



## From My Heart...

My Dear Daughters, Friends and Well-wishers,

**I** start with wishing all of you **A VERY HAPPY, HEALTHY AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.** I am sure each one of us has our own memories of what has happened in our lives in the year gone by. We need to dwell upon these and take our decisions of going ahead with our life, giving it our best to ensure that we find joy and happiness in everything we do.

At LPF we have done so many new things which have not only brought happiness to us but



certainly to all whose lives we have touched. Many new scholarships have been introduced, substantially increasing the number of scholarships. This has been made possible by a few corporates, many friends and some Lila Fellows who have come forward to support the cause we are championing.

We now have 8 LFs, contributing very efficiently on various panels which run the Foundation, 2 others working full time in the office and a highly motivated team of LFs working for INSPIRA. This indeed is very gratifying. **It is so important to have Lila Fellows involved in the working of the Foundation.** My dream is that the Foundation should soon be **"FOR THE LILA FELLOWS, OF THE LILA FELLOWS AND MANAGED BY THE LILA FELLOWS"**. I dream of the day when one of our Lila Fellows will take over the complete administration of LPF as its CEO. That will be the day, when I will rest assured that the Foundation will live forever!

I am happy to share with you the several initiatives we have taken in the year gone by. A new video of the Foundation has been launched and can be viewed by all on U-tube at the URL <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIQztpHcVjQ> and also share it with all your friends and family. This will enable us to reach out to many more individuals and befriend them. You must also visit our renovated website at [www.lilapoonawallaafoundation.com](http://www.lilapoonawallaafoundation.com). Our web site is continuously on the move, so do send in your updates to ensure that our web site remains dynamic. We have also composed a LPF song, sung as an inaugural song at all our functions. You can listen to it on U-tube as well as on our web site.

Additionally, I wish to let my daughters know about **the LPF Group (Group Activities)** on Facebook, which can be accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/141586042605723/>. You all must join it! This connection will keep you updated with the happenings at LPF all round the year!

Our efforts to enhance the skills and personalities of our girls continued with increased enthusiasm. Many workshops and short training programmes were organised in the last few months. Though this issue of Inspira covers some of them, I share a few highlights of all of them.

We started with an intense **Self Defence workshop**. The shocking incident of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2012, the infamous Delhi Rape Case brought to light the state of insecurity our women face in society and invited international concern. I have always been very concerned about the safety of my girls. This incident made me realise the value of my foresight to have a workshop

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on Self Defence for my girls in June 2012 itself! An organisation named **Reflex Quotient** conducted this programme. Two experienced trainers **Mr. Hemen Lohana**, who is a Sensei certified trainer from Dale Carnegie Training Course and **Mr. Salil Nadkarni** a Kyo Shi and a specialist in Isshin Ryu Style of karate & 5<sup>th</sup> degree in Matayoshi Kobudo a traditional Japanese Weapons Art, imparted all possible easy skills to the girls.

Quite a few programmes were focused on **Leadership and Self Development**. To start with **Mr. Satish Kalokhe, Director QCFI India & Chairman of QCFI** Pune chapter and an experienced trainer conducted a workshop on the core skills required to become a good leader. **Mr. Minocher Patel, the Founder of Ecole Solitaire**, a motivational speaker and a corporate trainer of international repute guided the girls on how to create lasting impressions in every walk of life. Indeed! What an **excellent, motivational Etiquette & Grooming Programme**. **Mr. Nilesh Waghchoude, a qualified Corporate & Executive Coach from UK**, who has conducted coaching sessions to achieve excellence in areas such as Leadership, relationships, entrepreneurship, self-development, etc., conducted a workshop on how **'Your Dreams can be your future'**. One can spend one's life thinking & talking about dreams, however Nilesh shared and convinced the participants that there was a proven powerful process to achieving their dreams by following them. **'The Art of Powerful Communication is the Language of Successful Leadership'** - this workshop was conducted by **Dr. Pratik Surana**, an entrepreneur and trainer specialising in people management, leadership and communication skills. He is the author of the widely read book **'Cool down before you Burnout'**. Another very important programme was that on **career guidance** to girls, imparted by three excellent individuals- **Dr. Apoorva Palkar, Director Sinhgad Institute of Management** (a career counsellor of national acclaim), **Dr. Abhyankar, Principal VIT College** and **Mr. Narendra Dravid, Director SEICCO**, an institute for special education. All the three threw light on the opportunities available to the girls as they complete their academics.

I believe **there are four things that women should know to achieve success- 'How to look like a Girl? How to behave like a lady? How to think like a man? and How to work like a dog?'** To help our girls transform into young ladies, we organised the **WOW programme, 'Wellness of Women'**. This was conducted by the Journalist-turned-Editor, **Vinita Deshmukh** and her team of experts. They gave inputs on how to remain beautiful, both externally and internally. They gave inputs on how to harmoniously balance personal and professional lives. They also spoke about what foods to provide to the body and

mind, in order to ensure their health.

Following this, we had an **art and culture workshop** by a renowned artist **Mrs. Maya Dongre** (mother of our LF Sujata Dongre). She introduced to our girls various forms of fine art, namely **Worli, Madhubani, Egyptian and Pueblo Painting**. The last art form is a new American Red Indian art which mostly comprises of geometrical patterns. We also gave some of our girls the opportunity to attend **Shaimak Davar's** dance show, which they enjoyed thoroughly.

We held four **Spoken English courses**, each for 64 hours covered over a period of a month. **Mrs. Sangeeta Belvalkar**, (the mother of our LF Neha) who is professional English teacher with many years of experience conducted most of these classes.

This was the first year when we had **THREE** award functions; two in July and one in November and added another **506** girls to our family. All these new family members were also given an orientation, informing them about the **working of the Foundation, the objectives, the mission and the values most cherished by the Foundation**. This issue of Inspira will give you glimpses of these award functions.

All the Lila Fellows, Lila Girls and Lila Juniors got together and arranged **SAMAGAM 4**, a cultural event to raise funds to enable LPF to support more girls. **This is their way of giving back to LPF. Many corporate and individual sponsors made this event a runaway success like never before.** Read more about it in here.

For our **Lila Juniors, their mothers and their teachers**, we organised a **health awareness programme** by **Dr. Meeta Nakhare** and her team of doctors. She covered all aspects of **health and hygiene, nutrition, introduction to sexual health and contraception, in 5 modules, which also included an Anaemia Campaign**. Additional coaching classes have been introduced in difficult subjects such as Science, Mathematics and English for all LJs, whilst even their teachers are being coached in the instructional techniques of the same. It has been a wonderful experience to see the enthusiasm in all the young school girls!

I am sure, from the entire narrative I have given, you too can feel the dynamism of the Foundation. So much is being done... and this has been possible only because of the **dedication of our staff, who have a sense of belonging to the Foundation and strive to achieve excellence, knowing no boundaries**. I take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work. I also take this opportunity to thank all the **Trustees** who have worked sincerely throughout the year, specially the efforts they have put in during the selection process ensuring that the best and most deserving girls become a part of the

LPF family.

I am grateful to all the donors, who have come forward without any reservations to make this year indeed a very rewarding year, not only for those girls who received the scholarships, but also for their families and us in particular working towards the joy of giving. You must have all enjoyed the festive season starting with *Raksha Bandan, Dussera, Diwali*, Christmas and New Year. We all look forward to yet another year

of excellence and I am sure 2013 will be even more rewarding than the past. **I wish every one of you the best life can offer.**

Good luck and Happy Reading  
Mom to all my girls; Friend to everyone

*Lila.*

Lila Poonawalla

### Self Defence Workshop

***Rape, assault, abuse, domestic-violence.... These are not just stories in fiction or thrilling daily headlines! According to current statistics, one rape case is being reported every 20 minutes! In order to equip our girls with the preparedness, presence of mind and tact to protect themselves, as they pass many a prying eyes in their daily lives, LPF organized a workshop on self-defense. How relevant a workshop to conduct in wake of the Delhi rape case on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2012! It was conducted by experienced trainers, Mr. Salil Nadkarni, Mr. Hemen Lohana and their team from Reflex Quotient Academy for Self Defence.***

**T**he workshop was an eye-opener towards certain basic but crucial steps involved in self-defense. This training gave a practical demonstration of how to deal with very dangerous situations like attempt to rape and/or theft very effectively. The trainers started the session with warm-up exercises and advised the girls to do warm up-exercises daily in order to keep their bodies supple. It is important each woman builds on her stamina by exercising daily.

The prime mental technique imparted to the participants was to be alert and very aware of their surroundings, maintain calm and guidance on how to react in such situations. The trainer gave a tip that never show you are ready to counter attack, always pretend that you are scared, so that you can buy precious time to escape from the risky situation. He also told the participants that when crisis falls, the adrenaline in your body helps you to develop that power to attack back. In short, the slogan of the workshop said- **"Help yourself. Self-awareness and presence of mind are the two essential things to deal with any critical situation."**

This was a workshop one of its kind, wherein the girls were made aware of the many weapons they are generally equipped with everyday! Simple contents of each lady's handbags like clips, pins, scarf, comb etc.,

were portrayed as potential weapons of self-defence! The girls were also made to practically perform the acts of self-defence they had learned, on each other.

Naznin Shaikh's (LF-2011) favourite take home message was *"Never show mercy to the attacker and knock him out rendering him breathless. Always give value to your life more than belongings."* She was astonished to know her handbag was full of weapons! A participant, Mansi Talke (LF-2011) told us that during the session, she learnt various exercises that would help her keep fit and healthy. She was sure she would go back and teach the same as well as the defence techniques to her sister and friends. She said, *"I have decided that henceforth I will always carry a stone tied up in my dupatta (stole) in my bag to protect myself."*

I agree with what John Dryden said, "Self-defense is nature's eldest law". We all need to follow it. Nilofer Glasswala (LF-2011) said, *"The workshop taught us techniques to protect our dignities as well as of those in need, rather than feel helpless and scared in such situations."* The workshop encouraged women to believe in their inner strength, become strong and ingrained in them a feeling that they are capable enough to defend themselves



■ - Nisha Pandya



As you have read in Mrs. Poonawalla's article, "From My Heart", the Foundation organised three equally grand award ceremonies, on three different days to cater to over a 500 scholarships that it gave away this year. Inspira summarises the 3 pompous functions that comprise the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Award Ceremony of the Lila Poonawalla Foundation in a fact sheet presented herein and lots of pictures, whilst we highlight the invaluable messages given by our distinguished guests at these functions, especially for those who missed it!

