



This summer I had the opportunity to go on a volunteer trip with an organization called Child Initiative International (CII). Child Initiative International is a non-profit that supports six locations in Uganda, Africa, all of which are schools and three double as orphanages.

Since January 2014, I have been working with CII as their head of graphic design and online marketing. The chance to work with an organization to the extent that I have been working with CII was completely unexpected. I first heard about CII from a co-worker who just moved into the area from Illinois. She casually mentioned CII several times before I started asking questions about it. Eventually I found myself talking to Pastor Phil Klikas, the CEO of Child Initiative International, and filling out a volunteer member application.

The trip came as a surprise, too. I didn't think I had been in the group long enough to have the chance to go with them quite so soon, but I was soon being told that I could raise money to go on the 2015 trip to Uganda. After sending letters, raising money, trying to

## A Great Experience



## For a Good Cause

❖By Sally Whiting

remember to pack everything I needed and a blur of flights, the team of Pastor Phil, a member named Shirley, and I finally arrived in Uganda.

It was the middle of the night when we arrived and we were greeted by Pastor Steve Kimbowa, CII's main contact and

head of the Rock of Joy School in Uganda, and Allan Mbabali. Pastor Steve and Allan acted as our guides and drivers during the trip.

The next morning was much the same as every morning following. We'd wake up around 6 or 7 am, have breakfast, and

wait for Pastor Steve and Allan to come pick us up for the day.

The first day was spent exchanging money and having maintenance done on the CII van with a new set of tires. Later that night we visited Rock of Joy with a delivery truck carrying 2,000 pounds of flour, sugar, rice and beans for the 382 children at the Rock of Joy School.

Driving through the city was one of the most perplexing experiences in Uganda. There are no speed limits but many speed bumps, which people may or may not pay attention to. Through watching drivers I understand there are no rules to driving either, no right-of-way laws, or at least no one seems to care about them just like they deliberately do not follow road signs, the few that there are. There are also no rules to pedestrians, people, including lone children, walk in and out of traffic not paying attention to drivers. Fortunately, I did not have to see any of the consequences you can imagine so frequently happen.

One of the most fascinating, and terrifying, things to watch



*This is a photo that Pastor Phil took when he snuck away from Shirley and I while we were shopping in the market. A homeless mother and child sleep on the side of the road. This was one of few photos that we were able to capture although scenes like this were very common as we drove through the city.*



*Some of the kids at Grace Children's Home. The young girl sitting to the left of the kid in the black shirt came to the school a couple years ago after being severely abused. She didn't speak and stole food from the other children. Only being there a couple years has helped so much. She came up to me and smiled a little, and shook my hand. She is doing so well.*