



ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

A Message from the Managing Trustee



Back in New Orleans where we lived for eight glorious years, Aarti became close friends with Ashley who was a couple of years older to her. They had a bond that was indescribable even though Aarti had very little language and Ashley had none. But they laughed

together. Often. Aarti comforted Ashley through her music and songs. Ashley loved it and when she flashed Aarti a brilliant smile, everything was hunky dory again. Aarti has autism and Ashley has a smooth brain syndrome.

Persons with disabilities or those who are differently abled such as Ashley and Aarti and millions of others show us in countless ways their special strengths: they work hard and want to do well; they share their happiness with gay abandon and they feel sad when we do. Many have faced adversity and derision all their lives. But they are resilient and continue to strive to be the best that they can be.

Above all they teach us to go beyond ourselves and into the core of our being and find those qualities of love and compassion that are beyond egos and petty differences.

If we, others, choose to look beyond the disability, we can learn. A lot. In the bargain, we also realize that inclusiveness, besides being the 'right' thing to do, benefits the entire community.

Yash Charitable Trust was formed in 2013 based on these beliefs and with the mandate of empowering persons with developmental disabilities (PWDs) to live satisfying and fulfilling adult lives.

Integral to the notion of being able to live satisfying and fulfilling adult lives is meaningful employment that is inclusive and involves community participation.

The obvious choice was food related and thereby the idea of the *dabba* service was generated and in April 2015 we began providing hot lunches.

Community participation also includes service and so a collaboration with the Robin Hood Army was launched wherein we provide 25 nutritious meals to street children on a weekly basis.

Also during the year we worked on creating civic awareness by collaborating with the M.L. Dahanukar College chapter of Enactus. We have been taught how to compost our kitchen waste and have a thriving kitchen garden.

We have an enormous resource in our beneficiaries who enrich the lives of our support staff and volunteers each and every day. We love the time we spend together and nothing is more rewarding than to see our beneficiaries grow in so many intangible ways: whether it is in their skills, their confidence, or their community participation.

We also have a wonderful set of families who support our every initiative wholeheartedly.

There is much to do and much we would like to do. But we are young and resources preclude us from doing too much too soon.

In the meanwhile, we continue to marvel at the inspiration provided by the Ashleys and Aartis of the world. We salute their resilience and we dedicate our existence as YCT to them.

Sushama Nagarkar



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Introduction

Yash Charitable Trust (YCT) was established in 2014 with the overall mission of enhancing quality of life for persons with developmental disabilities. Therefore activities of YCT are geared towards assisting such individuals to become responsible, productive members of the communities that they live in. We constantly strive to create inclusive community-based opportunities that provide to our beneficiaries a satisfying and fulfilling adult life similar to their non-disabled peers. Yash Charitable Trust is registered under the Bombay Public Trust Act 1950 and all donations are deductible under Sec. 80G of the Income Tax Act of 1961.



Our Trustees

A wonderful set of very diverse individuals comprises the Board of Trustees. These are persons who have unflinchingly volunteered their time and efforts to take on these special responsibilities. Their varied talents and expertise bring an enriched perspective to the activities of Yash Charitable Trust.



Sushama Nagarkar, Managing Trustee, is a parent of an adult with developmental disabilities. She believes that individuals with developmental disabilities are people first and that their disability does not define who they truly are. She also believes that with the right kinds of supports every adult with developmental disabilities can live a very fulfilling life and be an active contributing member of the community that he or she lives in. Sushama completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees in psychology from St. Xavier's College and Bombay University and continued to obtain a Specialist degree and national certification in School Psychology as well as a Doctorate in Special Education during a 15 year stay in the US. She is a registered Rehabilitation Psychologist with the Rehabilitation Council of India.

Aakil Mahajan, born and raised in Mumbai, has completed his Bachelors in Industrial Engineering from Northwestern University and a Certificate Programme in Managerial Analytics from the Kellogg School of Management. After graduation, he worked in manufacturing with Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics in Worcester, USA. Upon his return to India he worked for a year as an associate consultant with Ernst & Young Private Limited in Mumbai and Bangalore. In December, 2012, he decided to leave the corporate life behind and joined Pratham Education Foundation. His work with Pratham/ ASER included program management and strategy, and monitoring and evaluating impact. In order to further his personal goals, in 2015, Aakil went back to being a full-time student and is currently pursuing his MBA at IESE Business School in Barcelona.