## LPF SCHOLARSHIPS 2012 -QUICKFACTS

Venue: Symbiosis Vishwabhavan Auditorium

Event	Date	Guest of Honour	Chief Guest
PG & UG Awards Ceremony	28th July 2012	Mr. Per Heggnes	Prof. S.B. Mujumdar
School Awards Ceremony	29th July 2012	Mr. Per Heggnes	Mrs. Vandana Chavan
New Categories Awards Ceremony	4th November	Ms. Anu Aga	

	CATEGORIES OF SCHOLARSHIPS	NO. OF AWARDS
A	OVERSEAS	8
B	INDIAN	10
C	SPECIAL	61
D	ENGINEERING	36
E	SCIENCE (Bachelor's in Computers, Electronics, Physics, Chemistry, Maths, Statistics, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Animation & Pharmacy)	17
D1	ENGINEERING (NOVEMBER BATCH)	65
E1	SCIENCE (NOVEMBER BATCH)	62
F	DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION	17
G	BACHELOR'S IN PHYSIOTHERAPY	11
H	BACHELOR'S IN NURSING	31
I	DIPLOMA IN ENGINEERING	47
J	BACHELOR'S IN ARCHITECTURE	3
K	2ND YEAR ENGINEERING (AFTER DIPLOMA)	15
	SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS (Support extended to student from class 7th to their graduation)	120
	5th Batch of PEACE AMBASSADOR SCHOLARSHIPS	14
	<b>TOTAL Scholarships in 2012</b>	<b>517</b>

**1996 onwards: 718 Lila Fellows; 382 Lila Girls; 229 Lila Juniors & 80 Peace Ambassadors**



Eco-friendly Inauguration by  
Mr. Per Heggnes &  
Prof. S.B. Mujumdar



Mrs. Lila Poonawalla

**W**hile speaking at the PG and UG awards ceremony, Mrs. Poonawalla said, "I am very thankful to the IKEA Foundation for helping LPF in launching its' new categories of scholarships to support undergraduate education in Nursing, Physiotherapy, Diploma and Bachelor's in Engineering, Architecture and Education. Per Heggnes and Vandana Varma are the largest contributors to this year's scholarships. Their support has not only helped me to support more girls, but also helped me support more disciplines too! The Foundation, along with such help has addressed needs towards educating and bringing girls into the mainstream, towards development and enabling transformation into their own life, and lives of families and communities in which they are living. I am happy to have this vision and have the friends who help me realize this dream. I am happy to keep dreaming and keep on growing this family. Normally in India, we propagate not having more than two children. But I do not mind having 20,000 such children"

At the School awards ceremony, Mrs. Lila Poonawalla introduced the school project and said "This is just the beginning and I want your help to complete all my dreams. My dream is to educate the girl child and if you support and push your girl to get educated, then I will take all their responsibilities. In this 21<sup>st</sup> century women are more confident, more intelligent, and more powerful. If we give them the right direction, they will reach their destination. Success for a teacher means motivating students to believe that they can achieve what they have not dreamed of before. My teacher, Ms. Manek Sunderji made a tremendous impact on my life. One day she told me, 'Lila you have the ability to transform every area of your life and its all begins with your very own self discipline. Remember it is a power of your own choice. Nothing in life is to be feared; it is only to be understood.' To mould a girl child in the right way, we need good teachers and the Foundation is also carrying out many programmes to train and motivate the teacher's of your daughters. We have employed counsellors for your daughters. We are giving them many opportunities to learn in form of different workshops. It is you who should ensure their participation and support me in supporting them."

"Please let your girls stand on their own feet and do not force them to get married and deliver a child. It is something that has to eventually happen with each one of them. Educate them, make them independent and capable of supporting themselves. Until and unless you parents do not support them nobody will do so..."

**These were Mrs. Lila Poonawalla's words at the New Categories Awards Function in November 2012. She beamed pride as she projected the contribution of LPF to the country's economy- "Even if each of my girls works for at least 20 years after completing their education, they will be contributing more than 25,000 working years for the growth of Indian economy."**

■ - Mrs. Lila Poonawalla  
Chairperson Lila Poonawalla Foundation



4th Batch of Peace Ambassadors (2012)



**Our Chief Guest at the PG & UG Award Ceremony was Padma Bhushan, Prof. S. B. Mujumdar, better known at the Founder of the Symbiosis International University of which he is also the Chancellor.**



*"For every successful man there is a woman; but here is a man behind the woman Lila. Earlier women were not allowed to go to school, read about civilization. They were further suppressed after the death of her husband by becoming a Sati! Indians were and still are*

*divided into the four castes, the Varnas and people will have to die like that. Mahatma Gandhi used to say "Harijans and women are commodities, to exploit, consume and enjoy. That was the state of the women in this country. Then, slowly but progressively, I am proud and happy to mention, that for the first time things improved for women from this very city of Pune. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and his wife started the 1<sup>st</sup> girls school in the country. Pandita Ramabai was born a Hindu, converted to Christianity and*

*was the 1<sup>st</sup> woman to travel abroad. She started Sharda Sadan to educate widows. Anandibai Karve and Maharshi Dhondo Keshav Karve started Hingane Stree Shikshan Sanstha for the betterment of widows and were boycotted by Pune for doing so. Ramabai Ranade started Seva Sadan and the Huzurpaga School just for girls. Pune is not only the Oxford of the East, but is the hub of education and now a pioneer in social power. I am happy for Lila and Firoz as they have lined up all these ladies for education. In the future, such Lila Fellows will be the trusted trustees. Lila has used the amount she was gifted on her birthday wisely and achieved her goals. Today, of the one Crore students in higher education, 80% are in Arts and Commerce. They are unemployed and have no skills. Lila promotes higher, skill based and vocational education. I salute both Lila and Firoz. Thank You for having me here!"*

■ **- Prof. S.B. Mujumdar**  
Chief Guest (PG & UG Award Ceremony)

Category A Overseas  
Post-graduate Scholarships



Category B Indian  
Post-graduate Scholarships

**Our Guest of Honour for the PG & UG as well as the School Scholarships Award ceremonies was Mr. Per Heggnes, the CEO of IKEA Foundation. Per served in the Norwegian Air Force and graduated from the University of Augsburg in Germany with an MBA. 'To improve situation of children and youth across developing world' is the vision of IKEA Foundation, so that they can create better future for the world. IKEA basically works towards fulfilling four fundamentals: home, healthy diet, quality education and sustainable family income. It has long-term commitments with South Asia, specially India.**

**Mr. Per Heggnes was accompanied by Ms. Vandana Varma, who is the Programme Director for IKEA. She manages and oversees programme partnerships, and holds an additional role as Children's Ombudsman for IKEA South Asia, where she supports business teams on preventing child labour in the supply chain.**



*"I am honoured to be present here on such an important day and function. As I am proud to be here, I salute every woman in India as they are the real heroes/leaders. They courageously face every obstacle in life and reach their destination. Food, shelter and clothing are the basic needs.*

*But education and health are also important; our Foundation IKEA, supports these. All of you are very lucky because you've got full support of Lila Mom. Mr. Kennedy once said "Lead as if you are alive today and tomorrow and learn as if you will live forever". It is important to enjoy every day of life and that happens as you plan. Do some planning with your life every day. Learning never stops; increase on your understanding. We do the same at the Ikea Foundation. We hate compliances. We look for constant improvement, constantly look to share practices and opportunities to improve. Life is about constant improvement and that is happening. In that sense, educating children is important for a nation. Educated children get the confidence to look beyond a given situation, start to make up their own mind and start to figure out what they can do to improve. It gives them attitude and skill for academics, to make life prosperous. It helps to make life resourceful locally, nationally as well as globally. I am proud to see these young women enter into a great new*

*life. Ikea is proud to be a part of Lila Poonawalla Foundation. This scholarship will definitely have an impact on their lives as well as those of the future generations. Educated women will have low birth rates and improve quality of health. We do not need more people on planet but instead need to take care of them. Education is a lifelong exercise. Keep asking right questions without any stoppage. Sometimes questions are important than answers. You will get every opportunity in this Foundation. I am proud to see growth at the LPF; am impressed by the English skills developed by girls as compared to last year. You may make mistakes in your careers and that is the best way to learn and correct them quickly to succeed in life. Tolerance is important in educational process. Learn to respect peoples' views. Diversity makes the world interesting. You are lucky to live in a country like India; rich with people, culture and fantastic heritage. I am impressed by women in India, than those in other countries. You are entering in new world and LPF is lifelong commitment. There is only one Lila and many Lila Fellows. Take active part in developing the country, to educate and develop in many more women in India. Its' the choice that you make in life that decides where you will be. You will have lot many choices in life. Good luck!"*

**■ - Mr. Per Heggnes,**  
Chairperson IKEA Foundation  
Guest of Honour (UG, PG & School Award Functions)

Category C (Group 1)  
Indian Post-Graduate  
Special Scholarships  
for the economically  
needy







Category C (Group 2)  
Indian Post-graduate  
Special  
Scholarships for the  
economically needy



Category D  
(Group 1)  
Undergraduate  
Scholarships for  
Bachelor's in  
Engineering



Category E  
(Group 1)  
Undergraduate  
Scholarships for  
Bachelor's in Sciences



**A Member of the Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of Indian Parliament and the Ex-Mayor of Pune, Advocate Mrs. Vanadana Chavan was the Chief Guest of the School Scholarship Awards Ceremony.**



Mrs. Vandana Chavan

*"This morning it was very difficult for me to attend this programme, because of my tight scheduled but I couldn't miss this programme because of its real cause of upliftment of women. LPF plays an important role in educating girls. We all want to improve but very few want to change. Investment in education and/or knowledge always pays the best interest. Now-a-days, women have touched every dimension of life. I am really proud of every Lila Fellow I have learned about, because they do not only develop their selves but also personally contribute towards the development of our society and thereby country. Today, I saw here past Lila Fellows who have supported the Foundation not only financially, but are spending their precious time for the Foundation. I and the LPF are working together towards the global cause of Global Warming and Environment. **I closely experience the standard and commitment of the Lila Fellows working for our cause and am impressed.**"*

■ - **Adv. Mrs. Vandana Chavan**  
(Chief Guest School Award Ceremony)



Eco-friendly Inauguration Ceremony by Chief Guest Mrs. Vandana Chavan





*Camp Education Society*



*Dr. Shamrao Kalmadi School*



*Zilla Parishad School, Gavadewadi*





*St. Clare's High School*



*Anjuman-E-Islam School*



*C.E.S's Utkarsha English Medium School*



# *Inspira* New Category Awards...

**Padma Shri Mrs. Arnavaz Aga, better known as Mrs. Anu Aga was our honourable Chief Guest for the Award Ceremony organised in November for the awardees in the newly introduced undergraduate categories. Anu Aga, born in 1942 is an Indian businesswoman and social worker, who led Thermax Ltd., the Rs 3246-crore energy and environment engineering major, as its chairperson 1996-2004. After retiring from Thermax, she took to social work for which she was awarded the Padma Shri for Social Work by the Government of India. She is currently Chairperson of Teach For India. She was nominated to the Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of Indian Parliament in April 2012, by the then President of India Mrs. Pratibha Patil.**



