



Educating Rural India

OUTREACH

APRIL - 2017



**Creating
Tech-Savvy
Children**

**New
Buildings**
Haripad & Vetapalem

Sweet Success
From Madhya Pradesh
to Manjakkudi

Dear Readers,

The 2016 Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) survey reveals that a large number of students in rural India skip or drop out of school. The survey included over 560,000 children between three and 16 years, in 589 districts of India.

The problem of students dropping out, and absenteeism, is particularly acute in BIMARU (sick) states - an acronym for the less-developed states of Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh - that together have over 51 million children, or 46% of India's total child population between the ages of 11 and 16 years, according to Census data.

Through AIM for Seva regional co-ordinators who work with local communities, we have also come to learn that enrolment in school does not necessarily translate into attendance. There are many reasons why children in rural India skip school, despite knowing the importance of education. Access to school, lack of basic infrastructure, poverty and simply lack of interest.

Though alarming, these facts and figures, reassert the importance of AIM for Seva's Free Student Hostels. A Free Student Hostel provides complete care to children in rural India, during the critical phase of their mental and physical growth. The hostels ensures children

- Stay in school all through the academic year
- Learn cultural values and the *samskaras*
- Eat healthy food
- Adopt good hygiene practices
- Become self-confident and disciplined

Children in rural India not attending school has its fair share of consequences to our country with respect to human resource development. Today, we have 97 Free Student Hostels, which have benefited over 14,000 children. There are many more districts to reach, and I am happy to know more individuals and corporates are coming forward to help us in our vision of educating rural India.

Thank you



Sheela Balaji
Chairperson & Managing Trustee
AIM for Seva

Happy to Be On Board



Infosys Foundation is supporting 40 boys at Jaya Smrithi Dhama AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel in Udupi (Karnataka)



Clarion Cosmetics has stepped in for the third year to support AIM for Seva's Free Student Hostel for Boys in Chilamathur (Andhra Pradesh). They have been supporting this project since the construction of the building.



Vijaya Bank in Chennai has extended support to two students in our Tamil Nadu hostel.



Dr. S. Ramamurthy, Director of Cognizant Foundation inaugurating the computer centre.

Creating Tech-Savvy Children

In partnership with AIM for Seva, Cognizant Foundation has helped set up a computer lab facility in Swami Dayananda Vidhyasramam in Karagur Village, Palacode Taluk, Dharmapuri District, Tamil Nadu. The school provides quality education to over 250 children from kindergarten to Class 5 who come from Karagur and its surrounding villages.

Cognizant Foundation believes that corporate actions play a very important role in creating a climate of positive opinion and giving back to the society is not only imperative to the company's growth, but also an earnest reflection of the values it stands for. Established in the year 2005, Cognizant Foundation has several programmes that enables and facilitates underprivileged sections of society to access quality education, healthcare and livelihood.

The computer lab sponsored by Cognizant Foundation has 15 Lenovo computers on row tables and 1 UPS. A lesson plan has been created and will be incorporated into the curriculum from the next academic year. Moreover, there are plans to provide computer training to the villagers during after school hours.

“Great to see how the efforts of AIM for Seva has borne fruit in a very backward area with limited educational facilities and consequently high unemployment among the youth.”



The computer centre at Swami Dayananda Vidhyasramam in Karagur Village, Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu ready to be used.

Cover Story

Here's an excerpt of a conversation with Dr. S. Ramamurthy, Director of Cognizant Foundation who inaugurated the centre:

'Educating Rural India' - how important do you think is it?

Rising income disparity has a negative impact on productivity. In order to maintain the same quantum of annual growth in output (measured as Gross Domestic Product) more and more investment is required to compensate for productivity decline. Education and healthcare disparities have the same effect and adversely impact value creation. It is important to focus on providing help to institutions that endeavor to modernize and upgrade quality of education and healthcare available to underprivileged sections of the community, most of whom are in the rural areas. This will help upgrade standards in these sectors and address disparity concerns.

What made you join AIM for Seva in its mission to educate rural India?

