COLLABORATION

DISHA

FEB 2025

GURUJI EDUCATION FOUNDATION
www.gurujifoundation.in

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CONTENT

Founder's Message

While India has made tremendous progress towards ensuring Right to Education, there are significant challenges that still need to be overcome to ensure that all students, especially the underprivileged, receive holistic education that will help them realise their full potential. The challenges in the Education space are huge, and we realise and are deeply cognizant of the need for collaboration to deal with these challenges. This realisation is the reason why "Collaboration" features as one of our 6 principles that we follow at GEF.

The spirit behind our principle of Collaboration conveys "We are eager to collaborate with like-minded organizations & individuals, fully appreciating that the challenges in the education space are huge". This translates to action in the way we look at all our stakeholders – our partners, our supporters, our students and our alumni. All of us are working together towards our shared vision of "Education for All", by pooling in whatever resources we can – time, efforts, talents, funding, and more.

However, collaboration is not only about how we work at GEF. Collaboration and team work are also attributes of great value in our

personal and professional lives, and therefore, we take efforts to inculcate it in our college and school students. I recently had the opportunity to participate in our Annual Days at Nanded, Pune and Mumbai, and it was pure joy to witness this collaboration in action. It gives me great confidence that the principle of collaboration is well-inculcated in our students, and they are all poised for success in their lives ahead.

"Collaboration and team work are also attributes of great value in our personal and professional lives, and therefore, we take efforts to inculcate it in our college and school students."

Dr. Pradeep Waychal

FOUNDER

From
Team Disha

Dear GEF Family,

A bit late, but we wish you all a Very Happy, Successful, and Satisfying New Year. Our first issue of the new year 2025 is themed Collaboration - yet another principle that is dear to all of us at GEF.

In keeping with the theme, this issue's "Let's Speak With" column, features Ms. Arpita Desai, who is the TAP Charity Principal for GEF. TAP Charity has been our staunch collaborator over the last few years, and as you will learn in the interview, they have been contributing to our mission in more ways than one.

Very fittingly, one of the highlights for the past quarter happens to be the launch of our collaboration with Infosys Foundation, with the very first Science Lab being set up at Kai. Yadav Dagdu Patil Madhyamik Vidyalay, Tandulwadi.

We would like to thank those of you who have shared your appreciation and feedback on the previous issues of Disha. It encourages us to do more and do better. We would also like to congratulate Shri Pramod Hashilkar, for submitting the only all-correct solution to the last contest. We are sure that will encourage more of you to participate in this issue's contest. Keep the entries coming!

We do hope that you have been enjoying reading Disha, as much as we are enjoying putting it together for all of you. And in keeping with the theme of this issue, please do collaborate in the making of Disha, by contributing content, participating in the contests, volunteering as a part of our team, and sharing any other thoughts and ideas that you may have.

– Team Disha

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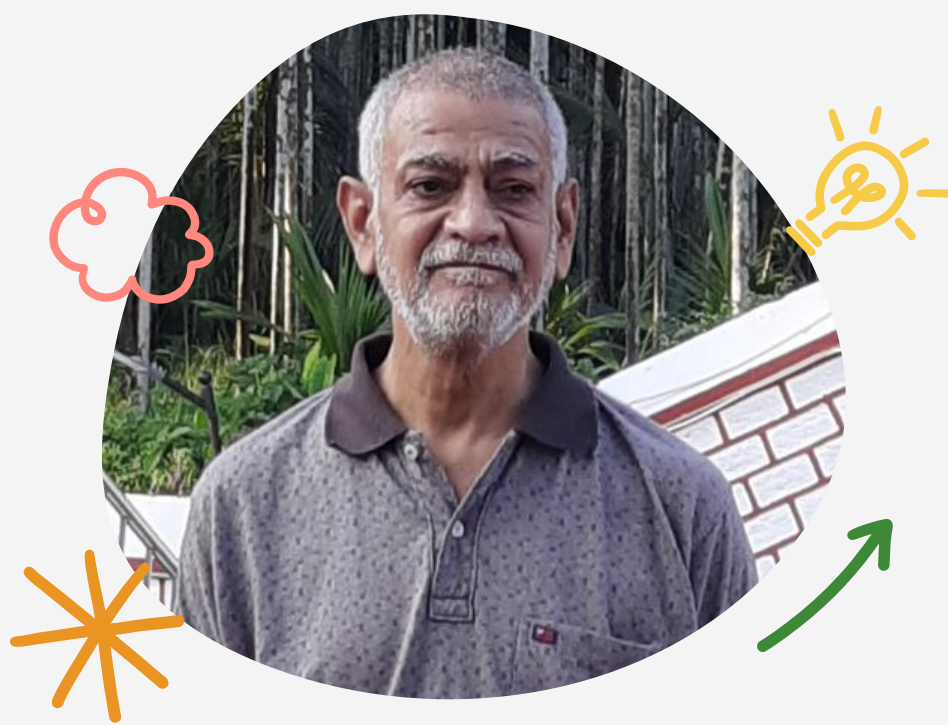
Collaboration

"If you trace back history, development in all fields has come about only because humans as a species have mastered the art of collaboration"

By Gopal Kalpathi

Senior GEF Mentor

The word "collaboration" that we use on a daily basis, looks so familiar that we might not give much thought to its origin. If you look up the Dictionary.com online, the word is not that old. It is as recent as 1855 or so when it was used combining the French word 'Collaborat' and 'ion' to make it a noun. Surprised? While the English language has been in existence for far longer, albeit its evolution over time, such a commonly used word came into existence as late as the 1850s! One of the main reason for this recent inclusion of this word in the dictionary is its impact on the

development of Humans, na Homo Sapiens I must say, as a special species.

The following interpretation from

Dictionary.com provides an insight into the possible reason for introducing "collaboration" as a separate word in English as late as in 1855-60:

[kuh-lab-uh-rey-shuhn] – noun:
- the act or process of working together or cooperating:

e.g. Chat tools provide opportunity for real-time collaboration and dialogue.
- a product resulting from working together or cooperating:

e.g. This dictionary is a collaboration of many minds.

Going a little deeper, one of the key factors behind the evolution of Homo Sapiens to the modern day MAN, overtaking all other species on this earth, is the human ability to collaborate.

From early cavemen, to tribes living in pockets, to hunting for both survival and territorial expansion, to migration and conquering, all have involved man's ability to collaborate. So much so that today, US and Russia, two of the most diabolically different nations in their political, geographical and cultural make up, collaborate (along with EU, Japan and Canada) in the outer space to maintain the International Space Station (ISS).

If you trace back history, development in all fields has come about only because humans as a species have mastered the art of collaboration, which I will now extend to mean not only working together, but even sharing of knowledge, material things and skills – across individuals, families, communities and nations. Looking back a 100 years may look a little overwhelming, so let us just take the last 50 years – 1974 to date.

