

April 2016

COCONUT Connections



<http://www.goasudharop.net/>

Editor's Note: In the last 9 months Goa Sudharop has been busy building infrastructure in the community. Volunteering with Goa Sudharop is a fulfilling and edifying experience that everyone should experience. Enjoy reading about the ways in which we are building the community and look for opportunities where you may be able to contribute.

Right: Goa Sudharop, Greenlight for Girls (g4g), Cisco, and CIBA came together to inspire and support Goan girls to enter and stay in Science, Technology, Engineering & Math.



Left: Girls aged 10-15 attend one of the workshops at the Goa Sudharop G4G event held in Goa in January this year.

Editor: Rebecca Lobo, PhD is an entrepreneur and contract editor.

Video Editor: Nikhil Shastri is a Junior at Miramonte High school, Orinda CA.

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BETWEEN TWO COCONUT TREES

by Nikhil Shastri

Click here to watch:
[https://
www.youtube.com/watch?
v=uNBawZrNIfc&feature
=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNBawZrNIfc&feature=youtu.be)



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Michelle Nazareth, a 7th grader in San Jose, put together an innovative study that showed that non-steroid asthmatic treatment (Ventolin) inhibited the growth of the fruit fly (*Drosophila melanogaster*) more than steroid asthmatic treatment (Advair) did.



Intrigued by the height difference between her (4' 8") and her brother Andrew (5' 2") when both were 11 years old, Michelle wondered if Advair or Ventolin, medicines that she used to manage her asthma, were responsible for their height difference. She hypothesized that Advair was responsible for the height difference as it was a steroid and steroids can interfere with naturally occurring growth factors. So she compared the effect of Advair and Ventolin on the height of fruit flies.

She exposed 2 groups of *D. melanogaster* larvae, for the first 7 days of the flies' life, to either 1 puff of 115/21 Advair or 1 puff of 108/90 Ventolin daily. After 14 days she measured their wing and body length and was surprised to find that the non-steroid Ventolin decreased body length 10.2% more than the steroid Advair. Advair decreased wing length by approximately 1 % more than Ventolin. She also discovered that Advair significantly affected the development of larvae.

However, upon contacting medical practitioners, to ask if they saw similar trends in humans, she was told that in humans non steroids do not affect height and that steroids like Advair can affect height in children up to 1 cm, but they grow it back after medication ceases. They confirmed that steroids can affect larvae development. Based on her experiment, she concluded that it is safer for asthmatic children to use asthma inhalers (both steroid and non-steroid), than not use them for fear

Her work was submitted and/or won:

- 1st prize in the Medicine Junior Division regional Synopsys Championship
- the UCSF Center for Systems and Synthetic Biology Award
- a participant in the 2015 CA State Science Fair
- a semifinalist at the 2015 National Broadcom Masters Competition.

In addition, on December 8, 2015 at the San Jose City Hall Council Chambers, she was commended for her work by San Jose's Vice Mayor, Rose Herrera.



From left to right:

Mayor Sam Liccardo (3rd from left),

Vice Mayor Herrera (in blue jacket) and

Michelle (far right) at the commendation ceremony at the San Jose City Hall Council Chambers.



Kiran Shastri, a junior at Chaminade University a Guard for the Chaminade Silverswords basketball team, took a service trip to Chennai , India in 2015. Here's how he described his first week:



Week one in Chennai with team crossover has concluded. The weekend relaxation was much needed to refuel our minds and bodies for another full week with these amazing and energetic kids. Week one tested every aspect possible for us – the heat, the long bus rides, and 500 kids all challenged us mentally and physically. And it added to our overall amazing once in a lifetime experience.

The campers come early to wait at the entrance for us upon our arrival. They rush to our bus forming a huge crowd, pushing and shoving just to get a high five from us. I would compare it to the 1992 dream team in Barcelona, who faced mobs of people every place they went to. Every day the kids in my homeroom ask me “Kiran sir, how was your day today?” , “Kiran sir, would you like some of my food? I want to share.” Their dinner consists of packaged crackers and some fruit. And yet they still want to share with me and make sure I’m not hungry.

“The little things I’ve learned in one week from these kids are more influential in my life then some of the things I’ve been taught my whole life.”

I’ve never seen such an appreciative and caring group of kids. These kids don’t have much in life, yet it doesn’t seem to effect their daily activities. During the week we visit some of the schools of the students who participate in our camp, and every kid at school is eager to learn with a huge smile on their face and *appreciating* every single detail they are being taught. These kids then come straight to our camp after school to continue learning.

