



Class in Action at Mundara

(Thou), and the content (It), which provides a shared focus for their relationship and interaction.

Some workshop participants focused on the teacher (the I) as the main impetus for moving the school forward. They emphasized the importance of using a variety of teaching techniques, of “planning for good teaching” (Kavita Devda), and of creating “a friendly environment in class” (Meenaz). They stressed the need for teachers to become learners themselves. “Learn innovative ideas to communicate with students,” suggested Bharti Rao.



Primary class at the Mundara satellite campus

Others emphasized the “Thou”—the students—and the importance of creating a relationship with learners, (“Have a good and friendly relationship with the students—Monika Vaishnav), communicating with them, (“How we communicate with students matters,” –Om Rathore), engaging them in the subject matter, and developing their interests. “How can we create interest in children?” wondered Himani Chauhan.

Still others saw the need to improve the content that is taught both in and outside of the classroom: the “It.” They recognized that the quality of the interaction between teacher and student was intimately related to the quality of the ideas and topics. “Content knowledge should be upgraded,” suggested Nikita Rajpurohit. “How to make a lesson interesting is a challenge,” wrote Suresh Kumar, suggesting the key relationship between pedagogy and content. The “It” also encompasses co-curricular activities such as community service. “Come for education and go for service,” was Suresh Singh Negi’s way of moving the school from good to great.

The challenge for any teacher is to keep the interaction vital between the three angles of the instructional triangle—to be self aware, innovative and reflective as a teacher (I), to create a relationship with students which builds on their interests (Thou), and to interact over content which engages students’ hearts and minds (It). In the workshop the teachers engaged in the process of becoming a community of learners. As Jagdish Suthar said, “Group discussion is important to make a school grow from good to great.”—both among the teachers and between teachers and students.

### Faculty Reflect on How to Bring the School from Good to Great by Dr. Barbara Powell

*Dr. Barbara Powell, former head of Dana Hall School in Wellesley, MA USA, is an advisor to The Fabindia School and the John Bissell Scholars Fund.*

In an October 2012 workshop conducted by new BAT Board Chair Sandeep Dutt, Fabindia faculty members reflected on the question: how will we move ahead and develop our school from “Good to Great.” Their responses indicate that they understand that the most effective agent of educational change is the teacher. They also bring to mind the “instructional triangle” posited in an essay by David Hawkins called “I, Thou, It.” Hawkins sets forth the vital interaction between the teacher (I), the student



Fabindia sports teacher C.P. Singh

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Loomis student Rashi Dua assistant teaching



Fabindia girls

### William Bissell: Forbes India 2012 Leadership Award

In October William Bissell was the recipient of a Forbes India 2012 Leadership Award for Entrepreneur with Social Impact. According to a recent Forbes India article, William won the award for “creating a globally recognized, profitable retail brand that has over 22,000 local artisans as its shareholders, most of whom would have lost their livelihoods if it were not for Bissell and Fabindia; and being able to make sure margins are almost three times that of the industry average.”

In November The Economic Times wrote an intriguing article called “How Fabindia’s William Bissell is changing the rulebook of business.”

*Editor’s Note: To read the complete news articles visit the school’s blog site [www.bateducation.org](http://www.bateducation.org)*

### U.S. AMBASSADORS VISIT THE SCHOOL

On December 31, 2011 the school was proud to host Peter Burleigh, U.S. Ambassador to India, and Betty E. King, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. The Ambassadors visited with Class XII students who are part of the Commerce curriculum track and shared a lively discussion on Indian and US economies and the recession.



