**Women Who Made A Difference...**

The below mentioned list of great Indian Women have kindly consented to be a guest and grace the occassion. DIYA Mumbai will felicitate these women who made a difference... and share their inspiring stories.

**USHA RAJAGOPALAN** is a writer, translator by choice and lake conservationist by chance. She led a successful campaign to rejuvenate a lake in Bengaluru which she now maintains with her friends. Their Puttenahalli Neighbourhood Lake Improvement Trust was featured on national television “Amazing Indians” as eco-saviours. Usha has won prizes for poetry and thrice consecutively in the Common wealth Short Story Competition. She has published seven books in fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

**Organization:** Puttenahalli Neighbourhood Lake Improvement Trust  (www.puttenahallilake.in)

**JAYSHREE VYAS** is the Managing Director of Shri Mahila Sewa Sahakari Bank Ltd. (SEWA Bank), Ahmedabad, a pioneer in building inclusive finance for low income women. Founded in 1972 by Ela Bhatt, the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) is a registered trade union of one million women workers of the informal economy from nine states. Received Award in 1993-94 for “Outstanding Woman Entrepreneur” by FICCI Ladies Organization India.

**Organization:** Shri Mahila Sewa Sahakari Bank Ltd. (www.sewabank.com)

“Woman has suffered for eons, and that has given her infinite patience and infinite perseverance.”

- Swami Vivekanand

“for we women are not only the deities of the household fire, but the flame of the soul itself.”

- Tagore
Mittal Patel is the founder of Vicharta Samuday Samarthan Manch. VSSM, is a collective platform of members from Nomadic (Vicharata) and De-Notified (Vimukht) Tribes (Samuday), individuals and organizations' empathizing with these communities. VSSM as a collective was initiated in the year 2006 and was formally registered as an organization in the year 2010, with the mission to give social identity. Recognized neither by villagers nor by the government, transforming lives of these nomads is her mission.

Organization: Vicharta Samuday Samarthan Manch (www.vssmindia.org)

Mrs. Paranjpe (or Rajani Tai as she is fondly called) founded the Door step school along with her ex-student Bina Lashkari, out of a passion for children and education. As a professional Social Worker she realized that Education was the single most important factor that could bring about a change in the lower strata of society. She has a Masters in Social Work and is a retired professor. She has held posts at both the College of Social Work, Mumbai & the Shikoku Christian University, Japan.

Organization: Door Step School (www.doorstepschool.org)

Triveni Acharya is an Indian journalist and activist based out of Mumbai, best known for her work with the anti-sex-trafficking group the Rescue Foundation. The organization is devoted to the "rescue, rehabilitation and repatriation of victims for human trafficking from different parts of India, Nepal & Bangladesh and sold for forced prostitution. The Rescue Foundation has received several national and international awards for its work under Ms. Acharya's able leadership.

Organization: Rescue Foundation (www.rescuefoundation.net)
Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya

“There is a need for an educational institute which could mould its students into noble, enlightened, selfless, warm hearted, compassionate and kind human beings.”

- Kulpita: Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya

DSVV is a foundation-funded residential University devoted to undergraduate and graduate level research and study focusing in the Vedic sciences of Yoga, Ayurveda, Mantra, Yagnopathy, Psychic and Pranic Healing, and Vedic Philosophy.

Founded in 2002, in accordance with the vision and wishes of Revolutionary Seer and Saint, Shriram Sharma Acharya, the University makes up one component of a larger platform for helping human culture transition to meet the global social, political, environmental, and economic needs of the 21st century. For the past 14 years, the University has admitted exceptional students with an overriding drive to benefit society, regardless of caste, economic status, religion, nationality or gender.

Today, DSVV is recognized for the breadth and depth of its knowledge resourced from the ancestral wisdom of India. Its ability to apply this knowledge to the cultivation of students of exceptional skills and character building for the benefit of society. While the University lays a lot of emphasis on the values and high-minded character traits of its student body, it also understands that a thorough and broad education in a field of specialization is a crucial resource for change agents and providing social servants to the modern world.

