



Every child has
the Right to Education

Newsletter
March 2015, 26th Edition

*“Listen to the mustn'ts, child. Listen to the don'ts.
Listen to the shouldn'ts, the impossibles, the won'ts.
Listen to the never haves, then listen close to me...
Anything can happen, child. Anything can be.”*

– Shel Silverstein

One wouldn't expect 3-year old children in a remote village in Maharashtra to joyfully recite French rhymes in front of an audience of over 500 people. Too often, we as adults, are blinded by the challenges we face – the 'impossibles and the won'ts'. Children, however, know no such



limitations. At a recent Annual Day event at our Education Centre for Tribal Children, our young ones surpassed every expectation and put up a splendid performance. The 10-year olds hosted the event while the younger ones sang, danced and enthralled every visitor. They conveyed important messages of family planning, environment preservation and the value of education through their performances. They spoke with understanding and confidence and basked in appreciation of their parents and guests.

In Mumbai too, our children have extended their learning beyond the classroom. Eight of our students earned a spot in 'Jesus Christ Superstar' – Alyque Padamsee's famous musical. They rehearsed diligently after school every day and performed at auditoriums across the city. Some other students participated in an interschool dance competition and one of them won the 'Best Dancer' award.

Our budding artists participated in the Kala Ghoda Art Festival and created a delightful installation inspired by artist, Henri Rousseau. Over weeks of art classes, an insipid looking refrigerator carton was transformed into a homage to their favourite artist. The installation was displayed at this popular art festival and caught the eye of children and adults alike.



Our Secondary Section organized its very first Career Fair this year. The fair aimed to spark curiosity and drive amongst our older students. They worked on projects related to different

professions and researched the courses, nature of work and career opportunities

pertaining to each of them. It was so wonderful to see the students expand their horizons and begin to give direction to their goals.



The perseverance of some students was also recognized by Tata International. Five students were felicitated for their hard work and overall development and awarded attractive new bicycles. The students were most excited and have been riding to school every day. Nivea India also felicitated five mothers for their active participation in our children's education. As part of Nivea's 'Mom's Touch' initiative, the mothers received food supplies for three months and much appreciation for being the driving force behind their children's success. This will be an ongoing initiative and will certainly encourage our children and mothers.

Some of the mothers of our children are also part of Aseema's support staff. This group of about 43 women and men works tirelessly to ensure our schools are well maintained, meals are served systematically and the children are well looked after. Our children, teachers and the entire Aseema team expressed their gratitude to them on Support Staff Day. Heartfelt cards, gifts and games made the occasion truly special for our support staff. We also made efforts to build their capacities through regular training programmes conducted by Taj Lands End and a session on formation of Self Help Groups by Swadhar.

Our donors and well wishers also rallied around us at the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon. Teams from Credit Agricole, L&T Finance and Nivea India were joined by many enthusiastic individuals supporting the cause of education. This marathon was particularly special for us because one of our students – Manivale Subramanyam – ran the 21 km Half Marathon and completed it within 2 hours.

Over the past few months, we had many more reasons to celebrate. A grand ‘mela’ set up in one of our schools, a visit to Hamley’s toy store, thoughtful gifts and exciting parties hosted by our well wishers made the festive season so much more fun. Another joyous occasion was the successful completion of project Umeed. This five year project – implemented by a consortium of NGOs – aimed to create sustainable change in the slum communities of Bandra East. As the education partner of this project, we were proud to have registered 100 percent enrollment, high student attendance and significant leaps in children’s learning. While the project has drawn to a close, our work in these communities will continue with the same focus and zeal.

In the months ahead, we propose to commence construction of the next phase of our Education Centre for Tribal Children. This phase will include classes for the Primary and Secondary Sections as well as facilities for dining, indoor and outdoor sports. This project will enable us to reach out to 500 children annually and ensure the joys of learning reach children in the most remote rural communities. We welcome you to spread the word about this project and contribute in any way you can.

A special thank you to all those who have supported our work in these past few months – Ace Productions Pvt. Ltd, Acme Housing, Akash Sen, American School of Bombay, Amole Gupte, Anju Makhija, Anthony Sleight, Armeen Kapadia, Arun Randive, Aryan Sansare, Asha For Education (SF Chapter), Astha Laboratories Pvt. Ltd., Astha Corporation, Astral Foundation, BNP Paribas, Bahirwani Ramesh, Bansuri Foundation, Batra Group, Being Human – the Salman Khan Foundation, Biba, Bloomberg Data Services India Pvt. Ltd., Bombay Scottish School, Breach Candy Swimming Bath Trust, Buhariwala Logistics, Chetna Malik, Committed Communities Development Trust, ContractPod, Cravatex Ltd., Credit Agricole, DBS Bank, D.P. World, Dabang Mumbai Hockey Team, Desiree Punwani, Dhirubhai Ambani International School, Dinesh Patel, ETP International Pvt. Ltd., Ebay, Edelweiss, Event Capital India, G.E.,



Gabbana, Gharda Chemicals Ltd., Global Conference Organisers, Global Offshore Services Ltd., Gulf Polymers, HDFC Standard Life Insurance Corporation, IIT Bombay, IL&FS Financial Centre, Impresario Hospitality, Inam Rahman & family, JBCN International School, Jagdish Shah, Jaspreet Kaur, Jasudben M.L. School, Jenai Banaji, June D'Silva, Justice S.J. Kathawalla, Jyoti Soneji, K.C. Mahindra Education Trust, Kala Ghoda Art Festival, Kamini Desai, Kapstone Construction Pvt. Ltd., Kimya Gandhi Keystone Realtors Pvt. Ltd., Kherwadi Social Welfare Association, L&T Finance, L&T Investment Management, Labh Capital Services Pvt. Ltd., Laxmibai Dwarkadas Charity Trust, Leyla Brashka, Lobsang Rangdol, Lotus Trust, Manaf Chatriwala, Manju Gadiya, Mateen Dholakia, Mehli Mehta Music Foundation, Moet Hennessy India Pvt. Ltd., Mustafa Doctor, Nalini Dhir, Nalini Navrekar, New Galaxy Services India Pvt. Ltd., Nivea India Pvt. Ltd., Nouveau Developers Pvt. Ltd., Philip Scott, Plan India, Plastindia, Promise to Act for Children Today, Pinky Mondal, Poornima Nepade, Priyali Kapur Dadlani, Radiant Corporation Pvt. Ltd., Ramesh Kapadia, Reliance Foundation, Ritika Ramchandani, Rustomjee Realty Pvt. Ltd., S.P. Kamath, Sadguru Kamubaba Foundation, Sahara Star Hospitality, Saint Gobain India Foundation, Sajitha Lukose, Sanjay Ramani, Saravanan P., Shabana Qureshi, Shaktiyogashram, Shashikant Dalal Charitable Trust, Sheryl Anne D'Silva, Singapore International School, Smaaash, Society for Education of the Crippled, Society for Nutrition, Education & Health Action, Sonika Lakhera, Srinjay Sengupta, Star India Pvt. Ltd., Sulekha Panoskar, Swadhar, Systems Plus Pvt. Ltd., Taj Lands End, Tata International, Tech Mahindra Foundation, The Bai Alamai & Seth Ardeshir Talati & Sarosh B Mody Charity Trust, Unison International, United Way of Mumbai, Vandana Shinde, Vidya Trust, Watson Pharma, William Serle, Wishing Well and Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action.