*"Even today, most of the Indian population is deprived of even basic education. 3% of the children in India do not go to school at all. About 50% children are unable to complete even primary education, while a staggering 94% of children are unable to acquire University level education. It is, therefore, encouraging that Lila Poonawalla Foundation*

*has undertaken the task of educating so many girls, especially those from rural areas. All these girls are extremely fortunate, and should make the most of this opportunity. Girls should also remember to back to society what they have received. Never be under the impression that whatever you gain or achieve is because of your own efforts alone. There were others, your parents, your teachers, mentors like Lila who have been behind your success."*

*I also urge parents not to treat daughters different to your sons. In my era, girls took up medicine, nursing and not business. We were taught to feel guilty for every small thing and be submissive. Rules were different for me and my brothers. It was ingrained in me that business was not for me; and one day when I lost my husband suddenly in an accident I was thrown into shouldering the responsibility of Chairperson Thermax! Times have changed; girls have started exploring many fields. Your daughters are equal to your sons. Girls, please stop feeling guilty.*

*Another advice, I would give you is to develop the right habits and thoughts to get the desired*

*outcomes. Orange trees will not produce the apples; they will produce the oranges only! So it is equally important to enjoy oranges instead of brooding over apples which never yielded! Be whatever you are do not expect which you can never get. If possible, practice Vipasana, an age-old technique of Buddhist meditation, which helps you to connect with your inner self, and overcome all conflicts. After my*



*Inauguration at the hands of Padma Shri Mrs. Anu Aga*

*husband's death, I was disturbed for a long time not sure I would be able to take over the company and perform equally well. But Vipasana helped me a lot. It taught me to be calm during turbulence. It is up to us to decide whether we should spend tough times in sorrow or with happiness and creatively".*

■ - **Mrs. Arnavaz Aga**  
(Guest of Honour,  
New Categories Awards Ceremony)

Category D  
Undergraduate  
Scholarships for  
Bachelor's in  
Engineering  
(Group 2)





# *Inspira* New Category Awards...



*Category D Undergraduate Scholarships for Bachelor's in Engineering (Group 3)*



*Category E Undergraduate Scholarships for Bachelor's in Sciences (Group 2)*



*Category E Undergraduate Scholarships for Bachelor's in Sciences (Group 3)*



# *Inspira* New Category Awards...



*Category F Undergraduate Scholarships for Diploma in Education*



*Category G Undergraduate Scholarships for Bachelor's in Physiotherapy*



*Category H Undergraduate Scholarships for Bachelor's in Nursing*



# *Inspira* New Category Awards...



*Category I Undergraduate Scholarships for Diploma in Engineering (Group 1)*



*Category I Undergraduate Scholarships for Diploma in Engineering (Group 2)*



*Category K & J Undergraduate Scholarships for admission to 2nd year of Engineering and Architecture (after completion of Diploma Course)*



### **An overview of the school project 2morrow 2gether which was initiated in 2011.**

The LPF's school project **2morrow 2gether** is now in its successful second year. In June 2011, 109 girls of standard 7<sup>th</sup> received this scholarship and became Lila Juniors (LJ). This year in June 2012, we selected 120 more girls and further plan to add another hundred deserving girls the next year. The project aims to support these girls right up to their graduation in their chosen field. These girls have been chosen from six schools: Anjuman-E-Islam School, Camp Education Society's Girls High School, Camp Education Society's Utkarsha English Medium School (included in 2012), Dr. Shamrao Kalmadi High School (Kannada Medium), St. Claire's High School, and Hirkani Vidyalaya, Gawadewadi (Rural School).



*Scholarship being awarded to a School girl from Anjuman-E-Islam School*

The highlight of this project is the involvement of the LPF through its various programmes and activities in ensuring that every Lila Junior is able to fulfill her dream for higher education.

**Counselling Programme** is the essence of this project. Three separate counsellors have been appointed for the 2011 batch, 2012 batch and for the rural school at Gavdewadi. The main aim of the programme is to help the Lila Juniors cope with



*Teachers Counselling being conducted*

their difficulties / problems which may hinder their educational progress and to prepare them for future challenges. The counselors conduct individual sessions and group sessions with the girls and also visit their homes and meet their parents. Regular meetings are also held with the teachers to know more about their progress and needs. There is a constant coordination between the counselors, project coordinator and project director, Ms. Jayshree Shahade to take the programme ahead in a positive direction. The counselling programme has been very successful and has helped the Lila Juniors to cope with their daily life challenges. LJs express their feelings without any inhibitions and are happy and eager to participate in the various activities conducted by the Foundation.

**Regular Extra Coaching Classes** were started from June 2012 for the first batch of girls. All the LJs belong to marginalized family backgrounds and most of their parents are uneducated. Thus, they do not get conducive educational environment at home. Keeping this in mind and the needs of the LJs, LPF provides them with extra coaching classes conducted



*Extra Coaching Classes taken by Rukhsana Sheikh in Anjuman-E-Islam School*

by external faculties in Science, Mathematics and English, at their respective schools. These classes are conducted daily before school hours and are monitored by the Counselors who give regular feedback to the faculty to ensure that the LJs get maximum benefit from the same.



*Selection interview in progress*





*Extra Coaching Classes*

**Teachers Training Programmes** by qualified and expert trainers are conducted for all the school teachers who teach our LJs. This programme ensures effective teaching practices, not just for our LJs, but for the entire class. This also helps in the professional growth of the teachers. The teachers are very happy



*Teachers undergoing training in Mathematics*

with these programmes and some of them have been able to implement the new teaching practices and methods in their class. These training programmes are conducted regularly and there is a continuous follow up with the teachers. This year the teachers were provided subject-wise training on how to effectively teach the subject.

**Health Awareness Programme for LJs and their mothers :** To improve the quality of life of our LJs it is very important that we also focus on their health. The LPF has initiated a Health Awareness Programme with Dr. Meena Nakhare, once a week at each school, which started in July 2012 and will continue through February 2013. Along with the LJs, the programme includes the mothers and the concerned teachers who



*Blood tests at Anjuman-E-Islam School*



*Health Check-up*



**Portable Toilet Blocks established for Gawadewadi school**

play a very influential role in the life of these girls. This programme accounts for the health check of each participant and covers 5 modules: Introduction to health and hygiene, Nutrition, Anemia campaign, Common health problems and Introduction to sexual health and contraception.

LPF has not only received full support in all its activities, but also active participation from these schools, their principals, teachers, parents and the LJs.

2morrow 2gether is a very ambitious project for the LPF as we are working with such young girls. They are talented but encounter econobpes to motivate and support them in the direction of education, thereby bringing about a positive change in their life.

■ - **Mrs. Samina Deokar,**  
(LF & Trustee, 2morrow 2gether)

## TIFR- the New World

***Rucha Deshpande (LF -2011) is currently pursuing her M.Sc. in Physics. She completed her summer internship at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai under the guidance of Dr. Ruchika Kaul Ghanekar at Interactive School for Health Affairs (IRSHA). They have published their first paper together on the 'Anti Breast-Cancer' potential of a patent. Her very first research paper as third author has recently appeared in the reputed international journal, 'Biotechnology, Bioinformatics and Bioengineering' (BBB). She writes about her tryst with research....***

As soon as I was out of school, at Fergusson College I got a newfound freedom to do things my way! My penchant for formulating my own questions and answering them myself revealed to me my passion for research. This summer, I got an exciting research internship opportunity at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR). I was to work in the only Femtosecond Laser laboratory in the country for eight weeks! Thanks to TIFR, all my concepts and ideas about research turned upside down! For instance, a good researcher will say 'for solving a problem it's good to be confused (for only then something new might come up)', whereas in college if you explain how confused you are then, you've failed.

When I asked my supervisor for suggestions to formulate a research project, he told me "Come here with an open and receptive mind and then we will strive hard to fill it up with lots of different experiences. Overcoming your reluctance to work and being open to new ideas and new working styles is enough preparation you can arrive with." My lab instructor would always insist that I try things on my own first, including making a choice of project. My main aim was to study and learn all I could about lasers. Being given the reading material, I was supposed to give a talk every week, regarding what I've learned. The strangest thing I realised during these talks was that, the audience asked me the same questions, which even I had, but never bothered to solve them! This

taught me that I was supposed to figure out the answers on my own, even if I was wrong!

At first, it was difficult for me to fathom what was going on. But, I soon realized that my lab mates were being more patient in training me to develop an analytical mind, than I was towards learning new things. Their efforts and the jolly atmosphere they maintained in spite of working so hard was the most encouraging thing I had ever experienced.

In my opinion, TIFR is one of the best places for research in the world and every science collegiate must visit the place to experience the research culture. Through this article, I wish to convey to all my friends that there is an entirely different world out there beyond academics. Research could appear to be a 'fairy tale' to many. But one must believe and be curious about it to experience it; and of course be led by the strong ethics and the right attitude, my supervisor mentioned. No matter which area you are in or what job you are looking for, I am sure every good institute will give you the same satisfying and liberating experience!

■ - **Rucha Deshpande**



Inspira

## Donations

Mrs. Aparna Harish  
Joshi (Bhat)  
(LF-2003)  
Rs. 40000/-



Mrs. Chandrika  
Mahesh  
Mageshwaran  
(Srinivasan)  
(LF-1996)  
Rs. 35000/-



Mrs. Monali Abhijit  
Thakre (Rode)  
(LF-2004)  
Rs. 30000/-





**The Lila Poonawalla Foundation is persistently not only supporting girls to complete their education but also taking efforts to make them independent and accomplish a good eminence in society. Out of concern for LF's as well as their mothers, LPF organizes health awareness workshops periodically. Physiotherapist, Dr. Neha Tambekar (Gupta) (LF-2009 & PA 2010) threw light on the importance of physiotherapy in our daily lives. Neha is a lecturer at the Sancheti College of Physiotherapy and also practices at her own clinic in Kothrud.**

Remember that advertisement of a pain relief balm MOOV on TV? Seeing his mummy suffering from acute back pain, a child asks his father... **"Sub kaam mummy akele hi kyo karti hai?"** (Why does Mummy alone do all the domestic chores?) and the father becomes speechless.

