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Vanuatu's Little Stars Summer School's Quarterly Newsletter



August 2018 – Edition 8

Welcome to the eighth edition of Vanuatu's Little Stars Summer School's quarterly newsletter!

The big news is that we are now an official incorporated Charitable Association in Vanuatu.

The Library Project is also moving forward, with over 900 boxes of books having now made it to schools on Pentecost. The next summer school is also moving closer, and preparations are in full swing to be ready in just a few months time. We hope that you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and the latest of all things VLSSS

First Day in Another Country

Bruce Watas, our top Anglophone student of the most recent summer school, describes his VLSSS experience. Find out more of the learning experience the program is for our junior students spending time away from home for the first time....

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Sponsor-A-Star

The Sponsor-A-Star program is back! For the third year running you have the opportunity to support the program, whilst building a more personal connection with the summer school and our students. Check out the back page to find how you can get involved with this great program....

Inspirational Leader – Grace Molisa

Need some inspiration. VLSSS is all about developing leaders, and Vanuatu has had some great leaders for us to learn from. Learn a little of Grace Molisa's story, a truly inspirational Ni-Vanuatu woman....

Want to join the VLSSS quarterly newsletter mailing list? Just contact us at: reachVLSSS@gmail.com

Director's Column



Hello again everyone,

While occupied with busy schedules in preparing for the upcoming summer school program in December, our library project has gained momentum with the 930 cartons of books safely delivered to the 23 Anglophone schools on Pentecost. The plan of our library management workshop is well underway, and will be implemented later this month with the help of our Library Advisor, Mrs Hannah Sau. She has put together a fantastic day program which we look forward to rolling out. We are glad to see the schools benefit greatly from this initiative and we hope to continue offering such support in the future.

Concerning the preparations towards the next summer school program in December, the list of successful teachers is already finalised leaving the positions of ancillary staff yet to be recruited including the school nurse, boarding master and chief cook. We have closed applications for these final positions and are currently reviewing the applications we have received. The students throughout the schools on Pentecost will soon be contacted on their selection to the program. We are all looking forward to another exciting gathering of learning and fun with the students.

I must admit that we have encountered a few challenges while still trying our best to ensure the upcoming summer school is a success. As one can imagine, financial constraints is a major obstacle for a small organisation like VLSSS. At present our management team is working hard to locate possible sources of funding for running our program in December. We are getting closer to meeting our budget target, but still have some way to go. We are grateful for the assistance of various supporters who have already pledged their contributions including the British friends of Vanuatu, the Kiwanis Club of Port Vila, the Rotary Club of Balclutha, BRED Bank Vanuatu

and Georgia Naughton-Watt and Michael Sandon, as well as other companies or individuals contributing through our Sponsor-A-Star program. VLSSS is very proud to have their support and we are sure they have made valuable contributions that will aid the success of the upcoming summer school program.

Reciting our vision *'for the promising students of today to become the dynamic leaders of the country tomorrow, evoking social change for the benefit of all'*, we believe quality leadership and strong moral qualities are essential traits to be instilled in our young students, to achieve this dream in the coming year. Having officially registered this year as a charitable association, we are confident the important role we serve will only continue to grow in strength.

Best wishes,

Jayford Sarial

Director

Vanuatu's Little Stars Summer School

Condolences

At the time of this newsletter going to press, we have just heard of the passing of the mother of our graduates Pettson Bule Tangsu (see page 9) and Ronaldo Tabi Rap. We are extremely sad to hear of the passing of Pettson and Ronaldo's mother. The whole VLSSS family would like to share that our thoughts are with Pettson, Ronaldo and their immediate and extended family and friends. We share your pain at this difficult time, and are grateful for such an amazing woman, and mother, who has helped to raise some remarkable children. Our thoughts are with you.

