



MSMF Newsletter

A Ray of Light

Education * Eye Care * Disaster Relief



A Sarada Vidyalayam Student.

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Sarada Vidyalayam Celebrates 20th Anniversary

The Torch Passes On.

Sarada Vidyalayam was started in 1992. Through this school, MSMF was able to provide quality education blended with human values, discipline and extra-curricular activities. The students of Sarada Vidyalayam come from very poor families and would not otherwise get any education. What was then a primary school has now become a high school with instruction up to grade ten. In addition, MSMF recently established a vocational school to train youth in various trades. It is anticipated that about 100 youth will be trained at this school and the training they receive will provide employment to rural youth and reduce the need for migration to already crowded cities.

Over 1,900 children have passed through Sarada Vidyalayam and over 300 scholarships have been offered to those pursuing higher education. The education and training at the school have been very effective as is evidenced by the fact that no one dropped out of the school and more are pursuing post-secondary education. An attendant benefit is that the children influence their families to change their habits in general behavior, discipline, personal hygiene and general attitude towards community.

This issue is dedicated to Sarada Vidyalayam and the empowerment of people through education. In addition to other news, in this newsletter we present news items from the past, the reflections of students in their own words, views of parents, staff bios and photographs. All this has been possible with your generous support. The graduating students are now engineers, microbiologists, teachers and are making important contributions to the society and more importantly, returning to their roots to help newer generation of students. The torch is passed on to a very new generation of students.

Motivation

Empowerment of people through support programs in education, eye care and disaster relief to create a lasting effect in the society.

Chandra Sankurathri Receives Humanitarian of the Year Award.

On 8 June 2013, Chandra Sankurathri was honoured by the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce in Toronto, in recognition of his efforts to support the community. He received the Humanitarian of the year award. Attending the event were Mr. Stewart Beck, High Commissioner to India, Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario and John Baird, Minister of Foreign



Dr. Chandra with Minister Baird.

Affairs, Trade and Development Canada. Prime Minister Harper sent a letter of recognition to Dr. Chandra. The citation read, "Thank you for your meaningful contributions to our nation's pluralism and please accept my best wishes for the future".

Humble Beginnings in 1992 - A news clip from June 2002 Newsletter.

The school, Sarada Vidyalayam, was established in 1992 with the aim to provide quality primary education, in a safe learning environment for girls and boys, free of cost, without any discrimination.

In 2002, Sarada Vidyalayam celebrated its tenth anniversary. The twelve students enrolled in grade one in 1992 have successfully completed their high school (grade ten) this year. We are waiting to see how many of the twelve will enter college!

This year's batch of all eleven grade seven students have written entrance examinations to Gurukula high schools, which are special schools, planned for educating rural children, with residential facilities, strict discipline, teacher supervision and guidance. The Gurukula schools are well-known for their excellent results. A high percentage of students graduating from those schools pursue higher education.

Sarada Vidyalayam is well equipped with excellent facilities to provide quality instruction up to grade seven. For grades eight to ten, Sarada's students will be encouraged to go to Gurukula schools.



News from Kakinada ...

After Summer holidays, Sarada Vidyalayam was reopened this year in June. A new batch of 24 children, 11 girls and 13 boys, were admitted into Grade 1. Also, instruction in Grade 7 began for the first time this year. Those, who graduated from grade 6, were admitted into grade 7. The total enrolment of the school is 98, 53 girls and 45 boys. They are taught by 10 teachers.



A story from 1999 Newsletter

Reflections of Former Students and a Parent.

Datla Manisha - a Student

My name is Datla Manisha. I have joined in 1st standard of Sarada Vidyalayam in 2003. I liked the atmosphere, plantation & goddess



Datla Manisha

Saraswathi at our school area. It will be very peaceful at our school. After school hours I would like to do gardening and take out the extra weeds from the school ground. I felt very happy as we used to run early in the morning and

sing few "slokas" & worship God by placing flowers. I felt sad when I was leaving on my last day of school. I love this school so much that again I thought of joining in 1st standard in the same school. Joining in Sarada Vidyalayam was really a boon to me. Human values & discipline which I have learnt from this school I shall never forget.