In today's world, back pain, neck pain, joint pain is very common in women of all ages; then be they be home makers or career women. In their pursuit to offer the most comfortable and facilitated lives for their families, women tend to neglect their own bodies. Hectic schedules and working on the computer/kitchen for long hours in incorrect body postures result in back pain, neck pain, shoulder pain and painful arms. But in this technologically driven environment we cannot remain aloof from technology, though it could cost our health. This leads to vital damage to our muscles and bones that lead to a disease named Osteoporosis.


In her session on physiotherapy, Neha demonstrated few simple exercises, which help in getting rid of back, neck, hand and knee pain. These exercises can

be done anywhere, even while sitting on a chair in office. The word 'Physiotherapy' means healing by doing some physical movements i.e. exercise. She also demonstrated exercises that cure knee pain common in women due to decreasing level of calcium as they get older.


Apart from exercises, Dr. Neha provided guidance on the dietary and nutrition necessities of the bones and muscles. She indicated dairy products, green leafy vegetables, salmon and sardines as the major sources of calcium and emphasized on their inclusion in daily diets.

Another problem that every one faces these days is muscular pain while working on the computer. Neha spoke about the importance of ergonomic sessions


## Strength, stamina and stabilizing exercises By Dr. Venketa Krishnan (B.P.T)




**1. Pelvic tilt** Lie down with your knees bent. Tighten your stomach muscles, flattening your back against the floor. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.




**4. Deep stomach muscle tone (stabilizes lower back)** Kneel on all fours with a small curve in your lower back. Let your stomach relax completely. Pull the lower part of your stomach upwards so that you lift your back (without arching it) away from the floor. Hold for 10 seconds. Keep breathing! Repeat 10 times.



**2. Stomach tone ('transverse tummy')** Lie on your front with your arms by your side, head on one side. Pull in your stomach muscles, centred around your tummy button. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 3 times. Build up to 10 seconds and repeat during the day, while walking or standing. Keep breathing during this exercise!

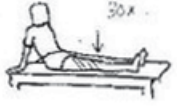


**5. Back stabilizer** Kneel on all fours with your back straight. Tighten your stomach. Keeping your back in this position, raise one arm in front of you and hold for 10 seconds. Try to keep your pelvis level and do not rotate your body. Repeat 10 times each side. To progress, try lifting one leg behind you instead of your arm.




**3. Buttock tone (gluteals)** Bend one leg up behind you while lying on your front. Then lift your bent knee just off the floor. Hold for up to 8 seconds. Repeat 5 times each side.


## EXERCISES FOR THE KNEE




Tighten your thigh muscle. Push down your knee onto the bed. Hold for 5 seconds and then release. *Repeat 10-15*




Place a rolled up towel or a small cushion under your knee. Lift your heel off the bed until your knee is completely straight.



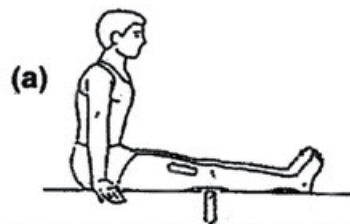
*Less angle better*  
Keeping your knee straight, slowly lift up your leg. Hold for 5 seconds and then lower it. *10x*

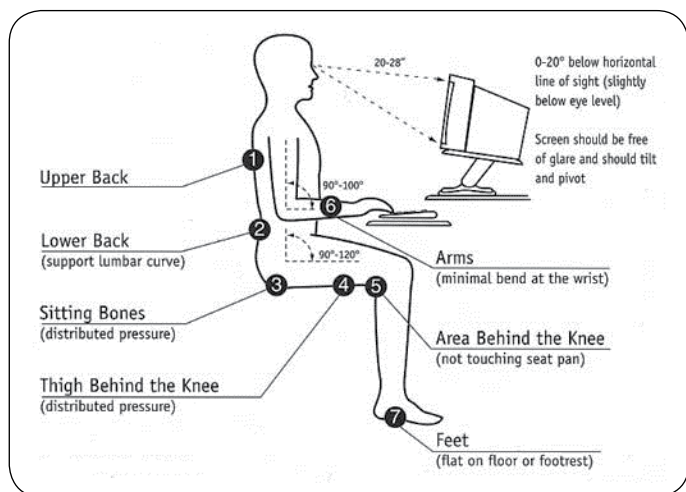


Bend your opened knee. You should feel a stretch via the front of your thigh.

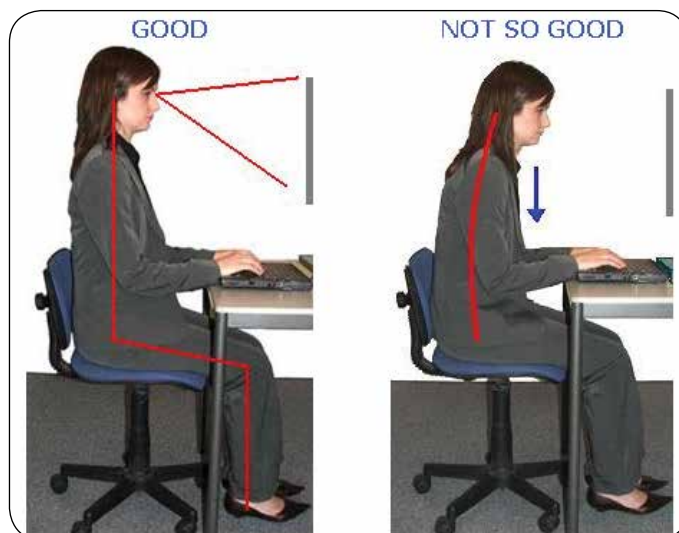


Sitting on a high chair, slowly straighten your knee fully and lower it down.





every organization arranges for their employees as they believe healthy bodies make healthy minds. Dr. Neha insisted that while working on the computer, one should have an ergonomically correct posture. She insisted upon the regular usage of a table and a good chair that gives your back, complete support. She suggested that the key board of the computer should be placed at the right height, such that the upper arm makes a right angle with the lower arm. One should take frequent breaks and do some stretching in order



to reduce stress and anxiety. She also advocated the use of a screen on the computer to avoid eye irritation.

Physiotherapy has proven to be the most effective therapy now a days and it has given positive results to cure many cases of osteoporosis. So, sit straight, eat healthy and exercise regularly to say goodbye to muscular pain.

■ - **Nisha Pandya**

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2012

Dear Lila,

Thank you for sharing the latest LPF album with me. These pictures are a testimony to the immense importance of the work Lila Poonawalla Foundation has been doing, in assisting young women to get education at various levels, for nearly two decades now! You have thus enabled them to pursue a career and a life that would otherwise not have been within their reach. An extremely important aspect of this unique work is also its growing impact on perceptions in society of the role and capabilities of women in professional life, a vitally important understanding of the essential and necessary contributions of women in building a prosperous and dynamic future and of the need to tap this pool of neglected potentials.

Again, I salute you and Firoz for the extraordinary achievements of the Lila Poonawalla Foundation.

With my very warm regards,

Johan Nordenfelt  
Ambassador  
Bellmansgatan 15  
SE-11847 Stockholm  
Sweden



**Receiving the LPF scholarship is the first step towards reaching one's 'Zenith'. From then it is no looking back and the Lila Fellows set out to accomplish their dreams and make the Foundation proud. Here are a few of our LFs who have made immense progress in the past year and are a success in their individual careers.**



**Sana Sayed Mone (LF-2001)** was given the LPF scholarship to pursue her for my Master's in English from the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad. Sana got her first major break in 2006, working as a Recruitment Officer for Parsons Brinckerhoff International Inc., Dubai. She was responsible for

HR and recruitment activities for the middle East (Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Oman, Saudi, Qatar and Jordan). She was responsible for recruiting roles within different engineering market sectors like power networks, power generation, transportation (roads and rail), environment, water, buildings, infrastructure and also some non technical roles like document controllers, IT, administration, HR, finance, etc. When the recession hit, she also worked on more HR related functions like redundancies, final settlements, etc. Which gave her an all round experience of the whole employee life cycle. She was also responsible for new joining formalities and so worked closely with the labour and immigration teams (Arabic locals) in every country to ensure people were able to get visas and approvals on time to start work. Her 5 years learning experience at PB, during which she dealt with people of more than 25 nationalities under one roof, helped her grow as an individual.

While tending to her infant from August 2011 to July 2012, she worked as a Talent Acquisition Advisor with another international engineering consultancy firm, AECOM. Here she worked more on strategies involved in business plans and assisted in sourcing candidates not only for the live vacancies but also for the projects that the company bid for in the Middle East, which would enable the pipeline of projects and people going side by side. In November 2011, Sana and her husband moved to Singapore in order to offer a more open culture environment to their little son to grow up in. Sana since then, works as a Senior Recruitment Advisor, with Mott MacDonald Singapore, again an international engineering consultant. Her profile includes managing all roles within the power sector for South East Asia (SEA), India, and Middle East. In much more powerful role, she now specialises in recruitment in the power sector (thermal and renewable). She recruits engineers with consultancy experience in power generation

(combined cycle gas turbines or coal fired power plants and hydropower, wind, solar, other renewable energy).



**Dr. Urmila M. Aswar (Tambe) (LF- 2000)** completed her M. Pharm. (Pharmacology) and is currently working as an Assistant Professor at Sinhgad Institute of Pharmacy. She received the Best Research Project of the Year 2010-2011 Award by 54th Indian Pharmaceutical Congress (IPC), Pune at the hands of the Mr. Satej Patil, Hon'ble Minister of State,

Home (Urban and Rural), Rural development, Food and Drug Administration, Government of Maharashtra and Hon'ble Dr Vishwanath Karad- Founder President of Maharashtra Academy of Engineering Education and Research (MAEER). Her project dealt with the **"Evaluation of the effects of IBPR, IBIS and Andropeak in castrated (testis removed) and non castrated rats'**. The study included the effects of 3 compounds, namely **IBPR, IBIS and Andropeak** (code name given by Indus) on male sexual behavior, intracavernous pressure, blood pressure, anabolic activity and androgenic activity. After successful clinical trials, IBIS and IBPR have been patented whilst all the three active molecules have been marketed as Testofen, Testosurge and Andropeak by Indus Biotech, Pune.



**Jyonita Deshmukh (LF-2010)** completed her Master's in Mass communication with flying colours. She was immediately picked up by "Radio Mirchi" as a Programme Producer. She is the 'RJ' on the show - 'Kya Zamana Tha', aired though Monday to Saturday from 14:00 to 17:00 Hrs. IST.



**Nisha Pandya (LF-2004)** - On completing her Masters in Analytical Chemistry Nisha started her professional career with Halliburton Technology Center, Pune. This organization opened up lot of avenues for her success and added to her list of achievements. Her work on "High Temperature Acidizing

Application" has been accepted to be filed as a US patent. One of her research papers on 'Performance Enhancements in Suspension Characteristics of

*Borate Crosslinkers'* was published in Offshore World Journal 2012. Another of her research paper has been accepted in *SPE Kuwait conference*. Nisha, as the first author of the paper presented it at the conference at Dubai in December 2012. Apart from her academic and professional success, Nisha has worked hard on her overall development mainly in the areas public speaking. She recently won the title of *Competent Communicator* by delivering 10 speeches in International Toastmaster Club. She is a very dedicated Crusader with Inspira.