AIM for Seva's initiatives to help rural children overcome two major obstacles to education – poverty and access to education. It, was a good fit with our objectives under education. Our common aim is to reach out to economically and socially backward sections of the society and make a meaningful impact in their lives and in their quest for a better future and what better way than to do it together.

Could you share your thoughts on Swami Dayananda Vidhyasramam in Karagur Village?

It was great to see how the efforts of AIM for Seva has borne fruit in a very backward area with limited educational facilities and consequently high unemployment among the youth. The hostels for boys and girls are well run and the students in general, besides doing well in studies, were found to be disciplined and high - spirited. The cultural event they put up for the guests at the Annual Day was awesome and displayed a high level of energy and talent.

What do you think are the challenges in making rural India computer literate?

- Low awareness about the importance of IT education among rural parents
- Difficulty in recruiting teachers with relevant qualifications and passion to promote computer literacy
- Lack of financial resources for procuring computers and creating necessary infrastructure
- Poor power and internet connectivity
- Limited awareness of and accessibility to current software tools
- Lack of English language skills

What are the projects that Cognizant Foundation would like to support?

Cognizant Foundation supports projects in the areas of Education, Healthcare and Livelihood, from credible not-for-profit partners with excellent track record.

AIM for Seva envisions to bring about positive change in the lives of rural and tribal children making a difference through areas of adoption of technology, teacher training and hands-on learning as methods for improving the quality of education. We look forward to more philanthropic corporate to join us in our mission.



AIM for Seva Enters Vetapalem, Andhra Pradesh

Tucked away in the Prakasam District of Andhra Pradesh, Vetapalem is a slow and steady village. The village has shown keen interest towards education and skill development that many educational institutions have sprouted up over the years. Interestingly, it is in this town that you find the Saraswata Niketanam - a Telugu book library consisting of rare books. Many dignitaries including Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu have visited this library. Vetapalem's Bandla Bapiah Junior College started in 1920, is an educational hub for several neighbouring villages. We are happy to announce that AIM for Seva has inaugurated a Free Student Hostel in this historic town.

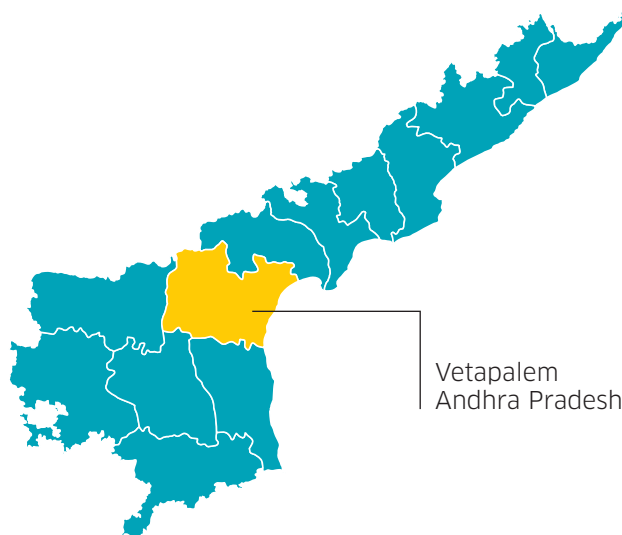


Shri. Pydikondala Manikyala Rao, Honourable Minister for Endowments A.P inaugurating the hostel.

Entrepreneur and social activist Shri. Srinu Gollapudi, understands the importance of the work done by AIM for Seva and wrote in to show his support. He came forward to build a free student hostel for boys through this family's Trust, 'The Gollapudi

Ventaka Krishnamma Charity (GVKC)' in his ancestral village of Vetapalem in Andhra Pradesh. The hostel construction began in June 2016 and the building was inaugurated in April 2017. Designed to accommodate 50 boys, the hostel is located close to the Z. P. High School and Ushodaya High School.

"In modern times, most charities are directed towards improving the skills to create livelihoods for people. But in this process, cultural values are often neglected. Further, the Shastras say, *apathra daanam* should be avoided. Most people don't know what kind of charity to do, and also don't know who deserves to receive charity, so they don't give at all. Given a situation like this, AIM for Seva is an all-in-one solution," he says. The hostel has some final work to be completed and will soon begin operations in the next academic year.