Charitable Association

We're glad to announce that Vanuatu's Little Stars Summer School has now been incorporated as a Charitable Association with the Vanuatu Financial Service Commission (VFSC). The committee has been working on meeting the various criteria and submitting the relevant paperwork over the past few months, and we very excited at having now taken this big step. Whilst we have been around for over 6 years now, and already have a strong program and an organisation with solid systems in place, it's great to take this official step forward.



Library Project

The Library Project is progressing well, with all of the boxes of books (over 900!) now reaching schools on Pentecost. This involved the shipment of a full 20ft shipping container with boxes being delivered at different points along the west coast of Pentecost.



We are now preparing for the final part of this project, which is a workshop on library management. We have already shipped the supplies for these workshops, and are glad to announce that Mrs Hannah Sau, a teacher at VLSSS 2018 and also at Lini Memorial College (LMC) in north Pentecost, has signed a contract to work as our Library Advisor in conducting these workshops. The workshops will go ahead later this week, from

Wednesday 26th September to Friday 28th September. The workshop is a day long program, but there will be three separate workshops, one each for the schools in north, central and south Pentecost. We look forward to the week ahead!

This project is in partnership with Kiwanis Club of Port Vila, who have donated the books and financed the project. Our Director Jayford Sarial has been managing this project, and has been doing a great job, with the support of volunteers. A massive thank you to all those that have supported in making this project possible.

Teacher & Staff Recruitment

Over the past couple of months we have been busy with recruiting our team of teachers for the next summer school in December. This has involved advertising, reviewing applications, shortlisting, conducting face-to-face and phone interviews and finalising the successful candidates. Our Local Teacher Program Manager Hancy Tabi has been kept very busy.



As this newsletter goes to press we have finalised the successful candidates and are in the process of contacting them and arranging their contracts. We're very excited to work with another great team again this year.

Due to the shift in dates of the summer school this year, we have seen a drop off in applications from international volunteers for the Volunteer Program. Whilst this is a shame as it adds a great element to the school, it will be great to have such a strong Ni-Vanuatu team this year.

We have also just closed applications for a school-based nurse, boarding master and chief cook for the upcoming summer school in December. We are currently reviewing these applications, and will finalise the successful applicants for these positions in the coming weeks.

First Day in Another Country

Bruce Watas was a junior student at the most recent summer school in January 2018. Not only was he an Assistant Head Boy, but he also took home the special award of being the top junior Anglophone student at the school on Graduation Day. Bruce is from Ranwas in South-East Pentecost. Despite having one of the smallest and most remote schools on the island, Ranwas has produced some of the most talented students to have attended the summer school program. Ranwas and Bruce should be very proud. Here's what he has to say about his time at the summer school....



Name: Bruce Watas

My first day at VLSSS was like my first day in another country. I am so scared, but few days later, I felt I am home.

My first day in school at VLSSS was a little bit scared, but I doesn't give up. I got three star points at my first day in school.

My first friend in school is Wilkin Tabi.

We did lots of dramas at VLSSS. In the dramas, I try to do all my best. One of my favourite drama is the Talk Shows.

We have learned many topics in English, Maths, French and General. I really like the topics so much.

In French I am a little bit confused, but I never give up. Some days later, I know some French word such as 'comment ça va?'.

There are about twenty-five teachers altogether. My best teachers are Mr Alfred, Mr James Mrs Cindy, Mr Maurice, Mr Glen and Mr Graham.

I become the Assistant Head Boy. That is what makes me feel I am in my real home.

On my behalf, I want to say a big thank you to Mr James, the VLSSS founder, for taking me to summer school. May our God richly bless you. Thank you.

Don't Wait, Be Part Of It

Qwendolyn was a senior student this year, having attended the junior program in 2013 and 2014. She soon grew to love VLSSS....



Name: Qwendolyn Bolenga

It was in 2012 that the (former) Director of VLSSS Mr James Roberts Bulewak told our teachers that the best students from each school at South Pentecost to attend the first VLSSS ever. At that time I attend my first VLSSS when I was in year 5 at Ranmawot School.

