



# MAHARASHTRA FOUNDATION

Social & Economic Justice for All

(NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations)

PO Box 2287, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008-2287

<http://www.maharashtrafoundation.org>

1-877-MAYTRIN Empowerment Through Dialogue

महाराष्ट्र फाँडेशन

October, 2011

**Year of Establishment: 1978**

**Lead- Founder Member:**

**(Late) Mr. Yashwant Kanitkar**

**Tax Exemption ID**

Under IRS Section

501 (c)(3) 22-2213611

**United Way NY, NJ, CT**

Agency Code 011675

**Board Of Directors:**

**President:** Shaila Vidwans

Tel: (609)-336-7239

Email: [president@maharashtrafoundation.org](mailto:president@maharashtrafoundation.org)

**Vice President** Sharayu Tulpule

Tel: 860-674-8953

Email: [vicepresident@maharashtrafoundation.org](mailto:vicepresident@maharashtrafoundation.org)

**Secretary:** Anirudha Kinare

Tel: 631-471-0613

Email: [secretary@maharashtrafoundation.org](mailto:secretary@maharashtrafoundation.org)

**Treasurer:** Punit Marathe

Tel: 609-468-5012

Email: [treasurer@maharashtrafoundation.org](mailto:treasurer@maharashtrafoundation.org)

**Members:**

**Fund Raising:** Anand Sharangpani

**Project Coordinator & Public Relations:**

Anjali Limaye

**Joint Treasurer:** Ankush Karnik

**Project Coordinator:** Sunanda Mane

**Newsletter & Website:** Vinata Kulkarni

Email: [editor@maharashtrafoundation.org](mailto:editor@maharashtrafoundation.org)

**Hello friends,**

After completing nine years of dedicated service on the Board of Directors, Arundhati Vinod retired as the President of Maharashtra Foundation (MF) on July 31, 2011 and I have assumed that responsibility. I am looking forward to some exciting time ahead. Anand Sharangpani from Michigan has been elected to the MF board to fill the vacant position. Welcome aboard Anand!

Though Maharashtra Foundation has been registered in the State of New York and most of its operation is from North East area, it is an organization of entire Marathi community residing in North America. This is one message I want to give to all. MF board would like to increase the awareness of MF's work in other regions. The efforts have been started in that direction and recently Vinata Kulkarni and Anand Sharangpani on behalf of Maharashtra Foundation did a presentation at Chicago Maharashtra Mandal Ganapati Utsava. It was encouraging to see young parents coming up asking for more information about Maharashtra Foundation. We need to engage such families and get them involved in Foundation's work. Board of Directors of Maharashtra Foundation plan to go to more places like Boston, Houston, Bay Area, Orlando/Tampa, Washington DC and such other places to increase the awareness about Foundation's work in different communities.

Another important initiative that Maharashtra Foundation needs to take is to encourage youth for their involvement in MF projects. If the Foundation has to survive beyond next 25 years, then the participation of Maharashtrian youth will be the name of the game. MF board has started taking steps in this aspect as well.

Finally, I would like to request all of the members, well wishers and friends of Maharashtra Foundation to attend the fund raising event that is planned for Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2011. Please join us in big numbers and support the charities of your choice and MF's projects. Your support goes a long way to help the needy. We are counting on your support to make this year's event a resounding success. Please continue to donate generously, and encourage your friends and colleagues to attend and in turn support MF. To those residing outside North East, I would earnestly appeal to send their donations well in time, thus, assist us in achieving MF's fund raising target.

Best wishes for the upcoming festival times of Diwali, Thanks Giving and Christmas.

**Shaila Vidwans**

President, Maharashtra Foundation

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## Introduction of Guest Speaker & CalAA Invited for Maharashtra Foundation's Fund Raising Event, November 13, 2011

**Jyoti Mhapsekar:** Born to the parents who were freedom fighters, Jyoti Mhapsekar was brought up in an environment where political debates, discussions, protest rallies, and patriotic songs were common. Her father was a political worker, and her mother was a school teacher who worked hard to establish two secondary schools for the poor in Mumbai and also a teachers' union in the early sixties. Jyoti attended both schools, pursued education in zoology and then library science followed by a post-graduation in sociology.



