

MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Long distance architecture helps Indian children

UTAS architect Ceridwen Owen has designed a hostel for 60 disadvantaged children in India, inaugurated by the Dalai Lama.

Dr Owen, based at Inveresk in the School of Architecture and Design and currently Program Director for Architecture, designed the building pro bono for the Tong-Len Charitable Trust through her company Core Collective Architects with her business partner, Ryan Strating.

Dr Owen said the hostel provides accommodation and education support for the children who come from a local slum camp. Many of their families are itinerant workers and the hostel provides a secure and clean environment enabling the children to attend school.

“My contact with Tong-Len came through my sister’s and my mother’s involvement. Originally the children lived in rented accommodation, but when the charity bought land to create a permanent base, they invited me to design the hostel.”

“It was an amazing opportunity. It’s very rewarding to watch the kids enjoy the building. The highlight for me came when the boy that I sponsor, Vijay, told me how much he loved living there.”

But Dr Owen’s work was all long-distance, much of it done when she was on maternity leave from UTAS. While she had visited the area in India on several occasions, the first time she saw the site was at the inauguration in mid-November.

“It was a very colourful ceremony where the Dalai Lama spoke about the increasing gap between rich and poor worldwide. He and a local politician pledged further financial assistance for the charity to continue their work supporting these children,” she said.

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