

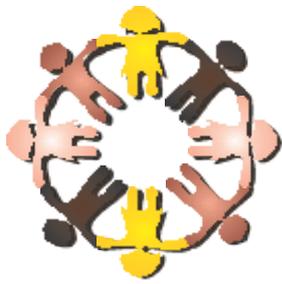


SRISTI FOUNDATION



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Empowering People with Disabilities

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Dear friends,

Hearty greetings from Sristi Foundation!

We are very excited to share with you the recent successes and developments of Sristi Foundation. Although the foundation is not yet one year old, the vision has been many years in the making, and we are thrilled to be taking giant steps forward in the realization of the dream. Please continue reading to learn about our mission and our efforts to secure and establish a permanent home for Sristi Village.



Living the Dream:

“Sristi”, the ancient word derived from the classical language Sanskrit, means “CREATION”. We want to create a new world for those who are marginalized, especially people with intellectual disabilities; a world that they can call their own, a world where everyone is treated with respect.

The main objective of the organization is **“to establish “Sristi Village”, a self-sustaining, inclusive and eco-friendly village, which provides a family atmosphere where everyone can reach their full potential regardless of disability, race, gender, etc. Further, people with intellectual disabilities and the marginalized will be equally active contributors”**.

At Sristi Foundation, we have been at work in making this dream come true. Here’s a quick look at everything we have achieved in the past year:

Land Acquisition

We have found 9 acres of beautiful cultivation land near Kunamangalam village in Tamil Nadu, 30km west of Pondicherry City. With the committed support of our well wishers, especially Kinderlachen, Germany, Weeshuis Der Hervormden, The Netherlands, and Ms. Samantha and Friends, USA and everyone else who contributed their money, time, resources and knowledge towards our cause, we purchased the land on the 30th of May 2014. We are planning to move there with our community and initiate the project by constructing a basic eco-friendly hut, starting an organic vegetable garden, and slowly moving towards achieving the long-term vision of Sristi Village.



Sristi Special School Inauguration:

On February 14th, 2014, Sristi Foundation inaugurated a school for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The school is located in Thazhuthali Village, near the Sristi Village land. Thazhuthali Village is situated 30 kilometres west of Pondicherry, the closest city, and there are very limited services available for children with disabilities. Based on a growing need along with a request from the village community, we decided to initiate the school as our first project. The inaugural celebration was attended by the Village Counselor, the presidents of Thazhuthali and neighboring villages, the new school Headmaster, teachers, parents, children, and members of the public. We highly appreciate the cooperation and support of the village people.



Sristi Vocational Training Centre:



On February 21st, 2014, Sristi Foundation initiated a vocational training centre for people with intellectual disabilities in Thazhuthali Village. In order to achieve the main objective of Sristi Foundation – to empower people with intellectual disabilities to lead independent lives - we started the vocational training centre. At this juncture we thank our supporter ADER organization, from Puducherry, for sponsoring two mat weaving machines.

Mrs. N. Lakshmi, President of ADER organization, Mrs. Kichenaveny Nadaradjane from France, and

Mr. Muruganandam Mandjiny, Executive Secretary of ADER, joined us in a celebration and delivered the mat weaving machines to the beneficiaries. The event went really well thanks to the support of the village people and the Sristi team.

At Sristi Vocational Training Centre we are currently producing door mats, phenyl, candles, incense sticks, handmade paper products, cloth flowers, greeting cards, and paper bags. Most of the products are made using recycled and waste materials.



UnLtd Tamil Nadu:

Sristi Foundation is pleased to share that our project has been selected as an investee by the social entrepreneurship incubator, **UnLtd, Tamil Nadu**, a local unit of UnLtd India. After being chosen by the decision of a selection panel, Sristi Foundation has received insightful coaching and mentorship from UnLtd Tamil Nadu. The organization has provided Sristi with valuable guidance and consultations with experts in permaculture, eco-friendly architecture, etc. – all very crucial factors in designing our self-sustaining village. We are extremely grateful for the help and support received through this meaningful collaboration.