It’s cliché to say these kids in one week have changed my perspective on life, but it’s true. I’ve never been exposed to such true appreciation and happiness. The little things I’ve learned in one week from these kids are more influential in my life then some of the things I’ve been taught my whole life.



In 2015 the You and Eye project, through Goa Sudharop, held a total of 6 camps throughout Goa, India. We are most grateful to our donors, volunteers and partners who supported these camps. We are thankful to Mukta Opticians for their partnership in working with us to bring vision to those who may otherwise have not had access to this treatment.

In total the You and Eye Project funded, screened, and provided eyeglasses for 360 individuals (see table below for details). Our volunteers on the ground witness first-hand the gratefulness of the recipients. Our goal is to hold more camps next year, and we look forward to continued support.



For more information on how you can help, or if you would like to volunteer on this project please send an email with the subject line: You and Eye Project to anjalicshastri@gmail.com

Village	Date	Number of people screened and given eyeglasses
Mopa- Pernem	December 5th, 2015	57
Maem-Bicholim	December 12th, 2015	60
Siolim-Bardez	December 19th, 2015	68
Pissurlem-Sattari	December 20th, 2015	60
Volvoi-Ponda	December 26th 2015	60
Tiloi-Quepem	December 27th, 2015	55



Representative pictures of villagers getting screened and fitted for eyeglasses at a You and Eye project camp.



Results from the Career Experience Survey for Mentorship, Internships & Job Connections

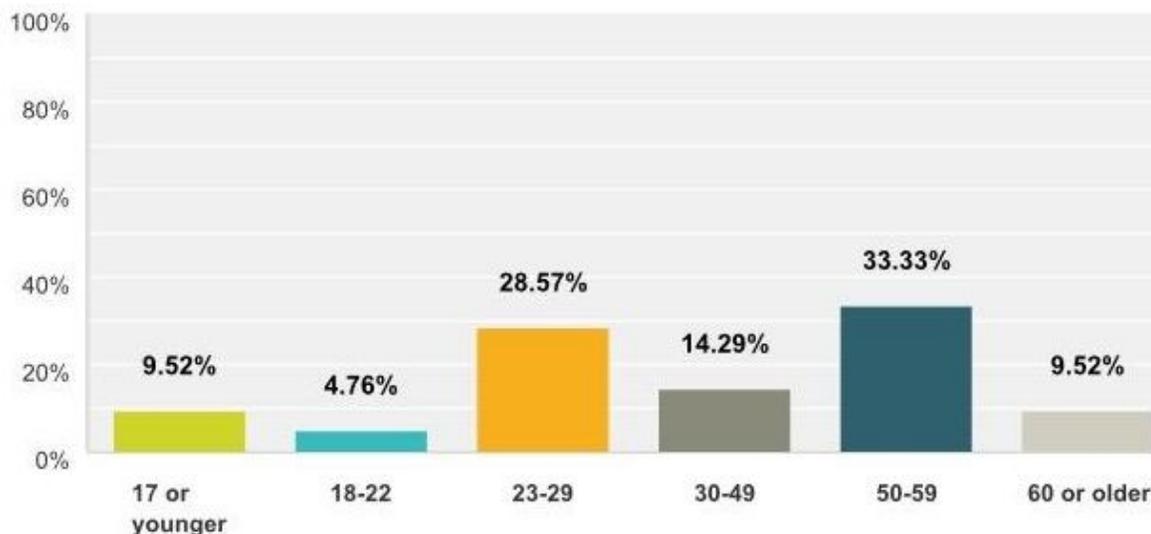
On July 21st 2015, our Youth Volunteer Team came together to plan the agenda for our Annual Goa Sudharop picnic. Elliott Pereira, a student at Case Western Reserve University, volunteered to lead a discussion on mentoring at the picnic on August 9th 2015. The discussion highlighted the need for mentoring in our community. The team developed a brief 6-question survey to obtain community feedback and input from students, young adults, and both working and non-working professionals.

A total of **21** survey responses were received and analyzed. Healthcare and engineering featured as the top two professions in the GS community, with **35%** of respondents in healthcare, and **30%** of respondents in engineering. Finance and science were second with **15%** of total respondents. Education, customer service, information technology, advertising, marketing, social media, and research were in third place with **10%** of respondents in each category.

Findings from the survey highlighted significant interest in mentorship. Of the survey respondents, **81%** indicated that they would be willing to share their work experience through seminars, workshops, discussions, or 1:1 meetings, **86%** said they would be willing to be a mentor, and **75%** of respondents indicated that they would be willing to be mentored.

