

**Nov 2024**  
**Volume 49 Issue 2**

**Indian Schools Alumni & Friends**  
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**A Section 501c3 Non-Profit**

**Federal Tax ID #**  
**23-7338355**

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# I N S A F

## INDIAN SCHOOLS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

### INSAF PROJECT GRANTS IN 2024 COULD APPROACH NEAR RECORD LEVEL

With almost two months to go, Year 2024 is looking to be an excellent one for our collective project effort. The question pending is how the total for all of 2024 would end up in comparison with the all time record of \$477,945 set in 2021. We have to wait for the answer but it will be an excellent year nonetheless.

So far in 2024, some of the major projects already funded have been as follows:

1. Rotary Eye Institute, 75,500 (Project Leader Sh. Ramesh Patel)
2. Kanchan Foundation, \$75,000 (Project Leader Sh. Chandra Vora)
3. Eternal Gandhi Museum Houston TX, \$50,000 (Project Leader Sh. Joginder Kundra)
4. Narmadalay, \$50,000 (Project Leader Sh. Suresh Patel)
5. Vaghaldhara Vibhag Kelavani Mandal, \$42,600 (Project Leader Sh. Ramesh Patel)
6. Nanritam, \$36,500 (Project Leader Sh. Joginder Kundra)
7. Kaliyuva Mane, \$19,113 (Proj. Leaders Sh. Joginder Kundra & Dr. Harshavardhana)
8. Parijat Academy, \$10,000 (Project Leader Sh. Suresh Patel)
9. Sri Badrika Ashram, \$10,000 (Project Leader Sh. Suresh Patel)
10. Ruchika Social, \$6,975 (Project Leader Bhav Sharma)
11. Books for All, \$6,000 (Project Leader Sh. Vinod Luthra)

About 12 other projects have also been funded at various levels as of the end of October. Of course, each project is unique in how it makes a difference, and financial numbers provide only a partial perspective.

Large, generous donations for the Rotary Eye Institute and Vaghaldhara Vibhag Kelavani Mandal projects were made by new members Dr. Rajan Naik and Dr. Sridevi Sarma. Significant donations from the Vora family, Kundra Family, Sh. Suresh Patel, Dr. Harshavardhana, the Luthra family, and from several other donors made all the year-to-date INSFAF grants possible.

Reports on many of the above-mentioned projects are included in this edition of the Newsletter. We will attempt to bring reports on projects not covered in this Newsletter in the next edition in Spring 2025.

A very warm welcome to the following new and likely INSFAF members:

- Dr. Rajan Naik & Dr. Sridevi Sarma, McLean VA
- Sh. Mrugesh Yogeshk Desai & Ms. Erica Laycock, Seattle WA
- Sh. Satej Desai & Ms. Anjali Naik, Redwood City CA

If anyone has not funded their project in 2024, now is a good time to act. If you wish to support an organization that you have not helped before, or you have any other questions or comments, please get in touch with the Editor (address on this page).

The entire INSFAF Team wishes each of our Newsletter readers a very happy holiday season and a great year in 2025.

## YEARS OF MAJOR INVESTMENTS ENABLES KANCHAN FOUNDATION TO PROVIDE HELP

Kanchan Foundation was set up by the Vora family and their close relatives for humanitarian activities as a tribute by the sons of Kanchanben Ratilal Vora.

During the most recent fiscal year, the Foundation spent about \$54,500 on education scholarships or education-related projects, and an additional \$20,000 on medical or financial assistance for the needy in Mumbai as well as Ahmedabad, Bhavnagar, Jamnagar, and Rajkot areas of Gujarat. Students from several villages were supported.

One noteworthy project was the on-hand learning of sanitary pad making and the addition of a much-needed girls bathroom at a school in Bhavnagar district.



**Students learning to make sanitary pads**



**Students making use of their new bathroom**

The Foundation awarded scholarships adding up to over \$30,000 needy students at the school and college level. More information is at [kanchanfoundation.org.in](http://kanchanfoundation.org.in).