Ashaita Mahajan was born and brought up in Mumbai and graduated with a BA in Economics from St. Xavier's College. She went on to pursue a Master's degree in Music Management at the University of Sheffield. Having a passion for the performing arts – music in particular – her professional life has included working on projects and with companies that function in the live entertainment space. Currently employed at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Mumbai, she is actively involved in promoting arts and culture to young children across the city. By leading the Outreach program at the NCPA, she hopes to bring a positive influence to as many young children as possible through the medium of multi-arts education. Her cousin Aarti, who has autism, is her biggest inspiration when it comes to music and learning.

Meena Narvekar completed her post-graduation in Clinical Psychology from University of Bombay several years ago. She subsequently worked as a School Counsellor in Happy Home and School for the Blind, Worli mainly counselling visually impaired children and their families. From 1983 to 1991 she worked as a lecturer in SNDT Womens' University teaching psychology to students of the Junior College in all three mediums of instruction (English, Marathi and Gujarati). Over the last few years Meena has devoted her time and energies to her large extended family. She is passionate about music, and all forms of artistic endeavours.



LataShetty is an alumnus of St Xavier's College, Mumbai. After working for over 20 years in the banking sector, Lata took voluntary retirement and began to devote more of her time and energy to other pursuits that were important to her. A considerate and caring individual, Lata has found her niche in helping others and whatever she undertakes to do is done with her total commitment. Lata has been reading to the blind and recording books for them for several years now. Many of the books she has recorded can be found at the National Association for the Blind in Worli, Mumbai. In addition, Lata travels across India for a few months of seva every year. During these months, with a smile and total devotion, she undertakes whatever chores are assigned to her, whether it be cooking, cleaning, or other organization activities.

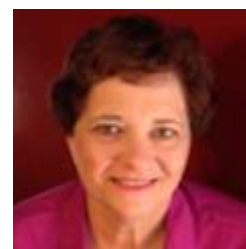
Our Advisory Board

We are fortunate and grateful to have on our advisory board, individuals who have worked for many years in the world of disabilities. Collectively they have over 125 years of experience between them! The beauty is that they continue to advocate tirelessly towards bettering lives for individuals with disabilities and make a huge difference in the life of every such person they encounter.



Jody Cook believes that all people have common goals for home, work, family, friends and that vocation, recreation, and community involvement are crucial to a balanced and fulfilling life. Jody also believes that activity, opportunity and involvement are essential rights that should be accessible to all individuals regardless of ability.

Debbie Flores has officially retired from teaching after serving students with special needs and their families for over 36 years. For most of her career, she focused on cultivating inclusive environments to produce positive post-secondary outcomes for all students. Since her retirement in May, 2015, Debbie continues to work in the field of education and transition services through various venues. Debbie also volunteers for the Missouri Humanities Council with their Read from the Start Program, is a member of the Community Gospel Choir of St. Louis and a proud grandmother.



David Hampton works as an Associate Professor at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, USA. David has been drawn into working with students who are transitioning into meaningful adult life due to his lovely niece, Rebecca who has significant Developmental Delays and Autism. David has been a staunch advocate for young adults with significant disabilities as they work to enter competitive employment and seek programming to further their social and emotional development.

Susan Lloyd as a speech-language pathologist with over 30 years of experience in the public school system, Susan works with students to improve their ability to communicate, thus positively impacting their ability to access the curriculum and improve school success. She believes the key to a successful and productive life is good communication skills; this includes the areas of vocabulary, grammar and social language. Susan works with students who not only use verbal communication but assistive language devices as well (e.g.-voice output machines, gestures, sign language).



Sarbani Mallick is the Founder Director and Managing Trustee – Bubbles Centre for Autism in Bangalore. She began her journey of discovery in the field of Special Education in 1997 after a chance volunteering opportunity at a special school close to where she lived. This centre runs a day care school program for children with Autism in the age group of two to 18 years. Currently, there are 40 children in the school. Sarbani regularly conducts batches of “Mother Child Program” and reaches out to many parents empowering them with the Structured Teaching methodology.