During my first day at the VLSSS I don't get any interest of being part of it, but while starting to make friends, I found myself to be very happy.

My favourite teachers are Mr Jayford, Mr Tagaro, Mr James and Miss Annie (teacher at VLSSS 2014). My favourite subject is English, French, Science, Talk Shows and acting Drama.

On the other hand, speaking French and English for a week makes me a lot more improve in my French and English speaking as well as being confident to stand in front of the audience to perform dramas as well as talk shows.

As a result, you can see that most of the senior Anglophone for this year VLSSS 2018 are very smart and are confident to stand in front of the crowd to present what they like performing.

I really like attending VLSSS because there's no need for our parents to buy the fees or any other school material, generous people help us with this. Mr James Roberts, (former) Director of VLSSS, manage to spend most of the 12 months preparing for the most special part of the summer school, which was on the full month of January. Also I will never forget the time all my friends and all my favourite teacher decide to celebrate my birthday which was on the first VLSSS at Ranmawot Primary School.

Keep enjoy reading the newsletter from VLSSS and 'Don't wait, be part of it'.

Funding

As a small organisation funding is always a challenge. We raise our funds year to year and because of the nature of our main program, the vast majority of our expenses come at the end of the year when we run the summer school. This means that as we just about find enough funding for one summer school, we are back down to zero and start again to meet the costs for the next program. Added to this is that due to the success of the program we hope to reach more students and expand the program, which inevitably means greater expenses to be covered.

Students and parents don't pay any fee to attend the summer school program as school fees already pose a great barrier for many in Vanuatu. Imposing a fee would mean many deserving students would no longer be able to attend and benefit from the program because of not being able to afford to. For those students that would be able to attend and benefit from the program, it would potentially put them in a position of being more stretched to pay for their regular school fees following the summer school, and affect their continued attendance at school. We don't wish to see either of these things happen, and so we raise funds to allow the program to be offered and allow all deserving students to benefit.

Our volunteer team puts in a great amount of effort to develop the program and prepare for each summer school, but we need the support of our generous donors to make the program happen each year. Should you be in a position to support the program, or know of any individuals, companies or organisations that are, please don't hesitate to reach out to us: reachVLSSS@gmail.com

Change to December 2018 Program

Unfortunately, due to challenges in meeting our funding target for this year, we have had to review our proposed expenditure for the upcoming program and make difficult decisions to bring this in line with the funding we have available. This has a couple of impacts on this year's program:

- **Program duration** – This year's program will now run from Saturday 1st December until Thursday 20th December 2018 (2 and a half week), rather than the original planned dates of Saturday 24th November until Sunday 23rd December 2018 (4 full weeks).
- **Program size** – This year we will be offering a Junior Program, but no Senior Program. This means that both the Anglophone and Francophone senior streams (year 10 leaver students) will not be run this year, but both the Anglophone and Francophone junior streams (year 6 leaver students) will go ahead as planned.

These decisions were not easy, but unfortunately are a reality of the funding that we have available this year. We do not grumble though, to offer a 2-and-a-half-week Junior Program still requires a significant amount of effort and funding, and we have generous donors that have been fantastic in supporting to meet this need this year. In fact, you can read on to find out more about some of the great support we have received, and continue to receive. We are still a little short of what we need for the planned program though, so please do support if you are able to.

Sponsor-A-Star

The Sponsor-A-Star program is back, having been launched again recently for the upcoming summer school in December! The Sponsor-A-Star program is a great way to support the summer school, whilst also building a closer personal connection with the program and our students. You can sponsor a student to attend the program, which covers their costs for the full summer school, including their food, accommodation, stationery, transport to and from the school etc. At 10,000VUV, which is £75GBP, \$125AUD or \$130NZD, this is great value for such a remarkable experience for the student. Not only will your donation have a great impact on your star, but you will also receive a Sponsor-A-Star pack following the summer school that will contain a letter from your star (they're always good fun to read) and a photograph of your student as well as the whole school. You'll really know what you are supporting, and get to understand the impact your donation has had. Check out the last page of this newsletter for how to get involved and make a donation. Sponsor-A-Star today!



