

April 2016

NEWSLETTER

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# Assam Foundation of North America

Happy Rongali Bihu and a Happy Assamese New Year to our AFNA family! We hope in the coming year our projects will be even more productive with your continued support throughout the year.

## Project of the month - Support A Child Program

**History:** Since the beginning of AFNA in 1982, one of our goals has been extending the reach of quality formal education available to everyone in Assam and around the North East India. During the year 2009 we formalized this approach with our Support A Child (SAC) program. Since then, every year we have been providing the financial assistance under this program to about 100 students and making a positive impact in their lives. SAC work with multiple institutions in Assam like SHED, Tapoban, Parijat Academy, Pragyalaya, Atma Nirbhar ek Challenge to provide these scholarships and run the program successfully.

**Goal:** SAC program provides financial assistance to children to enable them to attend formal education during their early formative years. We believe that during the early years of a child's life financial assistance can provide a major incentive to the child to stay at school instead of dropping off and joining the workforce as a child labor. Our program is making an impact in many ways: our scholarships provide an incentive for poor parents to continue their child's education; we help our partner institutions to make education more affordable to the needy; we help enhance the quality of the education through deeper ties between educational institutions and AFNA; our SAC donors feel more connected to the cause and help create awareness around the world that helps AFNA to continue our work.

**How SAC works:** SAC program provide a scholarship of \$100 per student per year. Our selection criteria are mostly based on financial condition of the child's family and their willingness to attend school.

We work with the educational institutions to receive nomination and we help the institutions disburse the scholarships. Our scholarships are either provided in full, as cash to the child or the institution would utilize the funds directly as reimbursement of the expenses it incurs for the student. For example students in Parijat Academy were provided cash scholarship, but in SHED, the nominating institution used the scholarships to meet the boarding expenses for the 23 students living at SHED.



Students at Pragyalaya



### Get Involved:

**Monthly volunteer call:**  
First Sunday, every month,  
10am - 11am PT  
Dial in: 641-7153272  
Access Code - 457920#

*We need active volunteers to run our projects.  
Please reach out to us (contacts above) or join  
our monthly volunteer meetings to know more.*

[Learn about AFNA](#)

### Donate:

By check (Pay to: AFNA)  
Mailing address:  
SARFARAZ TAHER,  
TREASURER, AFNA  
4391 MCMENEMY ST  
VADNAIS HEIGHTS, MN 55127

**How you can help:** We definitely need our donors to keep funding this program. At \$100 a year, which is like skipping a coffee in Starbucks once a week, you can fund a kid's education for a year. And if you wish, you can commit to the whole school life of the kid to be funded year after year to make a permanent impact to the kid's life. You can even adopt an institution and dedicate the scholarship in someone's loving memory.



Many of our partner institutions work in remote areas and focus on the core goal of serving the community, but do not have the resources to work on their book keeping paperwork and obtain clearance from multiple central government departments of India to get the necessary FCRA clearance to receive funds directly from AFNA. AFNA is trying to help with the process, but we need more volunteers to help with this process.



You can also join the AFNA volunteers as stewards of this program. You can help us by connecting various institutions in Assam and identifying candidates. We need help in working with the institutions in Assam to disburse the scholarships properly and monitor their progress. When you visit Assam, you can make a trip to one of these places and interact with the kids to provide them exposure and hope for a brighter future.

## AFNA at 2016 Eco-Blast Sustainability Fair, Bridgewater, NJ

The Eco-Blast Sustainability Fair at Bridgewater, New Jersey on May 7, 2016 is an annual celebration of local sustainability and includes exhibits and interactive environmental and sustainable displays from businesses, clubs and non-profit organizations, eco-friendly children's craft, live music and taste of local foods. AFNA is invited by the Township of Bridgewater to participate at the fair displaying our projects in Assam and inform people of Bridgewater about our work related to sustainability like the Tree Planting ceremony in honor of Jadav Payeng held in October 2015. AFNA volunteers Niren Choudhury and Binoy Bordoloi will represent AFNA at the fair and spread the words about our valuable projects. AFNA is excited to engage the community of Bridgewater in our ongoing initiatives through the popular local event.

## AFNA activities at Assam Convention, Seattle, July 1-3, 2016

AFNA volunteers are gearing up to participate in the Assam Convention to be held in Seattle from Jul 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016. We are planning for the following activities to effectively utilize the convention and encourage more engagement from the community:

- Involve high school children to volunteer for AFNA during the convention in making arrangements for the GB meeting, explaining about AFNA's projects to interested attendees using their choice of presentation mode (ppt, poster etc). We request all parent volunteers to encourage their children for this. If your child is interested please write to our secretary Lipika Deka (Lipika.Deka@gmail.com). AFNA will provide a certificate with the number of volunteer hours served.
- Conduct an essay competition among middle school to high school students. There will be trophies, certificate and cash prizes for 1 or 3 top essays depending on the number of entries we receive. The rules, deadlines, topics etc. will be published in various websites (AFNA, AANA, Assam Convention etc.), and also communicated through various mailing lists and newsletters including Pronaam. Please stay tuned for details in the coming weeks.
- Promote the Work-an-Hour fundraising drive through various channels of communication within the convention with a target goal of certain amount of donations and involvement of a specific number of new volunteers.

We request all our volunteers, well wishers and all members of the Assamese community of North America to attend the convention, which is usually the largest annual gathering of Assamese people in North America. Event and registration information are available in this link: <http://aanahome.org/assam-convention>

### Volunteer Email DL:

Subscribes to  
[afna-vols@freelists.org](mailto:afna-vols@freelists.org)  
at  
[freelists.org/list/afna-vols](http://freelists.org/list/afna-vols)



**Donate online**

### Newsletter team

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