Our Team



AARTI NAGARKAR

Since our beginning, Aarti has been an enthusiastic participant in all activities of YCT: whether it is at Arpan, collaborating with RHA or the Saturday class. She brings with her a ready willingness to learn and a certain warmth of personality. Her smiling face and enthusiastic good morning brings smiles all around. Of her work at Arpan, she says, "I like all the work – wiping all the vessels and delivering dabbas with Pandit. I like being friendly with everyone here."

ANAND JANGIR

Anand spends most of his time at Dilkhush sheltered workshop, but spends all holidays and other days with us. He is meticulous and thorough in all tasks that he does; whether at Dilkhush or at Arpan. He smiles when asked what activities in Arpan he enjoys the most. He likes them all, he says! He enjoys sitting around the table with his friends and doing work as a team. He is not too fond of cutting onions, but is a very willing participant to complete the rest of the tasks that are assigned to him.



ASHA DIVTE

Asha, one of two supervisors, travels from the distant suburbs to come to Arpan. Although she has had no experience in working with adults with special needs ever before, Asha has taken to her work like a fish to water! She absolutely enjoys what she does. "I am loving what I do! When I first began here, our team members did not know many aspects of our work. And we had to begin from scratch. I am learning a lot! How to cultivate patience, how to teach differently and I am always thinking how to handle difficult situations. I learn all the time."

BUNNY AMAN

Bunny has completed a year and a half as a team member. He travels alone using public transport from his home to Arpan and is very proud of this accomplishment. Rightly so! Bunny is quiet and keeps to himself for the most part. He completes assigned tasks and waits to be given more work. He loves to sing and dance and breaks into dance when the opportunity presents itself. Bunny has worked in other sheltered workshops and for sure loves Arpan the best. His most favorite activity at Arpan is to deliver dabbas. "I love to tell people to enjoy their meals!"



CHETAN JAWALE

Currently Chetan is the youngest of the group. Always enthusiastic and ever willing to work and play. He enjoys teaching those of his friends who need more support and is patient and caring with them. He dances at the drop of the hat and often has everyone around doing the same. "I love to come to Arpan! Work with my friends and have lots of fun! Sitting together with my friends here is very enjoyable. Everyone is very kind!"

KAVITA AKREY

Kavita, one of two supervisors, has had some prior experiences in working with children with disabilities; she loved her job there but due to her family responsibilities, she had to leave. She has been with YCT for over two years. She loves to work at Arpan. "I improve my spoken and written English because of our team! They teach me how to use technology! They have taught me how to use WhatsApp. "...didiiskajawabbhejona...". And they show me how. If there is family tension in the home, I run to work and forget it because there is so much love for me here!"



**NANDA KASURDE**

Nanda's work at YCT primarily involves making chapatis. She also teaches our team members to make the dough, roast the chapatis and so on. She loves the smiles that the team always bring; the fun and the camaraderie amongst everyone. She very much appreciated the team asking about her health and that of her husband's during the difficult months when they were both sick. She finds that the two hours she spends at Arpan go by very quickly and she becomes energized to go to her other jobs in the neighbourhood.

NANDU DAS

Nandu comes from distant Bihar. He says: "This is the first time in my life that I have worked with individuals who have disabilities. I learn from them and they learn from me. We laugh and we have fun and I enjoy teaching them."

**NAZNEEN KAGALWALA**

Nazneen has been with us since our inception. She is very independent in many ways and is able to travel to work alone. She has a keen interest in all activities of YCT and often offers very helpful suggestions from her experiences at home and in the community. She recognizes that she has grown in many ways over the past few years. "I like to come here, enjoy and work with my friends. First I did not like to clean methi and all and now I do it. I can peel a lot of garlic!"

PRATIBHA KAMATH

Pratibha also has been with us since our inception. She is a work horse and will do any and everything that is asked of her. She absolutely hates to sit idle! Once she understands a task, she is able to carry it out independently with minimal supervision. Pratibha brings to Arpan a smiling face and constant chatter. She is also a patient teacher and will readily teach those of her peers who need assistance. "I like to do all the work here. Whatever I have to do!"