**Swati Tarawade (LG-2011)** who is pursuing her Engineering in Instrumentation recently bagged 1 Gold, 3 Silver and 2 Bronze medals in K1, K2 and K4 events organised by the MACK (Maharashtra Association for Canoeing and Kayaking) in. This contributed in her college winning the "Overall Championship Trophy".

Swati who is also very good with sketching made some sketches for her college event MIND-SPARK, which attracted lots of appreciation from TV anchor and CNBC Awaaz Special Correspondent, Mr. Ankit Vengurlekar who insisted on meeting the artist. Swati aspires to become a class one officer by clearing the competitive State or Union Public Service Commission examinations.

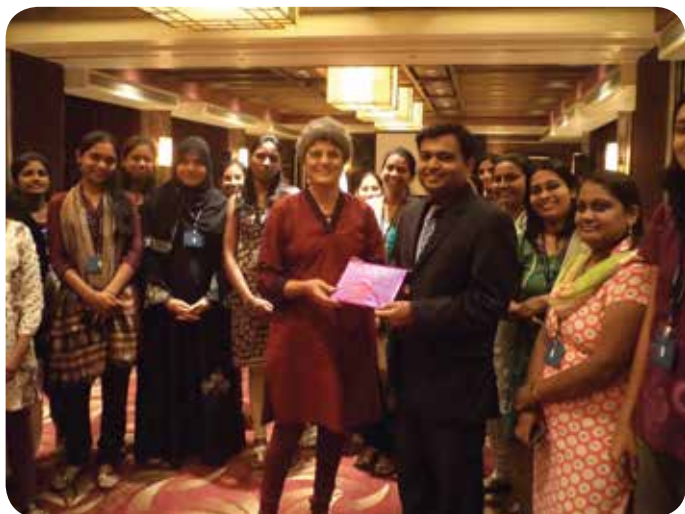


**Dr. Neelu Nawani (LF-1997)** was awarded the LPF scholarship to pursue her studies in Microbiology. She recently received a grant from the Swedish Government to work on the "*Possible remedy to prevent lung deterioration in rural women due to the burning of wood for cook-stoves (chulha)*". This is the second project she received from the Swedish funding agency. She had also received the funding for a project on "*Preventing Pollution in Rivers*". Neelu has also received a grant from the Indian Government to work on the project for "*Anti-Cancer properties of some molecules from marine fauna*". She is an Associate Professor at Dr. D.Y. Patil Biotechnology & Bioinformatics Institute, Pune.

**Geeta Sahu (LF- 2001)** has done her M.Phil. (English) and is an Assistant Professor at H.R. College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai since June 2006. Recently she has enrolled for her Ph.D. from Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literary Studies, Delhi University, for which Geeta is working on the memoirs of 4 Indian women writers. In May 2007, her college sent her to London for a

faculty development programme during which she visited some eminent universities like Westminster University, Imperial College, Oxford, etc.

■ - **Compiled by Sunetra Chaphalkar (Biradar)**



*Your Dreams Can be Your Future!* by  
Mr. Nilesh Waghchoude



*Workshop on Leadership Core Skills*  
by Mr. Satish Kalokhe





*The Art of Communication is the language of Successful Leadership*



*Vidya Secretary LPF orienting the new awardees*



*Various Forms of Arts for LFs by Mrs. Maya Dongre*



*Spoken English Classes for LFs and LGs by Mrs. Sangeeta Belwalkar*



*Orientation programme for new undergraduate awardees*



*Dr. Apoorva Palkar counselling the LGs on College to Careers*

**Mr. Minocher Patel, the Founder Director of Ecole Solitaire India's first residential finishing school, conducted the workshop, "Lasting Impression – GROOMING AND ETIQUETTES for our Lila Fellows on 28th October, 2012 at Hotel Deccan Rendezvous. He has been conducting similar workshops for our scholars almost regularly, since the inception of our LPF. The aim of the programme was to impart necessary skills for both, personal and professional effectiveness. He threw light on Emotional Quotient, Etiquette Quotient, Social Quotient and Spiritual Quotient. He further focused on Perception Management, Self-Belief, Importance of Gratitude and Time Management for balancing everything in life and achieving the goals.**

**H**ere is what participant Shirley Menezes (LF-2012) had to say about her experience at the workshop: *"I wish to mention a few lessons that stood out for me and that will stay with me for life. Especially when you a pauper, it is extremely important to have unrelenting confidence and passion about your aspirations. Efficient failure management and keeping goals forever in view are some of the secret ingredients of the potion of success. On a personal note, breaking out of past conditioning and learning to be happy in all seasons are two things that I will definitely work on. I earnestly thank Lila Mom and Firoz Dad for taking the efforts to put together such an inspiring programme for us Lila Fellows."*

*A c c o r d i n g to Deepa Krishnamurthi ( L F - 2 0 0 5 ) , " W i t h o u t inspiration, the best powers of the mind remain dormant. There is fuel in us that needs a spark to ignite. Generally, whenever we listen to some motivational talk, we momentarily get inspired; but later we lose the motivation. But*

*this workshop with Mr. Minochar Patel taught me how important it to set goals and go through them every day to retain the motivation. We should try to develop a WOW (With OR Without attitude) to reach our goal. This attitude can be attained by preparing an implementation sheet on which you must try to write down action plans for the day or the week ahead. It is also important not to be judgemental or biased about people and/or situations in order to avoid conflicts."*

Known for his professionalism globally, Mr. Patel did not forget to inculcate in our girls the two P's of attitude. The first P as in PASSION... to be passionate about

everything we do; and the second P as in PRIDE... to take pride in everything we do. He also dealt with communication skills focusing on the importance of voice modulation, its tone and t e l e p h o n e etiquettes. And of course, no grooming is complete without table etiquettes, to which one full session was dedicated!



**■ - Compiled by Priyanka Eratkar and Rashmi Tare**



## I LEFT MY HEART IN SAN FRANCISCO...

*Call it a gathering of dark storm clouds or the wrong alignment of planets...or maybe, it was fate's dominoes...When I was denied the American visa in 2009, my world fell apart. I shook my head in shock and disbelief. Was this really happening to me? I was bruised beyond description.*

*Perhaps there was a bigger plan. Left with no other option, my daughter Sharmila, a US citizen, filed for my green card immediately. I was granted a 'Permanent Citizen' status in February 2012 and left for San Franciscoto visit my children on May 23, 2012. On arrival, I was warmly welcomed by the immigration authorities as a 'new immigrant'. How ironic!*

I've always loved to write, so when Rajani asked me to recount some of my experiences of my trip to USA this year, for INSPIRA, I happily agreed. My story is structured around the importance of nurturing family and friendship; it is about connections with the mind and heart, celebrations and love and some memorable events and experiences, spanning over the last six months. I have sourced certain facts and statistics courtesy the San Francisco Chronicle.



*At the foot of the Bay Bridge, San Francisco*

**October 31, 2012:** Today is a day no one will forget..... it's **HALLOWEEN!** When the young and old pop out as witches and ghosts out of nowhere.... where homemade spiders hang inside window works and cobwebs sway in dark corners. Jack-O-Lanterns carved out of pumpkins adorn entry ways to ward off evil spirits and Turkey and Pumpkin Pies are in. (America spent \$113 million on pumpkins in 2011!). Kids knock on doors to **Trick or Treat** and return home with armloads of candy. Halloween is festive, colourful and spooky! It is celebrated with great enthusiasm in America.



*With host Mom, Dorothy Liu, Honolulu, Hawaii*



*With Sonya celebrating our last night in Honolulu at the famously Halekulani Hotel, Waikiki*

But today will be better and always remembered for the San Francisco **GIANTS** Victory

Parade on Market Street in downtown San Francisco. Frenzy has swept the whole city which is adorned in orange and black to honour the baseball champions who created history on October 28<sup>th</sup> by their amazing win over the Detroit Tigers- their second in the world baseball series in 3 years!

I am watching baseballs' biggest party on TV. Never seen the likes of this before...over a million fans dressed in crazy T-shirts and Panda-hats have lined the Championship parade route and are screaming as their heroes pass them by. Their outpourings of adoration, affection and admiration are overwhelming; some even shedding tears of joy. It's raining orange confetti, trumpets are blowing and champagne is flowing everywhere. The Giants fever! What a celebration!

While San Francisco is delirious with excitement over the GIANTS win, tragedy has struck the East Coast simultaneously. **Super Storm SANDY** barrelled north from the Caribbean to meet two powerful monster storms slamming the Eastern Seaboard north gusty winds, storm surges and sheets of rain, wreaking havoc over 800 miles from



*At Sean's Halloween picnic at Julius Kahn park, Presidio, San Francisco*

the East Coast to the Great Lakes. Its impact; 100 dead, millions without power, a complete shutdown including Wall Street, homes completely destroyed and washed away and an estimated economic loss of \$50 million. I've switched to CNN and the images are extremely troubling. Only one word can best describe it -Catastrophe! My heart goes out to the American people left homeless and devastated.

And so it came to be, that at long last, I was reunited with my children Sharmila, her husband Kevin Hutchins and their adorable children, Sean (three and a half yrs.) and Sabina (one and a half yrs.), my younger daughter Sonya, my brother Arun Tolani and his family and many friends, after an agonizing wait of 4 years. For a grandma to be around her grandchildren every day is the ultimate experience.

Sharmila and Kevin relocated to San Francisco from Boulder Colorado (their home for 17 years) in



*With daughter Sharmila at her home on Diwali day*

2010. It is happy coincidence that they own a condo on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the same building where Sonya has hers on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. God's Grace, I have a quick commute, just 30 seconds elevator ride going up or coming down!

Sharmila is Project Manager with **IBM** where she has worked for 17 years and Kevin has a long commute to Sunnyvale in the South Bay, where he works for **Juniper Networks**. Sean joined a private montessori school in September and enjoys interacting with a diverse group of kids in his class. *Beans* (Sabina) is a smart, observant, curious little girl. She loves her books and her brother's mechanical toys and has an impressive vocabulary for her age. And both Sean and Sabina operate iPads like experts! Amazing!

Sonya is Executive Vice President and Chief Investment Officer at **Bailard**, an Investment Management Company in Foster City, CA. She joined them 18 years ago, straight out of college. She was recently honoured with a position on the Investment Committee of **Silicon Valley Community**



*With daughter Sonya on Diwali day*





*At Yountville, Napa Valley, celebrating the arrival of my green card*

**Foundation**, the second largest in America. They manage \$2 billion in assets which go towards serving educational and social causes.