## MALVI EDUCATIONAL & CHARITABLE TRUST (MECT) SUPPORTS EDUCATION FOR THE POOR

During 2023, grants totaling \$41,350 were sent to MECT to support several programs. MECT operates Shantaba Vidyalay in Kukeri, South Gujarat. The grants were made possible by donations to INSAF by Sh. Ramesh & Jyotiben Patel, Sh. Girish Patel, Ms. Nimaben Patel, and Sh. Suresh Patel.

About \$14K of the grants were used to support the higher education of 13 students as about 36% of the students are orphans or children of single parents. Another \$10K was used to support the construction of a new hostel for girl students.



**Inauguration of the new Girls Hostel**

Another major use was to support the operations at the Vidyalaya (food & nutrition, teacher's honoraria etc.)



**A scene from a classroom at Shantaba Vidyalaya**



## **SUSTAINED 6 YEAR COMMITMENT DELIVERS \$309K 11,000 SQ FT SURGICAL FACILITY FOR EYE CARE OF THE POOR**

In 2017, Sh. Joginder Kundra learned about Nanritam in Purulia, West Bengal (WB), which runs an eye hospital, a good quality children's school, and a seed farm for farmers. Purulia is one of the poorest districts in WB with many people living on under \$1.25/day. Purulia also happens to be only 64 miles from Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, where Sh. Kundra went to an engineering college as a Punjab youngster.

The eye hospital provides free surgeries to 92% of its patients; the remaining 8% are subsidized according to their income. Nanritam explained to Sh. Kundra that they badly need a 2nd operating theater (OT). The old OT had a mandatory 3-day shut-down whenever the OT was used for surgeries on infected persons. The shutdown limited the operational efficiency and overcrowding due to the resulting backlog. The hospital also needed new operating equipment.

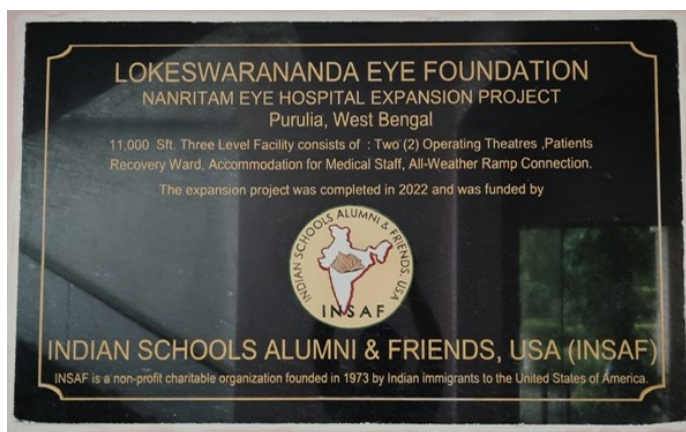
Sh. Kundra and the Nanritam team fine-tuned the plans and then persevered to build a 3-story, 11,000 sq. ft. facility including a new operating theater, recovery wards for men and women, and an all-weather ramp connecting the floors. The actual construction was completed during 2020-22 in two phases,

Total cost of the project was \$309,130 making it the largest infrastructure project ever sponsored through INSAF. Generous donations came from Sh. Joginder & Meeraji Kundra, the Prasad family, Dr. Kusum Kumar, and a number of other donors. The entire cost of the project was covered by INSAF sponsors.



**A View Inside the new Operating Theater in the new Nanritam building at Purulia, West Bengal**

Information on Nanritam is available at <https://nanritam.org>



**Plaque at the entrance of Purulia Eye Hospital Extension**

## **NURSING COLLEGE GETS GRANT TO UPGRADE EQUIPMENT FOR ESSENTIAL SKILLS TRAINING**

Dinsha Patel College of Nursing in Nadiad, Gujarat is managed by the Mahagujarat Medical Society which also runs a few other educational institutions. In 2023, an INSAF grant of \$31,000 was sent with Sh. Chandra Vora as the Project Leader, thanks to a generous donation by Dr. Barin Desai.