In 1975, Jyoti was one of the members of a feminist group who established 'Stree Mukti Sanghatana' -(SMS) (alias- 'Women's Liberation Organisation'), to improve the lives of disadvantaged women in India. Today, SMS is a leading women's organization in Mumbai. Jyoti has helped in establishing several organizations. She is recognized for her leadership in the women's movement, and is an accomplished playwright and songwriter.

As SMS received a grant to run a nursery school in rag-pickers' residential area, Jyoti focused on the plight of women engaged in rag-picking. In 2002, she quit her job as a librarian at the Academy of Architecture, and has since devoted herself full-time to realizing her vision. Establishing partnerships with municipal authorities and other groups to assist in garbage collection and improve the conditions of the dumps is an essential part of Jyoti's overall strategy. Jyoti is improving the lives of women who collect and sort garbage, demonstrating the value of their work to society, and changing the attitudes of the middle and upper classes toward them. Often called "ragpickers," these women are among the most disadvantaged groups in India. Stree Mukti Sangathana (educates and trains these women and organizes them into labor cooperatives. Jyoti is also partnering with government and neighborhood groups in India to bring better wages and opportunities to the women ragpickers.

**California Arts Association (CalAA)**, founded in April 2002 by San Francisco Bay Area professionals with a clear mission:  
To produce challenging yet entertaining plays, music, dance and television programs,  
To provide a forum and platform for performing arts presentations and appreciation for our vast talent pool in the Bay Area,  
To invite renowned writers, directors and actors to share their creations with us,  
To appreciate exceptional performing arts presentations by others live on stage and on screen,  
To invest the profits from the programs back into archival of top quality presentations worldwide.  
In short, CalAA's mission is **Cherish Art.... Through Art..... For Art.** For More information, visit <http://www.calaa.com/>

<b>Maharashtra Foundation Pledge Card - Please fill out complete card</b>																																																	
<b>Donor Details:</b> Name(s): _____ Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____  <b>Form of Payment:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> Pledge <input type="checkbox"/> Matching from: _____  Please make check payable to: <b>Maharashtra Foundation</b> Please mail the check and pledge card to: <b>Maharashtra Foundation</b> PO Box 2287, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008-2287  Federal Tax I.D.# 22-2213611 United Way Agency Code: 011675  <i>Maharashtra Foundation is a registered non-profit            charitable organization tax exempt under section            501 (c) (3) of I.R.S. code.</i>		<b>Donation Details:</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">A. Membership &amp; other</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Amount</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Number</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Total= Amt* Number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Benefactor</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$5,000.00</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Patron</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1,000.00</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Life</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 500.00</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Annual</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$20</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Child Sponsorship</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$125.00</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>General Funds</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <b>B. Projects</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr><td>1. Anti Human Trafficking</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$</td></tr> <tr><td>2. Pure and Safe Drinking Water</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$</td></tr> <tr><td>3. Swayamsiddha</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$</td></tr> <tr><td>4. THINK Maharashtra</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$</td></tr> <tr><td>5. MAYTRIN</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$</td></tr> <tr><td>6. Education Promotion of Waste Picker families</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$</td></tr> <tr><td>7. Health Awareness &amp; Wellness Camp</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$</td></tr> <tr><td>8. Solar Energy Facility for Educational Environment</td><td style="text-align: right;">\$</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <b>C. Recommended Organization (Name and Address)</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">1. _____</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <b>D. Amount not allocated:</b> _____ \$ _____ <b>Total Amount: (A+B+C+D)</b> _____ \$ _____  <i>Donor needs to be a member of Maharashtra Foundation (\$20 membership).            Maharashtra Foundation deducts 5% administrative charge.            Over 90% of your tax-deductible donations reach India.</i>  <b>Please visit <a href="http://www.maharashtrafoundation.org">www.maharashtrafoundation.org</a> for more information</b>		A. Membership & other	Amount	Number	Total= Amt* Number	Benefactor	\$5,000.00		\$	Patron	\$1,000.00		\$	Life	\$ 500.00		\$	Annual	\$20		\$	Child Sponsorship	\$125.00		\$	<b>General Funds</b>			\$	1. Anti Human Trafficking	\$	2. Pure and Safe Drinking Water	\$	3. Swayamsiddha	\$	4. THINK Maharashtra	\$	5. MAYTRIN	\$	6. Education Promotion of Waste Picker families	\$	7. Health Awareness & Wellness Camp	\$	8. Solar Energy Facility for Educational Environment	\$	1. _____	\$
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# M.F. Maharashtra Foundation

