

## **THIS IS ONEIDA PRAYING FOR MORE “MANA” FROM HEAVEN**

My middle school principal has told me more than once that administrators are paid for the tough days they must navigate. I was recently having one of those days in which I was probably earning my paycheck. It had not been a particularly good morning, but as I sat in our daily chapel service one of our very best students caught my eye. Tipmana, or “Mana,” as we call her, was worshipping the Lord as she sang praise songs in His honor during a praise and worship service. I was immediately reminded of what Oneida is about. Watching Mana worship helped me forget what was behind me and press ahead toward the goal in Christ Jesus.

Mana is from Thailand, just graduated from Oneida, and will attend The University of the Cumberland this coming fall. Mana’s parents are fine Christian people who are in the ministry. Mana brightened my day every time I saw her on this campus. She loves the Lord and loves people. She finished fifth in her class of 54 and received our school’s highest award, The William A. Evans Award. She was voted Most Talented and Best School Spirit by her classmates. We will surely miss Mana on this campus, and I have heard more than one of our staff members say we should not allow Mana to graduate so that she has to stay with us. I know Mana will live a life after Oneida that will make us all so very proud.

One of my favorite biblical lessons comes from the story of the Lord’s deliverance of the Israelite nation. Even though God used Moses to deliver the Israelites from bondage, they repeatedly grumbled against Moses and God. When hungry, God sent them manna from heaven, yet they soon grew tired of God’s provision and complained to Him. I can’t imagine ever having a finer young lady than Mana as a student here at Oneida. We have been blessed to have her here, and are thankful that the Lord allowed us to have her for three years.

We began our 2013-14 school year with 237 students and grew to 285 students. We closed the school year with 277. Factor out 55 graduates and at least another 25 kids who won’t return to Oneida for various reasons, and that takes us back under 200 students. I have asked my staff and am now asking you to join with me in prayer for 300 students when the 2014-15 school year begins on August 18. If we start the year with 300, we could easily grow to 350 by year’s end. I pray the Lord will send us many more students like Mana, but I also am praying that the Lord will send us those young people who aren’t as wonderful as Mana. I know for every Mana in this wide world there are ten young people who are more difficult to teach, love, and serve. The Lord knows who and where the kids are who need Oneida, and I ask that you join us in prayer that those young people will find us or that we will find them.

There is a need now more than ever for a place like Oneida for young people, and I know with our combined prayerful effort the Lord can send us those students. Stay tuned, because I plan to write an article in the fall letting you know that we did reach 300!



**Larry A. Gritton, Jr.**  
**OBI President**

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