The graphic features a header with social media icons (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, YouTube) and the text 'Follow VLSSS' and 'www.vlsss.com'. Below this is the title 'Sponsor-A-Star' in a large, bold font, followed by the sub-headline 'For the third year running you can sponsor your own star to attend the upcoming VLSSS 2018/19!'. Three circular photos of diverse children are displayed. The text below explains the program's value and lists the benefits of sponsoring a student, including a personal letter, a photo, and a school photo. It also provides contact information for donations and a website link.

Joining the Sponsor-A-Star program is simple. Just make your donation which will cover the costs of one student to attend the full program in November/December 2018. Students don't pay any fee to attend as finances already pose a barrier to education for most in this developing nation. Accommodation, food, stationery, transport and quality teachers are all covered by VLSSS for the month. Your single donation can cover all that for one bright star. At only £75GBP, \$125AUD or \$130NZD we offer top quality at great value!

Sounds great? It gets better! You'll also receive a special Sponsor-A-Star pack including:

- A personal letter from your star
- A photo of your star
- A whole school photo

It's your chance for a personal connection with the program, and your star! We have a few easy options to make your donation, via:

1. BT MyDonate – Just go to: mydonate.bt.com/vanuatu/users/who-sponsor-a-star
2. Bank Transfer – Just contact us for the account details: reachVLSSS@gmail.com
3. Cash – To: Management Advisor James David Roberts or Director Jayford Sarial

Sponsor-A-Star today! For more information contact: reachVLSSS@gmail.com

"Shaping leaders for a brighter tomorrow"

British Friends of Vanuatu

As announced in our previous edition of the quarterly newsletter in May 2018, British Friends of Vanuatu (BFoV) have committed to contributing a massive 450,000VUV towards this year's summer school. This is the largest single donation that we have ever received towards the summer school program, and the second largest single donation the organisation has ever received (after our Library Project funding). BFoV also continue to support VLSSS in many other ways, such as with the use of BT MyDonate for our Sponsor-A-Star program. We are very grateful for their continued support.

Kiwanis Club of Port Vila

Kiwanis Club of Port Vila have recently announced that they will be contributing a huge 300,000VUV towards this year's summer school. This matches their generous contribution for the last summer school, and follows the 598,300VUV of funding that they supported earlier this year for the Library Project. We really appreciate our partnership with the Kiwanis Club of Port Vila, and are glad to be one of the great projects that they support throughout Vanuatu.



BRED Bank Vanuatu

BRED Bank Vanuatu have recently become a VLSSS donor, making a generous contribution of 50,000VUV towards the upcoming summer school. This is the first time for BRED Bank Vanuatu to support the summer school program, although they do have a history of supporting worthwhile projects throughout the country. It's great to have you on board BRED Bank Vanuatu, a big thank you to General Manager James Hudson and his team.



Georgia Naughton-Watt & Michael Sandon

We are fortunate to receive the support of some great organisations and companies, but a special thank you must go to Georgia Naughton-Watt and Michael Sandon, who have this year contributed a significant 100,000VUV to the program. They have supported the program since day one back in 2012, whether financially or just as significantly through supporting the development of the program and teaching at the summer school. We know very few that have the kind-heartedness of Georgia and Michael, and are so thankful for their continued support.

Rotary Club & Other Generous Donors

We'd like to say a massive thank you to Rebecca Hastie of the Rotary Club of Balclutha for her efforts in supporting VLSSS. Rebecca was recently visiting Vanuatu and discovered our program whilst attending a Rotary Club of Port Vila meeting. She has since been very supportive in spreading the word about the summer school. She and two of her friends, Barbara Cowie and Scott Brown, have joined the Sponsor-A-Star program and she has been advocating for support from Rotary Clubs in her area back in New Zealand.

