

## **Dr. Supriya Singh**

### ***“The NYOTA Project”***

As a first-year medical student, Supriya travelled to Tanzania in 2011 as part of a medical outreach program. Once there she met a number of street children facing serious health concerns, including rickets and other bone diseases, due to a lack of clean water, shelter and nutritious food.

Moved by what she saw, Supriya conceived the NYOTA Project (in Swahili ‘nyota’ means ‘star’), spending countless hours fundraising and sharing the children’s stories in her community. Through Supriya’s personal donations and gifts from generous donors, the first 12 street children helped by the project are now self-sufficient and healthy.

The impact of the NYOTA project on these children is seen not just in their improved health, but in their desire to give back. Grateful for the support received, they directed Supriya towards others in need of help, and in 2014 the project’s area of focus shifted to supporting children living at Karama House, an orphanage for children born with HIV. When Supriya first began working with Karama House, the children had bowed legs and some were unable to walk due to severe malnutrition. Four years later, due to improved nutrition and medical and orthopaedic care, those same children are healthy and happy. And in Supriya’s words, “little stars”.

Says Supriya, “When I visit, the children tell me to thank Canada, the good country that helps others. They feel loved and supported, and not so alone, despite all that life has stacked up against them. If all that we accomplish is to show these children that they are loved, then I consider the NYOTA project to be a success.”