

## “International Women's Day Celebration”



**O**n the day of the International Women's Day 2011, LIFE Trust organized a program in collaboration with the Integrated Child Development Schemes (ICDS) Department. This celebration brought together eight hundred and fifty Anganwadi sevikas, madatnis, supervisors, government officials and women, working in several international and private sector organizations, under one roof. The agenda of the day was to award the best Anganwadi Sevika and Madatni. The Managing Trustee, Mrs. Poonam Lalvani, while inaugurating the program, said that International Women's Day gives an opportunity to celebrate acts of courage by extraordinary women around the world. She added that the power of women in different forms is

accepted in form of Ashtalaxmi who is the giver of prosperity, economy, and safety of all. She also expressed her happiness after watching so many bright, confident and empowered women together. She referred to LIFE Trust's support strategies towards enhancing the quality of Anganwadi Centers, providing qualitative learning skills to students for better education, therefore making them noteworthy additions to community and society.

Seventy teachers and Anganwadi Madatnis from Wadala, Sewri, Dharavi and Bandra showed their skills on stage followed by the encouraging empowerment song by LIFE Trust team "Tu Khud ko Badal." The plays performed and the dances were all about encouraging girl's education and women's liberation.

The event was chaired by Mrs.Indu Shahani, Sheriff of Mumbai. She has dedicated herself to the betterment of qualitative education system from the last three decades, awarded the 'Women's achiever award', 'Woman of the year', 'Giant International Education Award' and 'Sindhu Gaurav Puraskar'.

"Meri Awaz" was the contest held for encouraging Anganwadi Teachers to improve the qualitative abilities of one thousand Anganwadi teachers. The awards were selected by the LIFE Trust team and supervisors of ICDS Department. The top ten Anganwadi teachers and Madatnis were felicitated by Ms. Shaina and Dr. Indu Shahani. The top three were awarded with the trophies and rewards of Rs. 15000, 10000 and 5000 for the superior functioning of their Anganwadi. Sunita Damodar Patole from the Wadala Anganwadi, Radhika Krishna Bhaidkar from the Bandra Anganwadi and Alka Ravindra Khare from the Dharavi Anganwadi were the three winners respectively. A special award was also given to Minal Neman, for being the top Anganwadi Sevika for the last three years.

## Trustee Speak

**N**amaskar to all.

What a great start to 2011. Our first participation in the Standard Chartered Marathon-Mumbai was a huge



achievement. We raised a sizeable amount of funds. Our heartfelt thanks to all our Corporate Partners and a special mention to our two dream makers Rohan Batra and Amrudha Nair who collectively raised 3.15 lacs for us. We were delighted to welcome Mr. Jonathan Pease, a famous television and radio celebrity who volunteered with LIFETRUST. "Joy in a Box" was celebrated for a second year running and our children from Wadala and Antop Hill had a rollicking time at the party organized for them and put up some beautiful performances. As always LIFETRUST celebrates the spirit of the womanhood on the International Women's Day for all the Anganwadi workers who celebrated this day with us by expressing their talent through the LIFETRUST platform. It gladdens my heart when a group of Anganwadi workers thanks me in the end and says, "Ma'am, haame bahut maaza aya, ap hamare liye haar saal aisa hi program kijiye." On behalf of our board of trustees I thank all our donors, well wishers and the LIFETRUST team for their support.

Warm wishes for a wonderful 2011.

Together in service,  
Mrs. Poonam Lalvani  
Managing Trustee

## IN THIS ISSUE

Women Empowerment.....	1	Changing Lives.....	4
Piece of LIFE.....	2	Volunteer Speak.....	4
Mumbai Marathon.....	2	Corporate Sponsorship.....	4
Artwork for Heartwork.....	3		
Joy in a Box.....	3		

# PIECE OF LIFE

## MUMBAI

- Three women, Sunita Damodar Patole, Radhika Krishna Bhaidkar and Alka Ravindra Khare –, Sevikas of the Anganwadi project of ICDS, were felicitated at International Women's Day function held on 8th March by LIFE TRUST. This grand function was interspersed with group dances and thematic plays and the Sheriff of Mumbai distributed the cash prizes, certificates & trophies to these winners of the contest "Meri Awaaz".
- Sponsored by M/s Glaxo, LIFE Trust launched a yearlong Programme on "Learning Disability" for the children of 49 MCGM schools. Students having learning disability have trouble performing specific types of skills or completing tasks. While there is no immediate cure, through a counseling & remediation process these children can be taught how to deal with this and be high achievers. This way the counselor builds in a sense of confidence and a determination to succeed in such children. The LIFE Trust counselors at the MCGM schools also provide information, resources and services that can help these children lead a normal life.
- A documentary film "Window of my class" was made by Iranian student volunteers on our CCC programme. They were given training in basic film-making at Whistling Woods Academy-Mumbai. This is a great idea conceived by AED of Washington under their Project "Capstone".

