



Hand In Hand USA

One drop can make a difference

A non-profit 501(c)(3) organization for humanitarian aid

SUMMER 2023



**“The children of today
will make the India of tomorrow.
The way we bring them up will
determine the future
of the country”**

- Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

NEWSLETTER

Heartfelt Greetings

We at Hand In Hand USA hope you are having a spectacular start to your summer! Our summer newsletter highlights recent activities and celebrations at Hariharananda Balashram. It also features the journey of 10th grader, Ankita Adak, a remarkable young woman, and her goals and dreams for the future.

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter!

Sincerely,

The Hand In Hand USA Team

Hariharananda Balashram



Puneet Mansharamani, with Assistant Principal, Mrs. Vibhuti Vasudevan, and students

Hand In Hand USA Board Member, Puneet Mansharamani, visited Hariharananda Balashram in March. There he met with Balashram administrators and was able to tour the campus and interact with students.



On December 8, the Honorable Governor of Odisha, His Excellency, Professor Ganeshi Lal visited Balashram for an Art and Science Exhibition, where students were honored for excellence in both sports and academic achievement. A big celebration was held, including a special ribbon-cutting ceremony in honor of the Inauguration of the Exhibition.

As the temperatures begin to soar in India, Balashram students cooled off with a special treat of ice cream one evening in April!



Student Spotlight

Ankita Adak



Ankita Adak was admitted into Balashram when she was just four years old. Ankita's home life prior to then was quite challenging.

When Ankita was 1 years old, her father passed away, leaving her mother to seek out work at a local construction site in order to provide for the family. Fortunately, Ankita was selected to become a student at Balashram, giving her a real chance at a good life. "... my mother used to cry thinking of my future, because we had no money, but my mother wanted to send me [to] school. But suddenly my life changed from a poor condition to a better condition. And no other than it was our Balashram, for which place my life has a changed in a miracle way from a poor, dirty, unprivileged child to a healthy and educated child and a child who have a bright future."

Ankita is now 17 years old and in Grade 10. She is involved in many school clubs, including chanting, tailoring, dance, tabla (traditional Indian instruments consisting of two drums that are played while sitting on the floor) and music. She is most passionate about dance and would like her life to be filled with dancing.

Ankita would love to come back to Balashram to teach chemistry.

Ankita plans to pursue a career as a chemistry professor when she finishes her education at Balashram. "I get everything I need from Balashram. It supports and guides me a lot for my future." As Ankita's dreams start to become a reality, she plans on helping future students achieve their dreams. As is true of a vast majority of Balashram graduates, Ankita feels a moral responsibility to give back to Balashram, the school that has given her so many opportunities, as well as becoming her home.

"So now I am a girl of 17 and studying in +2 Science to fulfill my dream to become a chemistry professor and serve the people like Balashram who provide basic education to poor and unprivileged children irrespective of caste and gender."

Ankita was the proud recipient of an award for sports, presented to her by Balashram's Honorable Governor, Professor Ganesi Lal. Winning this award delighted Ankita and helped boost pride in both her school and in herself. "... [winning the award made me] feel happy [and] also made my school proud. Balashram is everything for me. And also special thanks for those Hand In Hand group who support such organizations like our Balashram."

"I love Balashram and it would be a privilege for me to be a part of it"

We wish Ankita the very best in her future endeavors in science and dance and we thank all our supporters for providing Ankita with this incredible opportunity to achieve her dreams.



Holi (“The Festival of Colors”) was celebrated, as it is annually, on the first full moon day in February/March

Fundraising



HIH USA Board Members & Volunteers with Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthy

After a three-year hiatus, Hand In Hand USA in Chicago was able to host its annual spring fundraiser in person once again! Held at the beautiful Waterford Banquet Hall in Elmhurst on April 15, the nearly 200 guests in attendance enjoyed presentations from board members, live entertainment by Ameya Dance Troupe, music by Sajan Vadali D.J., and dancing, including a rendition of the Oscar Winning “Naatu Naatu”!

Chief Guest of the event was U.S. Congressman, Raja Krishnamoorthi, who gave a moving speech about Hand In Hand USA, its tremendous impact, and the 20+ year commitment of its volunteers and supporters.

The event was a huge success raising over \$100,000 in donations for Hand In Hand USA, to be allocated appropriately for the school and medical centers.

Due to inflation and the increased cost of the basic necessities for life, the costs for child sponsorship at Balashram have increased. The new costs are as follows:

- Education for One Child: \$360 annually** (this cost did not increase)
- Education Lifetime Sponsorship: \$4,500**
- Room & Board for One Child: \$650 annually**
- Room & Board Lifetime Sponsorship: \$8,000**
- Education, Room & Board for One Child: \$1,010 annually**

This is the first increase Hariharananda Balashram has needed to make in many years. Please consider increasing your support if you are able.

Donations can be made in the following ways:

- **On our website : handinhandusa.org/donate**
- **TEXT “ ONE DROP” to 44321 to donate**
- **Please scan the code below to make a donation**