The project was aimed at upgrading the equipment at the Dakshaben Natubhai Amin Nursing Skills Lab at the College by acquiring new equipment as below.

**AirSim Combo  
Bronchi X for Airway  
Management Training**



**Advanced Life-  
Support Simulator  
For Life-Support  
Training**



**Patient Monitor for  
Advanced Life-  
Support Training**



College website is [dpcn.org.in](http://dpcn.org.in)

## INSAF Donors Support Education of Children from Nomadic Communities via VSSM

Project Leader Sh. Chandra Vora along with donors Jayaprakash Shah, Mukulesh & Upma Shah, and Pankaj & Nayna Dave have sponsored grants totaling \$9,692 during 2022-23 to support two projects at VSSM (Vicharta Samuday Samarthan Manch) in Ahmedabad.

About \$3,760 went for the sponsorship of 8 children from Nomadic/tribal communities in 2022-23 (\$470/child). The sponsorship supports the school fee, school dress & transportation, stationary, and food expenses, apart from a modest administrative expense.

The sponsored children, shown below, made good progress last year.



**Sandhya, 7th Grade**



**Ankita, 3rd Grade**



**Pooja, 4th Grade**



**Priti, 2nd Grade**



**Urvashi, 5th Grade**



**Bhavesh, 9th Grade**



**Nayan, 6th Grade**



**Vaibhavi, 8th Grade**

## Consumer Voice Aims to Increase Consumer Awareness and Protection

Consumer VOICE (Voluntary Organization in Interest of Consumer Education), based in New Delhi, has been working for consumer education since 1983. It provides unbiased reviews of food products, consumer durables, financial and banking services. It also runs a legal help desk for consumers and promotes car and road safety, tobacco control, and environmental protection.

A very good library of informative articles and videos on many topics of interest to help the consumer can be found on the Consumer Voice website. In addition, Consumer Buying Guides on a significant number of topics are available at the website for purchase at a nominal price of only Rs. 40 each.

In 2022, with Sh. Arun Cariappa as the Project Leader, a few INSAF friends decided to aid in the funding required for the construction of a building to be named Consumer Education and Research Institute (CERI). The land for a proposed 4-story building had been acquired previously.

The construction of the CERI building has started as of September 2024 (photo below).



**A View of the CERI Building Construction Site (Sep 2024)**

The new building, when completed, will have a small testing lab, a consumer redressal center, and an office. Two floors will be rented out for regular income and loan repayments.

During 2022-2023, INSAF grants totaling \$26,997.52 have been sent to CV. These were made possible by a major donation by the Sehgal Foundation, and 7 other donations.

More information on Consumer Voice is available at [Consumer-voice.org](http://Consumer-voice.org)



## 14-YEAR LONG SUSTAINED COMMITMENT TO HELP OUT-OF-SYSTEM CHILDREN

Kaliyuva Mane is a unique educational institution run by the Divya Deepa Trust on the outskirts of Mysore. Kaliyuva Mane provides opportunities to out-of-system children (often school dropouts due to poverty or other compelling circumstances) to earn their SSLC (10th grade), a diploma or a degree, or a specialized trade training, at no cost.

INSAF members have been committed to helping Kaliyuva Mane since 2010 when Former Board Member Dr. Soma Murthy initiated the project. Subsequently, 3 Former and Current Board Members have carried this torch: Dr. P. Harshavardhana, Sh. Joginder Kundra have led the project with active participation by Ms. Padma Tatta Cariappa.

