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Newsletter

February 2017

Assam Foundation of North America

Calling for Project Stewards for AFNA's projects

Are you interested in doing some core volunteering work for AFNA? Do you want to drive AFNA's projects?

AFNA is looking for volunteers who want to be stewards of our projects. As the steward for a project, you will be responsible for interacting with our partners to understand the needs, set goals for the project and take stock of the progress being made and provide regular report back to AFNA Board and donors. As a potential steward, you can bring in new ideas and needs to the table, which if aligned with AFNA's vision can be kicked off as a new project. As the steward, you will work with the office bearers to complete formalities, to disburse funds and to provide report on how the fund is utilized.

Typically, our stewards spend no more than few hours a month. As a steward, you are expected to join our monthly volunteer calls. And if you are new to this, don't worry, we will have our more seasoned volunteers to guide you. All you need to bring to the table is a desire to make an impact in the life of needy and we assure it will be a rewarding experience. Drop us a mail at info@assamfoundation.net if you are interested.

Supporting Disabled Artisans – a report from Swabalambi

Swabalambi, a Society for Rehabilitation & Training of Multiple Disabilities in Rural Areas has been carrying out Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) work in Dimoria block of Assam since 1997. In 2013, AFNA kicked off its Support-A-Disabled Artisan program with Swabalambi to provide vocational training to people with disabilities in Swabalambi's training center in Sonapur near Guwahati, Assam.

The program has just concluded its last training camp where it trained 20 persons with hearing impairments on tailoring skills. The trainer herself is a person with disability involved with Swabalambi. After the successful completion of the 3-month training camp, 10 of the female trainees received sewing machines donated by local organization named FICCI Ladies, Assam Chapter. These 10 ladies and 3 other male trainees have now successfully started enterprises in their own villages. The rest 7 trainees are now engaged in Swabalambi center making lamp shaded that is sold in Konyak, a part of FabIndia, Guwahati. AFNA contributed \$2400 to cover logistics and training material for this camp.



Obituaries

In a span of few weeks AFNA lost two of our close friends who helped carrying out our mission in Assam. Their guidance, knowledge and dedication will always be a source of inspiration for AFNA family. Here is a tribute to them.

Mr. Ajit Kumar Saikia

Mr. Ajit Kumar Saikia, a beloved husband, father, friend to many and a dedicated community and social worker of Guwahati city passed away suddenly due to heart attack on the 25th Jan. He is fondly remembered and mourned as one of the most honorable and respectable person.

Mr. Saikia had visited the US for a number of times, since late 70s to as late as 2015 and was a very helpful and passionate supporter of AFNA's projects such as "Support a Child", "Atma Nirbhar" etc. and was our go-to person (in Assam) along with Atma Nirbhar's late Kaushik Das. They both were our ardent supporters, mentors and facilitators and also executors for these projects.

Mr. Saikia was very popular, knowledgeable and effective in his career with the Tea Garden Management. He was a graduate of Delhi School of Economics, and was a topper at Saint Edmund's School, Shillong.



Mr. Saikia left behind his wife Mrs. Kumkum Saikia, son Mr. Sunanjit Saikia and daughter Mrs. Nandini Saikia of New Jersey, along with four grandchildren, brother Mr Rupesh Saikia of Texas, sister-in-law Dr Sapna Bora and brother-in-law Debojit Bora of

Prof. Prashanta Bordoloi



The members and volunteers of AFNA are deeply saddened by the news of Prof. Prashanta Bordoloi's untimely demise on Jan 16th 2016. A river mechanics engineer with tremendous field knowledge in river systems, he served as a Director in NERIWALM and was currently serving as a Professor of Civil Engineering and Dean of Outreach in Kaziranga University, Jorhat. He was also working on and was in an advance stage of signing a MoU for scientific collaboration in finding a solution for river bank erosion in upper Assam. During his illustrious career he also served at the Toklai Tea Research Association (Principal Scientist), Neepeco Ltd. and Brahmaputra Board. Originally from Jorhat, Assam, he did his Masters from Rutgers University. Prior to doing his Masters, he completed PG Diploma in Hydropower Development at the Norwegian Institute of Technology, Trondheim Norway.

In the past few years Prashanta had worked with AFNA volunteers to collaborate with Mr. Jadav Payeng, the forest man of India. He had many meaningful ideas and technical contributions to the goal of reducing Assam's floods and was working hard on getting those ideas adopted at the national level.

He attended the Assam Convention at Seattle last year where many of us had the opportunity to meet and interact with him. He attended AFNA's GBM and a seminar at the convention, where he presented a very illuminated talk on stopping soil erosion in Majuli. He also spent time in the AFNA booth, where our discussions flowed naturally from the Brahmaputra to the immortal creations of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika to the philosophy of Kalaguru Bishnu Rabha. His depth of knowledge is truly admirable and he shared them with a captivating demeanor punctuated by a beautiful smile that kept everyone at ease.

Prashanta was a widower and leaves behind two adult children, Prajnan and Videesha, who lost both their mother and father in the span of a few years. We express our sincere and heartfelt condolences to them, and we assure them that we at AFNA will continue to support the work that has been set in progress because of the dreams and the efforts of their father. A man with a vast repository of practical and theoretical knowledge, he has been and will always be a source of inspiration for everyone in AFNA.



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www.assamfoundation.net

Newsletter team

Editors: Pallav Saikia, Dr. Lipika Deka & Jahnvi Mahanta

Contributors of articles in order

Pallav Saikia, Pallav Saikia, Debojit Bora, Krishanu Kaushik

Get Involved:

Monthly volunteer call:

First Sunday, every month,

10am - 11am PT

Dial in: 641-7153272

Access Code - 457920#

Info@assamfoundation.net