## 2011 Fund raising Event

An evening of inspiration, entertainment,  
cocktail and dinner

Sunday, November 13th, 2011 at 3PM

Ukrainian Center, Somerset, NJ

## Special Guest: Jyoti Mhapsekar

Jyoti, a "Ashoka" fellow, is a dynamic founder and leader of the Stree Mukti Sanghatana established in 1975 in Mumbai. Her dedicated work for the rag picker women since 1998 and her work for adolescent girls is exemplary. Even before the female infanticide became a major issue in India, Jyoti had highlighted it through plays like "Mulagi Jhali Ho" which is now translated in 8 languages, has over 3000 performances and was a major item at the International Women's meet in Beijing in 1995.

### Also presenting....



कल्लिफोर्निया आर्टस् असोसिएशन अर्धात कला  
सहर्ष सादर करीत आहे

### !! पु.ल. - एक आनंदयात्रा !!

साहित्य, संगीत, चित्रपट, नाट्य या क्षेत्रातील पुलच्या चौफेर प्रतिभेला आणि या साऱ्यातून उजळलेल्या  
त्यांच्या लोभस व्यक्तिमत्त्वाला, "कला" ची वाजत गाजत मानवंदना



साक्ष - मुकुंद मराठे - काय म्हणाले गुरुदेव? - मुकुंद मराठे

अंतर्बर्वा - शेखर साखळकर

A BMM Talent Transfer Program Presentation

**Tickets: \$65, \$35 (Students with ID)**

Please contact:

Anjali: 908-232-6960 Ankush: 732-266-5439 Anirudha: 631-513-7131  
Anand: 99734-649-4208 Shaila: 609-273-1408 Sharayu: 860-674-8953



A farewell Speech given at the Annual general Body Meeting, 2011  
to MF's Past President- Arundhati Vinod

अरुंधतीला निरोप देताना . . .

अरुंधतीबद्दल औपचारिकपणे बोलायचा माझ्यासाठी हा पहिलाच प्रसंग आहे. थोडेसे विचित्रच वाटते आहे. बघता बघता मला महाराष्ट्र फाउंडेशनच्या कार्यकारिणीवर येऊन पाच वर्षे झाली. पूर्वी थोडिशी तोंडओळख असलेल्या अरुंधती विनोदशी तेव्हापासून कामानिमित्ताने फोनवर बोलायची सुरुवात झाली. ती हल्ली दर आठवड्यात व शेवटी रोज बोलल्याशिवाय दिवस जात नसे. अगदी काल रात्रीपर्यंत. . .

आता अरुंधती कार्यकारिणीतून निवृत्त झाली आहे. पण म्हणतात तसे Arundhati can leave Maharashtra Foundation but Maharashtra Foundation will not leave her!