Located in Haridwar, Uttarakhand, DSVV offers Graduate and Post Graduate degrees to an enrollment of approximately 1200 students & scholars, currently coming from 24 provinces, and from many foreign countries. With a student-
faculty ratio of 8 to 1 and a commitment to supporting scholar-teachers of the highest distinction, the educational community challenges and supports students as they reach toward their full spiritual and intellectual potential.

The **spiritual development of each student through value based teaching** is one of the University's primary focuses. Opportunities for active engagement in social service are facilitated by the outreach work of DSVV's parent organization, the **All World Gayatri Parivar**. The spiritual life of each student is cultivated through private consultation with their professor-mentors and through a series of spiritual practices and rituals, carefully designed to nourish and encourage the intellectual faculties of the students.

For more details please visit: [http://www.dsvv.ac.in/](http://www.dsvv.ac.in/)

**Convocation**

**First Convocation**
- Late Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat
- Hon'ble Vice-President of India
- Dr. Pranav Pandya
- Hon'ble Chancellor - DSVV

**Second Convocation**
- Late Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
- Hon'ble President of India
- Dr. Pranav Pandya
- Hon'ble Chancellor - DSVV

**Third Convocation**
- Ms Margaret Alva
- Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand
- Dr. Pranav Pandya
- Hon'ble Chancellor - DSVV

**Fourth Convocation**
- Shri Pranab Mukherjee
- Hon'ble President of India
- Dr. Pranav Pandya
- Hon'ble Chancellor - DSVV
Formed to harness the innate potential of the youth and to direct them towards the path of development through self-refinement.

India is poised in the mission of transforming itself into a developed nation by the year 2020. The youth in India, which constitutes a sizeable, vibrant and resourceful segment of our society, has a burning desire to scale great heights.

Channelize the energies of young India to unleash a momentum that will propel the nation towards the ideal goal of equitable and sustainable development.

DIYA initiative was conceptualized by Hon’ble Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and Dr. Pranav Pandya, while Dr. Kalam visited as the Chief Guest for the 2nd Convocation Ceremony of Dev Sanskriti University, Haridwar.

**DIYA is dedicated to meet these objectives with due consideration of the needs, rights, expectations and potential of the youth.**

**Five Fold Objectives of DIYA**
- **Educated Youth** as they are the foundation of a **Developed Nation**.
- **Healthy Youth** as they are the strength of a **Powerful Nation**.
- **Self-reliant Youth** as they are the yardstick of a **Prosperous Nation**.
- **Cultured Youth** as they are the life-force of a **Happy Nation**.
- **Sensitive Youth** as they are the mark of a **Superior Nation**.

For more details please visit: diya.net.in
All World Gayatri Parivar

movements in various domains have transformed the mindset of people across India. Be it Women Empowerment Program (WE campaign) or the Youth Awakening Movement (YAM), the Adarsh Gram Yojana or the Vriksha Ganga Abhiyan, the Gutka free campaign or the Nirmal Ganga Abhiyan; all these initiatives are for the people, by the people and to the people. Each project encourages the PPP model - Positive People Participation.

Following are some of the key projects a huge hit amongst masses:

Gutka (Tobacco) Free India

This is an offshoot of the de-addiction program of All World Gayatri Parivar. The Gutka free campaign was recently launched in the month of August, 2014. Over 10,000 people die every day in this country due to tobacco and tobacco aided products. With a vision to eliminate the consumption of Gutka usage in India and to bring in an effective enforcement of comprehensive tobacco control legislation and policies; the youth have taken this lead. They are creating awareness and mobilizing the public by taking their opinion through signature campaigns, recording their testimonies, creating and generating vital public and media support for public health, conducting road shows, street plays and door to door campaigns. Interestingly, Gutka Free India campaign has been initiated from the state of Gujarat under the flagshipt of Shantikunj. Volunteers of Gujarat have been driving this campaign forward with full zeal and dedication.

(For more details - www.diya.net.in/Projects/De-addiction_Movement)
NIRMAL GANGA ABHIYAN

No believer of Indian culture questions the sanctity of Mother Ganga; she has always been and will always be treated with love and devotion. But the pollution level of Ganga is debatable; it is certainly an area that demands serious attention. The largest river basin of the world feeding around 40% of the population of the largest democracy of the world without discriminating any of its beneficiaries in the name of religion, caste, creed or occupation, is facing a tough time. Human greed, the common practices in the name of false traditions, industrial and household waste is converting it into a large reservoir of filth and garbage.