A 4-year effort has resulted in the following progress:

- A 2-story dormitory for 72 boys commissioned Aug 2018. It provides a healthy living space for the children with solar water heating and rainwater harvesting. A sewage treatment plant has been added as well. \$80,000 was invested in this development.
- A refurbished and expanded girl's dormitory for 32 students and 7 lady teachers. Each teacher has her own room and private facilities. This will help attract and retain teachers. An 8 ft. boundary wall provides privacy and security. The facility was inaugurated in Feb. 2020 after an investment of \$80,000.
- A two-level facility with a 3,000 SF first floor which has a new kitchen, a storage room, and a modern dining area for over 75 persons to dine in one sitting. The 2nd floor has modern living accommodations for 7 male teachers. In the final phase, more trees were planted, an access pathway paved with interlocking blocks was added. INSAF funding for this phase was \$40,000, thanks to help from a local donor friend in India. This facility was inaugurated in December 2021.



### Dining and Staff Quarters Facility

To date INSAF members and friends contributed over \$350,000, with \$200,000 going into Infrastructure development, and the remaining funds supporting operational costs.

Kaliyuva Mane and its founder Sh. Ananth Kumar have a great track record. More information on Kaliyuva Mane is available

## NEW PROJECT: Narmadalay

Nimar is a region in Madhya Pradesh where a significant number of displaced villagers moved as a result of the Sardar Sarovar Dam Project on river Narmada about 15 years ago. That project is said to have displaced over a million people.

About 15 years ago, an exceptionally dedicated volunteer, Ms. Bharati Thakur, started to work in village Lepa on the banks of river Narmada in the Nimar region to help the children and women of the very poor community in Lepa and nearby villages. In 2010, with the help of like-minded people, Ms. Thakur established "Nimar Abhyudaya Rural Management and Development Association (N.A.R.M.A.D.A.).

Several informal education centers, schools, a vocational school, a hostel, and a Rural Technology Department are being run by Narmadalay, helping hundreds of children, youth, and women.

The main school at Lepa Punarvas, named Ramkrishna Sarada Niketan, is affiliated with the Madhya Pradesh Education Board, has 325 students, including 220 at the hostel. Branches of the school are located at Village Bhattyan and Village Chhoti Khargone. Vocational training is provided to quarterly intake of 10-15 students, or 40-60 students per year.

The Technology Center, in collaboration with Bhaba Atomic Research Center, is producing solar dryers for sale, as well as other products for sale such as dried onion, kasuri methi, herbal tea, tomato powder, spinach powder, and wooden trays.

A Goshala (cow shelter) with 27 Nimari cows, a gobar gas plant and vermi composting, is also in operation.

In 2023, INSAF Member Sh. Suresh Patel decided to help with a donation for the construction of a 5,500 Sq. ft. dining hall-cum-activity center for the hostel and school children. An INSAF grant of \$16,000 was sent thanks to his donation. The overall project cost is estimated at \$85K-\$100K.



A View of the Dining Hall and Activity Center in Aug 2024

## **INSAF-Ruchika Education Centers Help Rail Platform and Slum Children in Odisha**

Seven INSAF families have been sponsoring a program in Bhubaneswar and Paradeep in Odisha for remedial education of children from desperately poor parents. Some of these are children who are found around the railway station in Bhubaneswar. Some come from a slum near the railway station at Paradeep. In 2024, a grant of \$6,975 was sent, thanks to the 7 INSAF families. In 2023-24, the program had 56 children (21 girls) with 85-90% attendance.



**A View of the Platform School, Bhubaneswar (Railway Platform was under repair at the time of the photo)**



**A View of the Paradeep Education Center**



**Special one-time Excursion to Bhubaneswar Zoo for Motivational Purposes (Dec 2023)**

## **Sodhana and INSAF Collaborate for Women's Empowerment and Community Health in A.P.**

Several INSAF families have been supporting 7 different programs with Sodhana in A.P. One of those programs is Women's Empowerment, sponsored by 4 families. Under this, coordinators organize and support women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to receive and pay back microloans from government-owned banks. About \$2,830 was spent on this program in 2023.



**A SHG Meeting at the Sodhana Office in Chipurupalli, A.P.**

165 ladies in 15 SHGs from two villages (Ramalingapuram and Purreyavalasa) benefitted in 2023-24. The average bank loan in recent years has been at about Rs. 60,000. The loans are typically utilized for some income-generating activity which helps to gradually pay back the loans.