China, a country to reckon with today, was a very poor communist country with families finding it difficult to manage 2 square meals as late as in 1970s, and where is it today? Russia, USSR as it was called then, again a communist country which had fought the WWII and won a major portion of Eastern Europe, gradually lost its grip over the Eastern European fragments, but put a valiant front against US dominance of world politics in the name of 'democratisation' of the world.

Today, Russia is able to hold its own. Japan, Hitler's ally in WWII, had to pay a very heavy prize (and is still paying in terms of genetic defects in new borns) due to atomic bombings by the US at the end of WWII in 1945. Today, it has one of the most advanced electronics manufacturing capability. All these countries are now collaboratorsin the ISS mentioned above.

Any branch of Science could not have advanced without collaboration. Take for example the Nobel Prizes, awarded initially in the pure sciences (Physics, Chemistry and Physiology or now Medicine). The first time they were awarded in 1901, not surprisingly, they were awarded to individuals in their respective fields for outstanding original research. Not for long. As early as in 1902, the Nobel Prize for Physics was shared between Hendrik Antoon Lorentz and Prof. Peter Zeeman, both Dutch Physicists. In Physiological/Medical Sciences it started a little later in 1906, with Camillo Golgi and Santiago Ramón y Cajal being awarded for their work on the structure of the nervous system.

It took much longer in Chemistry, when in 1946, 3 Americans viz. James Batcheller Sumner, John Howard Northrop and Wendell Meredith Stanley shared the prize.

In the field of computers, I can narrate my own experience. In 1974-76 when I was a student at the Dept. of Chemistry, University of Pune, the neighboring building housed the 'Computer Center' of the University. It was an IBM mainframe machine which used to occupy an area of 10 15K square feet, with air-conditioners running 24x7 and very restricted access. As an aside, this later became C-DAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing), a premier Government of India organization.

Later IBM introduced the desktop personal computer with a CRT Monitor and Microsoft's DOS (Disk Operating System), which subsequently evolved with the introduction of MS Windows in the 1980s. What I want to emphasize here while narrating this 'Computer Story' is that such rapid progress was made possible only through collaboration between scientists and engineers from

different fields including Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Materials, Electronics and many more.

If you look at the most recent developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) or Machine Learning (ML), these too have happened as a result of millions of people like us collaborating, sometimes even without we knowing it! While the debate on the moral and ethical issues of AI continues, as the world uses more and more of AI and ML, we can all draw satisfaction for having collaborated by contributing a tiny bit of the data that these systems depend on!

On a more humbling note, if we look at other living beings, collaboration is not really all that unique to humans. Think of all those species that live and survive as communities - ants, honey bees, some fish species, elephants and many others. They too have highly advanced capabilities of collaborating with each other. It is a lesson that if we as a species want to survive for many, many more years, it can only be achieved by collaborating with each other -not only with other humans, but also with Mother Earth and all its beings.

... collaboration is not really all that unique to humans. Think of all those species that live and survive as communities ...
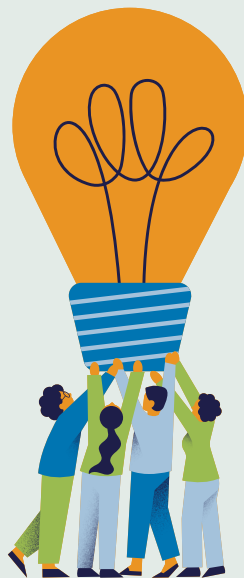
Arpita Desai

TAP Principal, GEF

AN INTERVIEW WITH TEAM DISHA

TAP Charity has been a staunch GEF Collaborator over the last many years. Team Disha speaks to Arpita Desai to hear her perspectives and experience on this collaboration.

Team Disha
Hello Arpita Ma'am. Can you please share with us the story behind the inception of TAP Charity Inc. and its mission to give back through collaboration?

Arpita
TAP stands for TSEC [Thadomal Shahani Engineering College] Alumni Philanthropy. It was initiated by the TSEC batch of 1989. We first got together during the Covid pandemic and donated funds towards helping the needy in various ways, including providing oxygen concentrators to different corners of the country. On the back of this endeavor, we decided to form a registered charity in the US, and thus was born TAP Charity Inc, registered as a 501c3 charity in the USA. Today, the membership is open to all TSEC alumni and their families.

We operate along 4 pillars - Health, Education, Livelihood, and Psychosocial - which form the acronym H.E.L.P. Any partnership forged or activity undertaken is in one or a combination of the above areas.
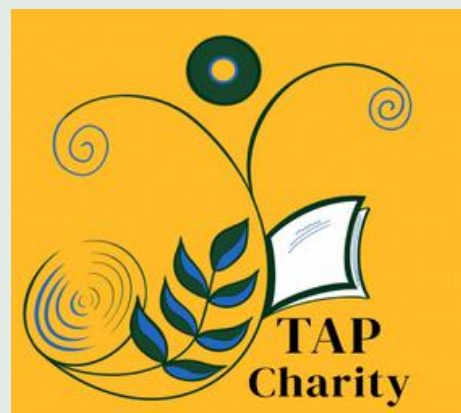
Team Disha

It is really impressive to see how something that started as a desire to do something for the needy, has now evolved into a registered charity supporting multiple endeavors, in just a few years. Can you shed some light on this growth and how TAP operates to manage this scale?

Arpita

TAP operates by partnering with organizations that operate in any of the above pillars and whose goal matches ours. Partner organizations are recommended by its members. NGO's who would like to partner with us give a formal presentation of their work and also a proposal to TAP on where and how they would like to collaborate with TAP. This presentation is given in one of our bi-monthly meetings. Questions and doubts are cleared in follow-up interactions offline. Thereafter, the members vote on whether it is a go or no-go for the partnership.

Each partnership is a collaboration between TAP and the partner NGO, where TAP contributes along 4-Tees: Time, Talent, Ties(connections), and Treasure (funds).TAP assigns a member to be a dedicated partner, the NGO's TAP-principal. They are there to develop a deeper understanding and explore new ways to deepen the engagement with the NGO. The TAP-principal also makes suggestions to the partner organization. Reports on utilization of TAP contributions are shared by the partner organization through the TAP-principal. This is reviewed by TAP members and the governing council. It is also used by TAP to make its own reports to donors and stakeholders.

Team Disha

So obviously partnerships and collaboration are in a way fundamental to the way TAP operates. In what ways has collaboration strengthened TAP's ability to create a tangible impact in underprivileged communities? Would you like to share some examples of a few of your successful collaborative projects?

Arpita

Absolutely, collaboration is the only way that we could have made a difference, and we are deeply cognizant of the supplementary roles played by our partners and us. Many TAP members are based out of the USA, and to make a difference on the ground, collaboration with partner organizations operating in the TAP focus areas is a must. Moreover, the areas where TAP would like to contribute may not be a core skill of TAP members. As an example,, we are collaborating with an organization called Prayas, which is a field action project of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences(TISS). They operate in the psycho-social space with people awaiting judgement due to them running afoul of the law of the land. Prayas counsels such people and also their families. They also partner with other NGOs to rehabilitate the affected individuals and their children so that they can begin life on a new note. This would have been extremely challenging if not impossible, even for India based TAP members to do. This is just one example of how TAP uses the expertise of the partner NGO to achieve mutual goals and make a difference in the target community.

