



# VAROSHA 2019

**Hope and Empowerment through  
Education and Opportunity**



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This has been an exciting year for Varosha and we are happy to share some highlights with you, our donors and well-wishers. We work for you to find and develop projects that will make a significant, positive, long term benefit for a person, family and community. This involves constant monitoring, evaluating and analysis to see if the funds donated are always being used in the most optimum manner. We visit sites at our own expense and speak with trainees, children, teachers and people in the community. Varosha's programs either provide direct vocational training or support education, nutrition and health of school children in economically disadvantaged communities. We believe that education and skill training is the key to changing lives and allowing people to live with dignity.

In 2019 we have partnered with new organizations that share our mission and optimistic vision and we have launched projects that have already proved to be excellent investments. As always, all donations are used to pay for direct project costs. Our directors are never compensated for their time, travel expenses and donate the cost of all promotional material and administrative expenses.

We are currently finalizing some exciting new projects for 2020 and look forward to updating you. We welcome your feedback and questions. Thank you for your continued support!

*Sincerely, Santi Banerjee, Krishna Chakrabarty, Shompita Chatterjee, Neela Dasgupta,*

*Bikram Dewanjee, Chandrima Roy, and Shuvani Sanyal*



## MOTHER'S DAY FUNDRAISER



We are sincerely grateful to our long-time supporter, Dr. Dipankar Mukhopadhyay for donating \$10,000 in honor of all mothers of children with special needs for Mother's Day. We thank all our donors who chose to honor their mothers by supporting projects helping women and children attain a hopeful life.

Donation to Varosha made by	
Agneesh Banerjee	In honor of Mekhala Banerjee, Megan Banerjee, Connie Nickel
Arpita Chakrabarti	In loving memory of Ma, Chhabi Ghosh Roy
Atanu & Ajanta Mazumder	In honor of our mothers, Pratima Mazumder and Ashima Biswas
Biswajeet & Sanchita Mukherjee	In honor of our mothers, Bithika Mukherjee and Susmita Sarkar
Debajyoti Chatterji	In memory of Mrinmoyee Chatterji and Pratima Banerji
Dipankar Mukhopadhyay	In honor of all mothers of children with special needs
Geeti Ghosh	In loving memory of Suprava Roy
Kaber Chakrabarty	In honor of Prafulla Bala Debi, Krishna Chakrabarty
Krishna Chakrabarty	In loving memory of Sulata Chakravorty, Shasthibala Chakrabarty
Lima Chatterjee	Wish all the mothers of Varosha and in honor of my mother Banani Chatterjee
Manisha Brahmachary	Donated for my mother, Suniti Brahmachary
N.D. Mukherjee	To honot Basanti Mukherjee
Nabendu & Leela Choudhury	In honor of Snehalata Choudhury and Kamala Roy
Pradip & Srabani Majumdar	In honor of our mothers, Snehalata Majumdar and Namita Basu
Pradip Raychaudhuri	To honor my mother
Raja Banerjee	In honor of Swapna Banerjee
Rajashree Sen	In loving memory of Prankumari Gupta
Rajoshree Bandyopadhyay	For our mothers, Mita Roychowdhury and Ratna Bandyopadhyay, with love
Rohan Roy	In honor of Chandrima Roy
Runa Bhaumik	In honor of Dolly Bose
Sankar Bhattacharja	In loving memory of Sikha
Santimoy & Mekhala Banerjee	In loving memory of our mothers, Chameli Banerjee and Suruchi Mukherjee
Satya Subhajit Ghoshal	In honor of Sova Ghosal
Shankar & Mallika Sharkar	In loving memory of our mothers, Sandhya Malati Sen and Sadhana Sarkar
Sheela Warty	In loving memory of Kamala Hemmady
Soumyabrata & Shompita Bhattacharya	In honor of Rita Chatterjee and Purabi Bhattacharya
Suchandra Das	In honor of Sabita Dey
Sumitra Das	In loving memory of Kamala Hemmady
Swati Mitra	In honor of Jharna Mitra
Tarak N Paul	In loving memory of wife, Amita Paul
Thirthankar & Pia Chatterjee	In honor of Rina Chatterjee and Reena Dutt
Veronica C Obodo-Eckblad	Happy Mother's Day Dr. Cl! Love, Veronica

### Update on our Healthcare Assistant Program

After a successful pilot program in July 2015 we partnered with HVR in Kolkata to operate this training project from 2016-2018. During this time 60 young people were trained in home healthcare and basic physiotherapy. The completion rate and employment rate was very high for this project with trainees immediately getting jobs in nursing homes and in the home healthcare industry. This project was funded by a generous grant from **Adrija and Amitava Das**. Our partner is launching an Academy of Health Science with the support of federal government grants. We are happy that this project will continue on a bigger scale and reach more people.

