

THE EAST WEST FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

Newsletter

Issue 29, June 2020

www.tewfa.org.au

The East West Foundation of India is continuing all of its Community Service Activities during the COVID-19 period



The Medical Center continues to play a vital role in the education and prevention of COVID-19. The Center is staffed with a full time doctor, nurses and social workers who continue to provide medical consultations for 60-80 patients a day.

The Children's Home, staffed by our house mother and house father and cooking staff and watchmen, remains open, providing holistic care including shelter, health and education for children who are orphaned or abandoned without a home to go to during COVID-19. 18 Boys and Girls continue to stay at the home and are being educated online. We continue to provide shelter and meals for 30+ children and staff.

The Primary School is closed, in line with the COVID-19 curfew regulations.

E-Classes at the Vicki Standish Education Centre have been suspended due to social isolation rules, but online classes have begun.

Maintenance, gardening and administrative staff continue to work.

We are paying all of our staff to ensure they can support their families and local community during these extremely challenging times.



WE NEED YOUR HELP

We have experienced a dramatic slowdown in donations since COVID-19 has hit our communities. We need your donations to keep the Medical Centre and Children's Home open, to house and feed the children and to employ local staff to support our community.

All donations are tax deductible. Please consider.

Thanks & Regards,
Raghu Nadathur
Treasurer
The East West Foundation of Australia

DONATIONS - TEWFA'S NEW BANK ACCOUNT

Our bank account has now changed. It is:

**The East West Foundation
of Australia Inc**

BSB: 013 040 Acc: 315 001 913

Please remember to amend your direct debit details and payee list. Many thanks for your continued support!

To donate online from anywhere in the world go to
<https://www.tewfa.org.au/donate>

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VOLUNTEER REFLECTIONS

EAST MEETS WEST AT THE ULURU CHILDREN'S HOME

I heard of the Uluru Children's home 2 years before I approached the organisation to see if there would be a possibility of being able to visit and perhaps contribute. My background is as a paediatric/neonatal nurse and I was interested in contributing to the health of the children in the home and the surrounding villages. The volunteer application went smoothly and I used the opportunity of visiting my sister in Melbourne to meet with Dr Chandran and Kerrie. The process was smooth and I was on my way to India in November 2019 - end of rainy season there was some flooding in Pondicherry. It is amazing how in India people embrace and get on with whatever they need to do, even when streets are covered in water. First lesson "Just do it".

I arrived at the Uluru Children's Home early December and was immediately impressed with the position near the water and the whole compound, buildings and gardens, which were very well maintained. The room I was given was actually two rooms, a bedroom and a sitting room with adjoining doors. Very comfortable and beyond what I expected.

It took a few days to settle and meet the people I needed to set up life necessities ie internet (not sure what we ever did without the connections we now rely on). I slowly met the children and other staff, the kitchen staff being very important as I spent a lot of time peeling and chopping the lunchtime vegetables. It was a great way to practice mindfulness.

One of the challenging things I found was remembering all the names and I don't think during my two months stay I really achieved that.

My contribution started with a visit to the local medical centre and meeting the doctor, nursing staff and social workers. It was the social workers who I spent time with and got involved with in different classes - hand washing, first aid, school visits, visits to tribal villages and some of the Uluru boys' self-awareness lectures. I did join a presentation at the local hospital for pregnant mothers but I found the lack of language on my part limited my ability to contribute.

The highlights of my stay were a baby massage class with some of the local women and a daily English class at the Uluru school with many delightful moments of connection with the local children, stretching my teaching abilities to keep the little ones interested. I also had an amazing Pongal celebration at one of the Tribal villages where I distributed 25 saris to the village women, I ate a lot of pongal food that day. I experienced some great connections with the people in that village - new mothers and other women with children. I felt they really appreciated my presence at their celebration and of course also appreciated the saris. It all seemed to be an auspicious start to their new year.

During my stay there was so much I experienced and will not forget-from buying two bikes for the girls, attending the evening party for a wedding, many



walks along the inlet and watching the beautiful birds in the area, the connection with people and the afternoon bus rides with the school children.

I am so grateful to have been given the opportunity to contribute.

I hope all the people that support this organisation continue to help these children.

Julie McNall
TEWFA Volunteer

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WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH...

