Visiting an Orphanage

By: Menita Anili Vedantam

Address: 14614 Pawnee St

Leawood, KS 66224-3938

To be completely honest, I have always envied others of what they have without completely realizing what I have myself. I always ask for more clothes or a new laptop when I have more than enough clothes in my, rather large, closet, and a shiny laptop that does not need to be replaced. After visiting the orphanage, Spandana, in India, I have come to be cognizant of the fact that I need to be thankful for the school I get to attend on a daily basis where I am continuously enlightened. Luckily, I have the honor to be part of a loving home that is transforming the lives of many children for the better.

When I first arrived at the home, after a very long car ride, what I saw brightened my day. A crowd of children ready to welcome us into their home. As my family and I walked up to the entrance the children gathered around us and handed us roses as they accepted us as their family. We then entered the building and there was a table set up for my family to sit as if we were the guests of honor. As we sat down, I turned around to look at the big whiteboard hanging behind us with the writing: “Welcome to our loving parents Srinivasa, Surya, Mihir, and Menita Vedantam.” At the sight of those words, I began to tear up. I couldn’t believe that I had contributed to something so beautiful.

All the kids sat around the table as we took pictures and they shared with us purses and scarfs that they stitched. The host led us outside to uncover a plaque plastered on the wall showing who made what contributions to make the orphanage possible. It was amazing to see how many people gave to the cause.

Soon after, we went back inside and served the kids their lunch. My mom passed out the plates of rice and lentils as my brother and I passed out the cake we brought for them. They were so happy at the sight of cake that they ate it first.

The host then took us on a tour of the building. We went up the stairs and saw their bedroom. It was one large room where they all slept on the floor. The kids started filling in and lying down for their nap. We then went into the crafts room where we saw drawings and paintings hung up. The children had some real talent in art. After that, we went into a therapy room where the kids with disabilities were helped with what needed to be treated. The therapist explained to us how he would help children with walking disabilities by having them practice on a treadmill. Each child was taken care of the way they needed to be.

We followed the host back down the stairs as we waved goodbye to the sleepy children. They were taken care of very well with meals being fed regularly, going through therapy, and creating art. I was mesmerized by how happy each and every one of the orphans looked.

Lastly, we reassured the staff of the building that they are the ones who are doing all the heavy lifting and hard working. They really are making everything possible for these children.