FOUNDER – Capt. Narendra Shetty

I am a retired Merchant Navy Master Mariner living in Mumbai (now shifted to Udupi). I am the youngest brother of Tapovani Mata Sant Subhadra from her ‘poorvashram’ and been part of her religious and social activities through the Gangori Ashram, Uttarkashi for a long time. I am also one of the trustees of Tapovani Mata Sant Subhadra Charitable Trust and been instrumental in carrying out Medical camps, setting up of Primary healthcare centre and providing free tuitions to needy children through the Gangori ashram.

The idea of forming Arunoday Foundation came up to keep social activities separated from religious activities and to involve local people in their own development, to carry forward promotion of ‘Shiksha, Swasthya and Sanskar’ particularly in the remote villages of Uttarkashi.

It could begin at any one of the remote villages in Uttarkashi. It happened in Juguldi village because of meeting of the minds of Gajendra Singh, a post Graduate from this village, and me. Gajendra offered his land and building for the school as well as his full time commitment for this cause.

SECRETARY - Gajendra Singh

When I went to Harshil, Dharali and Gangotri in the year 2003 on painting work I met Mataji while I was writing the sign boards. Mataji asked me to write something in the Ashram & I wrote that. Mataji wanted to give me some money. I did not take that money because I loved monks and Holy people. Then Mataji invited me to dinner. That day was very cold and it was snowing. I was poor that time & I had a thin sweater. When I entered the Cutiya Mataji gave me a jacket telling me you are feeling very cold. It made me very comfortable. Mataji gave me something to eat. My mother expired when I was a small child. Mataji loved me as a mother then asked me where l stayed. I said I am staying in a hotel. Mataji told me to stay in the ashram while working in Dharali, Mukhba. So Ashram became my home and mataji my mother. I was very comfortable there. I was painting whole day and stayed at the Ashram. I saved money and also served monks visiting Mataji’s ashram. That routine continued to 6to 7 years.

I did some writing work at Gangori Ashram also. Whenever Mataji had some painting work in the ashram she called me & I did it very happily with full responsibility. Once there was a ‘Bhagavat Sapthah’ in the Ashram by Keshava Muniji and I participated to serve for 15 days. Bahadur Singh Vermaji asked Mataji, is Gajendra a brahmin boy? Then Mataji said to him, ‘he is a brahmin for me’.

Mataji also sent me to free Medical camps at Harshil, Dharali and Jhala etc. Narenderji was serving there. I was not familiar with him that time. He silently gave me 500 rupees for my expenses. Nobody can see & I don’t understand what is happening. But after sometime my respect for him increased in my heart. Thereafter I always attended to social service works. I don’t know what Narendraji think about me. Slowly we became familiar with each other. In 2014 Narendraji said to me ‘Gajendra I want to start some social work if I have your co-operation, just think about that’. I was working that time in the conservative organic plan contracted by NABARD. I had experience of working village to village through NABARD organization of 7-8 years. Then October, 2015, he called me and asked what you thought about that. After sometime I met Narendra sir and decided to open a school with mataji’s ideals and blessings. Main purpose of opening school was to give modern and quality education to rural and poor children and to stop escape of villagers to cities for children’s education.

I had rooms also in the Jugaldi(UK) and farm too. I started the school in those rooms and now we have junior, senior k.g. and first class there with 55 plus students in our school.

PRESIDENT - Sandeep Kumar

I am also the President of the village Panchayat. I joined hands with Gajendra Singh to improve the education standards for our village children. Children in our village were starting schooling from 1st standard in the only available government school. Many parents were sending their children away to city for better education. This was not only separating the children from their parents and their roots but also bringing big financial burden on the parents who were all farmers. Arunoday Foundation will provide quality education at the village till the children are big enough to move to city for higher education, if the wish to. Health education for children and their parents is also part of the programme.

VICE PRESIDENT - Anil Singh

Arunoday Foundation is providing an opportunity for the villagers to participate in our children’s education. This is a great opportunity for us to improve the quality of our children’s education. We want our children to get good basic education in the village.

TREASURER - Radhika Gusain Chauhan

Parents are willing to spend on their children’s education but sending them to good schools in cities is very expensive and children have to stay away from parents. By opening a good school in the village Arunoday Foundation will make good education affordable for the villagers. Getting good teachers to village is very difficult and the management is trying their best to get. As soon as Internet becomes available management plans to introduce quality teaching through Internet and computers.

MEMBER - Shakuntala Devi

My son was studying in the village in a private school which closed down. Then I had to send my son to city to live with my relatives and study. This was very difficult for me. That is why I became a member of Arunoday Foundation which has opened an English medium school in the village. I am so happy that village children are getting good education in the village.

MEMBER - Laxmi Devi

Arunoday school is so helpful to the poor children of Juguldi and other neighboring villages.