

Remembering **William Lange**



December 20, 1995-September 3, 2016

*If there is something after death, it's good. If not, it's fine too. I have lived my life and did the best I could.*

Thomas Edison

*“Dear Jaimala,*

*My name is William Lange and I am a 17 year old high school student. I first heard about Vatsalya last summer while employed by Pamela Bjorkman, and was very intrigued. I feel that if you were to honor me by allowing me to stay at your orphanage in Vatsalya, I would be fully capable of helping, in return for an amazing experience. I will be able to carry out happily any work assigned to me. I have worked with tribal communities in Africa and Australia and I can assure you that the language barrier is never a problem with me.*

*I believe that the experience will allow me to live life in a new and unique way, giving me a broader perspective of culture, people, and foreign society.*

*Please let me know what you think, and have a wonderful day.*

*Sincerely*

*William Lange  
California, USA”*

I received this letter in February, 2013. Soon after this another letter followed from William’s mother, requesting us to make sure that he was met at the airport in Delhi. And of course, everything was done to ensure William’s safe arrival at Vatsalya. He won the heart of every member of the community with his charming smile. He would work tirelessly for hours, digging foundations for a new fence, planting trees and painting classrooms in the Vatsalya School. The remainder of his working hours he would spend

playing and interacting with the children. At the weekends, he would come home to us in Jaipur, play 'Limbo' with my son and enjoy Aloo Paratha and curd for dinner. William was very amused with Indian traffic and good humoredly would say –'It's a chaos that works!'

With most of our volunteers, our relationship lasts for years. They come back when they can and we look forward to their returning back to their Indian home. Unfortunately, William won't be coming back to us again. He was cruelly taken away from us in a tragic accident last month. When we shared this sad news with the children at Vatsalya, the older ones were simply shocked and the little ones were confused and asked- But why? Their words are innocent and uncomprehending but the question is genuine-WHY?

It is painful and it is harsh. We are heartbroken and sad. A beautiful, promising life cut short so mercilessly.

Our heart goes out to the family and friends who cherished and loved William.

While we feel the loss, we choose nonetheless to celebrate William's life, carrying forward some of the richness that made him what he was. He lived life well and lived it to the fullest, not for himself but for others. We want to commemorate William's love for life and passion for doing good, to support, to love richly. When this tragic news was conveyed to us by one of our longtime supporters in the US, she told us that she would like to make a donation in William's name. Later, more of William's loved ones sent further donations.

With the support from William's family and friends, Vatsalya has launched the **William Lange Scholarship & Awards**. The scholarship will be awarded to children with high potential and outstanding performance in **Sports, Agricultural and Energy Conservation** activities. The awards will be for demonstration of outstanding human qualities such as **Compassion & Empathy**, for the "**Most Helpful and Friendly**" for the "**Most Hard working**" children. The beneficiaries of the William Lange Scholarships & Awards would be for the children from the poor and marginalized communities.

We are saddened by our loss but we feel happy that William will continue to be with us in spirit and in the happiness that will touch lives of so many children who will receive the William Lange scholarships and awards!

We leave you with some beautiful pictures of **William** who made the world of our children **special** by being in it!

William with his beautiful smile with Vatsalya children