Team Disha

TAP has partnered with various organizations, including Guruji Education Foundation, Ekalavya India Foundation and others. Can you elaborate on how these partnerships came about and their impact?

Arpita

As I mentioned earlier, partner NGOs are recommended by TAP members based on the understanding that the partnership would meet the goals of TAP and also make a difference in the lives of the target community. Our partnership with GEF started as a recommendation from one of the TAP members who had personally worked with the GEF founder, Dr. Pradeep Waychal, and was aware of the work being done by the foundation. Over the last 3+ years that the partnership has been in place, TAP has been contributing across all the 4-Tees. Besides funds, TAP members have also been contributing towards Spoken English classes, and conducting specialized sessions based on their areas of expertise. It is extremely satisfying for TAP, when students look back fondly on what they have gained as a result of having attended the classes.

Similarly, Eklavya was recommended by another TAP member who knew the founder, who also happens to be a recognized, nationally awarded individual. The TAP representative has since been helping not just with the primary goals of the partnership, but has been stretching herself to help meet other impromptu needs as well. Thus, the spirit of partnership extends to making a difference in the lives of the target audience.

Most importantly, the result of whatever we do, not only impacts our partners and target communities, reciprocally it impacts us too. As an example, we have partnered with the Leukemia Lymphoma Foundation in Tata Memorial Hospital as part of our Health pillar. TAP members very often visit TMH to understand how TMH operates and how the patients' needs in all spheres are being met.

Developing camaraderie beyond the task or program at hand is an important bye-product of collaborative activities.

Every single member visiting TMH and LLF has come back hugely impacted by the visit, and with a renewed commitment to work towards making a difference. In the case of GEF too, as I said, seeing our students succeeding and doing well, and hearing about the impact that GEF has had on their lives, reinforces our motivation and commitment.

Team Disha

What are some of the challenges TAP has faced in fostering collaborations across different organizations and regions?

Arpita

Some of the organizations/groups we partner with, could be remote and/or speak a language not understood by most of our members. In such situations, collaboration does become a bit challenging. Add to it, if the TAP representative for that partner is located in the US, the time difference between India and US also adds to the challenge for communication and collaboration.

To overcome this, we have the partner organization identify an individual from their NGO who then helps ensure that the collaboration process does not break down - whether it is by meeting TAP's reporting requirements, or by simply engaging with the end beneficiaries to understand the impact of a given initiative and feeding it back to us.

Contributing Time & Talent - A session on the Future of IT and IT Careers, with TAP Charity member, Prasana Iyengar

Team Disha

How does TAP envision sustaining and expanding its collaborative efforts in the coming years? How important is the role of volunteers and the community in your collaborative projects?

Arpita

When we began, for a couple of years, the membership was open to only TSEC alumni of 1989. Later, we opened it to all TSEC alumni and their families. This has helped increase participation.

TAP has its own website, LinkedIn account and Facebook account. Our reports and activities including recordings of significant events are published on these portals. We solicit donations on our website. Members follow these accounts.

TAP members participate in activities like marathons with TAP as a partner NGO. This helps in soliciting donations and also increasing awareness about the organization.

TAP publishes quarterly newsletters where we provide updates on our activities. We also have a bi-annual General Body Meeting where we invite all stakeholders. The newsletters and the GBM presentation are circulated widely.

We ran a special campaign for soliciting donations for a specific partner as it was felt that the resultant impact at the ground level would be a force multiplier. It was also a cause dear to many TAP members. This campaign was also run in organizations where our members work. We were able to garner significant funds through this drive. We plan to continue this for other partnerships in future as well.

With a view to expanding our impact on the ground, we continue to solicit new partnerships via recommendations and presentations/ proposals.

Team Disha

What learnings would you like to share with other organizations seeking to build strong collaborations? Any tips on managing conflicts or differences based on your experience?

Arpita

Do thorough due diligence before signing up, arrive at common goals, agree on communication and reporting protocols.

For organizations like TAP: involve the larger community to maintain a sustainable partnership, investing with time and talent is as important to a long-term partnership as funding is. Be involved to the extent possible in activities at your partner's end, trust your partner.

For the receiving partner: be honest towards your contributor, including for abnormal situations, report accurately and in a timely manner as per established protocols. Trust, once lost, is difficult to rebuild.

As far as managing conflicts is concerned, due diligence is critically important to ensure that the right partners with mutually aligning goals are identified. Nevertheless, if a difference in understanding does occur, there is nothing that cannot be resolved through discussions and meetings, when both the partners are strongly committed towards a common goal.

Contributing Time & Talent - A Spoken English session conducted by Brahma Bantwal & Piyush Mehta from TAP Charity

**Contributing Time & Talent - A Spoken English session conducted by
Adwait Sathye from TAP Charity**

Team Disha

Finally, any thoughts on how we can develop a collaborative mindset among our students as part of their holistic development?

Arpita

There is a famous saying that "If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, work together". Working in teams increases the productivity of the group as the strengths of each member is utilized to the full extent. The proof of the pudding is in the eating: engaging students in activities that help them to look for ways to contribute their maximum in any group. The success of such participation will increase their satisfaction in the endeavour and will help them see the importance of working in teams. As I said earlier, it will help them in building relationships and camaraderie that will go way beyond the immediate endeavour. GEF is already doing it via the Scratch initiative at the school students' level.

Sharing inspiring success stories of collaboration would also be a great way to reinforce the message.

Highlights

Inauguration of Science Lab at Tandulwadi School

A fully equipped Science Lab set up at Kai. Yadav Dagdu Patil Madhyamik Vidyalay, Tandulwadi was inaugurated by Prof.N. Venkataramani from IIT-Bombay and Dr.Lalita Deshpande of GEF, in the august presence of dignitaries from the school management.

This marks a significant step forward in our Infosys Foundation supported project for enabling Holistic Development of selected schools, under GEF's Adolescent Development Program.

In preparation for setting up such labs at more schools, science teachers from 4 other schools across Maharashtra also received guidance on conducting experiments using the new lab setup.

ADP Footprint Extends to Goa

With the successful conclusion of the Scratch Student-trainer Training program, Swastik Vidyalay Secondary School, Priol – Goa, achieved the double distinction of becoming the 1st school from Goa, and the 50th school overall, to benefit under GEF's Adolescent Development Program (ADP). The program was conducted by Mr.Gopal Kalpathi, Senior GEF Volunteer.

Mr. Gopal Kalpathi igniting the young minds

Scratch training is conducted under our Amit Khare Training for Indian Villages (AKTIV) initiative, for improving critical, creative, and computational thinking, and teaming among students by using Scratch and other mediums as tools. AKTIV is a part of our Adolescent Development Program (ADP), which aims at enabling schools, especially those catering to underprivileged children, to provide holistic education spanning physical literacy, psychological strength, intellectual prowess, life skills, and entrepreneurial thinking.