I write this article while thinking of the endearing children and staff at TEWFI, hoping that they are coping well with the lockdown in India due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

It seems almost a lifetime ago since I first visited TEWFI as a volunteer during 4 – 13 February 2020. So much has happened and the world has changed dramatically with countries going into emergency mode trying to protect their citizens from ill health.

My experience at TEWFI helps me to put things into perspective while we have now moved into Stage 3 restrictions here in Victoria, Australia. The resilience of the children, staff, volunteers and Board members at TEWFI has taught me the importance of the well-known saying 'when the going gets tough, the tough get going'.

During my eight days in picturesque Kadapakam, staying in the volunteer quarters of TEWFI, I was fortunate to observe all the different activities undertaken – day school, children's home, women's programs, health clinic, environmental programs, IT education, outreach educational programs, and extracurricular activities for the children including South Indian classical singing and dancing. I developed a friendship with another volunteer and I admired her long standing commitment to the organisation with her annual visits to TEWFI from America.

The highlight of course was the children. I spent more time teaching conversational English with the girls in the children's home. The girls were respectful, but had a playful cheekiness which I loved, as it signalled to me that they were in a nurturing environment. This to me was the proof of the pudding – kids being as kids should be. I miss them and think of them often, hoping that they never let go of their dreams for the future.

My sincere thanks to the staff who included me in their programs, particularly the kitchen staff who fed me and allowed me to help them in the kitchen. A special thanks to my friends from Melbourne, Maithili and Naga Nagasundaram, who took me to Kadapakam and looked after me. My final thanks are to Dr Chandran for enabling me to be part of his vision and partake in the multitude of programs offered by TEWFI for the local communities in Edaikhazinadu.

Jaya Manchikanti
TEWFA Volunteer



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NEW BOARD MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS

Dear Members,

TEWFA now has a revitalized and dynamic board to meet the challenges ahead. With our new and innovative board members and our new online and administrative efficiency, we are working to restructure TEWFA's fundraising in Australia and TEWFI's objectives in India. In the difficult post Covid-19 period ahead, we need to clarify TEWFI's programs in alliance with our funders. This will require a review and restructuring of TEWFI's current staff and programs.

The current lock down and the difficult economic times ahead are likely to leave the Uluru Children's Home even more in demand for its safe children's environment. Similar demands are likely to be made on the Uluru Early Learning Centre, IT education and environmental studies at Uluru's Environment Centre. The Medical Clinic and its Social workers continue to provide quality health and social services, not only for the Uluru children, but also for the local communities.

Now to reveal our new board members, administration and volunteers:



Our new Treasurer, **Raghu Nadathur**, who joined us at the AGM last year, has taken over responsibility for the strategic review of TEWFI and its programs. He is highly accomplished in strategic and financial analysis, budget solutions and transforming team productivity. Raghu comes on board really qualified for the task ahead. His experience as a result of working on other not for profit boards has already invigorated TEWFA's Management Committee. His knowledge of intercultural relations is assisting in building a strong communication between TEWFA's MC and TEWFI staff.



Cheryl Taylor also came on to the board at the AGM last year. Cheryl's first involvement with TEWFI was in 1994 when she travelled with Dr Chandran and a camera crew to TEWFI. With over 30 years' experience in broadcasting, 20+ of them with ABC TV, Cheryl will update TEWFA's fundraising and communications skills. Her expertise in working on the 7.30 program and her recent roll as a Producer for a feature documentary will enable us to create greater online awareness of TEWFI's activities. Cheryl aims to use her media experience to develop new fundraising methods and to engage new and younger supporters.



David Parsons has also come on to the Board. He recently retired as a County Court Judge and is now an Adjunct Professor at the Aboriginal Studies Department at Latrobe University. David was on the Koorie Heritage Trust Board for over 20 years and also on the Melbourne Community Foundation Board. His commitment to social justice and his experience in working within the complexities of intercultural charities will enable him to make a valuable contribution both here and in India. David is the partner of Chris Nathan who, on her regular visits to Uluru, initiated yoga classes for the children. Both have supported TEWFI over many years.