Vetapalem
Andhra Pradesh

Ashirvad Foundation in Sembangudi

Ashirvad Foundation has helped build a new washroom facility for the boys at AIM for Seva's Free Student Hostel in Sembangudi, Tamil Nadu.



Join Our Journey

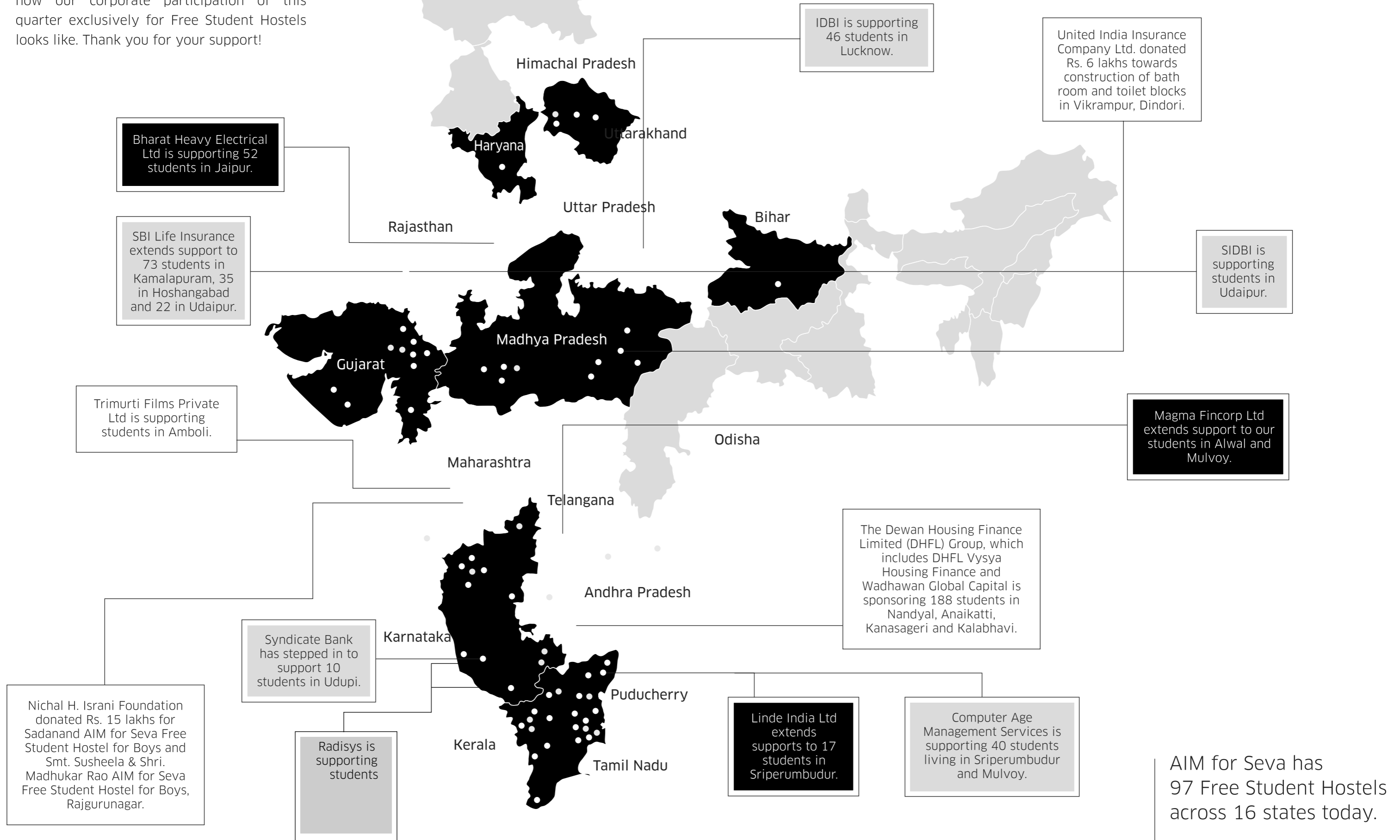
Student Sponsorship at our Free Students Hostels

Organisations across India are coming forward to support our Free Student Hostels. Heres how our corporate participation of this quarter exclusively for Free Student Hostels looks like. Thank you for your support!