## BANGALORE

- Project "Tent School", in collaboration with SSA ( Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), is a novel initiative taken up by LIFE TRUST to reach out to the slums in the outskirts of Bangalore. Our Programme Head has identified Onte slum, comprising of migrants from North India, being in dire need of a school for their ninety children. Soon you will hear of our first school being set up here.
- It's a common sight at all large construction sites where children are left to play in the heat and dust while their parents are at work. LIFE trust has set out to provide basic education to these children for about 6 years before their parents move on to the next site. This will be in collaboration with the construction companies, who will provide the school structure while LIFE Trust will run the school and move it to the next site when required.
- School Development Project (SDP): LIFE Trust has tied-up with the Bangalore State Education Department to replicate the successful model of our Flagship Programme at Mumbai. Therefore we plan to engage in eighteen government schools of Bangalore to impart holistic education through digital classrooms, yoga, special attention to slow learners etc.

## CHENNAI

- News from "Our Home"- Shankar's life has come a long way ! One who was unable to read or write in English, when he was admitted in our orphanage, is now on Facebook! One of the many success stories, we at LIFE TRUST take pride in.
- After a long wait the students of 10th standard from our orphanage are soon going on a trip to Kodiakanal. We will have a lot more to write about this in our next issue.

## MUMBAI MARATHON

**1** 6th January 2011 was an exciting day for all of us here at LIFE Trust. The LIFE Trust team put on its running shoes and joined thousands of others in the 'Dream Run' section of the 2011 edition of the Mumbai Marathon. We walked together to promote our motto of 'Changing Lives, Changing Destinies'. We were proud to participate in this event that embodies the spirit of the city of Mumbai as well as that of the perseverance of sport. The LIFE Trust team made its presence felt by coming out in large numbers, in our trademark colours of orange and white. Our t-shirts, banners and balloons bore this colour combination along with our motto.



As we all know, financial assistance is what keeps organisations like ours, going strong. The marathon presented an excellent opportunity for us to partner with some major corporate bodies.

Amongst them are, Nomura Securities, IRB Infrastructure and Developers, Sabero Organics and Centrum Financial Services. These companies were generous not only with their financial resources but also with their time and enthusiasm. We thank them for their support.

We also had very young Dream Makers - Rohan Batra and Amruda Nair who ran 21 km, half marathon in support of LIFETRUST and raised a handsome amount of donation. Well known actress Aarti Chabria, also shared her infectious 'go-getter' spirit with the rest of our team. We

laud them for their enthusiasm and thank them for their contribution.

# ARTWORK FOR HEARTWORK



Art is a universal language; it can be made by anyone, translates well visually and is often used as a tool in therapy for self expression.

Mother Teresa once said that every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love and a gift to that person. "Artwork for Heartwork" is a beautifully thought out combination of the two. Committed to bestow moral support through the means of art, the initiative was launched on 20 March 2011, a week after the great East Japan earthquake. Children are often most vulnerable to the traumas of disasters because of their restricted comprehensive and cognitive skills, and their inability to express distress and anxiety.

This initiative was started by students from Georgetown University, and our involvement in this relatively unknown endeavor, is all thanks to Rahul Jagtiani, the son of our Chairperson.

In an attempt to contribute to this thought provoking program, LIFE TRUST sent in nearly twenty drawings all the way to Japan. Children from the Municipal Cooperation of Greater Mumbai (MGCM) schools, showed their support hoping to bring light into the lives of these children, with a simple work of art. The students made beautiful drawings and incorporated 'スマイル', the Japanese lettering for the word "Smile" in many of them.

Soon enough, we at LIFE TRUST received a thank you letter from the organization, and the volunteers of "Artwork for Heartwork" acknowledging the arrival of these drawings.

LIFE TRUST is happy to be a part of something so path breaking- Delivering smiles from around the world.



## Few Pieces Of Our Artwork



Dear Mr. Rolla,

We have received your package and wanted to thank you and the students for participating in our project! I have attached a thank you letter as well as our first newsletter and would appreciate if you could share it with them. We will continue to post incoming artwork and new updates on our website, so please continue to follow and support us. Thanks again!