Bathina Anusha - a Student

My name is Bathina Anusha. I have studied from 1st standard to 10th standard in Sarada Vidyalayam. I studied very happily for 10 years during my education. I have joined in 2003 in Sarada Vidyalayam and that's what changed my future. Though I have studied 3 years in government school before joining Sarada, I neither could write nor read and not even having any discipline. After joining in Sarada Vidyalayam I have learned good hand writing and good behavior. I will never



Bathina Anusha

forget my 1st standard teacher Nageswari because she taught me how to write letters. There is a saying "Hand writing would change the fate" which means "if hand writing is good then future will be better". We have learned good hand writing for changing the course of future and this is possible only due to the dedicated teachers and we shall remember them forever.

I like the garden and scenery around Sarada Vidyalayam which is very beautiful. I can never forget those days when we used to play under the mango trees in the sand and also our Mathematics teacher Satyanarayana and the mischievous and naughty things we did in his class.

I like the madam's activity class in 3rd standard very much where we have learnt drawing, sticking of chips, scissoring, drawing with ink and various varieties of sports. I felt very happy during the revision classes in 10th standard. I cannot forget anything during my 10 years of education in the school. In my opinion there is no school like Sarada Vidyalayam. Having all facilities, nice atmosphere and teaching according to the understandings of the students. I find the value of Sarada Vidyalayam only after leaving it after completing my education. When I had been to other school for taking my SSC examination I find the difference between Sarada Vidyalayam & other schools. The bonding, affectionate relationship and the educational concept we won't find in any school. I felt very sad for leaving Madame, Sir, teachers & Sarada Vidyalayam. I shall never forget my school and I shall continue to keep my school's name on top & earn good name for my school. I shall be a partner in the progress of the school as presently I am pursuing 1st year Diploma in Engineering and may get selected for IIIT Nuzvid for six year B.Tech. course

Mrs. C. Mani - A Parent's View

By establishing this school Dr. Chandra has created opportunity for poor people like us. It is our good luck that we have educated our children in such a highly esteemed school. The education is very good in this school. They provide free

CIDA Director in Kakinada



Ms. Francoise Mailhot was welcomed to Sarada Vidyalaya by one of the students, watched by Dr. Syamala, Principal and Dr. Chandra S. Sankurathri.

Ms. Francoise Mailhot, Director, NGO Project Facility, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), visited Sankurathri Foundation in February. At Sarada Vidyalaya, she met the teachers and students. Principal, Dr. Syamala, showed her children's school work, explained the teachings techniques adopted at the school and the special linkages the school has been developing with schools in Canada, namely, St. Gregory School in Nepean, Ontario and Park Avenue Elementary School in Nanaimo, British Columbia.

From Newsletter April 1997.

school uniform and free text books & notes from class one to class ten. Free mid day meals also being provided from class 1 to class 5. Teaching of Yoga, knit work, embroidery work and computer also is being taught along with education and encouraging the students to become masters in all the types of arts. By providing scholarships to our children, Dr. Chandra is extending helping hand to us. We are being called to school and informing the child's progress and explaining the drawbacks of the children and asking us to rectify the child for their future. They conduct meetings for parents every month and notify their progress. The management is totally taking care of the children and by informing the parents about our children is something we have never come across. Even the corporate schools charging more fees also won't take such interest to call the parents for student's appraisal which means we won't find such school. Our children are being looked after well by the school management even better than their own parents. We are very much thankful for providing opportunity to our children to educate in Sarada Vidyalayam. We cannot repay the debt



for ever for providing a chance to our children.

Ms. Hema Sankurathri - Profile of a School Principal.

Whoever visits Sankurathri Foundation in Kakinada will come in contact with my sister, Hema Sankurathri, popularly known as Hema. It is impossible not to meet her or feel the impact of her contribution on any activity, starting from the house cleaning to delicious vegetarian meals prepared and served.