I love charming, iconic **San Francisco**. It has something to offer everyone. As long as the fog and windy weather, steep slopes and expensive real estate don't scare you, San Francisco has no shortage of attractive qualities. It parks in so much... world-class restaurants, a lively cultural scene, street fairs, music festivals, a large educated class and an improving economy; thanks to the booming Silicon Valley tech hub close by. Not surprising that Business Week recently declared **San Francisco, the top city in USA**, a ranking well earned. Yet, it has the highest population of homeless in the country.

Atop seven hills, facing the Pacific Ocean on one side and the Bay on the other, San Francisco lies in a seismic zone with the San Andreas and Hayward Faults almost touching it, indicating serious earthquake peril. None of this however, deters the 129,000 tourists from visiting this tourist heaven every day! What's not to see? I've driven over the Golden Gate Bridge, an architectural marvel, several times; sat in the cable cars; walked along the marina peppered with sail boats; visited Alcatraz, the famous, former penitentiary in the middle of the Bay; held my breath driving down the crookedest street in the world; seen the Hippies occupying the side-walks in Haight-Ashbury; watched the rainbow flags and naked men parading wares in the whacky Castro! Indecent exposure is the talk of town with a law coming in to ban nudity in public places. The Gay Pride Parade, an annual summer event on Market Street, draws a huge crowd. So do the street fairs which offer great music, food and a number of interesting artefacts and jewellery. At the Fillmore Street Jazz festival, I soaked in my fill of jazz and enjoyed fresh oysters topped with butter, shallots and jalapeno! A double whammy!



*With sommelier at San Francisco's famous restaurant Jardiniere where I won the wine tasting competition*

There's more to see, come on, let's explore. A walk down Fisherman's Wharf is incomplete without trying hot clam chowder served in a bread bowl. Next door, is the world famous Ghirardelli chocolate factory known for its irresistible chocolates and icecream. Where the sea lions bask in the sunshine on Pier 39, we can take a ferry ride to Tiburon and San Salto across the Bay. Walk or sit by the water and relax. The Ferry Building Farmer's Market sells fresh farm produce and delicious snacks over the weekends. The Painted Ladies (homes) in Alamo Square, The Golden



*At the East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii with fellow grantee Dan Berman near my old dorm*



*The USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, Hawaii*

Gate Park, Twin Peaks from where you get a stunning bird's eye view of San Francisco, a drive along Ocean Beach and a variety of cuisines at fancy restaurants are San Francisco's other major attractions. Woody Allen who was here shooting his recent film said "*it has so much vitality*".

**June 29, 2012: Cheers!** A trip to the wine country nearby is a must. When I received my green card in the mail, Sonya drove me to Yountville in the Napa Valley to celebrate with some wine tasting and French cuisine at **Bouchon**. Some of the finest wines are produced in the wineries in this region.

**July 12, 2012:** More exciting news on wine! I'm not an expert wine speak, but I won a blind wine tasting competition at a CHASE elite event at **Jardiniere**, an upscale fresh restaurant. Oh my God, I guessed right! An Argentinian **MALBEC!!** The sommelier and chef-cum-owner of Traci des Jardins rewarded me with a bottle of French wine. I do know something about the reds and whites now and enjoy them immensely!

**September 21, 2012: Wow! The Space Shuttle's Final BOW** Space Shuttle **ENDEAVOUR**, historic veteran of 122 million miles in orbital flight and 296 days in space, flew piggy-back on a Boeing 747 through the Bay Area skies. At the Crissy Field Beach, where we waited with bated breath, the crowd gawked and hollered as the Shuttle swooped over the Golden Gate Bridge and flew in front of our eyes at just 1500 feet overhead. It was a majestic, leisurely aerial spin against a deep blue sky full of light. It's last. A once-in-a-lifetime experience, indeed!

**Nov 6, 2012: Obama Wins!** It was a landslide victory for President Barrack Obama who got re-elected as President of the United States for a second term. He won both the popular and electoral-college votes defeating Mitt Romney by a wide margin. It was interesting to watch the campaign speeches,

Presidential and Vice Presidential debates and the speeches at the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. TV, Facebook and Twitter went overtime on who's up and who's down till the very end.

### **October 6 – 12, 2012: Aloha Magical Hawaii!**

My happiest moments in this trip were spent in Honolulu, on the island of Oahu, one of the chains of six islands that form the State of Hawaii. It was a homecoming of sorts as I was awarded the East West Centre scholarship for graduate studies at the University of Hawaii in 1966. Established by the US Congress in 1960, the ENC promotes better relations and understanding among the peoples and nations of the US, Asia and the Pacific through co-operative study, research and dialogue. Thirty two countries were represented under one roof.

I never imagined that I would connect with my contemporaries and dear friends there after 47 years! Some like Dan Berman, June Sato and Dr Asad Khan, former minister of Energy and Petroleum, Government of Pakistan, are settled in Honolulu. Charlotte Cascio and Jean Natalie like me, were visiting; it was an exciting and touching get-together. My host moms Ellie Nordyke and Dorothy Liu, both in their 80's and keeping indifferent health invited us for lunch and together, we revived old memories. Spent a leisurely morning at the ENC, walking past the Japanese garden to my dorm Hale Kuhahine, witnessed a Korean cultural programme of music and dance as well.

Dan Berman drove us along the ocean to the other side of the island. Rich scenery unfolded in an endless feast for the eyes. Every step was a vista, coral reefs, white sandy beaches and the ocean coloured a deep cobalt blue with the surf crashing inland.

The highlights of our stay were a visit to **Pearl Harbour** and the **Polynesian Cultural Centre**. At the former, we stood at ground zero and gazed at the skies, which once swarmed with Japanese war planes



*With Dan Berman on a scenic drive around the island of Oahu*



that destroyed the entire US naval fleet on December 7, 1941. A naval boat took us to the **USS Arizona memorial** where we paid homage to the 1700 men who went down to their watery graves along with the ship. Visible were a large turret and the remains of the USS Arizona on the ocean floor.

Charlotte, Jean and I went to the **Polynesian Cultural Centre** considered as the world's most successful theme attraction. A canal boat ride took us past the Fiji, Tahiti, Tenga and Hawaiian villages where their dancers entertained us. Then on to the Luau, the traditional Hawaiian Feast with captivating music and Hula dancers in attendance. A fitting finale was Hawaii's largest and most spectacular show – "Ha: The Breath of Life".

There are some chapters that stay in your life forever. The EWC and my connection with Hawaii is one of them. Thank you Sonya for a wonderful holiday and all you wonderful host families and friends for your warmth and hospitality, I love you all.

**November 13, 2012: Deepawali Diyas** and a traditional Indian feast replete with **mithai** and **SeviyanKheer** set the mood for a family dinner at Sonya's place. My brother Arun's family joined us as well.

**November 16 -19 2012: Los Angeles.** Am back to San Francisco after a weekend trip to LA where I was very happy to meet old friends from Pune.

**November 23, 2012: THANKSGIVING** is round the corner. It is about celebrating the blessing of food, family, friends and the comforts of life. Once more, our family will be celebrating this day together.

As I sign off, let me say that the last six months in this beautiful city have been exciting. Surrounded by my children and grandchildren who are that love of my



*Enjoying a gorgeous day in San Francisco, next to the iconic Golden Gate Bridge*

life, I have devoured every moment in their company. I have spent time with Arun's family and dear friends I've known for many years who have hosted me at their homes on various occasions. Have seen some great shows, dined at the finest restaurants, viewed Rodin's exhibits and works of art at the famous museums here and even caught up with a lot of reading starting with 'The Fifty Shades of Gray', a trilogy by E. L. James. This erotic phenomenon has taken America by storm and still continues to top the National Best Sellers List.

Let's face it. I've enjoyed myself to the hilt. I head back to my home in Pune shortly, and when I leave, it will be to the strains of Tony Bennet's song.... "I left my heart in San Francisco....."

■ - **Mrs. Maya Thadani**  
(Founder Trustee and  
Member of Advisory Board, LPF)



Ms. Aarti Basant  
(LF-2009)  
Rs. 25000/-



Ms. Romana Tambe  
(LF-2006)  
Rs. 20000/-



Ms. Rashmi Amol  
Joshi (Soman)  
(LF-2001)  
Rs. 10000/-



Mrs. Vikshala Vivek  
Savale (Kamble)  
(LF-2002)  
Rs. 10000/-

Mrs. Manasi Vijay  
Ogalapurkar (Kulkarni)  
(LF-2001)  
Rs. 3000/-

Mrs. Kalyani Rajiv  
Nanajkar (Pathak)  
(LF-1998)  
Rs. 1000/-

## AN UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEY TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

***"Humanity is the rent we pay for living on this planet"..... I happened to read this phrase in one of the books that my mom had given me as a child, almost 15 years back. The wise woman was well aware that the book contained some pearls of wisdom that would guide her child into the future. Though as a child I was unable to understand the deep meaning of this phrase, it found its space in my memory. And since then I have been trying to reveal to myself "What exactly does it take to be human?" I grew from a child to an adolescent and into a mature young woman. In this journey of 15 years, I have come across a number of instances that allowed me to differentiate between things we label as human and inhuman. However, the question remained unanswered. But then, 'God reveals the secrets of life when he knows it's the right time for you'. And the right time for such an enlightenment dawned upon the 14 of us who constituted the 5<sup>th</sup> Batch of Peace Ambassadors during our 3-weeks stay at the Asha Centre. It is there that we learnt what it takes to be human and what it takes to sustain humanity.***

**W**e have been fortunate to get this opportunity to seek and learn. We try to present this article as a kaleidoscope for all the readers of Inspira and especially the Lila Fellows, Lila Girls and Lila Juniors, of our journey as Peace Ambassadors.

Most of us were travelling out of India for the very first time and our landing at Heathrow (the World's busiest Airport) left us flabbergasted. We had set our



*5<sup>th</sup> batch of Peace Ambassadors on the way to Gloucestershire with Mom & Dad*

foot on the land that claims to be, or indeed is one of the most developed nations in the world. Planned, organized and disciplined!!! What impressed us on the first day continued to hold true till the last day of our journey.

From the bustling city of London, we headed towards the scenic Gloucestershire, (one of the most beautiful



*Peace Ambassadors 2012 at the Asha Centre*

counties of England!). When we stepped into "Asha Centre", situated amidst the Forest of Dean this training centre is the only one of its kind. We could not believe the sight of the place we were destined to spend the 21 most important days of our life. The birth child of Ms. Zerbanoo Gifford, Asha Centre stands as a symbol of peace and serenity. An English cottage with its rose gardens, apple trees, wild strawberries, the flowing stream of water and the weeping willow to wade off all the evils. Asha Center gives you the opportunity to be one with nature. Such mesmerizing is the enigma of this wonderful place!