Thanks to Shri Shirishkumar Amshekar, Principal and Mrs.Prabhati Desai, Computer Teacher and the entire management of Swastik Vidyalay for their wholehearted support.

Trimbak School Qualifies for District-level CS Hackathon

Janata Vidyamandir, Trimbak was 1 among the 10 schools that qualified to participate in the district-level CS Hackathon organized by the District Institute of Education & Training, Sindhudurg, in association with Zila Parishad (Education), Sindhudurg, Amazon Future Engineer, Leadership for Equity, and Code to Enhance Learning (CEL).

The objective of the CS Hackathon was to enhance 21st century skills such as Computational Thinking, Logical Thinking, Teamwork, and Coding as envisaged under the New Education Policy (NEP), 2020. The 10 teams for the CS Hackathon were selected based on their performance in an "Unplugged Challenge" held earlier.

Janata Vidyamandir, Trimbak is one of the beneficiaries of our AKTIV (Amit Khare Training for Indian Villages) program, which aims at developing Thinking and Teaming skills, using Scratch as one of the mediums. The student team of Manuja Sawant, Ovi Bhogate, and Durva Ghadigaonkar, represented the school under the guidance of their teacher Abhijit Dhure.

GEF Executive Committee Reconstituted

The GEF Executive Committee has been reconstituted, with the following distribution of responsibilities:

- Admissions - Sunil Patil
- Alumni Connect - Shridhar Vaishampayan and Meghana Karlekar
- Counselling - Anjali Lele
- Mentoring - Dr.Lalita Deshpande
- Outreach - Vidyut Navelkar
- Scratch Training - Gopal Kalpathi
- Spoken English - Sharad A Deogekar
- Technology - Tarak Sheth

Student Stars

Ravindra Rathod who is currently pursuing his post-graduation at NIPER, was a part of the team whose design titled "Portable Device for Measurement of Cardiac Arrhythmia" was approved and granted Certificate of Registration of Design by the Patent Office, Government of India.

Nikita Patil has been selected to join QSpiders, a software training institute based in Pune.

Nikita is pursuing her BTech in Computer Science & Engineering (Artificial Intelligence & Data Science) from Padmabhooshan Vasantraodada Patil Institute of Technology, Budhgaon.

Sumit Gursale has successfuly cleared his Chartered Accountancy (Intermediate) exams.

Rutuja Raut who is doing her BTech (Electrical Engineering) at Walchand College of Engineering, Sangli, has been selected for placement by L&T Pvt. Limited.

Anand Gadge has been selected for placement as a Graduate Engineer Trainee by Tech Mahindra.

Anand is doing his BE (Information Technology) from DY Patil College of Engineering, Akurdi, and will be graduating in May 2025.

Shaijal Aher has joined Interglobe Aviation (Indigo Airlines) as Officer AO & CS.

Shaijal is also in the final year of her Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA) program.

Hariom Thadke who is pursuing B.Tech (Computer Engineering) from Shri Guru Gobind Singhji Institute of Engineering & Technology (SGGSIE&T), Nanded, has received a placement offer from TCS Ltd for the role of a System Engineer

Sakshi Ghadge who is currently pursuing MSc in Applied Psychology from Central University of Tamilnadu, has successfully cleared her UGC-NEET exam, and thus qualified for the post of Assistant Professor, and admission to PhD.

Rajesh Pokharkar has received a placement offer from Accenture Ltd. for the role of an Assistant System Engineer.

Rajesh is currently pursuing BE (Computer Engineering) at RMD Sinhagad School of Engineering, Warje.

Snehal Ghodake who is a student of XI standard at Modern College, Shivajinagar, stood 1st in her class with 97.5% marks

Mayuri Sangekar who is pursuing B.Tech (Civil) at Government College of Engineering, Aurangabad, presented her paper titled "Inclinometer-based Health Monitoring and Digital Twin Development for a Simply Supported Beam Subjected to Point Load" at the 39th Indian Engineering Congress, organized by The Institution of Engineers (India).

Ayush Pamula has joined IQVIA, a Fortune 500 company, in the role of eTMF Documents Specialist.

Ayush recently completed his M.Sc in Biotechnology from Smt.CHM College, Ulhasnagar, with a CGPA of 9.0.

Aakash Pamula has been excelling in athletics, and stood 2nd in Discuss Throw and 3rd in Shot Put in Thane Zone, at the Mumbai University Games held in October 2024.

Aakash is currently in the second year of his B.Com studies at B.K.Birla College, Kalyan.

Molika Sharma was one among the 52 volunteers selected (out of more than 200) for a special NSS camp that involves going on a trek, with the aim of learning new skills and building meaningful bonds with other volunteers.
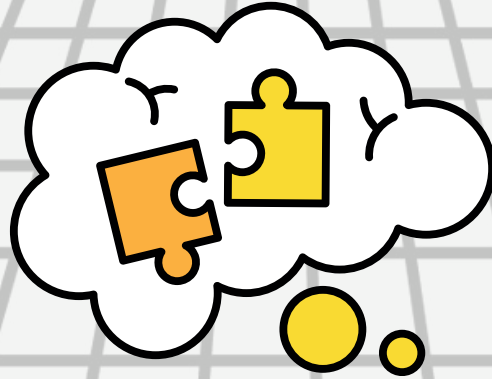
Alumni Stars

Pratiksha Vaidya who completed her Civil Engineering in 2022 has been selected as Water Conservation Officer Grade B (non-gazetted) in the Soil and Water Conservation Department.

Currently she is working as Civil Engineering Assistant in the Bhima Canal Circle of the Water Resources Department.

Perspectives

PERSPECTIVES is an open forum for our GEF family members (Students, Alumni, and Supporters) to express their thoughts on issues that they deeply care about, as well as on any topic of interest to them.
The views expressed in PERSPECTIVES are the author's views and GEF may or may not subscribe to the views in whole or part.

अधिकार की पुकार
The voice of Rights

Mahesh Nagnath Kamle

कौन कहता है कि सब समान है,
अरे, वह जिसने बांध रखा है हमें,
वह हमारा संविधान है।

जीना-मरना हर किसी की किस्मत में लिखा है,
पर किसी को मारना हमें किसने सिखाया है?
बातें की गई स्वतंत्रता की लोगों से,
पर खुद पर बात आए तो अस्वतंत्रता अपनाई है।

नारी को देवी का स्वरूप माना जाता है,
फिर भी उसके साथ अत्याचार किया जाता है।
दीप जलाने से किसकी चिता जली है?
दीप जलाने से किसकी भला चिता जली है?
जलाना है तो उसे जलाओ,
जिसने किसी घर की ज्योत बुझाई है।

Who says everything is equal?
Who says everything is equal?
Oh, the one who has tied us down
That is our constitution.

It is written in everyone's destiny to live and die.
But who taught us to kill someone?
They talked about freedom to the people.
But when it comes to them, they always adopted only unfreedom for the people.