Born into a large family, she was always loaded with responsibilities from a young age, and she carried out those responsibilities with utmost care. Because of family responsibilities she sacrificed her formal education and studied from home.

When I decided to return to India to start the programs of MSMF, she offered spontaneously to resign her job in Hyderabad to assist me with my efforts to improve the quality of life of rural poor and needy. Knowing her commitment, determination, and zeal I did not persuade her to rethink her decision, and I was very happy about her decision.

She followed me to Kakinada in 1990 and since then has been a guiding force for me and others in various activities. Her impact is obvious in the planning and implementation of all activities related to the school, Sarada Vidyalayam. In addition, she also takes care of me, manages the home, canteen, food arrangements for the patients, maintenance of the compound and buildings. She also looks after all the visitors who stay at the Foundation.

Despite her contribution to the welfare and happiness of so many children, patients, and visitors, she avoids limelight and never craves for recognition. I am fortunate to have such a sister who supports me quietly. Without her help I am not sure how much I could have achieved. I owe the success of the programs to her presence and help. I acknowledge her contribution and thank her for her unselfish support over these years.

[Chandra Sankurathri. Reprinted from May 2008 Newsletter.]

In Memory of Natalie E. Pinch

We are pleased to be informed that the new high school/vocational school in Kakinada – India, is in its last stages of completion. It was sometime in fall 2007 when Natalie and I were first introduced to MSMF by watching the CBC documentary: "A Ray of Light". We were



Natalie Pinch

deeply touched by what we saw. We had a common understanding that our global village and entire world is in serious crisis, and that the meaning or even existence of justice, humanity or wisdom, will remain questionable as long as poverty and lack of food, shelter, education, health care, etc., exists anywhere in the world. Natalie, who was diagnosed with cancer at the time, was an active advocate of social justice and women's rights and always spoke for the unprivileged.

A few days before she passed away, I told her that we will find and support a library somewhere in the world where it is most needed, to keep her passion for people in need and her beautiful wishes alive. Natalie, in her life, was a very humble person who lived lightly on the earth. She did not think of herself or her work with people as extraordinary in any way, and she was happy and humbled that she would be remembered through the support for a library.

Further research about MSMF confirmed that this is a well-respected organization, with dedicated and humble volunteers and staff, with minimal administration costs and a clear record of success of bringing health and education to the poor in the province of Andhra Pradesh in India.

The Idea of supporting a library in Kakinada as a memorial for Natalie has generated much support among those who knew and loved her.

On behalf of Pinch family and myself, I want to sincerely thank all of the people who have morally or financially supported MSMF or the Natalie E. Pinch Memorial Library.

MSMF is a success for humanity. We are pleased with our involvement and will continue to support and stand beside it in their ongoing struggle to change that region of India for the better.

Over the past eleven years, every year staff and students of St. Gregory have participated in a Lenten fund-raising project to provide for books, uniforms and desks for the students of Sarada. Also, there have been regular exchanges of letters, information, photographs, gifts and greetings between the two schools.

2004 Newsletter

[Bahman Fattahi. Reprinted from September 2008 Newsletter.]

Vocational School - Fall 2009

Chandra recently announced a forthcoming event, inauguration of the vocational school in Kakinada. "This has been a great achievement in a very short duration. We want to celebrate this event most fittingly by participation of as many Canadians as possible." said Chandra. He also said that the original date of 7 November 2009 for the inauguration has been now postponed to Friday, 27 November, 2009, to allow for more participation from Canada. He hopes many will make a note of this change and attend the function and make it a great success.

[Reprinted from November 2009 Newsletter]

Progress Report from Sankurathri Foundation.

Srikan Institute of Ophthalmology (SIO)

Srikan continues its busy pace. The number of surgeries per month are averaging at about 900 per month. The number of eye camps has also increased to an average of 10 per month. The hospital has been screening 10,000 patients per month in recent months. They have add about 15 new staff to handle the additional load.