Natarsha Knott is another welcome newcomer to TEWFA. Natarsha's experience as an administrative professional and her efficiency in accounting systems and streamlining office and administrative processes has greatly benefited the running of TEWFA's administration. Natarsha was executive assistant to Ron Merkel on the Federal Court of Australia for 10 years and then worked in several high powered businesses before returning as an executive assistant for Ron at the Victorian Bar. Natarsha worked with Arnold Bloch Leibler, TEWFA's pro-bono solicitors, to acquire DGR status for us last year. This involvement assisted her in becoming familiar with TEWFI's community and developmental work. A huge thanks and welcome to Natarsha and also thanks to Arnold Bloch Leibler and Marin Accountants for their continuing pro-bono support.

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Victoria Harrison is our volunteer multi media expert who is assisting Cheryl in promoting TEWFA and TEWFI. Victoria has come to us through Wendy Brooks and Partners which is working toward a more equitable society by building the capacity of the not for profit sector. A big welcome Victoria.



Also assisting Cheryl is **Emma Danckert**, a creative marketing consultant. Her team at 'Touching Base' is working with us on ways to expand our donor base and stream line our stories. Emma is particularly impressed with the striking health improvements provided by the Uluru Health Centre and the vocational training of local women in our Women's Centre.



Barry Cooper, now a regular visitor to TEWFI, returned again in January this year with the intention of creating a cost-effective analysis of TEWFI. Barry's report drew attention to TEWFI's six units. The Children's Home, Uluru Primary School, the IT Centre, the Uluru Health Care Clinic, the Environment Centre and the Women's Centre and explained how inter-related and mutually supportive each unit is of the other. His report recognised community respect and recognition of TEWFI, its staff loyalty and provided a bench mark for the continuing delivery of TEWFI's services.

Led by our Founder, Dr Chandran as Chair, this year our message is that we need to expand the Children's Home, ensure all of the children are educated so each can realise their full potential in life and provide them and the local community with excellent health, education, IT and environmental services.

We thank all our supporters for your continuing support. We especially thank Seasol International and its staff who have continued to assist TEWFA in our fundraising activities for over 12 years.

Dr Beth Z Charles

SAVE THE DATE

28th ANNIVERSARY

Gala Dinner



**Saturday 10th October
2020 at 7pm**

We are still planning to have our 28th Gala Dinner Dance in October at the **Manningham Function Centre** in Doncaster

In view of the present Covid 19 crisis it may not be possible to hold this function but hopefully we will be able to do so, in which case your invitation will be sent to you by separate email with the appropriate details.

If, however, we have to make the decision not to proceed we will also advise you of this by email. In that event we will have lost a major funding source towards the cost of our operations in which case we will be asking our supporters to assist us by making a special tax deductible donation in lieu of attendance.

To keep up with any news on this please check our website
www.tewfa.org.au

Thank you to all who have been part of our social functions. We hope to run this year's event, but if not we'll look forward to seeing you at the 2021 event!

THE DINNER DANCE COMMITTEE

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Dear Friend

In our 28th year of existence I find writing this particular note for our biannual newsletter the most difficult.

It is written in an extraordinarily unusual time of enormous strains on global economies and the health and wellbeing of all – all caused by Covid 19.

With your help the Foundation in India survived the 2004 Tsunami, but with this Covid 19 'Tsunami' that has hit the impoverished rural region we serve, we need your help and assistance more than ever before.

This is the first newsletter over the years not to be printed and mailed - but sent only digitally.

The Foundation is both unique and rare – continuously engaging positively a remote rural deprived population in so many ways over 26 years, and continues to be almost entirely volunteer driven!

Over the past few months our usual regular donations have understandably fallen, and we seek your continuing support to enable the important work The East West Foundation does in the underprivileged rural population it serves.

Your generous donations over the past 28 years have made all its work possible and is deeply appreciated.

The Foundation has had a productive year on the ground and you can be reassured that with your support the Foundation is "making a huge difference in the community" it serves.

I include a snapshot of some key Foundation statistics for you to see the extent and range of our activities.

- 155 children have found sanctuary at its Uluru Children's Home
- 17,4307 patient consultations by our Uluru Health Care Centre and its Mobile Health
- 2,370 patients have been seen at our Community Health Camps
- 39,102 children and adults have attended our Community Education Programmes
- 34,088 people have attended our Community Development Programmes
- 19,375 children and adults have attended our Environment Education Programmes
- 100 children have attended our Uluru Nursery and Primary School

All donations are tax deductible in Australia (DGR Category 1 status), USA, UK and India.