Woman is considered a form of goddess.
even then she is tortured
Whose funeral pyre has been lit by lighting a lamp?
Whose funeral pyre has been lit by lighting the lamp?
If you want to burn, burn the one who has extinguished the flame of anyone's house.

उन्हीं की जगह से उन्हें निकाला गया है,
उन्हीं को जलाकर जश्न मनाया गया है।
सांस लेने में तुम्हें तकलीफ हो रही है,
हां, वह उन्हीं की देन है,
जिन्होंने किसी को जलाकर जश्न मनाया है।

क्यों शक्ति को दबाया गया है,
जिसने इस सृष्टि को फूलों सा सजाया है?
हर जगह उसने अपना अस्तित्व बनाया है।
वह आग है, जिसने हर मुसीबत में
अन्याय के खिलाफ खुद को जलाया है।

मांगने से अधिकार मिलते नहीं हैं,
ना ही नेताओं की रैली में मरने से मिलते हैं।
यूँ ही नहीं किसी ने कहा है,
अधिकार मांगने से नहीं मिलते, उन्हें छीनना
पड़ता है।

क्यों लोगों को अधिरोपित किया जाता है?
जाति, धर्म, रंग और लिंग से बांटा जाता है।
इसी तरह इंसान इंसानियत भूल जाता है।
और इसी का फायदा उठाकर नेता अपनी
सरकार बनाता है।
पर जो एक अकेला सभी को अधिकार
दिलाता है,
वही बाबा साहेब आंबेडकर कहलाता है।

They have been removed from their place.
They buried them and celebrated.
that you are having trouble breathing
Yes, it is the gift of those who celebrated
by burying someone.

Why women have been suppressed
Even she decorated this universe like
flowers.
everywhere he has made his presence felt
That is the fire that has kindled itself
against injustice in every trouble.

You don't get rights by asking for them.
Nor do we meet the dead in the leaders'
rally.
It's not for nothing that someone said this.
Rights are not obtained by asking; they
have to be snatched away.

Why are people imposed upon, divided on
the basis of caste, religion, color, and
gender?
This is how man forgets humanity.
And taking advantage of this, the leader
forms his government.
And the one who alone gives rights to all
is called Baba Saheb Ambedkar.

Talent++
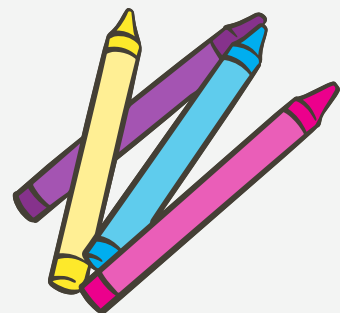
Janhavi Gundawar

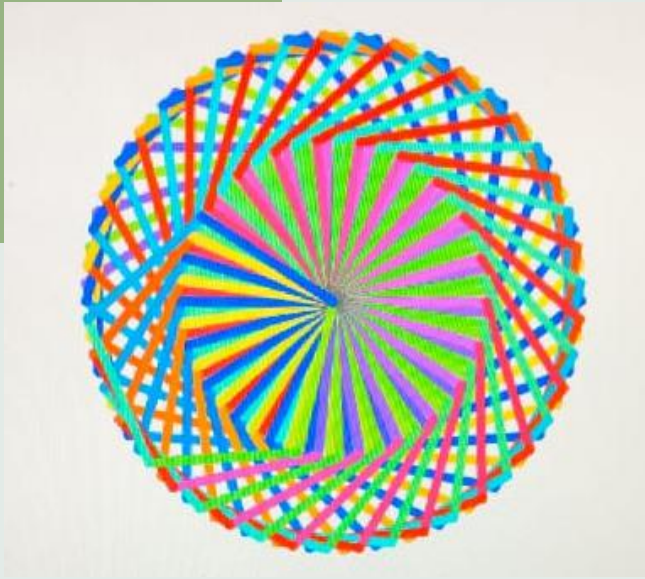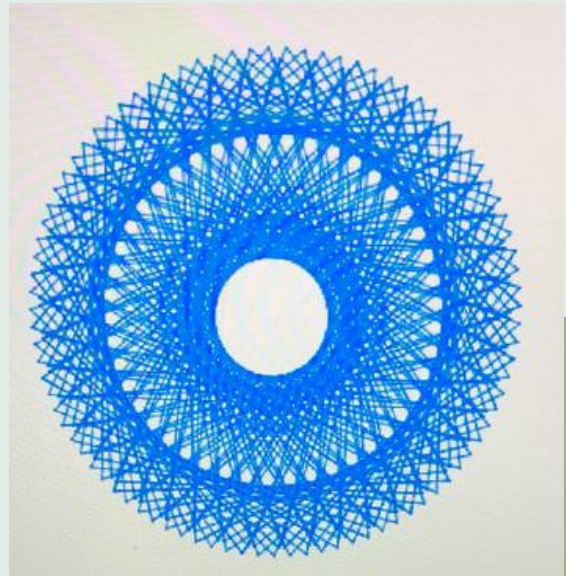**Pooja Raut**

Gayatri Chingunde

Rangolis using computers .... when tradition meets IT!

Akshara Patil

A rangoli with a message

Archana Rohane
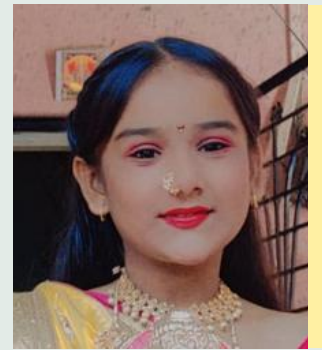
Komal Patil

Bhagyashri Bahirat

CROSS WORD
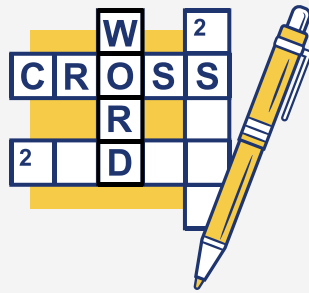
Contest

This issue's Contest is based not only on the contents of this issue, but also some general knowledge questions aligned with our theme of "Collaboration". And we are perfectly fine if you search for answers online! The objective is to strengthem general awareness while also having fun.

So go ahead and get started! We are waiting for your answers ...

