

WINTER 2021 | ISSUE 2.4



ENDEARING CAUSES



Quarterly newsletter of Asha for Education, Silicon Valley chapter



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Asha for Education
Bringing hope through education
Silicon Valley chapter



Message From The Coordinator

Dear friends of Asha,

Thank you for your continued support towards Asha for Education, Silicon Valley chapter. It is your support that has enabled us to sustain and grow impactful projects that touch the lives of thousands of children, even in these very challenging times. In this last quarter of 2021, we have been busy completing our project funding commitments, and concluding the year's fundraising activities.

We also finalized the 2022 Silicon Valley Chapter Team and it is super exciting to have several new volunteers take up chapter roles. We are very thankful to our old and new volunteers involved in Chapter, Team Asha, and other roles for their dedication and uncountable night and weekend volunteer hours.

In this edition of Endearing Causes, you will read about Team Asha programs and fundraising updates. And we will present some inspiring project highlights and volunteer contributions. If you would like to volunteer, donate, or learn more about our initiatives, visit sv.ashanet.org, or write to us at sv@ashanet.org.

Thank you again for your continued support towards Asha for Education, Silicon Valley chapter. We wish you all a very Happy New Year and a relaxing holiday season.

- Kritika Upreti,
Chapter Coordinator



2021
so far...

22,899



Children Impacted

\$503,341



Disbursed

23



Projects Supported



Team Asha Updates

Team Asha is a premier endurance sports training program providing personalized coaching, motivation and support for individuals with a goal to run a half/full marathon or bike 100 km/100 miles or do a sprint/olympic triathlon. Many TA Program participants also become exceptional volunteers and stay with the Asha family for many years to come. Here we see a brief update on the fund raising outcomes of TA 2021.

TA Biking: 2021 was very challenging for TA biking program due to target ride cancellations and air quality concerns during some planned rides. However, the coords, coaches and captains still pulled off two amazing rides for their 105 trainees. Organizers also tried a new experiment of eliminating a minimum fundraising \$ requirement, and were happy to note that this season was a record breaking year for enrollment, active riders and total funds raised per-rider despite being one of the most challenging years in TA history. Biking program logged \$138,529 (confirmed \$62,000) in donations.

TA Triathlon: The 32 triathlon trainees went on long rides and runs almost everyday in preparation for their Santa Cruz (70.3), Sacramento (140.6) Iron Man and olympic triathlon targets. The season logged \$24,450 in donations.

TA Climbing: 24 trainees targeted to conquer the Mt Langley, CA summit and the Grand Canyon Rim-to-rim hikes this season. \$46,889 of donations were logged (\$26,248 confirmed).



TA Biking Participants



TA Triathletes



TA Climbers



Team Asha Updates

TA Running: The TA SV and East Bay running programs had 65 and 25 trainees respectively targeting various 10Ks, half and full marathons in San Francisco, San Jose and other California locations. SV running and East Bay running programs logged \$37,450 and \$65,225 in donations respectively.

To learn more about Team Asha and to stay up to date with future seasons, please visit <https://sv.ashanet.org/team-asha/>



TA South Bay Runners



TA East Bay Runners

Volunteer Spotlight



Shivani, one of Asha SV's 2022 chapter coordinators

Shivani Prasad had been participating in the TA running programs since 2017 and during the 2019 event, she got to know more about chapter activities and was excited to get involved. Her belief that education is the most powerful way to uplift a society has led her to don many hats as a volunteer- she has been a new project coordinator (Edu impact 2020 evaluations), steward for GVS project, Asha Learning Program coordinator and is soon going to be acting as one of Asha SV's chapter coordinators for 2022.

Shivani appreciates the fact that volunteering with Asha keeps her connected to the ground realities in India. In her own words, "Volunteering with Asha has made me realize that there are a lot of ways in which one can help the kids in India and has given me a platform to do my part in bringing about the change in a meaningful way."

Read more about GVS, a project Shivani stewards and their exceptional response to pandemic-era challenges [here](#).



Edu Impact 2021: Projects Initiated



Educate Girls, (Rajasthan, MP, UP)



Sankalp ek Prayas, Chhattisgarh

Currently where patriarchy and poverty intersect, and where policies are not enabling, girls face enormous challenges in getting to and remaining in school. Educate Girls works in these worst gender gap districts of India to create a sustainable and systemic solution in the hope that one day every girl will be in school and learning. Educate Girls follows a scalable low cost model using smart data and technology with village level high-touch community engagement and partnerships with state ministries. Volunteers known as “Team Balika” do the grassroots work, they find out-of-school girls, bring them into school, ensure that they stay and learn, and help in forming School Management Committees.

Since its founding in 2007, Educate Girls has ensured that over 1 million girls have been enrolled into school and it has also improved learning outcomes for over a million children. With Asha SV's support, Educate Girls will be able to enroll an additional 200 out of school girls and improve learning for 2000 children.