Ambassadors Burleigh and King with Class XII Fabindia students

### 20 YEARS OF PROMOTING GIRLS EDUCATION

When the school started 20 years ago, all girls were given a 50% subsidy to promote girls education. Rajasthan had one of the highest female illiteracy rates in the country and the prevalent attitude was a reluctance to invest in high-quality education for girls. However, over the years, we have noticed a remarkable shift in attitudes, as more parents have started seeing the value of educating their daughters and many today do not need a subsidy to send their girls to school. Therefore, in keeping with the changing times, the school has revised its policy and is introducing need-based scholarships and ensuring that we reach out and include those students who come from marginalized communities or economically disadvantaged families. In addition, the school continues to provide 25-50% tuition subsidization for all girls up to Class III. We remain committed to our original focus on girls’ education and believe that our new scholarship program is the best way to ensure the greatest access to a high quality education for rural children. Generous donations to the scholarship program provide critical support to help the school maintain its inclusive character, bringing in children from lower castes and lower socio-economic groups while striving for full gender parity.



Fabindia Student

### FUNDING GIRLS SCHOLARSHIPS

Over two decades, the school has provided a top-quality, English medium education to over 7,000 rural youth with scholarships and tuition subsidies given to more than 3,000 girls. Considering that only 5% of girls complete their secondary schooling in the central regions of Rajasthan, this is a remarkable achievement. Thank you to the many donors who have contributed to the John Bissell Scholars Fund since its establishment in 2001.



*The Fabindia School was established by William and John Bissell who saw the need for a model school to empower young people in rural Rajasthan where literacy rates are extremely low, especially among women. From the beginning the school has been committed to encouraging education for girls in a region where most parents who can afford an English medium school would send only their sons. To encourage and promote female students, the school subsidizes their tuition and provides need-based scholarships. Started in 1992 with 11 students, the school now has almost 1,000 students. The John Bissell Scholars Fund was established in the year 2001 in memory of John Bissell. Its purpose is to support scholarships for female and disadvantaged students. For comments or further information about the fund, contact Katherine Allen at [k.allen@fabindia.net](mailto:k.allen@fabindia.net) or write to the following address:*

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P. O. Box 1, Collinsville, CT 06022, USA  
Ph: 860-693-1123; Website: [www.fabindiaschools.org](http://www.fabindiaschools.org)

*For more information please visit our website at [www.fabindiaschools.org](http://www.fabindiaschools.org) and our blog at [www.bateducation.org](http://www.bateducation.org)*

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# THE FABINDIA SCHOOL

## Newsletter

Fall 2012

### LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Principal Parinita Ranpal

Dear friends,

The school is buzzing with excitement as it gears up for its 20th Anniversary Celebration on December 1 and 2, 2012. We look forward to two days of academic and art exhibits, cultural programs, dance and yoga displays, races, games, prizes and even Musical Chairs, all in celebration of our wonderful school.

This important anniversary gives us an opportunity to reflect on the well-being of the school. We are proud to be known as one of the best schools in the area - we are, in fact, the only CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) certified school in the area and 100% of our students have successfully passed the national board exams. From 11 students back in 1992 when the school started, today we have 909 students with 40% girls in pre-school to class XII. Students have access to a well-equipped computer lab, a spacious library, wi-fi connectivity and solar-generated power. We are witnessing that local families are more likely to send their daughters to school along with their sons, encouraging us that we are succeeding in our mission to provide quality education to those frequently underserved by top quality education - girls and students from lower-income families.

This year many exciting and wonderful things happened on and off campus. Here are a number of highlights:

The school granted 63 scholarships on the basis of gender, academic excellence and need along with subsidies to 192 girls.

American students from Loomis Chaffee (spring 2012) and Putney Student Travel (summer 2012) volunteered to construct a water hut and two badminton courts.

The architectural master plan for the campus was realized with the completion of the final, seventh block of four classrooms.

Students in classes IX, X and XII brought home five gold medals in interschool athletic meets and successfully represented the school at the state level. They also participated in an interschool soccer tournament.

In October 85 students and 21 teachers travelled to Kumaon, at the foothills of the Himalayas, on a seven day educational tour. For many this was their first trip outside of Rajasthan.



