



THE
SUGUN THOMAS
FOUNDATION



TOGETHER WE CREATE
A SPECIAL WORLD

Newsletter – Issue 1, Vol 1, June 2006

For those who support and closely follow the activities of the Sugun Thomas Foundation

From the Editorial Team,

This newsletter is primarily meant for those who are supporting the cause that the 'Sugun Thomas Foundation' is addressing. We hope to bring out newsletters once every two months, and convey the news of the Foundation as accurately as possible. Feel free to comment on the newsletter - good, bad or what's missing, and we will include it in subsequent newsletters.

Selection of students – Beyond objective criteria and interviews

The selection team that headed out to different schools to shortlist and select beneficiaries knew that it would be a difficult task. There seemed so many deserving students with genuine difficulties and yet only two or three could be chosen. Difficulties like low income, single parents and lack of facilities were common place, yet these children wanted to show the world that they could do it, with a little help. Principals and teachers of schools lead us to children who stood out and performed consistently well under difficult circumstances.

We could see Preeti, Ajith, Anita, Sudakshina and Gina discussing the choices for hours. It forced everyone to clarify the objectives of the Foundations during meetings. A checklist of factors were made under 3 broad categories

- Merit and track record
- Financial need
- Drive and will to succeed

Most importantly, the financial situation of the children would have to be verified.

The child support team swung into action. Homes were visited. Parents and relatives were interviewed. Facts were verified. A clearer picture emerged, and the results were published. The team gained a wealth of experience, both in terms of methods of selection for future years, as well as in obtaining a first hand understanding of difficulties of the less fortunate in their quest for a good education.

Kudos to the child support team of Preeti, Ajith, Gina, Sudakshina and Anita.

Driven by purpose and a dream to improve lives of others, propelled by the memory of a dear friend.

31 December 2005 was a momentous day for us all. It was on this day that the seed of a purposeful life was sown in the minds of a few who gathered at Sugun's home.

It was on this day that we held hands to reminisce the time we shared as good friends and to acknowledge that life is all about making *right choices*. We pledged that our choice is to live life to the fullest, whilst giving to others kindness and hope in greater measure than we receive. As a team, we have since then come a long way. The Sugun Thomas Foundation is the labor of many who have contributed their time, effort and capital to establish it today.

Meetings at Sugun's house held every 2 - 3 weeks is a melting pot of ideas, views, experiences, an opportunity to get together, and act on the commitments of the Foundation. For starters, the spirit is purposeful, infectious and in many ways fun too.. Roles and responsibilities emerge in such discussions, mostly volunteered by the team members.

We welcome you to join in to support the activities of the Foundation whenever you are free. Of course, the goodies dished out by our gracious host, Preeti is an added incentive to involve yourself on a Sunday afternoon!

There is so much more to be done and the hands are few

Visit www.sugunthomasfoundation.org for a brief profile on the Trustees and list of team members contributing to the management of the Foundation.



Congratulations! Reena and Sangeetha – the first beneficiaries

S Reena



.... "I don't have both parents in our life..." "If I don't get into college, I will become a maid like my mother" ... "I wish I had....."

I don't want my son to become a fruit vendor like me and struggle all his life..." "My husband deserted me for another woman, I alone am a support for my two children...I can only do this much....not more" ... "I wish I had....."

"As an educated adult I can make a difference to my family..." "Good education alone will give us the foundation to build our lives..." "We deserve a better future...I can..."

B Sangeetha



This is but a glimpse into the life and status of the very many, born into disadvantaged families. The lack of quality life, financial security, parental support, aetrial and physical comforts was never a discouragement for S Reena and B Sangeetha, among the many other children, who today shine in the academic life. They are both from the Presidency School, Chennai and now the very first beneficiaries of the Sugun Thomas Foundation.

We were collectively encouraged in our mission, when we witnessed tears of joy coupled with the determination to succeed in the two children, when we announced their selection. They are now a part of our families as much as we are a part of theirs.

Donations Corner

First of all – a big thank you to those of you who have contributed to the Foundation. Your contribution has encouraged everyone.

Currently we can accept only donations that originate from facilities in India. This may be inconvenient for NRI's and foreign citizens. We are in the process of applying for a clearance from the Government to accept foreign donations.

All donations are Tax Exempt and will benefit the person in India through whom the funds are routed. Please note that all routed funds will have to be accompanied by a letter stating the purpose. We have a template of the same. Please contact us for a copy of the same.

There are many options to send funds to India such a wire transfer, cash2india.com, Samachar money transfer etc. These electronic fund transfer routes, will be faster and safer than couriering a cheque or draft to the person in India. Foreign Cheques or Drafts may take anywhere from 20 to 45 days to realize in local accounts.

Meanwhile, we have created some alternative routes for the foreign donations. For those who have difficulty in routing funds through friends and relations in India, please contact us to help you deposit the funds to the Foundation.

Please do write to us in case of any difficulty and we will hand hold you through the entire process.

Visit www.sugunthomasfoundation.org for more details