S	A	R	A	J	G	U	R	U	V	W	A	I
A	A	A	V	I	O	N	I	A	I	I	N	L
R	T	N	A	K	I	M	X	A	L	L	A	B
G	I	N	K	A	T	O	J	B	A	R	A	S
E	P	E	A	R	M	N	M	L	I	Y	S	T
U	R	D	U	R	V	A	E	O	R	S	A	E
R	A	I	N	G	K	A	I	N	Z	O	W	P
A	R	R	O	D	I	T	N	E	O	O	H	P
Z	Y	I	O	E	D	U	F	L	O	D	E	H
I	G	N	L	D	R	P	O	A	L	I	N	U
V	I	E	Z	Y	A	I	S	M	A	L	E	L
V	I	K	R	A	M	E	Y	P	R	S	T	E
I	L	B	O	R	I	N	S	E	R	G	E	I

Clues on the next page

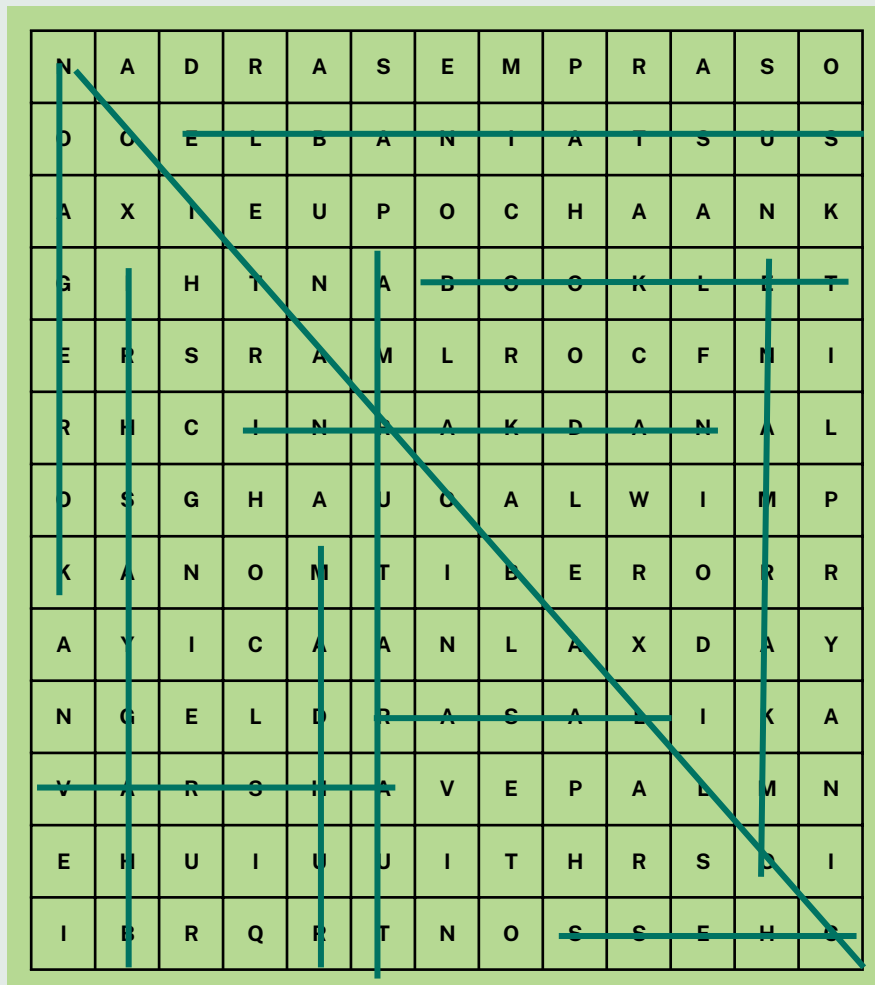1. Collaborators in the famed 644 run partnership: Sachin Tendulkar and _____ _____ (First name + Surname)

2. The music makers _____-Pyarelal (First name)

3. The lesser known co-founder of Apple along with Steve Jobs: Steve _____ (Surname)

4. One of the 3 member student team that collaborated to qualify for the District-level CS Hackathon, Sindhudurg: _____ Ghadigaonkar (First name)

5. Inauguration of the Science Lab at Tandulwadi marked a significant step forward in GEF's partnership with _____ Foundation

6. The TAP-Principal for GEF: _____ Desai (First name)

7. She was one of the joint winners of Nobel Prize for Economics in 2019 along with Prof.Abhijit Banerjee: Esther _____ (Surname)

8. Two collaborators widely credited for the setting up of India's space program: Homi Bhabha and _____ Sarabhai (First name)

9. Social reformers and pioneers of women education in India: Jyotiba and Savitribai _____ (Surname)

10. These names do not need any further clues: Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram _____ (Surname)

11. Google co-founders: Larry Page and _____ Brin (First name)

12. Bronze medal winners in the 10m Air Pistol shooting event at Paris Olympics: Manu Bhaker and _____ Singh (Fisrt name)

The Contest is open to all our readers - Students, Alumni, and Supporters.

The first **20** all correct entries received will be recognized in the next issue of Disha. So hurry and send in your entries by mail to disha@gurujifoundation.in OR by WhatsApp to +91 9820328943.

Entries should be received no later than **15 March 2025.**

Solution to the last Contest

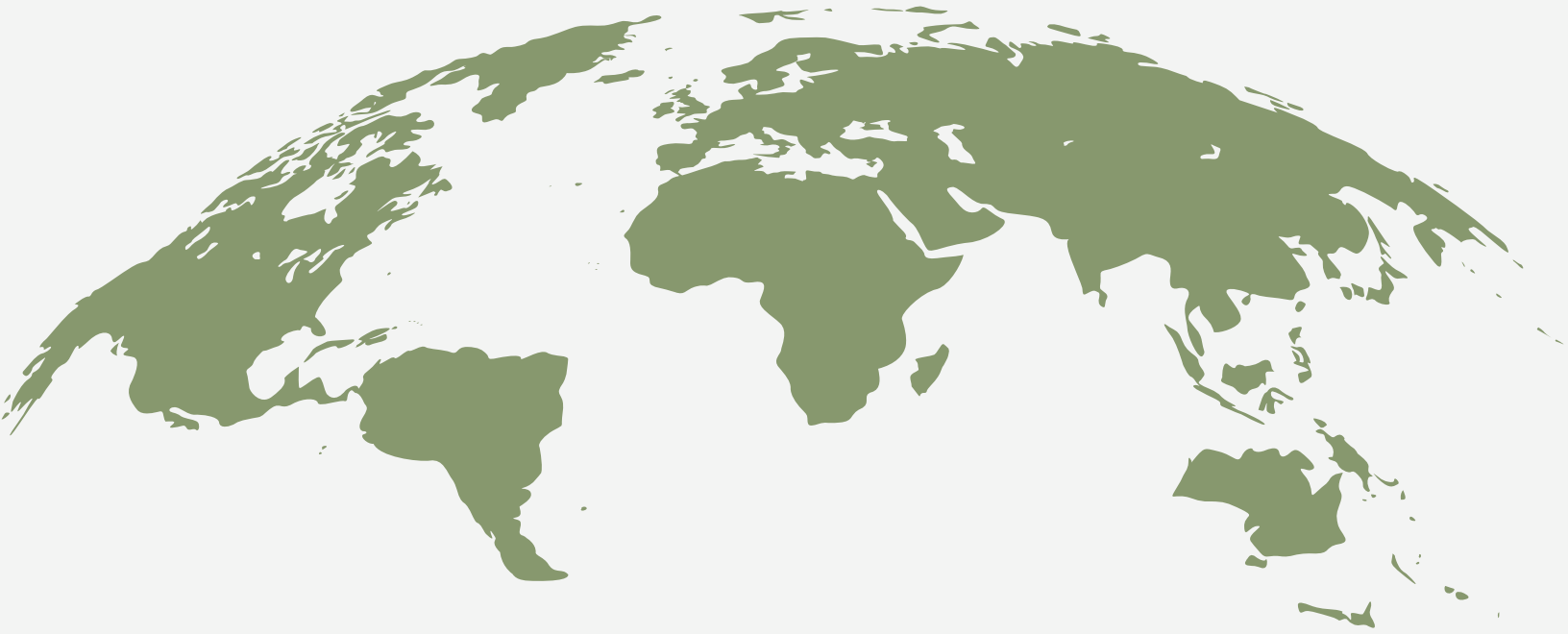| N	A	D	R	A	S	E	M	P	R	A	S	O
D	O	E	L	B	A	N	T	A	T	S	U	S
A	X	T	E	U	P	O	C	H	A	A	N	K
G	T	H	T	N	A	B	O	O	K	L	E	T
E	R	S	R	A	M	L	R	O	C	F	M	I
R	H	C	I	N	A	K	D	A	N	A	L	L
D	S	G	H	A	J	O	A	L	W	I	M	P
K	A	N	O	M	T	I	E	E	R	O	R	R
A	Y	I	C	A	N	L	A	X	D	A	Y
N	G	E	L	D	R	A	S	A	L	I	K	A
V	A	R	S	H	A	V	E	P	A	L	M	N
E	H	U	I	U	J	I	T	H	R	S	D	I
I	B	R	Q	R	T	N	O	S	S	E	H	S

