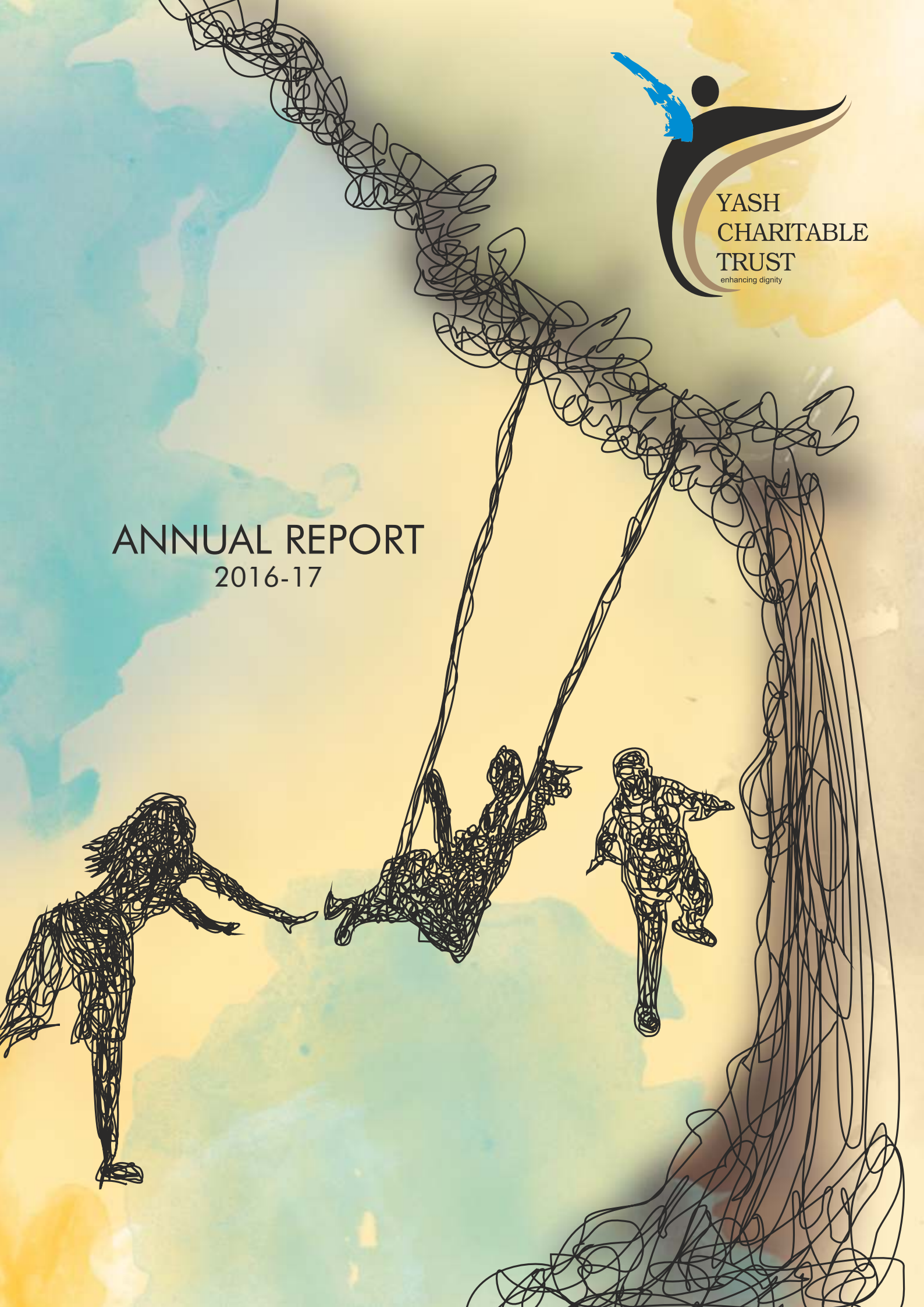




# ANNUAL REPORT

2016-17



## A Message from the Managing Trustee

Another year. Time flies when you are having fun. And a fun year it has been indeed!

Our team. Where do I start? Whatever I say about it is not enough. Autism and intellectual disabilities notwithstanding, our team is growing by leaps and bounds in all ways. They work hard, play hard and we are very proud of their accomplishments!