बऱ्याच आठवणी मनात एकत्र झाल्या आहेत. काही प्रसंग डोळ्यापुढे येत आहेत. तिच्याशी अनेकवेळा केलेल्या चर्चा. घातलेले वाद व केलेली भांडणे सुद्धा डोक्यात गर्दी करत आहेत. खरं तर "भांडणे" हा शब्द चुकीचा ठरेल. कारण चर्चा व वादाचे भांडणात रूपांतर झालेच नाही व त्याचे एकमेव कारण म्हणजे अरुंधतीचा सौम्य व मृदु स्वभाव. आज मला तिच्या स्वभावाच्या विशिष्ट पैलूबद्दल प्रकर्षाने बोलवेसे वाटते. तिचा स्वभाव सौम्य आहे व त्यात सौष्टव (compassion) आहे. तिचा स्वभाव इतका soft आहे की आजपर्यंत मी कधीही तिचा आवाज उच्च स्वरात निघालेला ऐकला नाहीय. आणखी एक वैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे कितीही frustrating व तापदायक परिस्थितीत सुद्धा अरुंधतीच्या मनाचा स्वस्थपणा कायम असतो. खऱ्या समाज सेवकात जे गुण अत्यंत आवश्यक असतात ते मार्दव व कारुण्य (softness and compassion) तिच्या स्वभावात उपजतच आहेत. मागील पाच वर्षांत तिच्या ह्या पैलूंचा अनुभव मला अगदी जवळून आला . She is a gem of a person अशीच मी तिच्याबद्दलची माहिती लोकांशी बोलताना सांगायची. ती अतिशय brilliant आहे! कॉलेजातील व सगळ्या नागपूर मधील तिची लोकप्रियता दोनवर्षा पूर्वील आमच्या नागपूरच्या भेटीत पूर्णपणे जाणवली.

उद्यापासून अरुंधती कार्यकारिणीवर नाही, प्रेसिडेंट म्हणून नाही हयाची खंत वाटे. उणीव जाणवेल ती ह्या अरुंधतीची. इतकेच नव्हे तर कार्यकारिणीवर असताना आपल्याला buy one get one सारखी deal मिळाली होती. अरुंधती आली म्हणजे ह्रिषिकेश ओघाने आलेच. ते तर अनेक वर्षांपासून महाराष्ट्र फाउंडेशनचे हितचिंतक, कार्यकर, अगदी प्रेसिडेंट पण होते. आजपासून आपण त्या दोघांना मुकणार आहोत! ह्या प्रसंगी त्यांना एकच विनंती "Arundhati and Hrishikesh, please do not be strangers. We will continue to seek your help and guidance".

शैला विद्वांस

"Youth Wellness Camp" at  
Jnana Prabodhini, Harali, Jan 15-19, 2012

Maharashtra Foundation (MF) in partnership with Share and Care will conduct a Youth Wellness Camp on January 15-18, 2012 on the campus of Jnana Prabodhini, Harali, near Solapur in Maharashtra. Approximately 250 students and children of an Anganwadi located in the village of Harali will be examined. (Medical and dental examination.) MF is looking for Marathi speaking pediatricians interested in offering their services. Please contact: **Shaila Vidwans** Phone: 609-273-1408, Email: [president@maharashtrafoundation.org](mailto:president@maharashtrafoundation.org)

Go Green with your next copy of  
MF Newsletter in Electronic Format

Please sign up for **email delivery** of future issues of the Maharashtra Foundation's (MF) newsletter. Go Green and help MF in implementing cost effective, quick communication tools and technology of today. Please send your email address to: **Anirudha Kinare** Email: [secretary@maharashtrafoundation.org](mailto:secretary@maharashtrafoundation.org) Your email address will only be used by MF for its communication with you only, and will not be given to anyone else.  
- MF Board of Directors

'ThinkMaharashtra Dot Com' : A web portal <http://www.thinkmaharashtra.com/>, under editorship of **Mr. Dinkar Gangal**, with a promising support from Maharashtra Foundation, and some local organizations in Maharashtra, is continuing its focus on highlighting Maharashtra's social and cultural events, keeping away from politics and bullying tactics prevalent in society. It's work includes collection and preservation of information relevant to Maharashtra Culture, traditions, festivals, volunteer organizations, inspirational life stories, touch base over all Marathi literature, and make such vast pool of information available at one place and with one click on the web. The task is tedious, but efforts are ongoing, collaborating cultural coordinators from various districts in Maharashtra.  
(News Report by - **Bhooshan More**, Think Maharashtra Dot Com)

