

MAY 2014

Bringing Joy to Tribal & Dalit Schoolchildren in India with a New Playground



For the past several years Visions has been supporting the phenomenal work of the Centre for Social Action Women's Education and Development (SAWED) Trust, including the **Radiance School for Tribal and Dalit Children in Dindigul, Tamil Nadu**. This beautiful school opened last spring 2013 and will eventually serve hundreds of highly disadvantaged children who would otherwise not have access to such an education. This school aims to provide a modern, holistic, and participatory learning experience for children who have known immense hardship, grinding poverty, social exclusion, and lack of access to basic services and rights. The opportunity to attend the Radiance School is a life-changing experience that will help shape these youth into thoughtful, productive, and compassionate young leaders.

Visions has provided support in the past for teachers' salaries and for installing large chalkboards in each of the 10 existing classrooms. Most recently, we were able to sponsor the development of a playground (including **soccer field and volleyball court**) and a **sports/physical education program** at the school—an initiative that will surely bring great joy and fulfillment to the lives of hundreds of Indian schoolchildren.

**After-School Tuition and Leadership
Enrichment Empowering Next Generation of
Young Leaders in Sri Lanka**

May '14 Edition

E-Newsletter #24

In This Issue

[Bringing Joy to Tribal & Dalit Children in India with New Playground](#)

[After-School Tuition & Leadership Enrichment Empower Next Generation of Leaders in Sri Lanka](#)

[Investing in the Capacity of Community Women Leaders](#)

[Recent Events Raise More than Just Funds--They Inspire Hope](#)

Join Our Mailing List!

Visions Chapters

We invite you to get involved with one of our many Visions Chapters today or start your own. Please feel free to contact any of the following individuals if you are interested in joining.

DAVIS:

Ritika Johal
rjohal@ucdavis.edu

LOS ANGELES/ORANGE COUNTY:

Greg Buie
gbuie@gmail.com

NEW YORK CITY:

Gurdeep Sareen & Terry Chen
gurdeep.sareen@gmail.com;
terry.chen@gmail.com

ROCHESTER:

Mary Grace Hamme
mhamme1@mail.naz.edu

SAUGERTIES:



Visions Board member Venita Sivamani visiting with Visions Leadership Academy students in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka earlier this month

With Visions' educational programs in Sri Lanka having grown considerably over the past few years, our impact has increased as well. Striving to fill the gaps after many years of conflict and overall hardship, Visions has invested heavily in the development of educational infrastructure and opportunities for marginalized communities. More than **560 youth** long affected by the conflict and displacement are currently attending after-school programs Visions runs in partnership with the Church of the American Ceylon Mission in Karadiyanaru and Vaharai in the Eastern Province, and Suthanthirapuram in the Northern Province. These after-school centers provide vital instruction in major subjects (such as Tamil, maths, science, etc.) and oftentimes mentoring support as well.

An ongoing year-round leadership enrichment program is also enabling **forty (40) Grade 10 and 11 students** in these under-served areas to develop their self-confidence, skills, and leadership abilities. As one after-school program teacher noted:

"The after-school classes have gone well, and the students are gradually improving their academic performance. At the Karadiyanaru School students are getting [higher] marks...quite regularly, and a higher percentage of students passed their O/L exams and qualified for A/L studies. As a teacher, I can also observe the enthusiasm of the students from how regularly they attend the program and by their eagerness to use these classes to clear up doubts and gaps in their studies."

~Mr. Gnanaseelan (O/L teacher at Kithul School in Karadiyanaru)

Investing in the Capacity of Community Women Leaders

Investing in the leadership abilities of those who on the ground who are making a difference in their own communities is one of Visions' main achievements. This year marks the first time that Visions is supporting a full-time staff to manage our growing programs in Sri Lanka. Ms. Biyoora, who is working under our local partner organization in Sri Lanka, is an up-and-coming leader with great potential and a passion for service. Earlier this year she conducted a 2-day gender sensitivity workshop with more than 20 preschool teachers in Vavuniya, putting her skills into action.