Talking about coming a long way. Many moons ago, around 11 am in the morning, a few times a week, Raees used to stand for several minutes outside our entrance to Arpan. His head was low and he was non-communicative. He would not respond to our invitation to come in. Some days later, he agreed to sit on a chair outside the main gate; subsequently, he agreed to sit inside the entrance. It took a couple of weeks to get him to sit at the table with his peers. By this time his communication became single word responses to others' questions. The story is long. These days he arrives independently and asks "May I come in?", still late (that is a battle we will battle later), puts his bag away, wears his apron, shares what is going on in his day, and begins the assigned work easily. As with the rest of us, he is quick at work he knows how to do and struggles with new activities. But he now also asks for help. "Yeh batao" or "Yeh kaise karna hai?" Raees also loves to deliver dabbas and happily remembers to carry his bus pass every day. He is fun to be around and every week there is new learning for us about how incredible Raees is.

So what did we do for Raees? Not much really. We provided him time; we provided him with an accepting, happy, safe environment to be who he is, with all his strengths and weaknesses. We offered him a certain dignity and the respect he so rightfully deserves. This is not rocket science.

Fortunately, it is a way of life for us at YCT. We value each and every one of our team members; those with disabilities and those without. We celebrate together, we empathize with each other, we eat together. We share.

Over the year, both through Arpan, our supported employment initiative, as well as through Tarang, our music initiative, and our other activities, some wonderful community-based opportunities have come our way. And



we have been able to deliver a very powerful message – that we belong – right here where we live and work.

During this year, we have also launched the Adult Support Kendra (ASK), an initiative that seeks to provide families and persons with developmental disabilities the necessary know how and skills that they need to navigate the adult world.

As is often the case with small NGOs such as ours, we are constantly in need of resources to help us move forward. We are immensely grateful to our friends and well-wishers who support us every step of the way.

The future is exciting. And we have plans on all fronts. Supporting employment initiatives is enormously important to us and will be a focal point of our work for the coming year. In the meanwhile, we celebrate our team, our achievements. We celebrate Raees' resilience and that of countless others. We salute them.

**Sushama Nagarkar**



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## About Us

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.







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 time and again demonstrate they indeed can be integral team members.



Through Arpan, we provide delicious home-cooked meals in a lunch service. Everything is made fresh on a daily basis. We support our local vendors and thus our team members also independently go out and buy vegetables and fruit or other staples as needed.



The nature of the work creates myriad opportunities for our beneficiaries to hone their skills. Almost every one chops, fries, grinds and packs with a certain ease and finesse. In addition, we are adept at making *atta*, and we have no problems with cleaning and washing. Doing deliveries is a highly sought after activity! Along the way, we are learning every day.



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

During this year, we have been fortunate to have had excellent community-based opportunities come our way. For example, we participated in the NGO fair at Narsee Monji Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS) where we sold sandwiches, rolls, pav bhaji and cake. It is not what we sold that is important; it is how our team members "wowed" the students with their warmth, enthusiasm and professionalism. Such a proud moment indeed!





We were provided an opportunity to participate in the Bombay Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BSPCA) pet adoption event. Again, we took sandwiches and the like. By far, our *limbu pani* was an instant best-seller. The weather helped.



The icing on the cake was when our team won second place in the Cook For Change cooking competition organized by the Veruschka Foundation. A proud moment indeed! Subsequent to the competition, the team received multiple opportunities to visit and learn at the Sanjeev Kapoor kitchen in Andheri. We were exhilarated by the experiences garnered under the watchful eye of professional chefs who on their part were bowled over by our enthusiasm!







Rajeev Kamath, a parent-volunteer spearheads Tarang, the cultural initiative of YCT. He believes that rhythm and music does wonders for persons with disabilities, particularly for those who have language and communication needs. We present excerpts from a recently co-authored article by him and Sushama for the Dance Spectrum, a magazine devoted to propagating the performing arts:

*“AUTISM: The Musical” is an Emmy winning HBO documentary, that tries to bring attention to a modern-day epidemic while celebrating the value of the human spirit in overcoming any challenge. The film introduces five autistic kids along with their parents, taking part in a ground-breaking theatrical workshop. How the children respond in the workshop is the story of the documentary. Similarly, the “Miracle Project” by Elaine Hall, eloquently demonstrates that kids with disabilities put through performing arts projects, are able to connect with their feelings and emotions in their performing, be it singing, acting or playing instruments.*