Our Management Advisor James David Roberts also recently made a presentation about VLSSS at a gathering of the Rotary Club of Blenheim. We'd like to thank Andy, Nicky, Murray and their fellow Rotarians for an enjoyable evening. The Rotary Club of Port Vila have also shared news of VLSSS with their District Governor and Foundation Chair, thanks for being passionate about the cause. This has led the interest of the Rotary Club of North Harbour and the 9910 Literacy Committee, who are looking to support the upcoming summer school.

We'd also like to those we haven't so far mentioned that have also joined the Sponsor-A-Star program this year, some for the second or third year running: Scott Mulholland, Anne Joyce, Mary Kirby, Matt Perrins, Priscilla & Bevan Read, Mark Walton, Matt Keyworth and Sandra, Stuart and Christopher Roberts, Katy Taylor, Gordon Dickinson, Casey Lewis, Catherine Jones, Linda Corey, the Hoon Hay Branch of the Catholic Women's League, Jacqui and Michael Ibell, Kay Song and Time Hume, and Emily McCormick. Wow, that was a long list of generous people! We really appreciate your support. We are now at 31 stars sponsored, a great effort, but still a little way to go to reach our target of 40 stars this year. See the last page of this newsletter to find out how to join this great program.

Planting Trusted Seedlings

The image below was a regular one at VLSSS 2018, the beaming smile of Mr Alfred! He was a great character and fantastic at motivating the students and his fellow teachers. Hear what he has to say about VLSSS....



Getting to know about Vanuatu's Little Stars Summer School (VLSSS) as barrier breaking for all the best students for all around Pentecost Island, improving leadership and building self-confidence is like planting trusted seedlings that will germinate and provide a useful plant that will benefit the people of Pentecost and Vanuatu. VLSSS has done so great and the students that have been selected were so fortunate because it prepares them for the next stages in school. In other places there are no schools like this, therefore we find students that aren't confident or aren't ready to start the next level of their educational journey.

For myself, I would like to thank and acknowledge the hardworking Director, the Assistants and the local and volunteer teachers that have participated as teachers during the two weeks summer school. They have done so great in teaching the students and building up their confidence. It hasn't only helped them but has also helped me to have more experience in the actual working sector as a teacher. It has helped me improve more on the skills of what I have been studying for the past four years at university in Fiji.

By far the most in my time at VLSSS I have really enjoyed meeting different students from different backgrounds. They are all the bright and smart students. Also I have experienced the different learning strategies, and the different ways students learn.

Finally, again I would like to acknowledge the teaching team for our good cooperation together, and the (former) Director that made it possible for us to come and meet each other and learn from each other.

Mr Alfred Tatangis
Teacher
VLSSS 2018

Cooperation

In the last few editions you have heard from many of our teachers and students, but this edition we'd like to share with you a few words from our Boarding Master at the recent summer school. This was the first time for VLSSS to employ someone in this position, with Misael being a great help around the school, he didn't stop! Below he gives a community perspective of the summer school....



By looking at the programmes of the VLSSS since it was started at Bwatnapni community, I can tell that the community gains a lot from VLSSS. Example, helping the communities by giving them vatu (buying foods, vegetables etc) from people. VLSSS is a very enjoyable program that students enjoy a lot. The students enjoy a lot in living at Bwatnapni. Students enjoy themselves in doing activities like drama and other activities, and community members enjoy watching them. It also builds a good relationship between students, staffs and community members. They cooperate with each other.

By working as Boarding Master of VLSSS in 2018, I can learn a lot of new things. For example, leadership, cooperation, getting to know other people from other countries and how to communicate with them in English and also French. Apart from that how I manage my time with the inside and outside programmes of the school. VLSSS shaped me a lot to become a good leader in the future to come.