Another young leader whom we have written about before is Visions scholarship student Ms. Sivatharsini who is currently working towards her undergraduate degree at Madras Christian College in Chennai, India. Visions recently sponsored her attendance at a month-long "Gender, Diversity, and Social Transformation" training workshop in Bangalore, India, believing that she one day will return home to Eastern Sri Lanka and become a powerful agent for change. We absolutely believe that these young women will become a powerful force for good.

Wendy Gold
wgold@hvc.ir.com

BOSTON:
 Viji Sriharan
vijisriharan@gmail.com

PHILADELPHIA:
 Shreehari Raghavan
srao@sas.ucsm.edu

PITTSBURGH (CMU):
 Marie Avilez & Lexi Hernandez
marie93.avilez@gmail.com;
lexihernan@andrew.cmu.edu

PITTSBURGH (Univ. of Pitt.):
 Ernest Rajakone
erajakone@gmail.com

VIRGINIA:
 Rose Cole
rose.sims.cole@gmail.com

WASHINGTON DC:
 Meg Whittenberger
mwhittenberger@gmail.com

WEST VIRGINIA:
 Cristina Fiorentino
cristina.fiorentino222@gmail.com

TEXAS:
 Nitya Kumar
nityakumar90@gmail.com

TORONTO (Canada):
 Shivanu Thiyagarajah & Hayat Ali
shivanu.thiyagarajah@gmail.com;
hayat.bvibe@gmail.com

EDMONTON (Canada):
 Leka Sivakumar
lsivakum@ualberta.ca

MONTREAL (Canada):
 Ganeya Gajaram
ganeyai@live.ca

LONDON (Canada):
 Achchana Nadarajah
achchana1@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND:
 Sabine Wyss
swyss@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA:
 Raj Srikanthan
rajsrikanth7@gmail.com

QATAR:
 Mariem Fekih Zguir
mfekihzgi@gmail.com

Stay Connected



Recent Visions Events Raise More than Just Funds...They Inspire Hope

UC Davis--March 29th

The Visions Chapter at UC Davis, in collaboration with UC Davis Sunatya, held the first-ever intercollegiate classical Indian dance showcase on the West Coast on Saturday, March 29th, raising more than **\$4,000** to support educational efforts in India. Teams from universities across the country competed in this unique event for a great cause. Many thanks to the event organizers, volunteers, and performers for your support and hard work.



New York City--April 5th

Last year Visions marked a decade of service with our 10-Year "Rising Stars" Gala in Orange County, CA. This year we sought to bring the excitement to the East Coast and celebrated our many achievements over the past 11 years with more than 150 guests at our "Spring Celebration: Party for a Cause" fundraising event in New York City on Saturday, April 5th. Thanks to event sponsor Dack Consulting Solutions, Inc., DJ Pup Dawg, and Mr. Anand Sanghvi, and all our wonderful friends and supporters, we raised **\$8,000 towards our Visions Leadership Academy** in Sri Lanka and India. This program is currently providing year-round leadership enrichment to 40 youth in Sri Lanka and 30 youth in India.

with Us!

Keep up to date with Visions and all our efforts, events, upcoming trips, and more...

FACEBOOK



TWITTER



YOUTUBE



RAZOO

<http://www.razoo.com/story/Visions-Global-Empowerment>

[University of Pittsburgh--March 22nd & 31st](#)

Our University of Pittsburgh Chapter Director Ernest Rajakone recently held 2 events to help raise funds and awareness about Visions. Through his fraternity, Iota Nu Delta, he coordinated a fundraiser night at Chipotle, with a percentage of all proceeds from that evening going back to Visions. As the President of the university's South Asian Student Alliance (SASA), the message of Visions was also showcased at an annual multicultural performance on March 22nd. Such creative ideas bring great exposure to the organization and help rally much needed support for our work.

1621 Barry Ave. #PH1, Los Angeles, CA, 90025

visionseducation@gmail.com

www.VisionsGlobalEmpowerment.org

PLEASE MAKE A CONTRIBUTION!

We need your help! There are several projects that need immediate funding, including:

- *Visions Leadership Academy
- *After-School Programs
- *Student Scholarships
- *Teacher Trainings & Support

We can only do this important work with your support. Donations are accepted online through our website OR can be mailed to us. Please make checks out to "Visions". All donations are tax-deductible [tax ID#26-3386678].

[Forward email](#)

 SafeUnsubscribe™