If you would like to donate online from anywhere in the world go to
<https://www.tewfa.org.au/donate>

I have included our Urgent Need and Wish List over the page. Please consider.

If you would like any of your family and friends who may be interested and wishing to be involved with the work of the Foundation to be added onto our email list please do send their contact email to admin@tewfa.org.au

Please do feel free to forward this newsletter to those who may be interested in our work.

In gratitude,

Founder: Dr. Natteri V. Chandran
Patrons: Dr. T. J. Rao OAM, MS, FRACS, FACS
The Hon. Ron Merkel QC
Mr Peter Gunn AM



Awareness
Caring
Sharing
Tolerance



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URGENT NEED

Our most urgent need is the ability to not only survive this Covid 19 influenced year but to be able to continue serving the community. It is critical for them that we are able to.

We are playing a lead role in the Covid 19 response in the region. Apart from caring for the children under our care, our medical staff are actively involved in education - encouraging preventive measures in the community as well as caring for non Covid 19 patients at the clinic.

We are also paying all our staff unable to attend on account of the lockdown during this period to support them in the community.

We need your help.

Our day to day operating and maintenance expenses to run the Children's Home, the Health Centre and services, the Primary School, the Computer Education Centre, the mobile computer buses, the Environment Education Centre, the Community Health and Welfare programs and the Women's Training Centre currently cost Rs 39360.00 per day.

(Aus \$800, US\$ 500, GB 400, Sing\$ 700, HK \$4000)

To donate online from anywhere in the world go to
<https://www.tewfa.org.au/donate>

WISH LIST

1. UCH younger children dormitory floor-replacement & painting A\$4,138.00
2. UCH older children dormitory floor-replacement & painting A\$10,476.00
3. School bus - repairs A\$2,000.00
4. Uluru Primary School - gate A\$1,740.00
5. UCH Well - drilling new deep well for to find good drinking and cooking water for the children as the current wells are salinated A\$17,000.00

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TEWFI AND TEWFA NEWS

A STORY OF HARD WORK AND SUCCESS



Puah, Geetha and Shipra

Puah and Shipra are twins who are currently studying to complete their Masters in Business Administration and Bachelor of Education. This is only possible due to the generosity of some supporters of our Tertiary and Further Education Fund. (see details later in the newsletter)

They study hard and speak excellent English but have no family support to help them pursue their dreams of completing their education and gaining employment.

The results of the exams they both sat last November and December were excellent and a credit to the many hours of effort they have put in. This is a remarkable achievement when we consider the personal obstacles these young ladies have had to overcome to reach this level of excellence.

They are currently residing in the volunteer quarters at the Uluru Children's home due to the Covid-19 restrictions in India. They are helping our staff with cooking, cleaning and tutoring tasks until they are permitted to return to their colleges.

We wish them both well in their further studies and are very proud of their achievements to date.

Many of our previous residents of UCH are also working hard at continuing education facilities or in paid employment.



Muganthi lining up for her Sunday cricket match



Selvan the Watchman on Duty



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TEWFI AND TEWFA NEWS



Swimming fun



Covid impacts on our medical services



Covid impacts on our medical services



December 2019 Newsletter Mail Out – Pre Covid 19!

This is a historic snap of the biannual newsletter mailout ritual (that TEWF volunteers have done over the last 27 years) taken last November with nil awareness that it may have been the last with Covid 19 forcing us to 'go digital'!



Pro bono working visits to UHCC

Two of Chitra's colleagues who are Specialist Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in Chennai have commenced regular pro bono working visits to our Health Centre providing much needed expertise. Our heartfelt thanks to Dr Deivyani and Dr Raji Meenakshi.



Madras Medical College Reunion and visit to TEWFI

Chitra's 50 year reunion of her Madras Medical College batch of 1969 took place in Chennai in January this year. Many visited the Foundation after the Conference and liking what they saw have offered ongoing support.



Madras Medical College Alumni from left Dr Amarendra (UK), Col. Dr Cecily David (USA), Chitra, Dr Deeptha Sithian (USA) and Dr Kishor Gopal (Singapore)

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TEWFA'S 2020 GOLF DAY

A hard working Committee delivered another very successful 2020 Golf Day. We were extremely lucky with the timing. Held 28th February, it was just a few weeks before social distancing restrictions forced so many closures.