*We have had similar experiences at Tarang. Our individuals, all of whom have developmental disabilities, have a multitude of talents. One young woman with autism is an exceptional sitar player and has done her arangetram in Bharat Natyam; another is an exceptional vocalist. One of our young males plays the tabla and another demonstrates an exceptional sense of rhythm on the bongos. The team has performed together at several venues around the city and thus apart from demonstrating their individual and collective talents, they additionally benefit enormously from the experiences of working together in a group whether it be turn taking or following directions and coordinating with one another.*

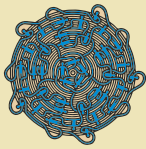


*Additionally, we have found that rhythm play a major role in improving their concentration. Therefore, in our weekly practice sessions, and because rhythm is the corner-stone of all genres of music, we spend almost 50 percent of our sessions on rhythm building exercises.*



*The music sessions with the team continues to be an enriching experience, where each person understands, grasps, learns, performs and enjoys music in unique manner. Even with such diverse ways of dealing with music, they are able to synchronize among themselves and perform very well in front of audience. Another notable observation is improvement in confidence after each performance. This improvement in confidence and skill reflects in their other regular activities as well.*





**ASK**  
ADULT SUPPORT KENDRA  
— An initiative of YASH CHARITABLE TRUST —

What happens when a special person and the family have to deal with age related issues, transitions in living arrangements, grief and all the other situations of adult life and aging parents?

In early March this year, we at Yash Charitable Trust launched an initiative called Adult Support Kendra (ASK). This initiative, manned by professionals, some of whom are also parents, bring together their extensive experience in the field of special needs to offer family centric and need based services for special adolescents and adults and their caretakers.

**Some of the areas that we help with are:**

- Understanding and addressing needs and behavioural issues of special needs adults, including dealing with sexuality
- Transition assessments
- Helping the family arrive at a person-centred plan by which to deal with transitions into adult life and set goals



for the future

- Developing processes for independence including enhancing of daily living and functional math skills
- Guiding caretakers of home bound adults for a home-based program including recreation possibilities

During this year, we have conducted programmes in Chennai and in Mumbai. During the next year, several more programmes have been lined up for other groups of individuals.

## Composting

This year, we have installed two composting bins outside Arpan. We collect all our kitchen waste in these bins and with support have been able to develop rich compost that we use for our small kitchen garden. It is an ongoing process of learning and community involvement for us.





# 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.



# Our Team



## AARTI NAGARKAR

My name is Aarti Nagarkar. I love music very much. I love to sing. I work hard at Arpan; I try to make tea in the mornings. I cut vegetables well. At home, I like to make coffee with Splenda. For breakfast, I love lots of fruit. My best job at Arpan is to help to cut vegetables. I don't like to take shortcuts, but sometimes I do!

## BUNNY AIJAZ AMAN

My name is Bunny Aijaz Aman. I live in Jogeshwari. My hobbies are singing, cycling, swimming and playing computer games and making puzzles and watching movies. I like to play bongos. At Arpan, I like to pack the dabbas, and do deliveries. I have learned to travel by myself from Jogeshwari to Juhu. I take two buses and the train to get to work. I try hard to come on time.



## ANAND JANGIR

My name is Anand Jangir. I am a 33-years-old. I like coming to Arpan very much. I work at Dilkhush and also at Arpan. My favourite thing to do is to play my tabla, but I also have many friends here at Arpan.

## CHETAN JAWALE

My name is Chetan Jawale. I come to Arpan to work. My work is fun and I have lots of friends. I save my salary in the bank. When I go home, I go to dance class. I like all the work I do at Arpan. Anand is my friend and is trying to teach me to cross the road and go home.



## NAZNEEN KAGALWALA

My name is Nazneen Kagalwala. I like to come Arpan. I have many friends here: Anand, Aarti, Bunny, Chetan, Raees, Sudha, Pratibha, Nandu, Nanda, Pandit, Shashi, Asha, Kavita and Anita. My Teacher Sushama Aunty teaches me good manners and Sucheta Aunty teaches me art and craft. I like to pack dabbas the best. Every day, I travel by auto to Arpan. I stay with my parents and brother's family. At home, I like to play with my nephews and do cross stitch.