## List of MF Donors, 2011

Achwal, Mohan	Jategaonkar, Arun - Vasanti	Paranjape, Hareesh- Madhavi
Bakane, Ramesh & Neela	Juvekar, Neeta and Prashant	Patel, Amit and Ankita
Benjamin, Elisabeth	Kamat, Durga	Patel, Mukesh and Hettle
Berde, Pankaj - Manisha	Kamble, Prashant	Phatak, Deepali
Berde, Suryakant & Jayshree	Kanitkar, Jayant	Puranik, Subhash & Vasanti
Bhagwat, Anand - Shivani	Karnik, Ankush & Sameeta	Rajadhyaksha, Mangesh & Smita
Bhave, Amit	Khanolkar, Anant & Uma	Rajamanur, Vimal
Bhome, Amol	Kshirsagar, Vasudeo & Arundhati	RANADE, Neela & Ashok
Dahake, Vaibhav	Kulkarni, Anish	Ranade, Samir
Day, JB & Radhika	Kulkarni, Nitin - Vijaya	Rege, Amit
Deodhar, Subhash & Rekha	Kulkarni, Shashank - Amita	Sathe, Vaibhav & Pallavi
Devare, Sushil & Doria	Kulkarni, Vinata	Satwalekar, Mukund & Jayashree
Devasthale, Madhavi and Pratik	Limaye, Ashok and Kalpana	Shah, Amar and Aparna
Dharkar, Harsh and Meghana	Limaye, Dilip	Shah, Hiren and Kiran
Farmand, Gina	Manal, Huma and Nabeel	Sharangpani, Aditi
Gandbhir, Lalita - Sharad	Mantri, Ashok & Sheela	Sharangpani, Anand and Dipti
Gandhi, Seema and Bimal	Mantri, Mahesh	Shared Vision Charitable Foundation
Ghate, Bageshri S.	Maraist, Elizabeth	Sharma, Bharatee and M
Girkar, Milind, Prateeksha	Marathe, Hemant & Punit	Shekar, DT
Goyal, Jayesh and Ritu	Matthew, MC and GM	Shete, Ashish
Greene, Thomas and Anshula	Menon, Latha	Sinkar, Mahesh and Kajal
Gupte, Shirish & Darshana	Nandedkar, Arvind & Meenakshi	Tawde, Pallavi
Hardikar, Sulabha and Vasant	Naringrekar, Vijay, Gandha	Thakar, Ani and Manju
		Vaidya, Aditi

## List of NGOS receiving Donations from Maharashtra Foundation, 2011

Abalashram, Bangalore	Helpers of the Handicapped	Pathak Vishwastha Nidhi (Trust)
AIDs Relief International	Hingane Stree Shikshan Sanstha	Pratham
Apne Aap Women's Collective	Indian Cancer Society, Solapur	Prevention Of Child Marriages
Aseema Charitable Trust	Indore Cancer Foundation charitable trust	S.M.M. Eye Welfare Charitable Trust
Central Society for the Education of the Deaf	Jagruti Seva Sanstha	Shri Gajanan Maharaj Sansthan, Shegaon
Child Sponsorships	Janaseva Foundation	SOFOSH
Community Aid & Sponsorship Program	Janvikas Pratishthan	Solar Energy
Deep Griha Society	Jnana Prabodhini, Pune	Stree Mukti Sanghatana
Devi Ahalya Bai Smarak Samiti	Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust - Balagram	Students Welfare Association, Pune
Door Step School	Limaye Kul Vishwastha Nidhi	Swami Vivekanand Medical Mission
Gram Mangal	Maher	Vivekanand Kendra Kanyakumari
Grant a smile foundation (Pure and Safe Drinking Water )	Malvan Education Society, Malvan	Vivekanand Kendra, Tamil Nadu
Halo Medical Foundation	Matrumandir	Yashsneha Trust

## Does Your Company Match Your Charitable Donation?

Below is a list of companies through which Maharashtra Foundation received matching donations, 2011. If name of the company where you work is not in the list, please inquire how you can get matching donations from your company. To find out if the charity of your choice has permission to receive foreign funds, please visit <http://mha.nic.in/fcra.htm>. There is a list of registered associations under which there is a state wise list. You can check if the organization you want to send donation is on that list or not.

