

THE EAST WEST FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA Newsletter

Issue 28, December 2019

www.tewfa.org.au



Uluru Children Celebrating TEWFI's 25th Anniversary (see pages 4 and 5)

Uluru Education Support Fund - a new initiative to assist the Uluru children with their post school education expenses.

See page 7 for more details.

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!

SAVE THE DATE
Annual Golf Day
28th February 2020



We hope you can all join us for another fun day!

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I received a message from one of 'our' girls last week. She expressed her happiness and gratitude for the assistance that she is receiving to help her complete her studies.

I promised to pass this on. She also said she is happy, studying hard and had recently won second prize in her college dancing competition. This is a great example of why we are involved in this Foundation.

This year has been an eventful one for the Foundation. Locally, we commenced the year with the notification that our taxation status had been upgraded to Schedule 1 category. We had a name change and new logo to accompany this achievement.

Our Administration Officer, Sue Kennedy has decided to retire after 4 years of service. We are very grateful for the effort and dedication that Sue has put in during her years with us and we wish her the very best in her retirement.

Our work in India continues to grow with some amazing progress in all aspects of the areas we support.

The tailoring classes at our Women's Centre are very popular with local village women and we hope this results in opportunities for these women to earn an income. TEWFI has recently taken delivery of eight donated sewing machines and more tailoring classes for the local village women are planned. Paper bag production is to begin soon.

The computer centre is also very busy and utilised by local people, students and TEWFI staff on most days. The number of patients seen daily at the Uluru Medical Clinic grows daily.

The reclamation and revegetation of the denuded coastal area is also producing amazing results.

More information on the five areas of our work is reported on elsewhere in this newsletter and on our website www.tewfa.org.au. I encourage you to read our news and become as enthused as we are! We are always looking for new ideas and ways to improve our processes so please consider joining us.

Finally, I wish to thank our hardworking volunteers, supporters, fund raising groups and committee members for their continued time and effort to assist the people we care for in Southern India.

Judy Nutbean President TEWFA



Pictured: Puah, our Uluru 'past' student, mentioned in the President's report

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ULURU STORIES

NAVIN, A SUCCESS STORY OF CHARACTER

Navin is only 18 years old now, but he has already qualified as an air conditioning mechanic and is successfully employed at The Dune, a five star hotel close to Pondicherry. Food and lodging is provided and his take home pay is currently 6,500 Rupees per month.

Navin attended the Swami Vivekananda Rural Community College (SVRCC), which is a vocational training college. It provides an holistic education where every student is given individual attention in terms of conduct, health and social and spiritual development. There are yoga classes every morning, biometrics for timing and free lunch for all staff and students.

The college is also supported by the Central government through Prime Minister Modi's Skill India programme. But best of all, at the end of one year of training each student is assured of a job. (Saranraj, Kalpana and Sindhu, who completed year 12 together with Navin are in their second year of College, following courses in B.A.English, and B.Com. respectively.)

The Director of the College Mr.Subramaniam and the Principal Madam Anuradha call Navin a jewel of a character.

Madam Anuradha called up one of the Directors of the Dune chain of hotels as soon as she was told that he was to be attending an interview at the Hotel. What a lot of love and faith she had in him! Sure enough he got the job. 'End of Education is Character', says one of the great Masters. Navin has shown how character works wonders. Working in a hotel, he will never run out of work!

Navin is looking forward to greater enterprises in the future and wants to do further study. For now though he wants to contribute some money back to the Foundation on a monthly basis.

What a wonderful soul he has turned out to be!



HELP AT THE MOST OPPORTUNE MOMENT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2019

Shipra and Puah: BEd and MBA, Kanniammah : Diploma in Dancing, Shivashankari and Shiva: Vocational Training at Swami Vivekananda Rural Community College (SVRCC);

All of the above, especially Shipra, Puah and Kanniammah who passed out of college after finishing their undergraduate courses in BA English and BA Tamil, owe their opportunity to follow their dreams especially to Judy, Megan and Beth who have tirelessly worked together to create more funding for the Uluru Education Support Fund.

Last year, given the Foundation was not able to afford to keep the students at their respective college hostels, Kanniammah went home to live with her parents and travelled to college and Shipra and Puah moved out to a suburb at Ramanathapuram, with the help of Amsa, one of our senior girls from UCH, who also lives in that area.

Amsa also helped them to get a job in Trends, a Reliance enterprise. All the girls, especially Shipra and Puah travelled a long way to college daily and worked at Trends in the afternoon from 2pm - 10.30 pm, returning home late at night. Then they had to prepare their night meals.

