








ViSiONS

G L O B A L

Education. Empowerment. Entrepreneurship.

JUNE 2015

						
19,388	2,792	130	1,181	49	135	\$867,649
lives impacted	leadership students & teachers trained	scholarships awarded	students attended after-school programs	leadership & teacher trainings conducted	international volunteers traveled abroad	invested in education programs

ETHIOPIA'S 1st REGIONAL DEAFNESS CENTER OPENS ITS DOORS



This spring Visions launched its Model Regional Deafness Center in

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Connect with Us!

FACEBOOK

Bahir Dar, Ethiopia - the first facility of its kind in the country designed to offer multi-interventional services for the deaf community and their families. The center, which builds off of our existing and ongoing work at Yekatit 23 School, is now providing services to deaf youth & young adults, families, teachers, university students, and community members through a wide range of education & development programs that are dramatically changing the status quo. Some of our recent efforts include the following:

- Establishment of an **early childhood education** program for deaf 3-5 year old children
- Conducting weekly trainings in **Ethiopian Sign Language** for parents & families (once per week), teachers & staff (once per week), and hearing children at Yekatit 23 School (twice per week)
- Conducting **computer training** for students three times per week
- Laying the foundation for a **hearing assessment & counseling center** and conducting first round of tests
- Selection of 20 young adults to benefit from a **livelihoods development** initiative
- Hiring of **2 new deaf teachers** (bringing the total number to 4) and **2 interpreters** to serve 80+ children amongst 3 public schools in the Bahir Dar District
- Construction of a **new classroom** for deaf schoolchildren at Yekatit 23 School
- Developing educational and community **outreach materials**

Within just the first few months of this initiative, which is part of a year-long grant made possible by the Dream Blue Foundation, the situation for deaf youth & young adults and the understanding of deafness in general amongst the public in Bahir Dar has improved dramatically. Looking to the future, we have much to accomplish, and look forward to sharing our work on the ground with the 2 scheduled groups of volunteers visiting Ethiopia in June (8 students & faculty from SUNY New Paltz) and August (11 volunteers).

EXPANSION OF VISIONS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



TWITTER



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LINKED IN



RAZOO

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

GUIDESTAR

<http://www.guidestar.org/organizations/26-3386678/visions-global-empowerment.aspx>

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Short Film: India School for Tribal & Dalit Children



This year, we are unveiling 3 new short films highlighting our education work in India. The first film, released this



Another very exciting recent development has been the launch of the next phase of our Visions Leadership Program in India, which has seen the expansion of the program from 55 students to 600! Following an initial Training of Trainers for 30 community workers/educators employed by our local partner organization (the Arcot Lutheran Church School Project), conducted this past March, Visions is now serving youth across 15 different villages, most of which are in rural and impoverished areas.

These students are now receiving regular leadership development training, daily after-school tuition, and mentoring, and have access to periodic service opportunities to put their newfound skills and talents into practice. Simple structures equipped with electricity were established in each of the 15 benefitting villages so that students will have a safe and well-lit place to study. Visions also hired its first full-time staff in India to lead this program, Mr. Shylet Moni, an experienced development professional and curriculum developer.

The Visions Leadership Academy in Sri Lanka also continues to offer thorough and multi-disciplinary support to 55 young men and women, including regular after-school tuition, leadership training, social & cultural activities, and mentoring. Each year, a new batch of students circulates into this ongoing program.

spring, features the SAWED Trust Radiance School for Tribal and Dalit Children in Dindigul, India, which Visions has been supporting in various ways over the past several years, including:

- Supporting 3 teachers' salaries for the past 3 years
- Provided 10 classroom chalkboards and school signboards
- Established soccer field and playground
- Youth and teacher trainings

Thanks to Joe Hill & Kaytie Nielsen (of the Unexpected Laboratory), two students at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, who directed and produced the film. And in a recent development, we are proud to announce we will be following through on our commitment to establish a library (the "Sivamani Family & Friends Library") at the school later this year!

Watch the film
HERE

I.T. SCHOOL FOR GIRLS IN INDIA

In a major development, Visions is preparing to establish an IT school for underprivileged girls in India. Slated to be our biggest undertaking to-date, this project was recently launched through a private donor. A team of Visions representatives recently traveled to India in March to scout prospective properties, with a follow-up scouting trip to Tamil Nadu scheduled for early July. To learn more about this project and our vision, please visit:

www.VisionsSchool.org

Through this initiative, we envision molding a cadre of the brightest minds through a personal development experience that seeks to educate the whole individual. Looking beyond the parameters of formal education alone, we seek to provide a unique, engaging, and interactive learning environment in which students have the opportunity to participate in myriad extra-curricular activities, liberal arts education, language development, computer and IT education, professional development, and meaningful cross-cultural exchanges.

Our vision calls for establishing a state-of-the-art academic institution that will provide a free and high quality educational experience to selected marginalized girls. This institution will eventually span Grades 6 - 12 and shall provide a safe and comfortable residential environment for those young women chosen to attend.

RECENT VISIONS EVENTS



Lancaster, CA

Visions held a "Songs for Seva" benefit concert and dinner on April 18th at the beautiful new Hindu Temple of Antelope Valley (HTAV), which raised an incredible **\$11,100** toward our educational programs in India & Sri Lanka! The performance by Bhakti Movement Live featured a beautiful fusion of devotional music with a multi-media element of classic & contemporary images and story-telling. Thanks to the performers, organizers, and all who attended for making it such a special and memorable evening.

Davis, CA

The 2nd Annual Davis Dheem Tana - the first intercollegiate classical Indian dance competition on the west coast - was successfully held again this April 4th at UC Davis, raising over **\$5,000** for Visions' Leadership & Scholarship Programs in India and Sri Lanka in the process. The always phenomenal Visions UC Davis Chapter and performers from universities across the nation made this a truly spectacular program.

New York, NY

The Visions NYC Chapter teamed up with nonprofit organization Baal Dan in hosting another "Cocktails for a Cause" event - a social gathering in Manhattan to raise funds to benefit children in need. The event, held on April 2nd at Proper West bar, raised **\$2,800** for Visions' Sri Lanka Leadership Program.

Los Angeles & Orange County, CA

The premiere of our long awaited Visions short documentary film "Voices of Empowerment" was met with a warm reception at two screening events in Southern California this April - one at an artists' space in Downtown LA on April 24th, and the other at a private residence in Tustin, CA. Many thanks to the Ravindran family for hosting us.

At these events, we honored a handful of exceptional individuals who have gone above & beyond in their service of others and have contributed greatly to Visions' work. Congrats (and thank you!) to the following individuals for their "Outstanding Dedication to Service":

1. **Ms. Kavitha Pathmarajah** (*Los Angeles, CA*)
2. **Ms. Mary Grace Hamme** (*Boston, MA*)
3. **Ms. Mimi Giboin** (*St. Helena, CA*)
4. **Mr. Nik Lub** (*Napa, CA*)
5. **Mr. Nakulendran Viswalingam** (*Irvine, CA*)

And congrats to our 2014 "Local Partner of the Year":

6. **Mr. Sundar Gandhi & the Arcot Lutheran Church School Project** (*Thirukovilur, India*)

Collectively, these two events raised nearly **\$8,000** in proceeds and commitments toward our Sri Lanka education programs. We are looking forward to bringing this film to cities across the globe this year. Stay tuned for future events!

PLEASE MAKE A CONTRIBUTION:

*Invest in deserving and marginalized youth.
Invest in the leaders of tomorrow. Invest in Visions.*

DONATE HERE

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].

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