Pre-primary Class at Fabindia's Mundara campus satellite school

We welcome 8 new teachers who recently joined the school.

We at The Fabindia School take this opportunity to thank all who have generously donated to make the dreams of many come true.

Parinita Ranpal, Principal, The Fabindia School

## INTRODUCING NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

### Welcome to New Chairman of the Board by William Bissell

I am delighted to inform the members of The Fabindia School community of the board's decision to induct Mr. Sandeep Dutt as its Chairman. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Mr. Dutt. With over 25 years of hands-on experience as an entrepreneur, a trainer and mentor for thousands of young people, Sandeep has been involved with schools across the country and worked with students in all kinds of socioeconomic environments. Sandeep has conducted educational reports for state governments across India and helped implement the development plan of the Australian Sports Outreach Programme (ASOP) in his last avatar as the National Director of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award. Sandeep's contributions to build a curriculum for enabling young people to equip for life and set in place a sustainable model for youth empowerment have been widely acknowledged all over the world. On behalf of the board, we extend a very warm welcome to Mr. Sandeep Dutt as he takes The Fabindia School to the next stage in its journey.



Sandeep Dutt

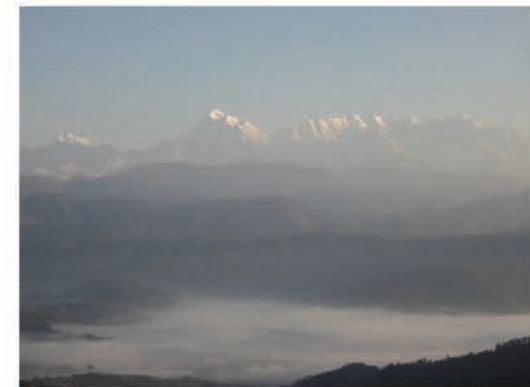
### Educational Notes by Sandeep Dutt, Chairman of the Board

I see the possibility of a nation where every school offers young people the opportunity to be rewarded for challenging themselves, rewarded for engaging with adult mentors, rewarded when finishing school, and rewarded for giving back to their communities. I believe we can help connect young people with new opportunities to change their world.

In October many of our students traveled to one of the beautiful hill areas at the base of the Himalayan mountains. This kind of experience helps the young learn more effectively; nature's classroom offers real time learning, be it chemistry, geography, physics, biology...look out and we will find we live it all in our daily lives. There is the pressing need for adults to find that spark which will ignite the mind of their pupil. Once we find this learning becomes fun.

Often the opportunities for learning outside the classroom are great, through sports and games and other activities like adventure sports, dramatics and community service. All play an important role in developing character and citizenship. A good school will provide a balance of opportunities in its curriculum to allow a student to develop along his or her special interests and talent.

## STUDENT VOICES



View of the Himalayas from Kumaon

### Educational Tour to Kumaon by Prasann Vaishnav, Class XII

In October 106 Fabindia students and teachers went for an educational trip to the Kumaon foothills of the Himalayas. We first visited Nainital, set in a valley containing a pear-shaped lake. We went boating on the lake, saw houses made of wood which seemed to be sloping down from the mountains, visited a superb market and saw the Naina Devi temple. At night Nainital looked like a big stadium with the audience sitting all around with flashlights.

Next we visited Bhimtal, named after Bhima of the Mahabharata and then Kausani, which Mahatma Gandhi called "the Switzerland of India." We reached Kausani at night and the next morning were surprised by a panoramic view of three major Himalayan peaks, Nanda Devi, Trishul and Panchchuli.

We next visited Anashakti Ashram where Gandhi, the father of our nation had spent some days and wrote his commentary of Anashakti Yoga. We then went to a tea estate which was a very good example of terrace farming, tea cultivation and export preparation.