AIM for SEVA

Educating Rural India



AIM for Seva has 97 Free Student Hostels across 16 states today.

Our Hostel in Haripad Gets A New Building!

AIM for Seva's Free Student Hostel in Haripad, a municipality in Alappuzha District in Kerala has been home to many boys since 2010. Last month, with the support of our donors Shri. Rajan & Smt. Jamuna Rajan, a new building has been constructed within the existing premises. This particular hostel has seen a gradual increase in student enrollment and a new facility was needed to meet the growing demands each year. Last year, a resident of Chennai, Tamil Nadu, Shri. Rajan stepped in to help with construction of a new building for the boys.

The new building, which can accommodate 40 more students, was graced by Shri. B. Swaminathan, Chairman of Karur Vyasa Bank in April 2017. During this event, an in-house library was also set up with books and learning material graciously donated by Macmillan India and individual donors. Education is the doorway to a wider and better world. Undoubtedly, this centre would be greatly beneficial for the holistic progress and development of the children.



Shri. Rajan & Smt. Jamuna Rajan, donors of our AIM for Seva's Free Student Hostel in Haripad, Kerala inaugurate the new building



Our boys sitting outside the new building

New Construction at Rajgurunagar, Maharashtra

There are 50 boys living in Smt. Susheela & Shri. Madhukar Rao AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel and the Sadanand AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel in Pangri village in Rajgurunagar, Maharashtra. Inaugurated in 2010, this hostel has received an overwhelming response from the local community. With the support of Bajaj Auto Ltd. and Atlas Equifin Pvt. Ltd., construction of a new building has begun. The new facility will house all 50 boys and have the capacity to accommodate more in the next academic year.



Our coordinators inspect the progress of construction.

The Many Ways of Giving

In his book, 'Daanam', Pujya Swamiji had written:

'You can give your time, you can lend a sympathetic ear to someone; lot of people want such ears. You can express words of appreciation, encouragement, empathy and so on. Sharing your knowledge with somebody is also caring. You can also pray for somebody; there are many ways of giving.' There are so many ways of giving - and this is how N. Selva and M. Kishore, engineering students, are doing their bit to support the community they live in. Selva who is pursuing his 2nd year MBA at Rajalakshmi School of Business and M. Kishore, a 4th year Mechanical Engineering student in Panimalar Engineering College are friends who decided to spend their Sundays in a more meaningful way.



Our student volunteer Kishore takes a theory class on the history of computers

They both decided to volunteer at S. Viswanathan Memorial AIM For Seva Free Student Hostel for Boys in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu every Sunday. They teach the boys the basics of computers: over the last four Sundays, they have given the boys an overview of computers, the history and introduced them to MS Office. Most importantly, they have created email ID's for students who are in class 10 and class 12. The hostel has two computers, which the students

use to run educational CDs, like Spoken English. Selva and Kishore bring their laptops along with them; they have a teaching methodology that includes theory and practical modules, drafted based on their personal learning experience.

"This would give them more confidence and help them in self-growth and transformation. Email ID's are a necessity today to connect to the world around us," they share. Upon asking what inspires them to be a part of AIM for Seva, they reply, "It is the smile and friendship of the students that makes us happy and encourages us to volunteer. AIM for Seva is doing a great job for the rural and tribal children of India. We feel blessed to be a part of the organization as a volunteer. It is a drop in the ocean, but we are happy to contribute." The students enjoy their classes and look forward to them every week, fondly calling the boys 'anna' (big brother in Tamil).

Bolt of Blue

As part of World Autism Day, AIM for Seva Krupa Home launched the 'Bolt of Blue' Collection. Fabric hand-woven by adults with developmental disabilities have been tailored into bags, folders, pouches and napkins.