**Sustainable Leadership Development**, this was the tag line of the Peace Ambassadors programme this year. 'Sustainability', has become a matter of great discussion today and finds its place in many newspaper articles, TV shows and of course, over coffee tables. All of us have heard much about it, but



unfortunately, very few of us have put it to practice. At the Asha Centre, everything revolved around sustainability. Sustaining ourselves, our individuality, our society and our environment... all in an effort to finally make this world a better place to live in. The first step towards achieving sustainability is through 'Self' - to introspect ourselves to find our own inner peace.

## OUR STEPS TOWARDS SELF SUSTAINABILITY

**Adrian Locher** (our mentor, companion and guide) introduced us to a new form of meditation: '**The Poetry Meditation**'. It is a unique concept that involved recitation of verses corresponding to a specific season. Poetry meditation gave us this unique opportunity to be close to nature and to discover our inner selves.

Our learning about inner sustainability was further enhanced when **Sandy** (most jovial of the humans we have ever met; and who had a lion's share along with Adrian in conducting the Peace Ambassadors programme) introduced us to the concept of "**Wheel of life**." Just as a wheel is divided into various sections by spokes, similarly we can compartmentalize our life into various sections like finance, career, health, personal development, etc. As this wheel of life rotates, we experience ups and downs in our lives. But what holds importance is the wisdom to understand which compartment requires prompt attention. By managing various sections in the wheel of life we can reduce our stress and enhance our sustainability.

Type the word 'STRESS' in Google and a huge volume of literature pertaining to the subject will pop up. Much has been spoken, discussed and written about stress. However, very often we fail to realize that we are the cause of our own stress. Self-sustainability will be achieved only when we reduce this unwanted stress.

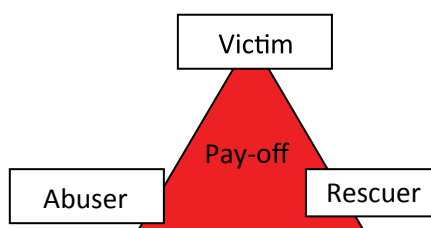
**Jason Lee conducted a workshop on Stress Management.** The session taught us to understand those factors, which produce stress in us and the measures we can take to reduce them. Jason also introduced us to the concept of 'Chi gong', a stress management technique practiced in ancient China.

Yet another step forwards towards self-sustainability was a workshop on **Inner sustainability, conducted by Mags**. Here we learned about concept of triangle of disempowerment.

The triangle of disempowerment explains the relationship between the victim, abuser and rescuer. It also underlines the various causes that effect different people to step into one of these roles. It is very important that each one of us understands the role we play and help free ourselves from the triangle of disempowerment. Mags further explained to us the **4 elements** that exist in nature (air, water, fire &



*PAs enacting the earth elements*



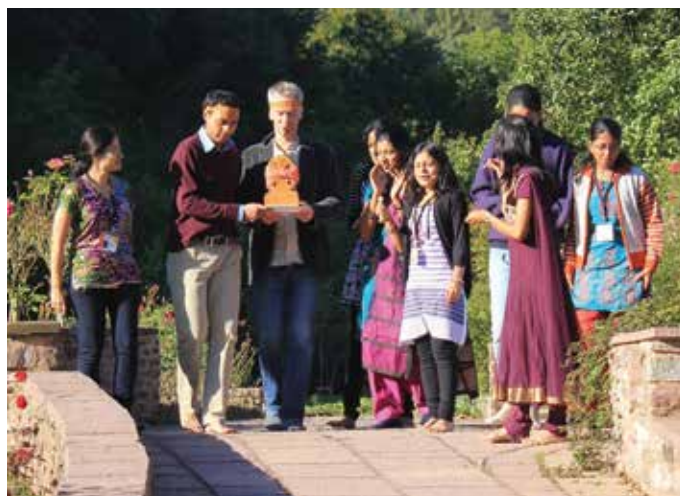
earth) and how they affect the human nature and behavior.

Adrian then explained to us the **four temperaments**

that reflect human nature: Choleric, Phlegmatic, Sanguine and Melancholic and how each of this temperament is closely related to the 4 elements in nature. He also demonstrated to us the positive and negative aspects of each of these temperaments so that each one of us could understand our own temperament better. Achieving sustainability requires that we imbibe within ourselves the positive aspects of these temperaments.

## LEARNING TO SUSTAIN OUR SOCIETY

This year we celebrated **Ganesh Utsav** away from home, is a special way at Asha Centre with our friends from different parts of the world....Germany, Italy, Portugal and more. Everybody participated with complete devotion in the daily Aarti. It was a unique



*Ganesh Utsav: At the Asha Centre*

way of learning tolerance; tolerance for different faiths and religions. Being different yet co-existing together in peace and harmony. We learnt that respecting each other's faith sustains religious tolerance.

## Indian tea party: An amalgamation of cultures

The Indian Tea Party hosted by the Peace Ambassadors came to be a union of the East and the West. It gave us a chance to showcase the Indian culture. The traditional Indian welcome, Indian sweets and



*Indian Tea Party*

savories and dances to the Bollywood numbers left the guests mesmerized. The last day of the Ganesh Utsav coincided with that of the Indian Tea Party. It was touching to see the devotion with which our guests participated in the Ganesh Visarjan procession! While Ms. Gifford performed the traditional aarti, Adrian led the Ganesh Visarjan procession. Though we had the rain god showering his blessings, the young and the old participated with equal enthusiasm.

## The Village of Grange: a symbol of equality and optimism

Not far away from Asha Centre is the village of Grange, which depicts nothing but sustainability. Conceptualized, as a part of the Camphill Movement, Grange is a community of people with special needs and certain learning disabilities; special people, yes indeed they are! Deprived of the average intellect, yet they stand out to be more sensitive and more human. Home for around 80 people, Grange is a working



*A Grange villager happy to be with our PA*

and self-sustaining community. The founding principle of Grange is to bring dignity and purpose to the lives of those with special needs. Hence, Grange consists of houses, shops, biodynamic gardens, a dairy, a bakery and everything else that one will find in any other village. What makes the village special is the fact that all this is run and maintained by people with special needs. At Grange, people with special needs are recognized as individuals with self-esteem and dignity. They are not bestowed with pity or looked at with sympathy. Instead they are made independent enough to run families, to get married and to bear children and lead a normal life.

## Understanding womanhood: Through Jeroo Roy's paintings

Lao Tzu says, "The nature of existence is more like a woman than a man because man comes out of a woman but a woman comes out from a woman". Though a woman is the basic element of growth, we



*Depiction of a woman's status in society in the name of tradition*

often fail to realize this fact. Consequently, many women do not sustain their womanhood and fail to cherish being a woman. An overview of Jeroo's paintings left us dumbstruck. Each picture she had painted told us the story of innocent women who had suffered the atrocities of the most inhuman nature. It was through her paintings that we were made aware of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation). FGM is a horrendous act that finds its place in many parts of the world. Chopping off the external female genitals (without any sedation) and then sewing up the ends together, all under the pretext of protecting a woman's virginity. However, what comes as a 'silver lining in the dark clouds' is the work done by Jeroo and few other women like her, for women's rights.

## Learning to sustain the environment

*We have not inherited this world from our ancestors; we have borrowed it from our future generation.* Humans are probably the most selfish species the Earth has ever seen. We tend to take so much from Mother Earth, but give back nothing in return. At the Asha Center, we were introduced to this unique concept of **biodynamic gardening by Rachel**. Biodynamic gardening is a way of giving back to the earth all the nutrients that we take from it. The





*PAs working in the Biodynamic Farm with Rachel*

beautiful self-sustaining garden at the Asha centre is a perfect example of this.

### **Understanding Leadership: The essence of sustainability**

Each one of us is a potential leader. While some of us demonstrate our leadership qualities, many of us have them lying dormant. In every walk of life, leadership holds immense importance. When it comes to sustaining our society, leaders assume a role of great importance. A session on Transformational Leadership was conducted as a part of our training. The session allowed us to recognize our leadership qualities and the kind of leadership style we exhibit.

The graduation ceremony was marked by the presence of many dignitaries like the Mayor of Lydney Mr. Bob Beeryman and his lovely wife, Mr. & Mrs. Poonawalla and Ms. Zerbanoo Gifford. Apart from all the cultural



*The graduation ceremony*

programmes that we presented, the graduation ceremony was marked by a very special event. It was the passing of the Peace Ambassadors torch to the newly selected Peace Ambassadors of the Grange Village. Such has been the impact of the Peace



Ambassadors programme that the residents of Grange decided to undergo the same programme themselves. Indeed! What an example of sustainability.

Living together can be such fun; it teaches us so much. It teaches us acceptance, to accept each person with all his flaws and imperfections as a part of our family, to care for others just as we care for our own selves. We learn to share and grow together.

Exploring new places is always fun and also the best opportunity to learn. We were blessed to have an



opportunity to visit some very beautiful places like Shakespeare's birthplace, Madam Tussaud's Museum, London Eye, Roman Baths, Oxford University and many more beautiful places.

This has been an incredible journey of 21 days. We have learnt immensely and have evolved tremendously. Now is the time for us to share this newfound knowledge with all and live up to the expectation of being the Peace Ambassadors in the real sense.

**For the 5th Batch of Peace Ambassadors**  
**Compiled by Dr. Sofiya Shaikh**  
 (LF 2009 & Leader PA 2012)



The concept of total wellness recognizes that our every thought, word and behavior affects our health and well-being. This effect is not only emotional but also physical and spiritual. The workshop WOW conducted on 22<sup>nd</sup> July'12 at Hotel Ambassador, was aimed at blossoming the total personality of our young women by empowering her in many dimensions. The beginning of the programme was very radiant and energetic because it demanded all the participants as well as Mrs.



Poonawalla tapped their feet to the rhythm of Zumba dance (cum exercise) led by a fitness expert Ms. Aradhana Sharma. This was immediately followed by a sumptuous healthy breakfast and then a tarot card reader Ms. Nandini Samant read out Tarot Cards of all present.