Eco-friendly village:

On January 31st we received a visit from Mr. Sajan, Director of Costford, who is an architectural pioneer and designs low cost eco-friendly buildings. Mr. Sajan and his team from Kerala did an initial assessment of various possibilities for designing and constructing eco-friendly, cost-effective, energy-efficient buildings for our Sristi Village community. We are so inspired by his wisdom and simplicity. We look forward to reviewing the final design for our village.

Permaculture:

We also recently spent an amazing day with Ms. Samantha and Mr. Daniel from the USA, permaculture pioneers who are experienced in Permaculture consultation, design, and education. Samantha and Daniel visited the Sristi Village land on January 17th, 2014. They explained the concept of permaculture and gave us valuable ideas about how we can practice it on our land. We are now designing our village based on their inputs. We are so grateful to Samantha and Daniel for their expert advice and generous support.





FSL India Visit:

Mr. Nagoor Kani J, Coordinator, FSL India, Pondicherry chapter, visited our Sristi Village project. FSL-India is a youth development organization focused on intercultural learning through voluntary service. Mr. Kani J assessed our organization with an eye towards engaging new volunteers for the village project. On behalf of the Sristi Village community, we wholeheartedly thank Mr. Nagoor Kani J and the team of FSL-India for their support.

Towards Independence:

Sristi Foundation recently conducted a workshop on legal issues for persons with intellectual disabilities. With an audience of more than 100 parents, we discussed various legal issues and challenges as they pertain to adults with intellectual disabilities. The main objective of the event was to share information on how persons with intellectual disabilities can lead independent and dignified lives. We thank Satya Special School for their support in organizing the event.



Organic Farming:



On the 20th February 2014, the Sristi village team was joined by the team of UnLtd Tamil Nadu to visit the Senakunnam village, Villupuram. The main objective of the visit was to get hands-on experience about organic farming. Ms. Kumari, President of the Organic Farmer Society, Senakunnam village explained the various activities and challenges of organic farming. Mr. Sivalingam, Secretary of the Care Society, Tindivanam organized the event.

Legal Guardianship:

On the 10th February 2014 Sristi Foundation organized a one day workshop on Legal Guardianship for the parents at Carunai Special School, Rediarpalayam, Puducherry. The main objective was to give legal guidance on appointing a guardian for the persons with developmental disabilities. Mr. G. Mutukrishnan explained the various legal procedures involved in guardianship. Mr. G. Karthikeyan, Director of Sristi Foundation explained about National Trust Act and other laws connected with legal guardianship. Mr. Ganesh, Director of the Carunai Special School organized the event.



Disability Survey:



Sristi Foundation conducted a disability survey in Thazhuthali and neighboring villages in order to identify the children and people with disabilities. The purpose of the survey is to provide information about children with disabilities whose daily activities are limited because of a long-term condition or health-related problem. This information will be used to plan and evaluate services and programs for adults with disabilities to help enable their full participation in their own community.

Handicraft Exhibition:

On the eve of Christmas and New Year Sristi Foundation in collaboration with Pondicherry Parents' Association of Mentally Handicapped and Spastic Persons organized a one week long handicraft exhibition from 21st December 2013 to 27th December 2013 at Saint Patrick Higher Secondary School, Puducherry. The main objective of the exhibition was to create awareness among the general public about the abilities of the people with intellectual disabilities. Various products displayed in the exhibition including paper made products, eco-friendly bags, greeting cards, beads, etc. Most of the products were produced from recycled and waste materials. Many people came for the exhibition and bought these products that had been made by people with disabilities.

The exhibition was organized



by the General Manager of Sristi Foundation, Mr. Muthukrishnan, and Mrs. Geraldin, Secretary of Parents' Association of Mentally Handicapped and Spastic Persons. NSS volunteers from Saint Patrick Higher Secondary School aided them in their efforts.

On 16th March 2014, Sristi Foundation organized a handicraft exhibition with the support of Gratias non-profit student organization during the event of Rhythm of Joy at JIPMER auditorium, Puducherry. Students and the general public appreciated and actively bought the various products made by the people with disabilities.