Data from the survey will be used to provide ongoing communication with regards to seminars, job openings, job connections, internships, college application assistance, SAT preparation and guidance. The information generated will also be used to connect mentors with mentees. Stay tuned for the mentorship kick off phone call meeting where Mentors & Mentees will be introduced, as well as group expectations, guidelines and time commitment will be explained.

Ken Coelho and the Goa Sudharop Youth Volunteer Team



Age distribution of survey respondents

Goa Sudharop's latest project is Greenlight for Girls in Goa:

Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

As an employee of Cisco, and a volunteer with Goa Sudharop, I was privileged to launch the first Cisco-led, Greenlight for Girls (g4g) event in Goa, India at the Center for Incubation and Business Acceleration (CIBA). This is one of Cisco's initiatives to inspire girls to become future Cisco's Women Engineers.

This day-long event was held on January 16th, 2016 in Verna, South Goa, and on Jan 17th, 2016 in Assagao, North Goa and was organized through the collaborative efforts of:

- Ria Davis, Project Lead for Goa Sudharop
- Melissa Rancourt, Founder of g4g
- Jelena Lucin, Project Lead Brussels
- Aurelia Takacs, Program Manager for g4g, Cisco Brussels
- Venu Gopal, Manager at CIBA
- DS Prashant, General Manager at CIBA

Two-hundred girls, aged 10-15, from 25 schools in Goa attended the event. Some girls traveled 2 hours both ways with changing buses to attend the event.

Their presence reflected the support of their parents and teachers/mentors and their enthusiasm and

commitment to learning. The girls were most appreciative of this special day dedicated to the "girl child" of India. They attended a full day of classes covering topics in medicine, physics, chemistry, mathematics (Vedic math), human DNA, robotics, computers & engineering. In collaboration with g4g, each girl received a Cisco logo lab coat and a Cisco Certified Future Engineer diploma to inspire and encourage them to stay in STEM.

The key note speaker for the event, Jennifer Lewis Kamat, Ph.D., a civil engineer and the chairperson of the Women's Wing, was most excited to bring this opportunity to these young girls and has offered her volunteer services and support from her network to this new program. In addition, the girls were inspired to hear about the young ambassadors for g4g who are pursuing careers and enjoying careers in math and science.

I am excited to be part of a project that empowers young girls in Goa and reduces the existing global gender gap in STEM.

Acaria Almeida

Goan Press Coverage: <http://epaper.gomantaktimes.com/GomantakTimes/22Jan2016/Enlarge/page5.htm>

Project Updates: <http://greenlightforgirls.org/g4g-day-go-2016>

We would also like to acknowledge:

- The GS Board and GS donors
- Freddie Fernandes from Goa who kindly provided a starter stationary kit for the girls
- CIBA for providing facilities & a volunteer team to conduct the workshops
- All the volunteers and donors from the "Midnight in Paris" fundraising event

Financial Summary as of December 2015

By Kurt Almeida

Project Name	Purpose of Project	Project Leader(s)	Available Funds
Violet Memorial Fund	TBD	Max Sequeira	\$29,905.00
Greenlight 4 Girls	Promote STEM-inspired hobbies, career paths, and encouragement for education	Ria Almeida	\$9,600.00
Autism Project	TBD	Sherise D'Silva	\$1,940.00
Healthy Hygiene Habits	Improve children's health	Candace Albuquerque	\$1,677.00
Let's Draw A Bridge	Provide educational supplies to orphanages	Jason Fernandes	\$295.00
Flip Flop 4 Youth	Provide flip flops for underprivileged youth	Kiran Shastri	\$795.00
You & Eye Project	Eye camps in villages for prescription glasses	Anjali Shastri	\$10,000.00
Velsao Pale Education Society	Facilities - library and paint	Mike & Flo De Souza & family	\$3,000.00
Dominican Fathers	Orphans and homeless shelter - basic needs	Neesha de Souza & Steve & Nyah da Silva	\$3,000.00
Nitya Seva (starting balance from 2013 with distribution in 2014 & 2015)	Facilities - paint & furniture	Troy & Jules De Souza; Fi Simeons; the late Bismark da Costa & Antonetta da Costa; Mike & Flo de Souza & family; Neesha de Souza; Steve & Nyah da Silva	\$21,634.00
Nitya Seva	Orphanage - School uniform, shoes & socks	Darren D'Silva	\$400.00