Two other programs are aimed at rural community primary health care. One program, sponsored by 4 families with \$4,485 in 2023, helps pay for 20 commonly needed medicines for several villages. Another program, sponsored by 8 families with \$1,480 in 2023, helps pay for one periodic health clinic.



**A View of the Monthly Health Clinic at Village Ramalingapuram, attended by 40-50 patients each month**



## 2024 CONTRIBUTIONS

Here is a menu of project types for you to consider for your 2024 contribution. Broadly, INSAF projects are in the areas of education, community development, and community service. Please see Page 8 for specific recent projects. Please print the sheet below, mark your choice(s) and enter the tax-deductible dollar figure you would like to contribute. Don't see a cause you would rather support? Feel free to start something new for your idea with a contribution, and one of the INSAF colleagues will be in touch with you.

Your Choice	Your 2024 Contribution	Type of Project	Additional Information
1	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	<b>Community Development</b>	Build some durable facility or service of long-term recurring value to a community
2	<input type="checkbox"/> A \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> B \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> C \$ _____	<b>Education</b> A. Teacher Staff Support B. Sponsor a specific student C. Grant to a school	Respective examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stipend for volunteers at a school</li> <li>Help a specific student from a poor family or at an orphanage (several years commitment)</li> <li>Make a grant to a school for operations or tuition/books/scholarship for students as an incentive to perform better or to award a teacher.</li> </ul>
3	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	<b>Community and Health Services</b>	Fund needed services for the poor
4	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	<b>Women's Empowerment</b>	Fund some program which aims to help women
5	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	<b>Literacy Improvement</b>	Fund efforts to increase literacy
6	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	<b>Hunger Alleviation</b>	Fund food services for the poor
7	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	<b>Animal Welfare</b>	Grant funds for care of stray animals in major urban centers
8	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____		Start a new project based on your idea. Please describe your idea in an e-mail to: sharma7336@gmail.com

### Membership Contribution:

☐ \$15/Couple or \$10/Single Annual-Membership

NAME(S) & ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION** (payable to INSAF): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Federal Tax ID # 23-7338355.** Please mail your check and this sheet (or e-mail the requested information) to Insafusa.Operations@insafweb.org) to the address below:

**Ms. Padmashri Lad, INSAF V. P. Communications, 137 Seagate Drive, San Mateo, CA 94403**

**INSAF PROJECTS:** Recent projects and Leaders/Coordinators are listed below. More information may be obtained through the Editor. Kindly do let us know of any errors and omissions including any corrections to the listings.