It was a life experience, but nevertheless a harsh one, considering that they have always lived a

protected life and moreover it was their final year at college. In India part-time work for students is unknown or in its infancy.

They all passed their finals and just as they were thinking that they had to work a few more years to be able to follow their dreams of further study, Judy and Beth made the announcement that the TEWFA Management Committee had approved the setting up of the Uluru Education Support Fund!

Now, thanks to the extended help made possible by Judy, Beth, Megan and Team, Shipra is following a 2 year Course in Education at the Immaculate College of Education for women in Pondicherry, while Puah is following an MBA at St. Joseph's College in Sri Perumbathur, close to Chennai. Kanniammah is travelling home from Chennai every Sunday to study under our own Dance Master at Uluru, Kadapakkam. Mr Kumaran, who also runs a dance school in Pondicherry, is teaching her at a lower fee given she is studying together with other senior children at UCH.

Shivaranjani, who just finished year 10, opted to follow a 1 year course in fashion technology and tailoring at SVRCC. She travels from UCH daily as SVRCC does not offer accommodation.

After completing her year 12, Shiva is taking up a 1 year course in Tally and Office Management at

SVRCC. She travels from her aunt's place in Nallur, which is about 4 kilometers from Kadapakkam. She then takes the bus from Kadapakkam every morning so both travel together daily.

This article would be incomplete without mentioning Yogaraj, who has passed with Honours as a fully-fledged mechanical engineer this year. Yogaraj was also a great help to Geethamma, Usha and I during the admission process of Shipra and Puah.

Mission Impossible has been made possible! Thanking one and all.

Devi Krishna



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TEWFI NEWS

'On 29th June this year the Silver Jubilee of The East West Foundation of India was held at Uluru, celebrating 25 years of work on the ground in rural India. The highlight for me was the return of the many UCH children who are working or in their tertiary studies coming back home to join in on the special occasion with the children currently there.' (Chandran, December 2019)



Our young UCH and school children performing at the celebrations. Many of our older UCH children who had left UCH and were working, studying etc took time out to join in the celebrations. This was very special!



Kanniammal and Yogaraj performing together again. Kanniammal has completed her Bachelor's degree and is about to start her Masters in Classical Dancing

The East West Foundation of UK inaugural Dinner took place in London in July



All set up and ready to go



Shiv and Chitra Chandran with Special Guest and MC - comedian Salman Malik



Trustee Jeet Soni with guest

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TEWFI NEWS

Uluru renovations completed thanks to the donations from the AV Thomas Group Chennai, The East West Foundation of UK and the Thursday Ladies Club in Chennai.



The new floor



The renovated manager's cottage



The new dish washing area



The newly renovated kitchen



New path to our school donated by the Balgi Family from NSW



'Jezza You Bewdy' Avenue, kindly donated by the Jarman family (also referred to in short as JJ Avenue)



The gate to our School from JJ Avenue being put in place by our staff. The entire road has been laid by them!

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MRS AMUDHA Head of the Uluru Early Learning Centre

'I have been working as the principal of the Uluru Nursery and Primary School for the past three years. This is my fourth year.

We are teaching the children through the play way method. Most of the children come from the fishing community and also from the tribal community. We are also teaching the children through internet technology. The children and we teachers love coming to our school!

Mrs Amudha

THE EAST WEST FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA'S 27TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER

The East West Foundation of Australia held its 27th Gala dinner on Saturday 12 October at the Manningham Civic Centre. Our Master of Ceremony Norman O'Bryan, stunningly dressed in Indian jacket and turban, reminded us of the important focus of the evening, which was fund raising, and how vital this is in running the Foundation in India. Our sincere thanks to Norman for keeping the evening running smoothly and contributing to its success.

Our speaker Rachel Goldberg spoke from the heart about her visits to Uluru and her first impressions of the Foundation's small beginnings to where it is now in 2019, a remarkable journey.

Natteri Chandran followed, detailing what has been achieved so far and emphasising the money

needed annually to keep these achievements going.

Our Auctioneer Arch Staver managed some brisk bidding in our Live Auction. This was followed by the raffle draw and conclusion of the Silent Auction.

Net earnings from ticket sales, raffle and auction items, day sponsorships and special donations came to approximately **\$49,000.00**. A wonderful achievement.

Thank you to all who attended, to the donors of the items in the live auction, silent auction and craft tables and to the dinner dance committee. It is due to your amazing generosity that the Foundation can continue with its good works.

We look forward to seeing you again in 2020 for the 28th Gala event.





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