**RAEES SHAIKH**

Raees has been attending different activities of YCT since our inception. Earlier due to medicine side effects, he was quiet and almost non-responsive. Over the past several months, he has shown us his humorous and loving side. He loves to come to Arpan even when he feels somewhat under the weather. He will say, "Achchalagtahai!" and give us a wonderful smile!

SHAMBHU PANDIT

Shambhu Pandit is integral to our team. He very responsibly supervises deliveries and our kitchen garden. He says: "Working with our team members is very rewarding. They work hard and I appreciate what they teach me."

**SULTANA BIBI**

Sultana has never had any previous experiences in interacting with PWDs. She says that she has enjoyed the work from the beginning and has learned a lot in the two years she has been at Arpan. She enjoys laughing and joking with the team members; she enjoys dancing with them. She appreciates that the team helps her with cleaning when she asks them to do so. She hopes that we continue to grow and that she continues working in such a fun-filled work place.

Our Initiatives

Arpan

Our supported employment initiative is our flagship programme. Meaningful work is an integral measure of quality of life and through this venture, our beneficiaries, who are active team members, time and again demonstrate they indeed can be successfully integrated.

Through Arpan we provide delicious home cooked meals in a lunch service. We appreciate our regular clientele who support this wholeheartedly and we welcome others who call in to order lunch on a daily basis.

Our team members are involved in every aspect of this 'business' in whatever way they can. Some may participate in the actual cooking, others may do the prep work and yet others may do the packing and delivery. They all have a valued role to play.

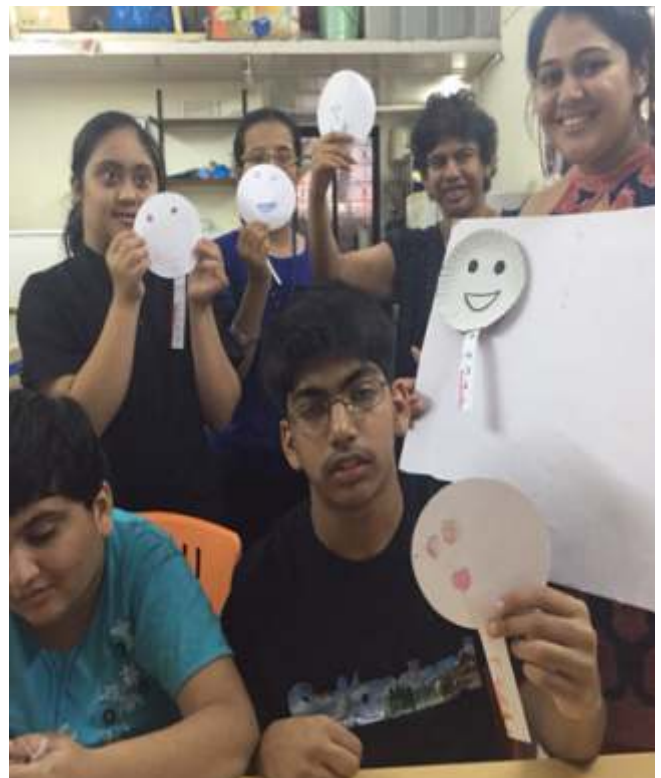
Everything is cooked fresh every morning. We support our local vendors and thus our team members also go out to buy vegetables and fruit or other staples as needed.

Although costs are high, and we struggle with making ends meet, the initiative has been hugely successful for our team members. They all love to come to work and the workplace is a very fun-filled place to be in.



Know More ...More Fun

During the entire year, we collaborated with Know More...More Fun, a creative programme designed to teach pro-social behaviours, general knowledge, rhythm and dance in a fun-filled atmosphere. This initiative was also thrown open to other individuals in the community. Some of our team members actively participated and hated for the sessions to end!





Collaboration with Robin Hood Army

As a part of our community involvement, we provide 25 fresh nutritious meals on a weekly basis to a group of street children who live a few kilometers away from our center. We seek donations from community members for this initiative.



Sustainable Kitchen Garden

During the year, under the guidance of the Enactus chapter at M.L.Dahanukar College in Vile Parle, we began to make compost out of our kitchen waste and started our kitchen garden. Our first bhindi was celebrated! We continue to experiment on our own and now have a few other plants such as basil, chillies, papdi and greens. We use these in our cooking—they are organic and totally pesticide-free and we relish them!