After this we visited the historic Baidnath Temple, a temple of Lord Shiva built in the 13th century. In this temple there is a big stone which cannot be carried by an individual person but if nine people try to carry it then they can carry it easily, even with one finger only. We tried it and were amazed. Our last destination was Jim Corbett National Park. There are 164 tigers at present in the sanctuary but unfortunately we did not spot any tigers. We saw many birds like kingfisher and woodpecker.

It was a great trip where we experienced many new things like different food and climates. I personally liked Kausani a lot. I vividly remember the day when I woke up and saw the huge Himalayan range covered with snow and sunlight. The village nestled between the fog-covered mountains was really a scenic splendor.

## USA - INDIA CONNECTIONS: LOOMIS CHAFFEE AND FABINDIA

### William Bissell - Commencement Speaker at The Loomis Chaffee School, Windsor, CT USA

Last June William Bissell, Co-Founder of The Fabindia School and Managing Director of Fabindia, was the Commencement speaker at his high school alma mater, The Loomis Chaffee School. This honor was a wonderful end to an academic year during which Loomis hosted the first two visiting Fabindia School students for 6 months. During his commencement address William attributed much of his love of learning and inspiration for starting The Fabindia School to his time as a student at Loomis.

"After graduating from Loomis and then Wesleyan University, I returned to India. For several years I worked alongside incredibly skilled artisans in northwest India in the desert state of Rajasthan trying to form artisan cooperatives. At that time Rajasthan had the highest illiteracy rates in the country and I noticed a clear need for a different educational model: one where the school could bring out the various talents of each child and inspire in them a passion for learning. I wished that more children could be exposed to the kind of education I received here at Loomis. After many discussions with my father and a good friend, twenty years ago, back in 1992, we started The Fabindia School in the village of Bali, Rajasthan.

I am thrilled that some of you graduating today have had a chance to visit and volunteer at The Fabindia School during your spring break on the Loomis Chaffee group trips. And even more of you had a chance to meet the two visiting Fabindia students, Shaily Jain and Shefali Jain, who were here for the first six months of this academic year."

*Editor's Note: For the complete text of William's Commencement speech, visit [www.loomischaffee.org](http://www.loomischaffee.org) and look for the web extras under the Summer 2012 Alumni Magazine.*



William Bissell at Loomis Chaffee Commencement June 2012

## PERSPECTIVES FROM AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS

In March 2012 a group of American high school students from Loomis Chaffee visited the school on a community service program. They worked to build a water tank, teach English classes and shared in sports and cultural activities with the Fabindia students. Loomis plans to conduct their 3rd annual trip to The Fabindia School again in March 2013.

### Visiting The Fabindia School by Meadeshia Mitchell, Loomis Chaffee Class of 2012

Going to India has given me the experience to see beyond the life I live here in the United States. I learned how to appreciate and treasure the things I have in my life and the given opportunities. I definitely want to go back and volunteer or help in whatever way.

When I first visited The Fabindia School I was inspired by how many students attend the school and their eagerness to learn given the little resources they have. I admired the way in which the teachers were able to present materials to students. For instance, when I assisted a drawing class I was impressed with the way the teacher made drawing appear so easy. I also loved the art work that the teacher presented. As a result, after returning from India I was motivated to take Drawing 1. That one drawing teacher made an impact on my outlook on how to approach drawing. I also admired how each student referred to their teachers as Madam or Sir and was surprised when they addressed students from Loomis in the same manner. I would like to commend all the teachers on the excellent job they are doing in helping the students become educated.



(Left to Right) Meadeshia Mitchell, Shaily Jain, Shefali Jain



Loomis Student Xin Wen volunteering-teaching

### Reversing Roles by Jenny Li, Loomis Chaffee 11th Grade

As I nervously stepped into the 3B classroom, groups of kids swarmed up to me and my partner, Keara, begging for our signatures and eagerly shaking our hands. Voices spiked up, shouting "ma'am! Over here ma'am! Please ma'am!" Overwhelmed, we turned to the teacher, but received nothing but a single word: "teach." Helpless, we turned towards each other, searching our minds for games to play.