Abbott Laboratories	Bristol-Myers Squibb	Levi Strauss	New York Life	Quest Diagnostics
AIG	Goldman Sachs	Microsoft	Pfizer	Wells Fargo
Avon	J P Morgan Chase	Morgan Stanley	Qualcomm	Yahoo

## Report of the "Forum on Mental Health and Substance Abuse in Indian and Maharashtrian Population in North America" conducted at the BMM convention, Chicago (July 21-24, 2011)

In every culture and ethnic population, a number of diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, etc. are common. The patients suffering from these diseases receive medical attention and treatment. No stigma is attached to those who suffer from these diseases. However, disorders or diseases such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, HIV infection are not easily accepted as medical problems and persons afflicted from these types of disorders are many times rejected and neglected by the society as well as by the relatives and friends. Because of such neglect the patients live a very miserable life and are lost in the society which should take care of such unfortunate individuals. The Indian population in USA and Canada is not immune from these types of afflictions. For example approximately one percent of the Indian population suffers from schizoaffective disorders. A significant number also suffer from alcoholism, substance abuse and other similar problems. This important issues of how the Indian population in general and Maharashtrian population in particular are being affected by these diseases, and how they are coping with the problems created when one of the family members suffers from such disorders are generally not discussed and help from culturally sensitive support groups are not available.

Understanding this need of the community, Professor Balwant N. Dixit from University of Pittsburgh, took initiative and planned a "Forum on Mental Health and Substance Abuse in Indian and Maharashtrian Population in North America" at Bruhan Maharashtra Mandal of North America (BMM) convention that took place in July 2011 at Chicago. During this 90-minute forum, a group of experts from medical, social and other areas provided valuable information and guidance on this important issue. Dr. Atul Mahableshwarkar chaired the session and Dr. Suneel D. Mundle from the BMM committee coordinated the proceedings of the forum. Maharashtra Foundation supported this idea and initiative.

It was a historical session. More than 100 people attended it. It was far successful event in terms of attendance or audience interest and discussion. Attendees were very impressed with the quality and amount of information given as well as suggestions made by the speakers and people in the audience. It was moving when a deaf person brought up an issue and wanted to be heard, who took away solutions from Dr. Barve and Ms. Bakre. It was impressive to see how a woman discussed her friend's case with Dr. Jeste, asking him for genetic markers for schizophrenia. A gentleman shared how he has been living with bipolar issues all his life, first with his mother and later with his son. Another individual asked how could he ensure that his son with mental illness will be cared for after he passes away. He had an instant legal consult from a lawyer in the audience.

In addition, personal stories of Dr. Wani as a caregiver and of Karmarkar as a recovered alcoholic were riveting and how both of them are now helping others overcome such problems.

Dr. Aparna Kalbag is conducting a survey to assess individual's perception of problems faced by members of the Maharashtrian/Indian immigrants to North America. Your participation in this survey will contribute towards a better understanding of the health care needs and family support needs of North America-based Maharashtrian/Indian immigrants. The survey can be accessed through June 2012 at

(<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BMM2011>).

The Forum was the first crucial step in the road to increasing awareness and bringing about change in how we as a community view mental illness. Conversations about such issues are a key to changing attitudes; we are at a great start.

The panel members were **Swati Bakre** (Child and Adolescent Therapist), **Anagha Barve, Ph.D.** (Psychotherapist), **Balwant N. Dixit, Ph.D.** (Professor of Pharmacology, University of Pittsburgh), **Dilip V. Jeste, M.D.** (Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry & Neurosciences, University of California at San Diego), **Aparna Kalbag, Ph.D.** (Office of Global Health, UMDNJ - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, an experienced research worker in assessing culturally-appropriate treatment for South Asians with mental illness), **Subodh Karmarkar** (Managing Director of Anamika Recovery Center in Anaheim Hills, CA), **Atul R. Mahableshwarkar, M.D.** (Senior Medical Director, Takeda Global Research & Development Inc. Chicago, IL), **Jagannath Wani, Ph.D.** (Professor Emeritus, University of Calgary, Canada). Also **Aruna Rao** (Associate Director, NAMI NEW JERSEY), **Rohan Ganguli, MD, FRCP** (Professor of Psychiatry and Canada Research Chair, University of Toronto, Executive Vice President, Clinical Programs, Center for Addiction and Mental Health) and **Vishwajit Nimgaonkar, M.D., Ph.D.** (Professor of Psychiatry and Human Genetics at the University of Pittsburgh) were in advisory roles.