All World Gayatri Parivar, has revitalized around 7 regional and national rivers including the Bagmati River of Nepal. It has strategized a phase-wise plan for enlivening the lifeline of the nation, Maa Ganga. It’s not a project, it’s a Movement. The 5 phased project covers the 2525 kms long belt of Ganga, the first phase of research is over recently. Moving into the 2nd phase of the project named as Ganga Samwad, we are trying to create interesting open dialogues projecting the pollution of Ganga through street plays. The 3rd phase will see the Kumbh Janjagaran Yatra on both the sides of the river and will conduct awakening drives, cleaning drives through people’s participation. The 4th phase will seek support from government, Industrial bodies, discussions and dialogues with policy makers and making it a National Movement. Lastly, the 5th phase will ensure a policy for the next 10 years of conserving and maintaining the achieved levels of success. This is a bottom-up approach of involving the masses and then escalating it up in order. Unless the 50 crore Indians, who are directly surviving on Ganga, get awakened and involved, the fate of the river will never be changed.

For more details please visit:
www.diya.net.in/Projects/Bhagirathi_Jalabhishek_Abhiyan
ADARSH GRAM YOJANA

India's soul lives in villages. Formation of real India is possible through an individual to family, family to village & village to country. The Indian village is a place where one will find rest and peace. Our Indian culture of cooperation & coexistence is seen in villages. Unfortunately, this glory has been spoiled by global culture penetration, political & market forces. It results in illiteracy, dependence, unhygienic conditions, lack of unity & migration to cities. Now, villages are leaning and cities are inflating.

'The Gram Teerth Yojana' or developing the villages like a pilgrimage centre is a unique solution proposed by Pandit Shri Ram Sharma Acharya which emphasizes on creating and boosting a village based economy. His vision of an 'Adarsh Gram' is-

- Well educated, cultured, addiction-free, healthy and self-reliant villages.
- Movement of developing at least one ideal village in every district.
- Development of Socio - Spiritual system based on time donation and money donation.
- Development based on the aphorisms given by our sages.
- Adopting plans and technologies according to the actual needs of the villagers.
- Cooperation and collective efforts are the key components of development process.
- Long-lasting and holistic approach - Balanced development of individuals, community and surroundings.
- "Inspire masses through refined spirituality" - Core element of our methodology.

For more detail: http://diya.net.in/Projects/Adarsh_Gram_Yojana
The environmental protection program of Shantikunj is named as ‘Vriksha Ganga Abhiyan’. As the name suggests, the plan is to plant saplings to the extent that it looks like a green river belt in not just rural but urban areas as well. This again involves a unique concept called, 'Taru Mitra' or 'Taru Putra'. Adopt a tree as a friend or son. This involves converting the overlooked and ignored gardens into health oriented Upvans. These are no ordinary parks but offer a one stop health option to the city dwellers with juice corner, acupressure pathway helping in fighting lifestyle disorders like diabetes, cholesterol, obesity, fatigue, nausea and headache. The lighting and soft music with the fountains add to the serenity and creates a rich ambience throughout the day.

Notably, DIYA Kolkata team has so far planted over 20000 saplings by driving this activity every Sunday. Consequently, they celebrated their 260th Sunday on 25th October this year and have also been nominated in 'Limca Book of Records' for their efforts in the field of environment.

Another team of volunteers led by DIYA Manoj Tiwari from Burhanpur, Madhya Pradesh has done wonders by turning barren hills into lush green peaks. With facilities like drip irrigation, trees have been planted by people as friends or adopted sons. So far more than 50 such hills have been revived and revitalized.

For more details please visit:
http://www.diya.net.in/Projects/Vriksha_Ganga_Abhiyan

‘Our generation is becoming so busy trying to prove that women can do what men can do that women are losing their uniqueness. Women weren’t created to do everything a man can do. Women were created to do everything a man can’t do.’