- **AIM for Seva USA [Community Service]**  
Sh. Ramesh & Ms. Jyoti Patel
- **Akshay Patra [Community Service]** Sh. Arun & Ms. Padma Tatta Cariappa
- **Animal Aid Unlimited, Udaipur, Rajasthan [Animal Welfare]** Ms. Aruna Marathé
- **Animal Rahat, Sangli, Maharashtra [Animal Welfare]**  
Ms. Aruna Marathé
- **ARCH - Action Res. In Community Health & Dev., Gujarat [Community Service]** Sh. Ramesh & Ms. Jyoti Patel
- **Balabhavan Nazareth Student Support, Paduapuram, Kerala [College Education of Specific Youth]:** Sh. Arun & Ms. Padma Tatta Cariappa, Dr. Santosh Chokhani, Sh. Joginder & Ms. Meera Kundra, Dr. Raj & Ms. Padmashri Lad, Dr. A.J. & Ms. Thankamma Poullose, Dr. Bhav & Ms. Kaye Sharma
- **Books for All [Community Dev]** Sh. Vinod Luthra
- **Calcutta Rescue, Kolkata, W. Bengal [Community Dev]**  
Sh. Asok Baral, Sh. Joginder Kundra, and Friends
- **Consumer Voice [Community Dev]**  
Sh. Arun & Ms. Padma Tatta Cariappa
- **Divya Deepa Charitable Trust, Mysore, Karnataka [Community Dev & Education]** Dr. P. Harshavardhana, Sh. Joginder Kundra, and Friends
- **Ekal Vidyalay [Literacy]**  
Sh. Joginder & Ms. Meera Kundra
- **Eternal Gandhi Museum Houston TX [Community Dev]**  
Sh. Joginder & Ms. Meera Kundra
- **Kanchan Foundation, Bhavnagar, Gujarat [Community Service]** Dr. Anop & Ms. Renuka Vora Families
- **Lions Club Charitable Eye Hospital, Jalandhar, Punjab [Community Service]** Dr. Ashok & Ms. Usha Sachdev
- **Mahagujarat Medical Society, Nadiad, Gujarat [Education]** Sh. Chandra Vora
- **Makunda Christian Leprosy & General Hospital, Karimganj, Assam [Community Service]** Mr. Jesudas P. Sundararajan & Mrs. Rajasingh P. Valarmathy
- **Malvi Educational & Charitable Trust/Shantaba Vidyalay, Kukeri, Gujarat [Education]**  
Sh. Ramesh & Ms. Jyoti Patel and Friends
- **Nanritam, Purulia, W. Bengal [Community Dev]**  
Sh. Joginder & Ms. Meera Kundra, and others
- **Narmadalaya, Kasrawad, M. P. [Education]**  
Sh. Suresh Patel
- **Panjab University, Chandigarh [Motivation of Students]**  
Chem. Eng. Class of 1969 Alumni & Bibi Amrit Kaur Scholarships c/o Dr. Bhav Sharma/Sh. Pritinder Singh Arora
- **Parijat Academy, Pamohi, Assam [Community Dev]**  
Sh. Suresh Patel
- **Rashtriya Sewa Bharati [Community Service]**  
Sh. Surinder Maheshwary
- **Rotary Eye Foundation, Ahmedabad, Gujarat [Community Service]** Sh. Ramesh & Ms. Jyoti Patel and Co-sponsors, Dr. Rajan Naik & Dr. Sridevi Sarma
- **Ruchika-INSAF Platform School, Bhubaneswar & Education Center, Paradeep, Odisha [Education]**  
7 INSAT Families c/o Dr. Bhav & Ms. Kaye Sharma
- **Sankara Eye Foundation, USA [Eye Care Services]**  
Sh. Joginder & Ms. Meera Kundra
- **Shrimad Rajchandra Adhyatmik Sadhana Kendra, Koba, Gujarat [Community Service]**  
Dr. Mahendra & Ms. Jyoti Nanavati
- **SODHANA — Ramalingapuram, P'valasa A.P. [Community Dev, Women's Empowerment, & Education]** Dr. Santosh Chokhani, Dr. Gopal & Ms. Shibani Ghose Chotani, Sh. Joginder & Ms. Meera Kundra, Dr. Raj & Ms. Padmashri Lad, Dr. AJ & Ms. Thankamma Poullose, Dr. Jay & Ms. Shashi Shetty, Dr. Manoj & Ms. Maneesha Shrivastav, Dr. Bhav & Ms. Kaye Sharma
- **SOS Children's Home, Rajpura, Punjab [Education]**  
Ms. Sudesh Kapur, Sh. Joginder & Ms. Meera Kundra, Dr. Raj & Ms. Padmashri Lad, Dr. Ashok & Ms. Usha Sachdev, Dr. Bhav & Ms. Kaye Sharma
- **Sri Badrika Ashram, Dist. Sirmaur, H P. [Community Service]** Sh. Suresh Patel
- **Vaghaldhara Vocational Training Center [Community Dev]** Dr. Rajan Naik & Dr. Sridevi Sarma
- **Vallabh Kanya Kelavni Mandal, Rajkot, Vadodra, Gujarat [Education]** Sh. Chandra Vora
- **Vicharata Samuday Samarhthan Manch, Ahmedabad, Gujarat [Community Dev]** Sh. Chandra Vora