Some pledges are still to arrive but we expect to raise close to \$45,000. These funds assist significantly in providing healthcare, education, relief and refuge for destitute children, and the overall development of sustainable, vibrant communities in Southern India. For the most part, the event is organised and staffed by volunteers. Expenses are therefore kept to an absolute minimum, enabling us to direct the funds to those most in need.

The winning team was Fiskars. The Real Estate Agents' Cup was won, for the second year in a row, by Jellis Craig. Congratulations go to these two teams and all who gave it their best shot.

We thank everyone who helped make the day such a success. In particular, we would like to express our gratitude to the major sponsors: Seasol, Ladbroke's, Jellis Craig, ULR Jaguar Land Rover, Radisson on Flagstaff Gardens, Melbourne, Nelson Alexander, Shaw and Partners, Gross Waddell, BMF, River Capital, Kay & Burton, and Burgess Rawson.



SAVE THE DATE

TEWFA 2021 ANNUAL GOLF DAY
26th February 2021 at the Southern Golf Club

It is not too early to mark it in your calendar.
We look forward to seeing you there!



ULURU EDUCATION SUPPORT FUND

Give the gift of education for a brighter future

The East West Foundation of Australia (TEWFA) carries out life-changing work in health, education, conservation and community development in rural South India. At the Uluru Children's Home the Foundation provides shelter and care to 40-plus destitute children from the surrounding areas.

Most of the children come from impoverished backgrounds, have no family support and received little or no formal education prior to their arrival at Uluru. At TEWFA we believe the best way to lift a child out of poverty is through education. The children attend local schools, are provided with additional tuition and participate in extracurricular activities such as dance, music and life skills workshops. Our staff work with each child individually through their secondary school years to find an appropriate post-school pathway to suit their interests and aptitudes.

HIGHER EDUCATION SUPPORT

Completing secondary school and taking the next steps to independence is a huge change for these young people - we cannot abandon them at such a critical time in their development. The Foundation is inviting individuals and groups to come together to support students in a life-changing and personal way - by supporting them to complete further studies over a 1-3 year period. TEWFA needs your help to ensure our students have the opportunity to attend higher studies, by covering fees and other costs like accommodation and transport. Together we can provide these young people - whose early lives were characterised by trauma and loss - with a chance to continue their education, giving them the best chance of a secure and positive future.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO EDUCATE ONE STUDENT?

Depending on fees and location of the college/school and associated living costs, it is expected that financial support for one student will cost between \$800 and \$2000 annually. Donors can choose to make a general donation towards the education fund - which will be distributed to cover the expenses of all current students - or to sponsor total costs for an individual student.

Example costs of students in the 2019-20 academic year include:

- **Saraswathi*** - Bachelor of Education. \$1050 tuition and \$850 boarding annually. **\$1900/year or \$160/month**
- **Sooriya*** - Diploma in Office Management. \$350 tuition and \$625 transport annually. **\$975/year or \$80/month**

***Names changed to protect identity of students**

WILL WE BE KEPT INFORMED OF STUDENT PROGRESS?

TEWFA will send all donors twice-yearly updates on how students are progressing.

HOW ARE PAYMENTS MADE?

Donations are tax-deductible and are made online at givenow.com.au/tewfa_education or via direct deposit into our ANZ account: Account name **TEWFA**, BSB **013-040**, Account Number **3150 01913**.

HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?

To sign up visit givenow.com.au/tewfa_education

To find out more see tewfa.org.au or email admin@tewfa.org.au



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TEWFA's Day Sponsorship Program underpins the whole of the Foundation's activities on the ground.

The money received goes some way to cover the running costs of the Uluru Children's Home, which cares for a particularly vulnerable group of children, providing them with a safe and caring environment. The funds also support the community education, development and environmental programs the Foundation runs.

Please consider joining the Foundation Day Sponsor 'family', or perhaps sign up on behalf of a family member or dear friend as a Christmas gift.

We thank Seasol once again for generously continuing to cover the administration costs for this program.

Please make a difference Sponsor a Day



Our facebook page is back!

We will be keeping you updated on all our latest news.

So please follow us, share us, like us and comment.

This will help build out community.