Irene (Artwork for Heartwork), artworkforheartwork@gmail.com

# JOY IN A BOX

**J**oy in a Box' is a one year old, annual initiative of LIFE TRUST. The aim of this initiative is to collect and deliver new educational learning toys to the less fortunate kids.

Statistics show that 85% of the human brain develops before the age of three and thereby educational toys like beads, pyramids puzzles, toy blocks, and model fruits/animals help in joyful learning which leads to mind stimulation.



The month of January saw us gear up for the 2011 edition of our annual event 'Joy in a Box'. The objective of this event was to provide the underprivileged children below the age of six, with educational toys which prepares them for school.

On 5th February, we hosted a mega party for 500 children from 50 anganwadis from the Shivri-Wadala area. LIFE TRUST provided 50 boxes to 50 Anganwadi teachers. The major entertainers- the clown; the moonwalker; the popcorn machine and the music made the kids dance with joy while they enjoyed mouth watering snacks. Our 'Box of Joy' distributed to each Anganwadi contained toys like counting beads to improve mathematical abilities, a pyramid to improve spatial ability and colorful shapes to make children familiar to different shades and forms. The entire staff of LIFE Trust worked together to make this event a success. The smiles on the faces of our little guests were the highlight of the evening.

# CHANGING LIVES



“The only way for a woman, to find herself, is by creative work of her own. There is no other way about it” said a wise person once. Sunita Damodar Patole; a Wadala Anganwadi resident has been a case in point.

The winner of the Women's Day Event held on 8th March 2011, she was felicitated by the Sheriff of Mumbai

Mrs. Indu Shahani and the Managing Trustee of LIFE TRUST Mrs. Poonam Lalvani; and received a monetary funding of Rs. 15,000 for her future development activities.

Sunita was chosen from among a multitude of contestants from 744 Anganwadis, and after a written, practical observation, feedback from those parts of her Anganwadi and the analysis of an ICDS supervisor. She is one of the few Anganwadi sevikas who commands great respect for her discipline from not only the parents, but also the children. The attendance rate in her school is the highest of her district; children are neatly dressed and adhere to school rules. Sunita is a great example of the fact that actions speak louder than words.

Another story, that of Nayana Yashwant Mestry, a LIFE coach who has been associated with LIFE TRUST for two years now is truly one worth telling. She came in to train students in basic computer skills. Her love for rangoli was evident to Ms. Poonam Lalvani, the Managing Trustee of LIFE TRUST, and out of pure goodwill and faith in Nayana, she enrolled her into a rangoli making basic course early 2011 conducted by "Rangvalli Parivaar" in Thane.

Now, preparing for the Advanced Rangoli Making Course also sponsored by LIFE TRUST; she is set to take on the world of commercial rangoli making.

If we don't change, we don't grow. If we don't grow, we don't really live; these women and their stories are a living example of this belief. We, at LIFE TRUST, hope to make a difference in every way we can, to bring about a change.

# VOLUNTEER SPEAK

“I am interested in meeting real Indian people so I can get a better understanding of their everyday lives,” said Jonathan Pease while filling in the volunteer form for LIFE TRUST. Jonathan Pease, a well known Australian radio and television presenter visited India for four days to get an insight about the functioning of Indian educational system.

He landed in Mumbai on January 31 and on the same day visited the Nirmal Nagar Child Care Centre in Bandra. He conducted a session in art and craft with more than 30 students in the above mentioned school. Next he toured the New Sion School and Maharashtra Nagar Child Care Center where he spoke about the Australian education system. Later he visited the vocational training session for underprivileged women with whom he participated in mehendi and tailoring session at Dharavi. The grand finale was a trip he sponsored to Essel World for the children of our Shindewadi BMC School.

Our staff who accompanied the children also had a wonderful time at Essel World - the first theme park of India.

When asked about his experience, he stated, "I love working with kids and inspiring people to reach their potential." It is really inspirational when a person of his stature decides to spend some quality time with the children and their teachers. Truly an example to follow!



# LIFE IN THE NEWS



# CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

We are happy to announce that Glaxo took the responsibility and sponsored the entire Learning Disability Outreach Program conducted by LIFE TRUST.

Learning disability is a classification that includes several disorders in which a person has difficulty learning in a typical manner, usually caused by unknown factors. The factor is the disorder that affects the brain's ability to receive and process information. This can make it problematic for a person to learn as quickly or in the same way as someone who is not affected by a learning disability. People with learning disabilities have trouble performing specific types of skills or completing tasks if left to figure things out by themselves or if taught in conventional ways.



LIFE TRUST extends its heartfelt thanks to Glaxo for taking this rewarding initiative.