There's not much more for me to say, but to conclude by saying that out from my heart and also the community we really acknowledge you (former) Director Mr James and your team for your cooperation with us. May God give you more wisdom to develop our VLSSS in the future to help our communities and country. God bless you.

Misael Bule
Boarding Master
VLSSS 2018

Inspirational Leader – Grace Molisa

VLSSS is all about developing leaders. Our Deputy Director Graham Hinge came up with the great idea of incorporating a lesson in the curriculum where the students learn about inspirational Ni-Vanuatu leaders, whilst developing some of the key leadership skills that we focus on during the program. This lesson plan has now been developed and is ready to be used at the summer school. One of our impressive leaders is Grace Molisa.

We love sharing what we are passionate about via our social media, and have shared a little of Grace Molisa's story recently through our social media posts. Grace's story is so inspiring that we are happy to share it here with you too. If you want to find out more, just pop Grace's name into a search engine online and we don't doubt you'll be inspired by what you find.

Grace Molisa



Need inspiration? Vanuatu is blessed with some amazing people, including very strong women like Grace Mera Molisa, Vanuatu's 'Amazing Grace'.

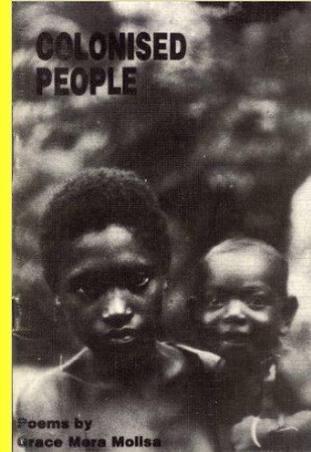


Grace Molisa was the first Ni-Vanuatu woman to be awarded a university degree, earning a BA from the University of the South Pacific. She was the spokeswoman for Father Walter Lini from 1987 to 1991, and a signatory of Vanuatu's Constitution.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



Not only were Grace Molisa's achievements impressive, but she fought many worthy causes. She was an activist for gender equality and environmental causes.



Grace Molisa was a poet and used her passion of writing to highlight inequalities in the newly independent Vanuatu. She wasn't afraid of speaking out for what she believed was right. She even set up her own press, Blackstone publishing, as a means of doing so.



Not only was Grace Molisa intelligent and articulate, but brave and passionate. She is a great example of a strong leader, one we can all learn from.

VLSSS on Social Media

If you want to receive regular updates and inspiration from VLSSS, find us on one of the many social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Tumblr, Pinterest & Google+. Just search for: @FollowVLSSS

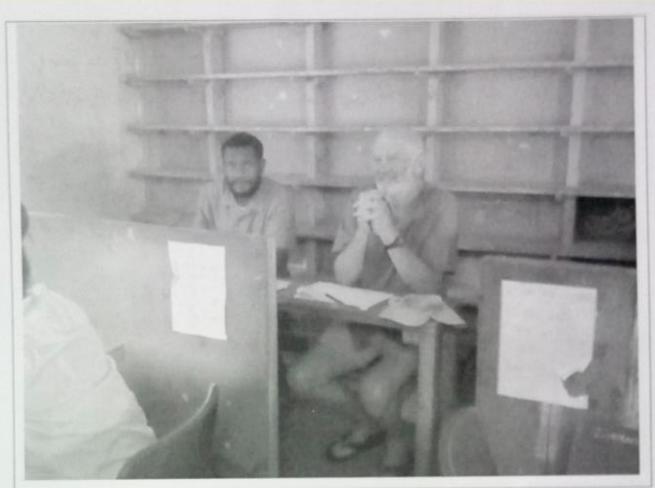
A Day in My Life at Vanuatu's Little Stars Summer School