A day of teaching the kids in the Fabindia School left me tired but satisfied and truly appreciative of the efforts of our faculty members. Our interactions with students did not stop there. During lunch break, the playground became our new classroom as we pushed the children on the swings and played with them on the seesaws. For the first time, I felt I was the one giving, giving knowledge instead of receiving.

## STUDENT VOICES: REFLECTIONS FROM FABINDIA'S TWO EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From September 2011 to March 2012, two Class XI Fabindia students, Shefali Jain and Shaily Jain, attended The Loomis Chaffee School, a co-educational independent boarding and day school in Windsor, CT USA. This was the first time that a Fabindia student matriculated in an overseas school as a visiting student. Shefali and Shaily made many friends during their 6-month stay and had an extremely rewarding experience. We are grateful to Loomis Chaffee for their financial support and are hopeful that more Fabindia students will have the opportunity to attend Loomis Chaffee in the 2013-14 academic year.



Shaily Jain, Molly Reynolds, Shefali Jain and Jim Morgan in CT, USA

### Dreams Do Come True by Shefali Jain, Class XII

Opportunity could have knocked at anybody's door but it knocked at mine. To go far away at such a young age and to be chosen for an exchange programme was truly meaningful.

In my last week in the U.S. when I knew I had to come back home, I carried both sweet and bitter feelings. I was happy that I was going back to my family, my friends and my school, but leaving Loomis kept haunting me. I was exposed to so many things like taking psychology and painting and being on the soccer team. Being there I experienced a challenge to my own beliefs, convictions, values and world view. I experienced more academic freedom and personal freedom. What I really enjoyed was writing the research papers. This process helped me

enhance my language skills and imagination power. One more thing that I miss a lot is my dorm life - checking in, going all together to the dining hall, getting bowls full of cookie dough ice-cream (one of my favorites) and Mr. Howe's special brownie cake. I really don't have words for my memorable journey because if I start writing it all down I think I will just write a book on it. Thanks to all who took care of Shaily and me while we were in America and also to both the schools who arranged such a great programme.

Certainly readjusting to my old surroundings was quite difficult for me but everything went fine as I had my family, my friends and my teachers supporting me. I was really happy to see my friends at the station welcoming Shaily and me, which actually made us forget the sorrow of coming back from USA.

### Things I can never forget... by Shaily Jain, Class XII

Seeing dreams with closed eyes is really a common thing. Dreaming with eyes open is also not surprising, but when dreams come true, everything changes--your life, your perspective, everything.

Sharing my experience about all that I did in USA brings back thousands of memories of the people I met and the friends I made. After spending such adventurous and happy times there I was really desperate to get back home, but even though I was coming to my own country, among my own people, I wondered about what life would be like again. No more going to the dining hall and snack bar with friends and enjoying the snow!

Adjusting to being home was not difficult for me, as FabindiaSchool is my favourite place. Supportive teachers, principal, parents and friends made it much easier for Shefali and me to adjust. I definitely miss the exposure to painting, my favourite hobby, dancing and studying psychology. Yes! I miss those moments...



Shaily Jain

### The Fabindia School

*The Fabindia School is a big family,  
It welcomes all very happily.  
It opens the doors with hope and light,  
This makes the students' future bright.  
All teachers and students work together,  
And stand together helping one another.  
All teachers teach us to be pure and true,  
And show the right path what we ought to do.  
Where the mind is without fear,  
And the head is held high here,  
We face the world with pride,  
As our school is a shining guide.  
Where every work is done with innovation,  
Which the students do with complete devotion,  
Where knowledge is free for all,  
Whether the person may be big or small  
Our school makes us wise and strong,  
And our life becomes a melodious song.  
Our days are spent wisely and happily,  
And we always stay as one big family.*

Swabhi Parmar  
Class XII