The next very exciting and important session was on "Empowering the Eve" by Vinita Deshmukh, renowned Journalist and Editor of Intelligent Pune. Through various examples she demonstrated how woman in different situations, can tackle problems confidently and courageously. She asserted, "The biggest crime is to suffer injustice." She introduced us to the Right to Information Act. Her talk inspired us and made us feel proud of the fact that we are women. **She ended**

the talk with a quote **"Courage is like a muscle, we strengthen it with use. Three things are important, 1) Empower yourself 2) Do not feel helpless 3) Act: You have the power."**

The next session was **"Emotional Wellness of Women"** by Dr. Suparna Telang, a leading psychiatrist, Ruby Hall Clinic, Pune. She focused on the following points: 1. To express our feelings in an appropriate way; 2. To think before we act; 3. The need of

an emotional, physical, social, financial, political and religious security; 4. How to maintain relationships with people? 5. How to deal with emotions? The workshop also included a session on **"Environmental Awareness"** by Ms. Nisha Gujarati, an artist and a member of the Shroff Social Group. She demonstrated us how to make paper bags to overcome the problem of plastic disposal. The post lunch session was **"Look good to feel good"** – Make-up tips by beauty experts Amrita and Bhakti from ISAS. They demonstrated the art of make-up on two girls. The last session was **"Healthy Lip-smacking Salads"** by Padmaja Dave, a Member of Green Tokri. She demonstrated shown several recipes for healthy salads which we all enjoyed learning and then tasting.

The entire programme was a great eye-opener for most participants as evident from the following feedbacks received:

*"WOW Programme was really educative and an awareness oriented programme. RTI was new to us. Learning how to present our self modestly from a Bollywood famous makeup artist, healthy eating habits, relaxing and exercising with Zumba Dance and last but not the least, the Tarot card reading session, were all different points in time where we explored our self."*

**-Supriya Satwekar (LF-2010)**

*"WOW explains and demonstrates how to deal with numerous problems and awkward situations. The programme also covered rare problems that few women have to face unfortunately. I am surely benefitted and am lucky I got this opportunity to attend it."*

**-Archana Ambekar-Karnik (LF-1999)**

*"The 'Right to Information Act' Session was certainly very new and very informative as well. I think 'Tarot reading' and 'make-up' sessions were secondary to us. And information about 'Psychology' was interesting. 'Salad making' was also very tempting. Overall the 'WOW' programme helped in creating awareness about general issues related to women in women. Thanks to LPF and of course Lila Mom for arranging such a good programme."*

**-Aparna Bhandar (LF-2002)**

*"The workshop gave me a glimpse of the different aspects of womanhood we ought to celebrate!"*

**Rajashree Ahirgawali (LF-2005)**

■ **- Ritaa Shetiya & Pricila Cricel (LF-2010 & PA-2012)**

**C**ome summer and all at the LPF family gets geared up for its 'Annual Cultural Confluence', SAMAGAM, which is also its' fundraiser. Over the past 4 years, Samagam has become a platform for our gifted and enthusiastic Lila -Fellows, -Girls and now even our -Juniors to exhibit their immense extra-curricular talent. The fourth edition of Samagam, held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June at the Nehru Memorial Hall this year, was saw almost 50 LPF members of LPF participating. Numerous participants, large audience and voluptuous sponsorship, all evidenced the unprecedented success of this season of Samagam.

As per LPF traditions, the evening opened to Foundation Song, "Ab To Hai Aage Badhana, Ab Meri Baari Hai" (Now its' my turn to move ahead...), sung by LFs Yogada Deshpande, Mangal Tajane-Kangane and Shruti Thite. The programme was formally inaugurated in an eco-friendly way, by watering a plant, at the hands of the Chief Guest, former Vice Chancellor of University of Pune, Prof. Arun Nigavekar. The new film about the work being done by the LPF was also screened at the event. Jyoti Otageri and Ritaa Shetiya compered the show in a combination of English and the local language Marathi.



*Environment friendly inauguration*



*We are the world*

The skit, 'We are the World' by 18 Lila Juniors of St. Clare's School, revolved around the experiences of a girl, who was granted a wish by a great holy man that changed her outlook towards life. It had a beautiful moral and talked about inculcating the virtue of working towards healing the world that we live in.



*Swarada Angal-Kulkarni & her team*

Bharatnatyam performance, 'Anubhuti', by LF Swarada Angal-Kulkarni and her team. Through the medium of dance, they presented the learnings that she obtained through the various events and activities organised by LPF. She also depicted the values LPF works towards inculcating in their girls, especially establishing strong bonds to form a well-knit family.



Four Lila Juniors from the CES Marathi Medium Girls' School sang a beautiful prayer, 'Ae Malik Tere Bande Hum', (Oh Lord we are your creations) asking God for the strength to overcome all the struggles in life. The prayer was rendered with such emotion, it instantly stirred the hearts of the audience.

*Ae malik tere  
bande hum* ▶



A monoact, 'Jijabai' by Lila Junior, Manasi Kamble, from CES Marathi Medium Girls' School, depicted an important incident from the life of the great Maratha warrior, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, where he received significant lessons from his mother, Jijabai, which are relevant even today.



▶ *Jijabai*

The hilarious monoact, 'Warhad Nighalay Londonla', by LF Snehal Patil, wherein she enacted multiple roles of members of two families, one from an Indian village and the other from England. The play revolves around these two families solemnizing the wedding of their son (Indian) and daughter (British) who are in love. The short play got the audience into continued fits of laughter.



▶ *Varhaad nighaala  
Londonla*

*Assamese  
Bihu  
Dance* ▶



'Dhoribo Mone Jai Ehe Ehe', an Assamese Bihu and bamboo tribal dance was presented by 14 girls of the CES Marathi Medium Girls' School. It was an eye-pleasing refreshing dance set to catchy beats.

A scintillating Kathak dance performance by LF & PA, Gauri Swakul and her team, entitled 'Naayika'. It portrayed the various qualities that constitute a 'Woman', the wonder created by God! Gauri ended her performance with her master-stroke... a unique fusion wherein Indian Classical dance-form Kathak was set to the beats of the unusual percussion instrument, the African Djembe drum.



▶ *Gauri Swakul  
& her team*

Vidya Khutwad  
presenting a 'hot  
lavani' ▶



Secretary of LPF, Vidya Khutwad-Jadhav presented a sensational Marathi folk dance, *Lavani*, on the super-hit Marathi film song... '*Zau dya na ghari..*' (Let me go home, its past twelve...). It was received with to unstoppable whistles and loud cheers from the audience.



'Bollywood Mélange'- 7 LFs & PAs performed to a medley of latest superhit Bollywood songs; a befitting fitting finale to the cultural evening.

◀ Bollywood  
Mélange

LFs presenting the classic melodies  
of the yesteryears ▶



Audience give a standing ovation to Mr. & Mrs. Poonawalla

Prof. Nigavekar was all praises for our vibrant Foundation. He said, "*The vision and enormous efforts of Mr. & Mrs. Poonawalla has contributed to the development of the Indian society that is in process of achieving its highest socio-cultural pinnacle*". He also appreciated the initiative of LPF, where impressionable, school-going girls have been 'adopted' in order to groom them into confident and independent young women. He proudly proclaimed, "*These little girls will one day transform the future of India*". **At the end of his talk, Prof. Nigavekar appealed to the audience- "I request you all to join me in giving a standing ovation to Mr. & Mrs. Poonawalla, the couple par excellence for founding Lila Poonawalla Foundation, certainly the Foundation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century!"** For all of us at the Foundation, at this moment our pride reached its' summit!





Team of Samagam 4

■ - Jyoti Otageri

Our Dear Readers....

**A**s we ring in 2013, we wish happiness to all your smiles, love to your hearts, health to your body and peace to your souls! We wish fulfillment to all your dreams and may horizons illuminate your horizons. Amen! Happy New Year to all!

We are back with a voluminous issue of Inspira, packed as never before! It had to be commensurate to the activity at LPF! Creating an issue of Inspira is becoming more and more challenging with every milestone achieved by LPF. Thanks to the very young and enthusiastic **LF-2011 Rashmi Tare**, who readily accepted Mrs. Poonawalla's invitation to help me out with the editing! And, of course some Senior LFs are

always available just a call away... **Mrs. Samina Deokar**, despite being a committed professional who works from home, is also a mother with 2 children, aged less than 5! Hats off to Samina, she took on additional responsibilities at Inspira along with doing justice as a Trustee on the School Project! **Mrs. Vidya Khutwad-Jadhav has been my genie at the Foundation Office, who always with regards to Inspira has said to me, "Rajani, Your wish is my command!"**

With our last issue i.e. the 36<sup>th</sup> volume, we adopted a very reader-friendly format for Inspira to serve our older readers. Thanks to those who wrote in to convey we succeeded in our mission. Even our non-English reading parents.... many of them



36th issue of Inspira being released at the School Awards Ceremony



communicated to us that they were so glad now even they could read Inspira, whose contents they had only learned about before, from others. We are sorry that this present issue we have not been able to make Inspira bilingual, due to excessive matter. However, our trial with printing Inspira bilingually has helped us estimate the effective shift in our outreach. I request our Lila Fellows, -Girls and -Juniors to assure their parents that we are taking planned measures towards printing Inspira regularly in English as well as Marathi.

In the last week of December, LPF organised 3 individual Christmas cum New Year parties on three consecutive days; one each for the Lila Fellows, Lila Girls and the Lila Juniors respectively, at the St. Mira's College. The way the family is growing, Lila Mom thinks we may have to hold 6 such parties next year! The girls participated in large numbers with their spouses and children, played games, won prizes for dancing and dressing well and danced into the night to latest music! But even during celebrations, Mr. & Mrs Poonawalla were not ignorant about the safety of their girls. Firoz Dad took centre-stage to sensitize the girls about the current safety situation of in India. He said, "We all know



LF Party 28th December 2012



LG Party 29th December 2012



LJ Party 30th December 2012

about what happened to this zealous physiotherapy student in Delhi on 16<sup>th</sup> December. Such dangers do not mean you put an end to your movement and get locked up at home. It is instead important for every Indian female of every age to be capable of protecting themselves, and protecting your right to freedom. This was the thought when we initiated the self-defence workshops for you girls. More of you should attend them. Not just self-defence, LPF conducts many workshops in order to empower you, your knowledge, awareness and confidence, which is intended to help you in your difficult times. Come forward and make the best of these opportunities." At each of the three new year parties, the girls observed

two minutes of silence as a mark of respect to the 23-year old gang-rape victim who died.

Wow, what a way to end the year as a family!

With a promise to bring you Inspira more often in 2013, than the year gone by... I sign off! Take care and be safe!

Love and Regards

■ - **Rajani Panchang-Dhumal**  
Chief Editor

**Asst. Editors:** Samina Deokar and Rashmi Tare

**Crusaders:** Vidya Khutwad, Ritaa Shetiya, Nisha Pandya, Sunetra Chaphalkar, Jyoti Otageri, Yogini Karmarkar

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<http://www.lilapoonawallaoundation.com/html/inspira.html>

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