchange he stowed away on the train to Dar es Salaam when he realized she would not send him to school. After sleeping on the streets for nearly a year in Dar es Salaam he learned about Dogodogo Center. By the time he finished Primary School he had achieved the highest scholastic place in his class and had scooped several Art Awards in inter-school Art competitions. UNICEF chose his drawing to grace the cover of their annual report in 2003.

In 2001 he was selected by his peers to attend the UN Special Summit for Children (UNGASS). While there he was elected the President of the Assembly for the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) special forum. He has since then traveled for meetings to Rome, Geneva and Johannesburg. None of these honors has turned his quiet compassionate, creative spirit. He has taken the initiative in forming Peace Clubs as part of the Education for Peace Project, which is sponsored by Arigatou Foundation through the Global Network of Religions for Children, GNRC. What have we learned by this example of one determined boy to realize his dreams? We have learned that there are many children who have intelligence, creativity, leadership and commitment to follow their star. We have learned that children can be role models for other children and that they can also be the best educators. Emanuel has assisted many other youth through theater to educate children in the villages about their sexual rights and their rights as children. While being involved in a lot of extracurricular activity Emanuel has managed to maintain high grades as he completes Form II.