Dr. Dixit and other panel members have posed some very important questions like: How to generalize the discussion, questions, and responses and provide support to the vast majority Maharashtrians who did not attend this forum. One approach is certainly to build an online network/support group/forum of some sort where people can go for answers and support. So, where do we go from here? Who all would/can be involved in further efforts? How do we set things up, what resources may be needed and where do we get them.

For further information or questions, please contact: **Professor Balwant N. Dixit**, University of Pittsburgh, either by e-mail at ([bdixit@pitt.edu](mailto:bdixit@pitt.edu)) or by telephone at (412) 963-8023 (voice).



## The rise of network leaders!

Few years back, I was leading the youthful information technology movement called 'IT for Social Change' @ grass-roots level in India. We campaigned in villages and trained rural volunteers in using Information Technology (IT) and internet to fight against the information and knowledge gaps in society, which we believed to be the prime reason for lack of development in some areas we worked in.

Our IT group conducted many successful programs. The human leadership that we developed remains the most important achievement of the whole movement. I feel, the art of social networking these leaders picked up for solving age old developmental problems has brought in the new catalyzing energy to the movements.

Recently, I visited 'Javhar' a tribal area in Thane district where one such group groomed by 'IT for Social Change' is in action. Krishna, a native of Beed district in Marathwada region of Maharashtra is organizing village people to take advantage of the rights granted by National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) Chetan educates adivasi youth in masses using IT, trains them to ask for minimum 100 days of work as their right and plan the projects like water-shed and roads. This act allows these projects to be undertaken as collective action of villagers under Government scheme. This kind of work creates the necessary rural infrastructure for growth and brings-in mass involvement. Devdas, a social advocate and expert in lobbying with lower government administration gets in necessary participation from government side. In absence of his work, the rural admin would have continued to live in it's own corrupt and inefficient world and people struggling at other end.

Sujit Nilegaonkar, a young doctor, encourages the social organizations to invest various resources. The young Agro expert Kisan is integrating all this into work done by his group, changing the traditional agro patterns without disturbing the land and the environment. The NREGA - Governance - Water-shed Development - Investments - Agricultural Reforms, is the

energizing chain reaction, these networks leaders are creating.

All these leaders are not formally educated in Social Work or Social Development, their learning has happened in virtual environment of Internet era and by one to one interaction in real peoples' social networks. They have created these networks by continuous interactions. They live in culture of knowledge sharing, there cell phones and laptops are buzzing whole day. With or without gadgets, they are the leaders of networking society that is emerging around us. If this trend continues, the traditional feudalistic days will be over soon and the growth balanced with agriculture-industrialization-service economies will take place, and will make several Tribal men, women and children in Javhar develop in sustainable ways.

- **Harshavardhan Purandare** (Mumbai, India)

## A Taste of Charity

On June 2011, a bidder spent \$2.35 million for lunch with the corporate philanthropist, Warren Buffett. This amount of money was \$650,000 more than that paid by a bid winner, last year. The U.S. billionaire Mr. Buffett auctions off a lunch take place every year for charity. The proceeds benefit GLIDE, a San Francisco charity that Mr. Buffett was introduced to, by his late first wife, Susan. He also made on Thursday (July 7), 2011 his annual donation of stocks, valued at approximately \$1.5 billion, to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Mr. Buffett has been donating stocks of his investment company, Berkshire Hathaway Inc., annually to the Gates Foundation since 2006, when he pledged to give away 99 percent of his wealth to charity.

As the nation struggles to recover from its worst recession in decades, the U.S. donations to charity rose to \$291 billion in 2010, it was 4 percent more compared to 2009, per study conducted by the 'Giving USA Foundation' and the 'Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University'.

No doubt, Americans, have set an example, person's life consists not only in seeing visions and realizing dreams, but in active charity too!

- **Vinata Kulkarni**

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