Winner

Congratulations, Pramod Hashilkar!!

What's new in the world

Gene Editing

By Om Moharkar

2nd Year MBBS, Govt Medical College, Latur

Imagine a future when there is no need of blood transfusion for dealing with blood disorders such as thalassemia and sickle cell anaemia, genetic disorders can be completely cured, and plant & animals can be grown as per our specifications! All these are now becoming possible, thanks to advancements in Gene Editing.

A gene is basically a segment of DNA or RNA having nucleotides, and is responsible for particular characteristic of individual, such as height, skin colour, etc. Whenever, there is a mutation in the gene i.e. deletion or addition or change in nucleotide, it leads to faulty genes that gives rise to some of the disorders such as thalassemia and sickle cell anaemia. With Gene Editing, such a faulty gene is identified, and the defective nucleotide is cut down by various techniques and replaced by a normal one.

Some of the techniques used for gene editing include TALENS, ZFNS and CRISPR-Cas9. While TALENS and ZFNS are older techniques based on enzymes to cut DNA fragments, CRISPER-Cas9 is a comparatively new tool which has gained a lot of popularity. CRISPER-cas9 is basically a molecular scissor to cut DNA fragments at specific sites to remove defective fragments and add normal ones. Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna were award the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 2020 for their discovery of CRISPER-Cas9.

Applications of gene editing include treatment of genetic disorders such as sickle cell anaemia and thalassemia, cure for cancers, increasing crop yield by development of pest-resistant species, increasing production of milk, eggs, meat, etc. Gene editing scores over other techniques in:
- being able to precisely edit the targeted gene
- providing a one-time permanent cure to genetic disorders
- reducing the number of hospital visits and overall cost of treatment
- greater efficiency as compared to conventional breeding techniques in the areas of poultry & animal husbandry

On the flip side, gene editing also has a few drawbacks, such as off-target (unintended) gene modifications, and lack of low-cost accessibility. Crops developed may not be suitable for human consumption and there is also possibility of misuse. Hence gene editing programs are controlled and regulated by government guidelines, with prior approval and permissions required from regulatory committees.

In December 2023, U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first gene therapy for sickle cell anaemia called CASGEVY, which uses CRISPER-Cas9 technique. However, the expense involved in CASGEVY is still prohibitive and costs around $2.2 million per patient. Where does India stand? In 2024 IIT Bombay and Tata Memorial hospital launched the first homemade gene therapy for Cancers, which is more cost effective than pre-existing gene therapy. While gene therapy using CRISPER has been part of India's mission to eradicate sickle cell anaemia by 2047, such therapy is currently not available.

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Collaboration in action

Annual Days - Behind the Scenes 👀

GEF Annual Days, are a celebration of our collective journey, showcasing the brilliance of our students and the dedication of our supporters. The Annual Days are fully managed by students to aid their development, and act as both - a learning ground and a testimony of Collaboration in Action. We bring here the "Behind the Scenes" stories from Nanded, Pune, and Mumbai+Thane Annual Days, that have been conducted so far in the 2025 cycle of Annual Days.

Mumbai & Thane

Every year, the Annual Day at Guruji Education Foundation becomes a heartfelt celebration of the passion, dedication, and progress that GEF's students and supporters have made throughout the year. Though the limelight naturally focuses on the interviews and exciting networking opportunities, the behind-the-scenes efforts that go into putting this event together are nothing short of remarkable. Team Disha got an opportunity to sit down with the student co-ordinator of Mumbai-Thane chapter, Archana Rohane, and here's a look into the detailed planning, teamwork, and execution that made the Annual Day such a success.

The Planning

Planning for Annual Day begins long before the day itself. Months in advance, the students begin discussion among themselves - deciding on the theme, the lead co-ordinator, the interviewees, and the overall agenda of the event. This year, the theme 'Holistic Development' was chosen to highlight foundation's commitment to helping

students grow beyond their academic performance.

The first task was to secure the venue. After the google form was sent out, it took almost two weeks to arrive at the number of people attending. When it was clear that the event will be hosted in IIT Bombay, Archana Rohane and Meghana Karlekar went together to assess the venue. The seating arrangement, technical aspect, and catering plans were decided right there. These responsibilities were then further delegated among the Student Volunteers and Alumni.

Meet the Team

- Archana Rohane – Event Co Ordinator Extraordinaire

Keeping track of everyone's work, meticulously following up for updates and noting down the action items wherever necessary, we can say that she has done her job beautifully.

- Vishwa Shetty and Sakshi Ghadge – Dynamic Duo of Anchoring

Vishwa and Sakshi's vibrant and energetic presence kept the whole audience engaged and inspired.

- Meghana Karlekar and Nimisha Dalvi – The Decoration Dream Team

The collaborative efforts of Meghana and Nimisha played a key part in the logistical planning and smooth execution of Annual Day.

- The Crew:
  - Nishtha Dalvi conducted an ice breaking session, starting the day off on a high note.
  - In addition to taking the responsibility of naming tags and badges, Prachi Ole, Riddhi Pagey, and Nishtha Dalvi were the first to arrive and assisted the Decoration Team in setting up the entire stage.
  - All the interviewers - Swastik Ohal, Meghana Karlekar, Atul Kshirsagar, Jay Shirke, Ravindra Rathod and Aditya Gurjar, played their part exceptionally. The audience enjoyed sessions thoroughly and carried the words of wisdom along with them.