## 'Maple and Spice' Book Launch with Dr. Moushmi Biswas & Silent Auction Fundraiser June 23, 2019



We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors.

*Sayantani Baksi*, Pandora's Box Past To Present

*Rajashree Basu*, Krishna Fashion House

*Pia Chatterjee*, Pretty by Pia

*Sanchita Dev*, Risa

*Rubina Mondal*, Tondra

*Rahul Saigal*, Cuisine of India

Massage Envy, Naperville



## Ananta Ram Ghosh Memorial Scholarship



In lieu of flowers, the family of Mr. Ananta Ghosh requested a donation to be made to Varosha in his memory. We are very grateful for their trust. To honor Mr. Ghosh's life and kindness to the community, Varosha established a scholarship for students who have completed Year 10 (Madhyamik exam) and are continuing their studies under great financial hardship.

We thank the following donors:

Subrata and Bakul Banerjee  
Pradeepita and Sabari Bhattacharya  
Soumya and Shompita Bhattacharya  
Bhaskar and Arpita Chakrabarti  
Ananda and Krishna Chakrabarty  
Aleya Champlin  
Subhasis and Janice Das  
Ranjan and Neela Dasgupta  
Subhasis and Bhaswati Laha  
Atanu and Ajanta Mazumder  
Dipankar Mukhopadhyay



The following 14 students were awarded a scholarship to fund their tuition fees, educational fees and books for one year.

Sumana K and Kartick M (Class 11 Commerce)

Puja H, Pritam J, Rahul H, Pinki M and Radha M (Class 11 Arts)

Sonali S (Class 11 Science)

Monojit P (Class 12 Arts)

Suprobindu B (Class 12 Commerce)

Biswajit B, Sanajit N, and Biplab B (B.A 1st Year)

Soma A (B.A 2nd Year)

Varosha was proud to be an exhibitor at Rotary's International Service Summit held on April 6, 2019, at Daniel L. Goodwin Hall of Business, Benedictine University. The annual summit allows us to promote our projects, share ideas and experiences with other organizations and find areas of collaboration. It is also an inspiring day to see all the good work people are doing. Jerome McDonnell, host of Worldview, WBEZ's daily global affairs talk radio show moderated the discussion panel. Wendy Pearlman, Professor, award-winning teacher, and author of four books on Middle East politics was keynote speaker. This year the theme for the conference was International Service as a Catalyst for Peace. We are very grateful to Rotary for arranging the summit and giving Varosha a platform. Directors: Santi Banerjee, Neela Dasgupta, and Chandrima Roy attended.



## Visiting Dipto Alo After-School Center By Sanchali Banerjee



*Photo: Sanchali and her family are welcomed to Dipto Alo*



*Photo: Dance students at Dipto Alo perform Feb 2019*



Sanchali (Shoumi) Banerjee learned Bharat Natyam under Hema Rajagopalan of Natya Dance Theatre and presented her arangetram on July 14, 2019. Shoumi generously donated \$1,000 from the gifts she was given during her arangetram to Varosha. We will earmark the funds to support the dance school in Dipto Alo for meals for the dancers/students, costumes, music and supplies. Thank you Shoumi!

During my winter break in December of 2018/January 2019, I visited the Dipto Alo school in Kolkata as a volunteer from Varosha. I have always wanted to help children in need and Varosha gave me such an amazing opportunity. This was a new experience for me as I have never been to the “basti” (slum) areas of Kolkata. All the kids were so excited to see us come in. They had so much to show me- dances, well-sewed clothing, computer programs and more. Each and every child is beautifully talented in their own way. I saw a few dances they learnt, with forms including Bharatanatyam, Kathak, and Bollywood. I saw the math problems they solve during their school day. They showed me how they make clothing as gifts and beautiful jewelry. I was astonished as to how much they learn in a short amount of time with a few resources. The teachers are very nice and willing to help in any way. They made me gifts for my visit. Their after school-activities have brought them to a level where they have learnt some basic needs to survive. Their school programs and classes have brought them to a level where they can sit for board exams. I was so happy to see how encouraged these kids are to learn and how fortunate they are to have an organization like Varosha supporting them. These slum areas of developing countries have always made me sad, and the amount of help Varosha is giving them is amazing. I hope to keep helping Varosha and support these kids all along their journey and see them grow. I can't wait to go visit the Dipto Alo school during my next visit to India. I would love to see how much more these kids have learnt!



