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"I am delighted to announce that Google has approved Guruji Education Foundation for donation and volunteering. It means that Google will make matching donations, i.e. if a Google employee donates X Rs, Google will also donate X Rs to the foundation. It also means that if any Google employee works as a volunteer for the foundation, Google will pay 10 US\$ for every hour of volunteering at the foundation. If any of you know Google employees working anywhere in the world, let us try involving them in the foundation activities. This support has become possible only due to a Googler, Mr Rahul Bhalerao. I thank him very much, personally and on behalf of the foundation.."

-Dr. Pradeep Waychal

MISSION : EDUCATION FOR ALL

## SUPER 30 in Action at Raja Shivaji Vidyalay, Thane



## EDITORIAL DESK

After two successful releases and an overwhelming response, we are glad to release the **third issue** of "DISHA", the Quarterly Newsletter of our Guruji Education Foundation.

We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please let us know if you would like to contribute to DISHA in any way. We apologize for the delay in releasing this issue of the newsletter.

We thank Abhay Joshi for the editorial help.

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## **OUR PROJECTS**

### **DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR ADOLESCENT STUDENTS AKA SUPER 30**

The word “foundation” plays a very important role in our lives. If the foundation is weak, the structure can collapse. Here is a GEF project aimed at developing the foundation of high school students. There are many high school students, who are high on potential but low on resources, and find it difficult to fulfill their dreams.

GEF has developed a framework to build a robust foundation for such high school students. The framework includes physical literacy, psychological strength, intellectual sharpness and entrepreneurial zeal. The implementation of this framework has resulted in a four year program from 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> standards which relies on interactive teaching.

In its first iteration for the 6th standard, the program consists of prayers, exercises such as suryanamaskar, English communication - encouraging students to ask questions and discuss their answers, learning creative computing using the SCRATCH environment designed at MIT, US, interactions with achievers from various walks of life, and sports. We include activities that attempt to develop values such as empathy and teamwork and attributes such as curiosity and critical thinking as well as bibliotherapy. We seek feedback from students at the end of each session, which has been overwhelmingly positive, even though students have to spend 7 hours on Sundays for the program, after 6 days of school.

We have initiated this development program at Raja Shivaji Vidyalaya Lokmanyagar Thane from Sep 2018, and at Navoday Vidyalay Tuljapur from Nov 2018. The Thane program would not have been possible without the unflinching support of Mr Ghadge Sir and his team, who was introduced by Mr Bhosale Sir and Mrs Wadwalkar Madam to the foundation. There are many individuals such as Mr Bala, Mr Wadwalkar, Mrs Wadwalkar, Ms Shivani, Ms Shikha, Mrs Sandhya, Mr Mandar, Ms Shraddha, Ms Shalini, Mr Santosh who are working untiringly to execute the program successfully. Ms Jaya is playing the role of convener. Mr Chavan sir is working on building a team for Tuljapur program. The foundation expresses sincere gratitude to all of them.

### **SUPPORTING CANCER-AFFLICTED FAMILIES**

Cancer-afflicted families go through tremendous psychological trauma due to the excruciating suffering of patients, and the drain on their financial resources. More often than not the patient loses the battle, devastating the whole family. We have decided to provide holistic support to eligible members of such families to help them recover from this trauma.

GEF’s approach is to follow the same admission process and principles as applied to other students. The only exception is, the person's academic performance is not considered. The focus is on identifying appropriate educational opportunities based on their talent and catalyze their rehabilitation. Mr Thyagarajan and Mrs Sangita Inamdar, who are doing voluntary work at Tata Memorial and are helping to identify the right students. We need volunteers working at other places, too.

The goal for Academic Year 2018-19 was to support 10 such students. So far, we have admitted 5 students.



## INTERACTION WITH Ms. VRUSHALI SHINDE

A beautiful poetess, an actress, an anchor and a great person; here is one more talented alumni with whom I had an exciting interaction. She believes in competing not with others but with herself to become a better human every day. Ms. Vrushali Shinde completed her B.E. Computer Engineering from Terna Engineering College, Mumbai University and is currently working in Citius Tech. Healthcare Technology Pvt. Ltd. as a senior software engineer. Let us know her better.