At the summer school a senior boy and girl are selected as the Head Boy and Head Girl. They are selected based on the leadership qualities and good character that they have shown at the school. They are given additional responsibilities in supporting their fellow students to give them the opportunity to further develop their leadership potential. Assistant Head Boys and Assistant Head Girls are chosen on a similar manner from the junior students, and work alongside the two senior students. Pettson was the Head Boy at the most recent summer school in January 2018. He showed great leadership initiative in the early days of the program, and was fully deserving of his role. Once selected and given additional responsibilities, he grew further as a leader. This didn't just mean being a good role model himself, which he certainly was. He also guided his fellow senior male students in supporting and setting a good example for the junior boys. Here's a glimpse of life at the summer school through Pettson's eyes....

Name: Pettson Bule Tangsu



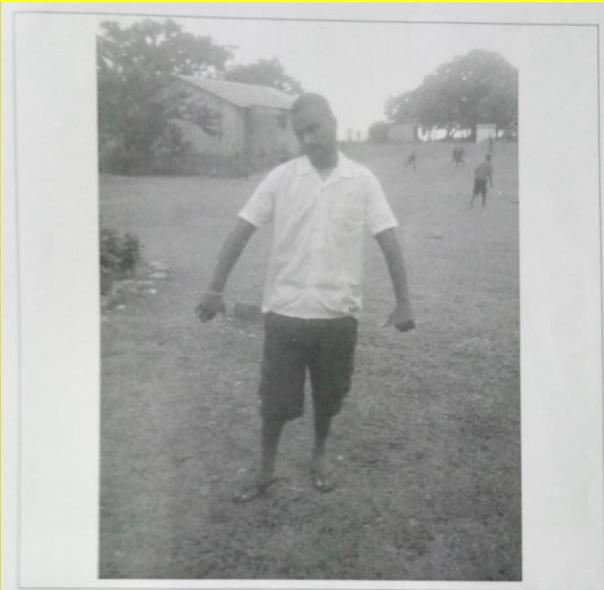
This is a photo of Our Director Mr. James Bulewek and the three
Senior boys Ronaldo Tohi, Jody Tohi and Samarana Kihu at
Vlss 2018
I chose it because We really cooperate in our work and also they are
my best friends at Vlss 2018.



This is a photo of Our Science Teacher Mr. Jayford Sorial and
also our General Studies teacher Mr. Mark all the
Way from Australia.
I chose it because They are my best teacher at Vlss 2018.



This is a photo of my best friends at Vlss 2018 in Senior class.
Sabrina, Sharon, Joflin, Samarana, Ronaldo, Reina, Sharon,
Ravlyn, Melissa and Jody.
I chose it because They are looking very smart in their work.



This is a photo of Pettson Bule Tangsu, Head boy of
Vanuatu's Little Stars Summer School in 2018.
I chose it because he is one of my class mates here at
Vanuatu's Little Stars Summer School in 2018.
He is also a hard working boy in class too.



Sponsor-A-Star

For the third year running you can sponsor your own star to attend the upcoming VLSSS 2018/19!



Joining the Sponsor-A-Star program is simple, just make your donation which will cover the costs of one student to attend the full program in November/December 2018. Students don't pay any fee to attend as finances already pose a barrier to education for most in this developing nation. Accommodation, food, stationery, transport and quality teachers are all covered by VLSSS for the month. Your single donation can cover all that for one bright star. At only £75GBP, \$125AUD or \$130NZD we offer top quality at great value!

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- A personal letter from your star
- A photo of your star
- A whole school photo

It's your chance for a personal connection with the program, and your star! We have a few easy options to make your donation, via:

1. BT MyDonate – Just go to: mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/vlsss-sponsor-a-star
2. Bank Transfer – Just contact us for the account details: reachVLSSS@gmail.com
3. Cash – To: Management Advisor James David Roberts or Director Jayford Sarial

Sponsor-A-Star today! For more information contact: reachVLSSS@gmail.com