## BREAKFAST FOR 190 SCHOOL CHILDREN

The relationship between a child's health and schooling is complex however there is growing evidence of a causal impact of health on a child's education. Poor health and nutrition reduces their time in school and their learning during that time. This has long term and life-changing effects. Certain vitamins and minerals play a critical role in brain growth, development and learning. For pre-school and school-aged children healthy, unadulterated food can improve their health, immunity and success in the classroom.

This year we began funding a breakfast program for 190 school children in three centers in Kolkata and one in Mallarpur, Birbhum district, West Bengal. The children in Mallarpur



center are given: puffed rice, milk and sugar (4 days), bread, sweet and banana (1 day), egg and bread (1 day). The children in the Kolkata centers are given: fruits (2 days), egg (2 days) and vitamin drinks (1 day) per week.

This program was sponsored by a generous grant from long time Varosha supporters **Nikhiles and Dolly Mukhopadhyay**. We are very grateful.



Varosha continues to support the Business Center in New Alipore basti for women who have completed our tailoring program.

We provide microloans to the trainees to assist them to buy sewing machines and supplies to start their businesses.



## CHELTIA SKILLS CENTER



Varosha fully funds the Hope Skills Center in Chetla. On May 30, 2019, 52 trainees from the Skills Unit received their certification and medals. Trophies were given to the three best performers in Basic Computer Applications, English and Tally Financial Accounting. Varosha is proud to financially support this center and help the students with job placement once they are trained.

## MUSHROOM CULTIVATION



Nine young men and seven young women from Birbhum, West Bengal who were unemployed have completed the mushroom cultivation and marketing training project funded by Varosha. The 6 month course trained them to grow mushrooms (including spawn preparation) and also how to prepare and market preserved mushroom products which are rapidly gaining popularity. The trainees were so happy with their training that they recommended the class and we have begun a second session.



## DIPTO ALO AFTER SCHOOL TUITION CENTER AND CLASSES FOR DANCE AND ART

Varosha remains committed to the children of the New Alipore basti. We are so grateful to our teachers, whose passion for education and love for our students makes Dipto Alo an inspiring hub of learning, art and music.



We are proud of Pallabi for being awarded 1st prize in dance for students 13-15 years during the 2018 Kanyashree Day Celebration, an initiative of the Government of West Bengal to empower young girls/women. Pallabi learns dance at our center under the care of her teacher Juliette Nag (right). Pallabi was given a certificate, a book and cash prize.

## JEWELRY MAKING COURSE



This year we began a 6 month pilot program jewelry making classes for women and girls in severely financially depressed areas. Over 100 trainees in three centers: Tangra Dhapa, Ultadanga Canal-side and Topsia Canal-side are being trained in: quilling, German silver, sea shells, bead making with silk and cotton thread. The classes have proved to be extremely popular and engaging for the students. Along with basic jewelry making training, they attend design development workshops with reputed and experienced jewelry designers and entrepreneurial skill development training. The trainees will be displaying their work in several pre-Puja stalls in Kolkata. Not only do these programs allow the trainees to form cooperatives and start earning but they give us a platform for generating awareness on social and health issues.

## BEAUTICIAN TRAINING



Beautician training classes are taking place in two centers in Kolkata (South End Park and Janak Road) as well as in Huchukpara and Bolpur. Currently 52 young women are taking the classes. The curriculum covers: manicure, pedicure, waxing, eye brows, make up, facial, hair styling and saree draping. The trainees will get further training at a local beauty parlor. We expect the trainees will finish their training prior to the Puja festive season in October.



We are grateful for the dedication of our partners in Kolkata:

Shampa Roy and the team at Trinita Shelter

Shimanti Bose and the team at Anandan

Geeta Venkadakrishnan and the team at Hope

Swarup Saha and the team at Matribhumi