Spotlight

Titan Company's Art for Development Initiative

We are happy to launch, in association with Titan Company, another fun workshop: Art for Development: A Window to Creative Expression 2016-2017. Children at five of our hostels, will be introduced to the basics of drawing, painting, collage and craftwork during the weekends. At the end of the year, all their artwork will be exhibited at a grand exhibition at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath.

The hostels that are participating in this year - long initiative at

1. Anugraha Swami Dayananda AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel for Boys, Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu
2. Emirates AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel for Girls in Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu
3. Atmalayam Swami Dayananda AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel for Girls, Tirupur, Tamil Nadu
4. Bhavani Arun AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel for Girls, Villipuram, Tamil Nadu
5. Swami Dayananda AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel for Girls, Bangalore, Karnataka



Students working on an upcycling craft activity

Sisters Raise Funds to Setup a Computer Lab in Udaipur

Siana Kapoor and Aria Kapoor raised USD \$5000 to setup a computer centre for the boys living in AIM for Seva's Free Student Hostel in Udaipur, Rajasthan. Aria (11 years old) created a website to promote the cause and to raise funds did a 'Swim-a-thon' where she swam 70 laps. Her sister Siana (10 years old) performed a 'Adavu-a-thon' where she presented a one - hour classical dance. The girls flew down from the USA with their family and inaugurated the computer centre in February 2017. The centre has 7 Lenovo computers, a printer and a trainer to teach the children.



From Madhya Pradesh to Manjakkudi

“The teacher in our village school would barely take classes,” shares Ashutosh Gupta. “I wanted to get proper education,” quips Reetesh Kumar Kourav and Ajay Kumar Dhemar says, “We did not have enough money to go to school.” For all these reasons, the boys joined the Krishna Rani Papneja AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel for Boys in Narsinghpur District, Madhya Pradesh. After completing class 12, they joined the Swami Dayananda College of Arts and Science in Manjakkudi to pursue higher education. The three boys were transferred to AIM for Seva's Free Student Hostel for Boys in Sembangudi,

Reetesh Kumar Kourav, Ashutosh Gupta
and Ajay Kumar Dhemar (L-R)



Tamil Nadu and went to college to pursue their three - year undergraduation course. At Swami Dayananda College of Arts and Science many corporate organisations and banks come in for campus recruitment. This year the organisations that came in include Lucas TVS Limited, Wipro, Tata Consultancy, Sundaram Finance, City Union Bank, CAMS and ICICI.

Acing the interviews with confidence and determination, the boys faired quite well at the group discussions and personal interviews. All three boys, who were pursuing Bachelors in Mathematics, have found themselves lucrative jobs. Ajay Kumar Dhemar has been selected to join Tata Consultancy Services and will soon know which location he is to report to. Ashutosh Gupta and Reetesh Kumar Kourav have been selected by Sundaram Finance and will be joining office in their home state Madhya Pradesh very soon. Today they would begin a new phase of life, embarking on a corporate journey. Being sons of parents, who are domestic workers, shop keepers or farmers, it is a matter of pride for them, their families and the village community. With smiles of joy, they happily share, “AIM for Seva has helped us to stand up as independent individuals. We feel blessed to have had the opportunity to grow up in this hostel. Anyone like us who does not have the means but yet dares to aspire can be rest assured that their dreams will be fulfilled at AIM for Seva.”

Bidding Farewell

Class 12 students at the S. Viswanathan Memorial AIM for Seva Free Student Hostel for Boys in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu are stepping out of the hostel to pursue higher studies. But as they move out, they have planted a sapling to leave their impressions behind. “It is here that we have made friends and learnt life skills, this is our home,” they share.



Other projects



Women Empowerment

AIM for Seva manages four vocational training centres. Located in Uttakhand and Tamil Nadu, each centre imparts training to approximately 40 women every year in tailoring. The course is completely free and women are taught sewing and knitting. Self-reliance and financial independence are the focus of this rural empowerment initiative.

Providing Free Health Care

Located 150 kilometres away from Ahmedabad, Shamlaji Hospital is a free healthcare service provider in the rural landscape. Approximately 200 patients everyday avail round the clock support; every year 1000 patients undergo cataract surgery and 30 patients get cleft lip and palate surgeries completely free of cost.



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