



Dear Friends,

I begin this year's newsletter with a quote from Jane Goodall, "What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." Thank you for *deciding* in the past to support OMPACO in our mission to raise healthy children by partnering with low and middle-income communities outside of the United States to advance access to quality medical and psychological services. This newsletter will highlight the work that has occurred over the past year, all due to the donations made, big and small; all making a *difference* in the lives of children overseas.

Building on the success of past trips and considering requests from stakeholders, OMPACO funded a trip to Tanzania this summer to continue our collaboration with the community. This trip was comprised of several components. First, the team wrapped up the first autism awareness mobile phone training in the Arusha region. Eighty-four teachers accessed the online training from July to December 2018. Upon completion of the training, individuals were entered into a jackpot to win a computer tablet preloaded with educational material related to autism. The team awarded these tablets to 10 excited winners during a ceremony hosted by the Special Needs Education Coordinator for the Arusha City Council. Due to the high interest of the mobile phone project in the Arusha region, OMPACO launched a second mobile phone training in the Mwanza region (that will run through December 2019) with 129 users, including both teachers and administrators, already accessing the training. In addition to the mobile phone projects, 40 family consults were completed over 3 days in the Mwanza region. At the conclusion of the consults, families were given a written report of their child's status with medical, psychological and educational recommendations provided as appropriate. This was the greatest number of family consults OMPACO has ever provided during one trip, addressing one of the requests from the region's administrator last year. After the mobile phone wrap up, the launch and the family consults, a portion of the team visited schools in the Arusha and Dar es Salam regions to meet with teachers and determine areas of need for future partnerships. The other part of the team attended the International Association of Special Education (IASE) Conference held in Tanzania presenting data from both the face-to-face trainings that OMPACO sponsored in 2016-2018 and on the 2018 mobile phone project. Finally, the team delivered learning materials to Makumbusho Primary School in Arusha and left materials for Patrick Winter School in Dareda.



Launch of the mobile phone training in Mwanza



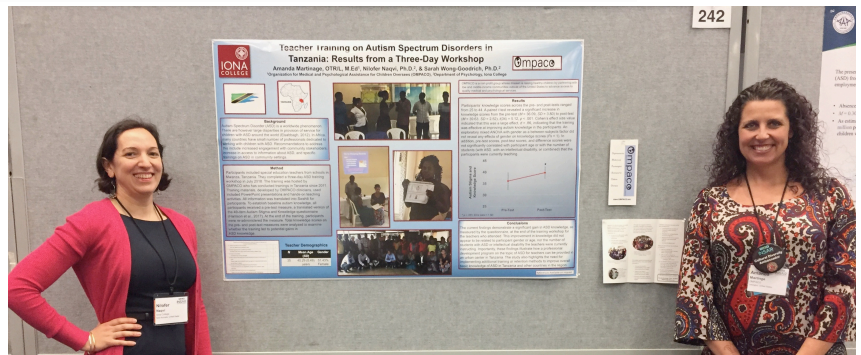
Family consult



Presentation of tablet to a jackpot winner



Delivering learning materials



Poster presentation at International Society for Autism Research annual meeting

Beyond the trip this summer, OMPACO was able to donate to the construction of a building at Dareda Hospital (a hospital that OMPACO has established a relationship with over the years supporting both the building of other parts of the hospital as well as purchasing medical equipment). Also, members of OMPACO presented two topics at the International Society for Autism Research's annual meeting, one of the most prestigious conferences related to autism. This year OMPACO board members also published more than ever! Two submissions were released in the IASE Conference proceedings related to data from face-to-face trainings and the mobile phone project and a manuscript entitled "Increasing Knowledge of Autism Spectrum Disorders Among Urban Special Educators in Tanzania. Results from Three Teacher Training Workshops." will be published in the International Journal of Teacher Education and Professional Development. Since there is only a small amount of published research related to autism in Tanzania, this written material is increasing the credibility of the work being done and highlighting the need for further research and funding.

OMPACO is updating our website to make it more user friendly. Please check out the changes and take some time to read more about this summer's trip and past trips, access our published work and to make online donations. Please visit our website at www.ompaco.org.

In closing, remember that making a difference doesn't have to take a lot of time or money, but it does take action. Please consider supporting OMPACO again this year, knowing that we will dedicate time and energy on your behalf to make a meaningful difference.

Making a tax-deductible donation is easy:

- Send a check to 14 Curve Street Lexington MA 02420.
- Visit our website and make a secure donation online through Pay Pal.
- Use Amazon Smile for your purchases - select OMPACO as your organization to support and a portion of your purchase will be donated to us!
- Use Good Search as your search engine - go to <https://www.goodsearch.com/> and select OMPACO under the "Choose a Cause" section.

I wish you and your family a safe and joyous holiday season.

Warmly,



Amanda A Martinage OTR/L, M.Ed
President OMPACO