Dr Hala from Libya and Dr Fath from Germany have visited the hospital for training in cataract surgery. Dr.Sandeep, Retina Surgeon from Srikan visited Government General Hospital (GGH) in Kakinada twice in order to identify



The Statistics Speak for Themselves

The statistics below provide a glimpse of what we have been able to achieve with the support of our funding partners and volunteers. Donors and volunteers are very important partners in what we do. It is essentially people empowering people.

Facts	Cumulative 1992-2013	2013 Jan - 2013 June	Statement of Expenses of MSMF (2012)	
			Expenses (To be audited)	2012 Jan-Dec
Out Patients Treated	1,915,938	55,564	Projects	149,277
Surgeries Performed	187,421	4,966	Credit Card Fees	1,814
Vision Centers	5	0	Fundraising	5,104
Eye Screening Camps for Adults	1,919	59	Professional Fees	8,394
Eye screening Camps for Children	974	8	General	3,320
Medical Personnel Trained	345	1	TOTAL	167,909
Support Staff Trained	110	1	Support Provided in 2012.	
CME Workshops Conducted	56	1	Sarada Vidyalayam	Approx. \$ 57,368
Children Educated	2,080	150	Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology	Approx. \$ 91,909
Scholarships Provided	373	37		
School Children Screened	313,834	4,875		

Retinopathy of Prematurity among new born babies. He screened about 6 babies who are below one month. Dr. Vinod Mootha from Dallas has visited SIO and wanted to setup a genetic research project on Ocular disorders which have genetic base and to find out its inheritance pattern. In order to evaluate its viability an ethical institution review meet was established to evaluate the research programs and give consent for the project. Two sponsors, TOMS and One-to-One' have identified SIO as a community partner to sponsor partially for cataract surgeries, spectacles and medicines through its new cycle C4.

SIO conducted screening camps for corporate sponsors that included SRMT, PIAGIO (transport companies) Reliance (power generation). This was done to create awareness among the public who come from various fields of life.

An event was organized for the employees of SIO. It included a documentary of SIO's evolution, photo gallery of the past and present employees and other media information. The event was well received and several people had fond memories of the good times and shared stories with others. It is gratifying to know that careers were made at SIO and that people were proud about their dedication, discipline, attitude and care for the patients.

Sarada Vidyalayam

The school reopened this year on 12 July for the current academic year and 19 new students joined this year. Earlier in the summer, Sarada students scored First and Second places in a regional competitive examination.

All the students of Sarada were administered a first dose of Hepatitis B vaccine in coordination with Dr. Ramana Rao and few staff of SIO.

The parent-teacher committee continues to meet. The parents come from four villages surrounding the school and it is anticipated that the monthly meetings will take place and will provide valuable feedback in the operation of the school.



Spandana - Disaster Relief

A village called Appanna Ramuni Lanka was flooded by river Godavari. These villagers were cut-off for few days and supplies of food and water did not reach them. One of the villagers who was aware of our activities through Spandana has called for help. The foundation delivered 630 Food packets, 1000 Water packets, 630 snack packets and 160 Kgs Rice and these were distributed for the flood victims through our Spandana team on 26th July, 2013.

All of the staff of Sankurathri Foundation has contributed one day salary towards the relief activities for the victims of Uttarakhand. The students from Sarada Vidyalayam also raised some money towards the same cause.

The material presented in this newsletter is contributed by the people mentioned above and is edited for the newsletter by S. Eswar Prasad of MSMF. He lives in Collingwood, Ontario.

Thank you for Caring

We are very grateful to you for supporting MSMF and its programs in eye care, education and disaster relief. We would not have achieved this level of success in eye care and education programs without your generous support. In these difficult economic times, your continued support is more than ever needed and appreciated. MSMF remains dedicated to provide the most outstanding service and care possible.

You can donate to MSMF in three ways: with a cheque or credit card information sent directly in mail to MSMF, online through (www.canadahelps.org), and through the United Way campaign. Some organizations and employers match donations of their employees.

A Ray of Light, is published by MSMF twice a year from contributions and reports sent by its volunteers. Please send your comments or suggestions to info@msmf.ca or call us.

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