### **So to start with tell us how GEF happened to you?**

My financial condition was poor, I had a mother and a younger brother to look after and my father had passed away when I was young. So my career plans were straight, post diploma I was going to start working even though I aspired to study more. I scored very well in diploma better than my engineering aspiring friends. My plans changed and I started searching for a trust which would help me financially. I hunted all over Mumbai with a list of trustees in my hand. I also knocked BOI's door and then my best friend told me about GEF. I then met Pradeep sir with my hopes all drained in my Mumbai hunt. A few days later I got a call from Pradeep sir asking to collect the cheque, I actually could not believe that I was going to live my dream.

### **In continuation with the previous question, tell us how life would have been for you without GEF?**

I wouldn't have been so confident and self-aware in life. I met this human, Pradeep sir, even after infinite number of births I can't match his personality. He is so grounded and sorted.

I was always fond of acting, writing poems, anchoring and GEF gave me a platform. I got an opportunity to host the Annual day, organized by Ashwini. I always aspired to do anchoring like Mrs Manisha Bakare. I had observed her the previous year, it was just flawless. After my anchoring, my biggest

achievement were the praises from Manisha ma'am herself and Tyagu sir. Sir compared me with my idol, Manisha mam. My confidence got boosted and my stage fear got annihilated.

### **What is your biggest achievement to date-personal or professional?**

Professionally I am yet to achieve and still searching for the opportunities. On other fronts, my poem got selected in top 15 in the poem competition held by Konkan Marathi Sahitya Parishad. I got an invitation to attend Kavvi Sannelan 7, wherein I got an opportunity to recite my poem in front of the famous poet. Ashok Naigaonkar. It was an awesome moment.

### **Who is your inspiration?**

Pradeep sir is my biggest inspiration. I want to be stable and satisfied like him. Mukta Barve, she looks so ordinary but her acting skills are world apart. There is a fine line between an actress and a heroine. She is a true actress and deserves all the respect and appreciation for the talent she has.

### **How do you make such beautiful poems?**

Your eyes and ears should be always alert. You must be observant of your surroundings and your audience. You should read daily. These few things make me pen down my poems.

### **Tell us about your life, how it was as a student and how it is now with growing responsibilities.**

As a student I was financially poor. My friends were all pampered, who used to have expensive things, beautiful dresses, whereas I was a skinny girl with spectacles and hardly social. My confidence dropped which also reflected on my poor performance in school. Now I am sorted enough with my priorities and aim straight. Now I realize that all these things are secondary. All you should strive to become is a good human.

### **How do you feel to be a part of GEF?**

I feel so proud to be part of the GEF family. I still have people in my native, who feel money is everything but here at GEF, the thoughts are exactly opposite. The knowledge is considered as treasure and everyone is encouraged and appreciated.

### **Any message or advice to our students?**

I would just say that improve your reading and make it a habit. Work on yourself. List down the things you don't know, try new things, aim for being a better person. The only person you should try to be better than, is the person you were yesterday.



### SALIENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCES (2017-18)

01. Aman Nikam – XII Science - 80%

02. Kajal Sonawane – TY B.E. Comp – 9.4

03. Madhuri Rohane – SY B.A. -8.6

04. Mayuri Modak – SY B.M.S - A

10. Rajat Poojari – S Y B.Sc. Chemistry. – 8.6

11. Rasika Patade – TY B.Com - A

12. Sayali Karande – FY B.M.S – 8.4

13. Shubham Gawde – TY B.Tech Chem - 9.8



05. Nimisha Dalvi – XII Com. – 90 %

06. Niraj Kumbhar - SY B.Com. - 9.7

07. Omkar Mane – SY B.Com. – 9.6

08. Prafulla Tembhe - SY B Sc Math – 9.6

09. Pratima Chaugule – XI Comm. – 83%

14. Sumit Gursale – IPCC (CA) Group 1 cleared

15. Rohini Raut – XI Science – 84%

16. Varsha Bansode – FY Diploma – 79%

17. Chhaya Rohane – AMIE Part 1 – 8.5

18. Kalyan Garde – B.E. Mech Final – 66%