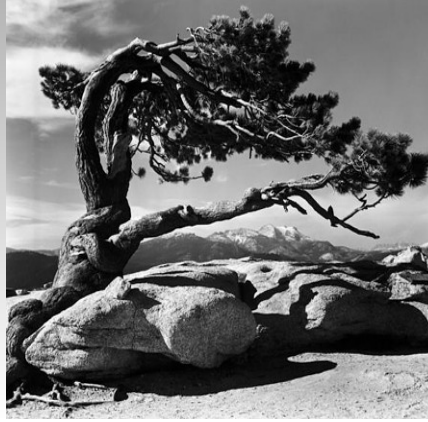


ASHRAYA



Have look! The pine tree is bending
Over the rocks like a frail old man blessing
The world of ASHRAYA
A physical challenged in India for
Education and Employment Generation
The scorching sun whips its back,
And the heat smacks its branches,
Shaking off green buds, leaves of shade
That orange, for refuge is a raggy folds.
Phone: 973-275-0034
As God's children go on a star-hunt,
The world of ASHRAYA stands on its head,
A top spinning in perfect harmony.

ASHRAYA – 2002 YEAR END REPORT

It gives me great pleasure to note that the year 2002 has been a good year for ASHRAYA in spite of economic downturns in the US. We have been able to crystallize what we set out to do a few years back, i.e.

- Becoming a liaison for select organizations in India and add at least one new organization per year (preferably small and focused). We added Mobility India-Bangalore and MP-Blind Welfare Organization, Indore to our continuing roster of organizations this year. While Mobility India's traditional focus has been providing prosthetic aids to the mobility challenged, they are expanding into the areas of education and income generation programs. MP-Blind Welfare Organization is a small and upcoming organization which was recommended to us by Mr. Subash Dattrange, the former executive director at NAB-Bombay, who continues to help us in identifying good organizations and proposals.
- Continuing our focus on identifying needs for equipment, purchasing and delivering them to the organizations so as to ensure effective usage. Our liaison volunteer in India, Mr. Dattatreya has been instrumental in making this happen, personal visiting the organizations and working closely with them to develop project proposals.
- Expanding the scope to include other physical challenges and funding income-generation programs (as opposed to funding education-related programs for the visually challenged which has been our past focus).
- Building our new web site www.ashraya.net and using it to create a 3-way information exchange between donors, beneficiaries and volunteers.

Please see attached our year-end accounts for 2002. We collected \$7136 for the year (this has been an all-time high, excluding organization-specific donations that we typically pass through). We disbursed funds worth \$5922. The following are the three projects we funded this year.

- Mobility India recently started 20 bridge schools in slums at the outskirts of Bangalore. These schools provide basic education for physically challenged children and prepare them for enrollment in regular schools. During my trip to Bangalore in March 2002, I visited these slums and identified the capital needs for running these schools, vis-à-vis educational kits, toys, blackboards, puzzles etc. Our liaison purchased these aids worth \$2600 and supplied them to the schools, and continues to monitor the progress and usage periodically (please visit our website for photos). We intend to support this innovative program as needed.
- MP-Blind Welfare Association in Indore is starting a center of education for the visually challenged students with Braille typewriters, computers with special software and a recording center for producing talking books. Their proposal was for capital equipment worth \$6000, including Braille typewriters, recording system, computer hardware and software and duplicating machine. Since this is first time we are working with this organization, we wanted to start out with funding a subset of their needs and expand our funding based on monitored progress. Once again, our liaison in India purchased 4 Braille typewriters for \$1403 and a recording system for \$1543 and delivered them to the organization personally.

- We purchased various textbooks on education for the physically challenged on behalf of our traditional beneficiary BPA, Ahmedabad, which intends to use them in their teacher training program. The books were purchased on Amazon and Thompson Learning and delivered to BPA by one of friends, Mr. Apurva Varma.

The list below is a comprehensive set of goals for the year 2003.

- We are currently working with Mobility India on a series of small-scale income generation programs for physically challenged adults in the slums around Bangalore. One of the ideas we are exploring in detail right now involves setting up a carpentry shop with lathes, saws, jigsaw machines and moulds. The capital purchases needed are \$2500, with a yearly operating expenditure of \$1600. Funding for operating expenses will be on-going for the next few years, till they are able to break even. We are currently evaluating the project for length of support and viability of the project.
- We have identified an organization called Shakuntala Foundation in Kolar near the Karnataka-TN border run by a very dedicated individual Mr. Chidambara. This organization provides education and rehabilitation support to the mentally retarded. We are currently doing the due diligence (Dattatreya has already visited the organization once) to see how we can help and work with them.
- We will fund the remaining portions of the capital needs of MP Blind Welfare Association based on the feedback on their progress.
- BPA-Ahmedabad is looking for support on developing educational programs for the visually challenged as part of their rural outreach programs.

Our challenges for the year ahead are many, and to meet these challenges, we need volunteers who can help us with running this organization. To be specific:

- We received a number of good proposals for Shubham in Muzaffarpur last year. We need someone to personally visit the organization as soon as possible and provide us a good evaluation its intentions and activities. In general we need volunteers who can visit organizations on our behalf to monitor progress of ongoing projects and provide inputs on new ones.
- We need people to own a specific organization raise funds through ASHRAYA for projects related to their organization.
- We need volunteers to help us in targeting alternate venues for raising funds in the US. If we need to expand the scope of our organization beyond education for the visually challenged, we have to expand our sources of funds as soon as possible (e.g. corporate sponsorships, media advertisements, sponsorships from organizations like NetIP and Indus).
- We would like to encourage our donors to set up donations through their companies to leverage matching contributions.

I thank all past donors for their continued support to ASHRAYA in spite of economic downturns. If you are favorably inclined, I also welcome you to become an active participant in ASHRAYA's activities. If you need any further information on Ashraya, please call me at 973-275-0034 or visit our website www.ashraya.net for latest information on projects and our progress to date. I look forward to hearing from you, and I thank you in advance for your support.

Regards and Cheers,

Vasuki Subbarao
PRESIDENT, ASHRAYA