Our Parents / Volunteers



JAMILA KAGALWALA (NAZNEEN)

"Nazneen has come out of a period of stagnation and there is a change in her look, her attitude. She is expressive about what she does, whereas previously she was not so. She is opening out and is very happy to come to work."

GODAVARI AND P.C. JANGIR (ANAND)

Godavari and P.C. Jangir are Anand's parents. YCT is deeply indebted to Godavari and P.C. Jangir, Anand's parents. Along with Anand, P.C. looks after our accounts and is very generous. He is always ready to fund us in whatever way he is able to. Godavari is always, always ready to provide a helping hand and delicious snacks for our team! They appreciate what YCT does to support Anand's growth.



ASHA AMAN (BUNNY)

Bunny travels to work alone from his home in Jogeshwari. His mother is thrilled at how much he has grown from his experiences. "Everybody in our society says Bunny is totally different since coming here! He has become disciplined, he wants to leave home early to be on time and at home he wants to help me. I see so much change!"

ASHA AND RAJEEV KAMATH (PRATIBHA)

Asha and Rajeev are very supportive parent volunteers. They are ever-willing to extend themselves and their resources whether it be training our team for a cooking competition or for a stage performance. We are deeply indebted to their commitment and willingness to help. Pratibha loves the thought of working and has become more responsible and whether at Arpan or at home, she does all work assigned to her without any fuss. She loves her friends and people she works with. Asha says "As parents, we are very happy with her progress in all areas and love the fact that she is so happy!"



SAEEDA ADIL SHAIKH (RAEES)

"Raees has an almost two year association with YCT. At the beginning he was totally non-communicative. Saeeda shares, "Raees has changed a lot. He communicates a lot more now. He is learning here and helps in the house which is something he never did earlier. He loves to be here and at times in the middle of the night, he will ask "Arpan me jaaneka time ho gaya?""



SUREKHA JAWALE (CHETAN)

"Chetan loves to come to work. He has made good friends, and loves to get his cheque every month. He also takes more responsibility at home. I am really happy for him!"

HUTOKSHI BANAJI

"I began to volunteer at Arpan after seeing a forwarded WhatsApp message about adults with developmental disabilities working alongside their non-disabled colleagues. From the first day, I have been welcomed as a part of the team and I found a way of working that was at the same time both serious and fun. I love it! If you are an enthusiastic person and always want to do something for yourself and others, this is the place to be!"



VERA MAHAJAN

Vera has been a volunteer with YCT from its inception. She says: "YCT means the world to me! I look forward to meeting my young family at Arpan every morning and I love being with each and every one of the team for their purity, gentleness, simplicity, and pure love of life. They take one day at a time. It's beautiful and fulfilling."

DIVYA NAGARKAR AND DANIEL GAVIERA

Divya and Daniel live and work in the US. They manage the web pages and other related tasks. Divya created our current Arpan aprons that we wear with pride. Smart and savvy, they are a great resource to bounce ideas off.



SUCHETA SIDDHA

Sucheta has been associated with YCT since its inception. She designed the logos and gave valuable inputs towards the programming. She insists that what she writes must be incorporated! Here goes: "I first met Sushama in 1992. I worked as an Art Director for a publication for which she was the editor. We connected because our children were the same age. She was the first parent that I had come across who was never ashamed that her child had special needs. On every visit of mine to Arpan, I see the beneficiaries becoming more independent and disciplined; at the same time they are very loving and affectionate. Today I am a proud friend who is seeing closely the results of her devotion and hard work."

In Gratitude

To our parents, and volunteers - thank you for your unconditional love and support. Our team is an amazing bunch and grows stronger by the day because of you. To our supporters and well wishers who have opened up their hearts and their purses without asking questions. Thank you for believing in us!

We owe a very special thanks to Anand Mahajan, Managing Director, Grindwell Norton; Amar Sukhi, Managing Director, Security and Personnel Services Pvt. Ltd. and Mrs. Lila Lall.



Our Finance Report

Particulars	FY 2014-15	FY 2015-16
Income	41,315.00	7,02,529.00
Expenditure	20,237.00	3,97,163.00
Opening balance carried forward	NIL	21,078.00
Closing balance carried over to the balance sheet	21,078.00	3,26,444.00





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