



SMP STORIES . . . PART OF GOD'S STORY

Late August is always an exciting time in the Christian Reformed World Missions offices. That's when we start to hear from SMP participants who are returning to North America. We usually greet returning SMPers with, "I've heard some amazing stories so far!" or "I can't wait to hear your stories!"

The fact remains, however, that these stories do not belong to any of us alone; rather, they belong to God and are part of the story that God has been weaving since the beginning of time.

As we come together as part of God's larger plan of redemption, all of our stories are woven into His story. No moment, not even the times where things "aren't going as planned," takes Him by surprise. Ultimately, we are all participants in His story. Here's a glimpse of the chapter of His story experienced by this summer's SMP participants.



Communicating without words . . .

In a cross-cultural setting, communication can be a challenge. This year's SMPers learned very quickly how to speak without words. **At left**, Sarah Bratt, SMP Nigeria, shares a moment with a child at an orphanage in Mkar. **At right**, Cindy Longyne communicates with a child in Japan. "She decided that I was her best friend that day," Cindy recalled. "It didn't matter to her that I didn't speak any Japanese; she decided she was going to talk to me anyway."



Stories from around the world . . .

At left, Amanda Arkema (center) and two other members of the SMP Asia team joined a team of English teachers from many countries. This team was able to see several of the people with whom they were working come to know Christ, thereby becoming a part of God's continuing story of redemption.



What's your story?

The **SMP Nigeria team** had a unique opportunity this year to explore the ways in which their own stories intersected with the stories of their counterparts from Nigeria. Five young people from North America partnered with four team members from Nigeria for a unique experience of service and mutual learning. **At right**, the entire Nigeria SMP team with Nico and Amira, children of CRWM missionaries Mike and Megan Ribbens.

HOW HAS GOD BEEN WRITING YOUR STORY? WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!
 TO UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION, SEND AN EMAIL TO LWOODWARD@CRUNA.ORG
 OR WRITE TO US AT THE ADDRESS ON PAGE TWO.



EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY



The story begins . . .

Each year, SMP participants take part in pre-field training at the Grand Rapids, MI CRWM headquarters. **At right**, SMPers learn to work together without using words to re-create a story by putting it into its proper sequence.



Stories of God's faithfulness are shared around a campfire in Romania, one of three countries where the SMP Eastern Europe team served. The youth of Eastern Europe are hungry for examples of young people who are living wholeheartedly for Jesus.



A story worth repeating . . .

The SMP Nigeria team expected a few hundred children to show up at a VBS in Takum, Nigeria. As the week went on, the crowds grew, with more than 1,000 children attending by the final day. Participants referred to it as "organized chaos." **See the November Banner for more of this amazing story!** **Above**, Geoff Brouwer holds up a sign in an effort to find his students.



Telling the story through song . . .

At right, Melanie Thompson, SMP Japan, leads worship with CRWM missionary Charles Hong. Musical gifts can be an important part of an SMP team's ministry. Of this year's twenty-one SMPers, five of them, Melanie included, play alto sax!

And the story continues . . .

Below: In Guatemala, SMPers Kayla Wilkinson (back row, at right) and Elise Ditta participated in youth ministry and worked alongside local teachers.



Above: Liz Huyer with children in West Africa.

The rest of the story . . .

Do **YOU** know a young adult who would like to participate in God's story in new ways next summer? Tell them **YOUR** SMP story, and then have them visit www.crwm.org/smp to learn more!



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