- Rajat Pujari and Prafulla Tembhe were crucial in overseeing every activity and offering their helping hand as needed.
- You'd have to thank Niraj Kumbhar for sending annual day pictures the very next day. He was running around the entire day trying to capture our perfect moments in the camera.
- Saurabh Raut, our newest supporter, was In charge of the technical component and made sure that show went on uninterrupted.

And every student who contributed in any capacity, whether it was making rangoli at the entrance or hanging the photos at student corner. Seeing everybody working together and collaborating with each other was what made the annual day so special.

The sheer joy of a job well done

Challenges Faced

Since the venue was Department of MSME's conference hall, there was a space constraint from the start. We were unsure of the location of networking, fun activities, and photo session until the day before the event. During the rehearsals, everybody brainstormed together to come up with the best possible solutions. In order to make things easier for the guests, we reorganized the schedule and selected activities that could be conducted in the corridors. On the day of the event, every volunteer worked towards accommodating more than 100 guests without causing a commotion. We began the day with an action plan, which we executed flawlessly with everyone's support.

Pune

The Pune Annual Day, a day of celebration, felicitation, feasting, and festivity, was successfully conducted on 26 January, 2025, and we will have more to share about it in the next issue.

For now, let us salute the collaboration that went behind the scenes to make this day a success. Hats off to the dedicated team that worked tirelessly to plan and ensure that every detail, from decorations to sound checks, was perfect. All the while maintaining a vibrant energy and excitement leading up to the big day!

The team was led by Head Coordinator, Dipti Kawale under the overall mentorship of Dr.Lalita Deshpande Ma'am, not to speak of the guidance,

backing and efforts of senior members of our GEF family - Avinash Surve Sir and Jyoti Sulakhe Ma'am. Volunteers were sought, and the following teams were formed:

- Anchoring: Pratima Chaugule, Varsha Bansode, Prachi Tari, Sakshi Sabnis,
- Guest introductions & Votes of Thanks: Snehal Ghodke, Sandesh Tayde, Gayatri Meme, Poonam Abhang
- Technical: Janhavi Gundwar
- Time-keeping: Dhanashree Bhovar
- Decoration: Gayatri Meme, Gayatri Phatak, Sakshi Sabnis, Pooja Raut, Janhavi Gundawar

And there were many others too as part of backup teams and helping with the various arrangements.

Not that everything was smooth sailing, but it was all a part of the learning. For Dipti and the entire team, it was like. a hands-on experiential program on project management, planning, problem solving, managing and working in teams, communication, delegation and more.

Multiple online meetings and rehearsals at Jyoti Ma'am's place were all part of the hard work, dedication, team spirit, and most importantly - enjoyment and fun, that went behind making this event grand and memorable.

Nanded

At Nanded, the team was led by Shivam Yadav under the guidance of Dr. Lalita Deshpande Ma'am and Pradeep Sir. It had all the GEF students from SGGSIE&T volunteering and coming together to make the event a grand success. The pictures below present a glimpse of the hectic activity and preparations that went behind the scenes. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words ...

If "Attention to Detail" had to be expressed as a picture..

Our boys too can make rangolis (in case the Talent++ pages made you think otherwise)

Mic check, computer check, projector check
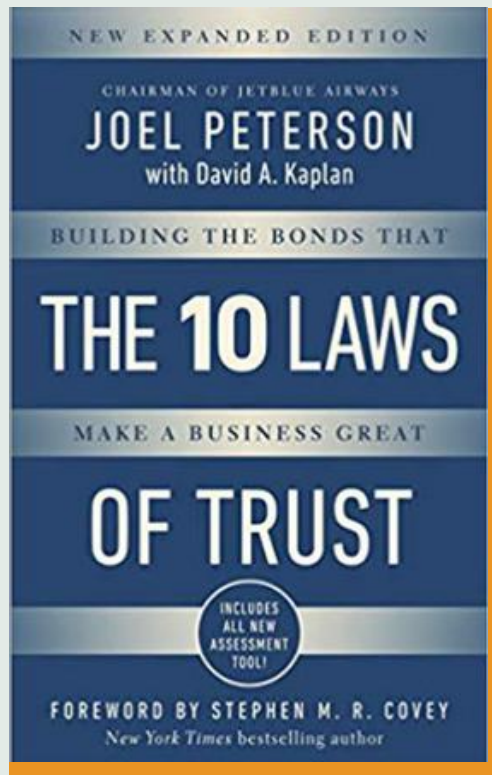... not leaving anything to chance

Reviews and Recommendations

GEF student, Molika Sharma reviews
"The 10 Laws of Trust"
which talks about "trust" which is a fundamental requirement for successful Collaboration

This book by Joel Peterson is a compelling guide on how trust leads to the success of a business. From his own experience Peterson outlines 10 principles namely, leading with integrity, respecting others, empowering teams, setting clear expectations, fostering open communications, etc. These principles aside, Peterson also emphasizes on creating shared goals, embracing conflict, seeing conflict as an opportunity for growth as whole, and addressing mistakes to build stronger relationships, and a growing business. Peterson also gives real life examples to highlight how trust not only enhances collaboration and loyalty, which are both important for a business, but also talks about long-term success in any organization or business.

While reading this book I could relate it with a few real incidents from my own life. For instance, when I first joined GEF I had a few issues related to my contract, but with the help of several members working in GEF together, the issue was finally resolved. With this book and the above incident, I understood the importance of working together or in collaboration. I work in groups, either in NSS or working towards Disha, I have understood that if there is no collaboration between members of the group the end result is not satisfactory. With the key points from this book in my mind, I believe that I will be able to work towards my attitude towards working in groups. In conclusion, whether you are a business owner, leading an organization, or even if you are a student, a book like this also comes in handy in the near future. This book for me was an easy read and informative, and has left me with knowledge I will forever remember and use.

- MOLIKA SHARMA
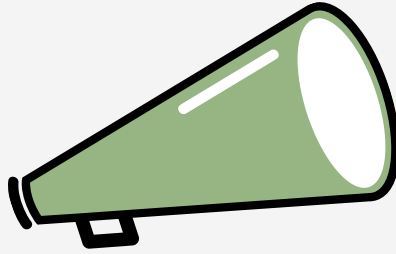
Upcoming Events

Tuljapur Annual Day 2025

16 February, 2025

At TISS, Tuljapur

Sambhajinagar Annual Day 2025

02 March, 2025

At Government College of Engineering, Sambhajinagar

Nagpur Annual Day 2025

09 March, 2025

At Veer Savarkar Sabhagruha, Nagpur

We would love to hear your feedback on this issue of Disha

Team Disha

Abhijeet Waghchaure
Bhagyashri Bahirat
Molika Sharma
Nimisha Dalvi
Om Moharkar
Sharvari Patil
Shubham Lingayat
Vidyut Navelkar

Write to the Team Disha at

disha@gurujifoundation.in

To donate

Please visit: https://www.gurujifoundation.in/donate

Donations to GEF are Income Tax exempt under Section 80G in India and 501C3 in USA

To volunteer

Please visit: https://www.gurujifoundation.in/supporters

Contact GEF

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