## PRATIBHA KAMATH

My name is Pratibha. I like to do work at Arpan. I come to work in the car. I love to cook. My hobbies are doing work in the home and at Arpan. I love to wash vessels, help my grandmother and grandfather – give them medicines, put their socks on, keep their clothes out and so on. I love to talk on the phone with my friends. In my spare time, I play the sitar and dance. I like to perform on stage.







#### **RAEES SHAIKH**

My name is Raees and I live close to Arpan. I like to come to Arpan every day. Sometimes I get into trouble because I don't really want to do the work! I love to go and deliver dabbas. I go with Shashi uncle by bus – it makes me happy to do that. I like going to movies and Hindi music. I know lots of songs.

#### **SUDHA**

My name is Sudha. I live with Pradeep and Kirti who are my brother and sister-in-law. They are like my father and mother to me and love me very much. I have been working at Arpan over a year now. I like to work here, I specially like to cut vegetables. I love to cook and I cook at home also. I also like to see movies. I have many friends here at Arpan.



**ANITA PARMAR**



**ASHA DIVTE**



**KAVITA AKREY**



**NANDA TAI**



**NANDU DAS**



**SHAMBHU PANDIT**



**SHASHI AKREY**



# 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.



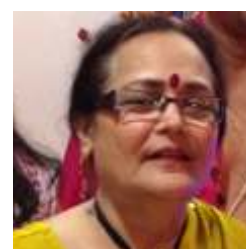
Sushama Nagarkar, Managing Trustee, is a parent of an adult with developmental disabilities. She believes that individuals with developmental disabilities are people first and that their disability does not define who they truly are. She also believes that with the right kinds of supports every adult 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, a Certificate Programme in Managerial Analytics from the Kellogg School of Management in Chicago and a Masters in Business Administration from IESE Business School in Barcelona. He started his professional career in strategy consulting with Ernst and Young Private Limited in India. In pursuit of creating a strong and meaningful impact, he moved to the development sector and joined Pratham Education Foundation and ASER Centre in 2012. His work at Pratham/ ASER in a leadership role included program management and strategy, and monitoring and evaluating impact. Upon completion of his MBA in May 2017, Aakil is currently working as a global purchasing manager for Henkel AG & Co.



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. Having recently completed four years working at the National Centre for Performing Arts in Mumbai, during which time she was actively involved in promoting arts and culture to young children across the city, Ashaita is currently devoting several hours a week to furthering the cause of YCT. She manages the social media and outreach activities efficiently and is deeply committed to making this world a better place for our beneficiaries. 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.



Lata Shetty 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. Over the last year, Lata has devoted her energies to managing the running of Arpan, our supported employment initiative. She spends many hours a week ensuring that the operation runs smoothly and efficiently.



# 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 center 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. More recently, Sarbani has been actively involved in the launch and development of the Pragati skill training center also under the aegis of Biswa Gouri Charitable Trust. Pragati will focus on preparing skill equipped individuals towards a range of real world employment opportunities.

# In Gratitude

To our parents and families - 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!

## Volunteer Speak

We have had a number of volunteers come through our doors and many have stayed much longer than their stipulated service hours. Tatyana Dias, Co-founder & CEO Veruschka Foundation has spent more than a few hours with our team and agreed to share her experiences: *"Gainful employment with community involvement is the way forward in enabling respectful and self-satisfying independent living. Arpan by Yash Charitable Trust is leading the charge by paving a route to successful employment in Mumbai. The center is home to the bubbly, enthusiastic, loving and talented – Arpan Stars namely Aarti, Pratibha, Bunny, Anand, Raees, Chetan, Nazneen and Sudha. My first meeting with the Arpan Stars was at The Cook for Change Challenge in September 2016, where they secured the coveted second prize for cooking a spectacular dish of appam and stew demonstrating skill and talent. Since then, I have visited Arpan often to spend time with the wonderful team. They exude confidence, talent, determination and certainly walk the talk with a whole lot of love and optimism. My experience has been rewarding and satisfying for my soul, a feeling that will keep me visiting for a long time to come."*



## Our Finance Report

Particulars	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17
Income	702529	828174
Expense	397163	432750
Opening balance carried forward	21078	326444
Closing balance carried over to balance sheet.	326444	721868









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