Meeting with Parents of children with disabilities:

Sristi Foundation organized a parents' meeting on March 20, 2014 at Muthialpet, Puducherry. The active involvement of parents of disabled children and young people in their lives is a standard theme running through all our endeavors. The main objective of this meeting was to promote information provision, emotional support, and liaisons among different institutions. It is intended to offer a concise overview of the issues faced by families with a disabled child, and how services may better meet their needs.



Training on Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

Sristi Foundation organised a training programme on "Rights of Persons with Disabilities" on 31st May 2014 at Satya Special School for Paramedical students, where various legal acts including UNCRPD, PWD ACT 1995, National Trust Act 1999 etc., were discussed. We are very grateful to Satya Special School and all organizers for arranging this wonderful event.



Training on Personality Development:

Sristi Foundation conducted a training session on Personality Development on 24th May 2014 for 50 higher secondary school students on 23rd May with the support of TYCL & MUGHIL in collaboration with Pondicherry University and PASIC. We highly appreciate the initiatives, and the learning gained.

Summer Camp for Children:

Sristi Foundation organized a three-day summer camp for children at KSP School, Kathirkamam, Puducherry from 24th to 26th of May 2014.

On the first day, we invited Pondicherry Childline to talk about their 24-hour free emergency telephone helpline and outreach service for children in need of care and protection. On the second day, we invited a psychologist, Mr. Kumaran who gave

training to the children in various life skills including stress management,

problem solving,

creative thinking and memory techniques through various activities and fun games. On the third day we invited Mr. Arunan, Assistant Professor who is an expert in storytelling. In a very memorable session he made the children write their own story – an activity which they enjoyed a lot. By the end, of the day we had collected 120 stories from all the children.



World Environment Day:

Sristi Foundation observed **“World Environmental Day”** on the 5th of June, 2014, through an event titled **“Inclusive Action for a Clean Beach”**. More than 300 volunteers joined during the event. We cleaned the Puducherry beach and collected 10 jumbo bags of garbage and have planned to recycle all of it. The money earned from the recycling will be used for the benefit of orphan children. We are very grateful to all our partners and volunteers.





Call to Our Friends:

For establishing the Sristi Village Project, we request you for your help. We will need the help of all our friends to make the Sristi Village and the larger vision of Sristi Foundation a reality.

While Sristi needs all the help it can get at this stage, we would be delighted to have volunteers who are interested in community building, and have any expertise/experience in permaculture, agricultural and farming practices, construction work and fundraising. If you don't think you have any of these aforementioned skills, but would really like to contribute – get in touch with us! We would really like to

have all hands on the deck, and any help and support you can lend to us at this stage is valuable.

Your support will help in two ways: it will help to transform the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and will also, through these individuals, help create a mindset change in society. With your help we can change the perception of disability. We can show, through the examples of trained and hard-working individuals with disabilities, that people with disabilities can be assets rather than burdens in their communities.

We are very excited to share with you our vision for Sristi Foundation! We welcome any thoughts or support that you can offer. Every contribution will be received with great thankfulness.

A Special Thanks to:

Sristi Foundation would like to extend a warm thanks to the following organisations and individuals:

Kanthari International Institute, Trivandrum, Kerala for helping us gain the necessary hands-on experience in social work and for aiding us in developing a keen vision for how we can achieve our milestones.

Leo Frühschütz, Brigitte Holzbauer, Victoria Mary, Anna Reid, Chitra Sha, Arulmurugan, Djolean Everts, Barbara Grieblinger, Kamalia Mary and Siva Mathiyazhagan for their unwavering support, patience and motivation in helping us achieve our goals and in tirelessly working and believing in our cause.

Kinderlachen, Germany, Weeshuis Der Hervormden, The Netherlands, Ms. Samantha and Friends, USA, Mughil Social Welfare Organization and everyone who helped us acquire the land and kick start the project. We are immensely thankful that they chose to share with us their resources, and expert guidance, and provided us with moral support and mentorship when we most needed it. Indeed we are grateful to have a firm ground to work towards our goals from.

If you need more information please do not hesitate to call or write us.

Thank you.

With warm regards

Yours gratefully,

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