Asha SV has supported eMerger initiative of Sankalp ek prayas in government schools of rural Chhattisgarh since 2019. This year they submitted a proposal for another project "GARIMA". The project will be implemented in 60 villages in Bhilai-Durg region of Chhattisgarh and will benefit 1500 vulnerable at-risk and disadvantaged girls in the age group of 10-16 years who are presently studying in Class VI to X, their parents and local community members. The goals of GARIMA-the Girls' Education program are:

1. Help girls complete secondary school and have the skills necessary to negotiate key life decisions
2. Create opportunities for upliftment of girls [in the age bracket of 10-16 years] in rural Indian villages as a 3 years pilot project
3. Contribution toward social equality and empowerment for girls to make a difference in their life by exposing them to various creative and performing art forms



Edu Impact 2021: Projects Initiated



VARUN, UP

Located close to the border of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, project VARUN serves to provide primary education to children in the villages surrounding the small town of Naugarh. To continue their education through high school and beyond, children need to attend the government school in Naugarh. Since a daily commute from Naugarh to villages is impossible, only those children that can find accommodation through relatives in Naugarh are able to continue their education. Boys also have an option of staying at a low cost hostel run by another NGO in Naugarh.

Through the Edu-Impact grant, we are working on building and running a girls hostel in Naugarh that can provide a safe place for the girls to stay and pursue their education. The expected result of the intervention is a reduction in dropout among girls after primary school. The eventual goal is to add vocational training facility and ensure the operation costs are self-sustained.



Jagriti Bal Vikas Samiti, UP

Jagriti Bal Vikas Samiti has had a long association with Asha. The Silicon Valley chapter has supported one of their schools (Apna Skool) since 2002. This year, they submitted a proposal for another school, Swami Vivekananda Vidyalaya, located in Lodhar village near IIT Kanpur. Swami Vivekananda Vidyalaya currently has an enrolment of about 300 students, in grades 1 through 8, with a girls to boys ratio of 3:2. The school has a computer lab with thirteen computers with internet connectivity and a library with about 12,000 books.

The proposal that Asha SV is supporting through Edu Impact 2021 aims to provide uniforms and learning materials to 100 girls in the school, advanced computer training and vocational training to all girls in grades 5 and above, and nominal scholarships to encourage girls graduating from 8th grade to continue their education. The proposal also seeks partial support for teachers who will be conducting the training.



Success Story



Mukesh Kumar, like many of his fellow villagers from Ranchi, used to migrate seasonally along with his parents to brick kilns of Kanpur, UP for livelihood. His family used to engage in the process of taking out the baked bricks from the kilns and transporting them. While his stay in Kalra 1 brick kiln in Tatiyaganj area of Kanpur, he was enrolled in Apna Skool, a network of education centers for the children of migrant workers in brick kilns in Kanpur. Charmed by their innovative methods of learning, he attended the Apna skool education centre when he got time after assisting his parents in their work. After completing his studies in Apna Skool till Class 4, he got selected in the first batch of kids in Apna Ghar, a residential hostel where the kids stay year-long so that their studies go on un-interrupted while their parents migrate back to their native place. Along with studies, he used to participate in dramatics and writing poems.

He completed his education till Class 12 while staying in Apna Ghar from 2006 to 2014, and then enrolled for BA program. He was accepted by Apna Kendra- supported by RV Foundation- to allow him to focus on his studies along with preparation for Azim Premji University for Master's program. He also worked as a teacher in Apna Skool during his bachelor's program, teaching kids like himself for whom education was the only tool to break away from the vicious cycle of brick-kilns.

He was accepted for MA (Education) program at Azim Premji University and successfully completed his MA in 2019. He is currently working as a Project Coordinator in Apna Skool (supported by Asha Silicon Valley).



Projects Showcase: Sankalp Day Care

12

YEARS OF SUPPORT

\$147,273

TOTAL FUNDS DISBURSED



A short video about Asha Silicon Valley's partnership with Sankalp Day Care

Sankalp Day Care is a non-profit institution in Kanpur, India, aiming to provide a nurturing environment for children with special needs. They cater to children with a wide range of challenges, including cerebral palsy, autism, speech impediments, and behavioral problems. They offer special education, physiotherapy, speech therapy, and vocational training for 60 children (only 26 children are currently attending the school because of COVID-19) at their facility as of 2021. Besides this, Sankalp also takes up awareness campaigns, counseling sessions for parents, and interactive sessions for teachers.

Since 2010, Asha Silicon Valley has supported this project to the tune of \$147,273. This has allowed them to increase their student capacity from 20 to 60 while maintaining the same quality of care by employing more qualified teachers and conveyance vehicles. With our continued support, Sankalp can focus on their mission - to create an atmosphere where special needs children can learn to grow and express themselves, and lead a happy life.

“If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children.”

MAHATMA GANDHI