

IMPORTANT UPDATE ABOUT NEW FISCAL SPONSOR



As of July 1, 2011, UU Holdeen India Program is officially passing the baton to our new fiscal sponsor, Friends of Tilonia. Ellen Fish, founder and head of Friends of Tilonia, a 501c3 non-profit organization in Brooklyn, NY, has generously agreed to continue in this role which UUHIP has done for the past 10 years. We are grateful that Friends of Tilonia will allow us to seamlessly continue to raise funds for The Fabindia School in a cost effective way. By working with Friends of Tilonia as our fiscal sponsor we are able to minimize our administrative expenses and overhead in the US, and pass on a remarkable 95% of all donations directly to the school.

Please note that all donations as of July 1, 2011 should be made out to "Friends of Tilonia" with "Bissell Fund - Fabindia School" in your check memo.

Please continue to mail all donations to: John Bissell Scholars Fund, PO Box 1, Collinsville, CT 06022. If you have any further questions, please contact Katherine Allen, k.allen@fabindia.net 860-693-1123.

EMAIL OUTREACH



With rising costs for printing and postage, we are asking our donors to let us know if you would like to receive an email copy of our newsletter instead of a printed copy. We typically only send one newsletter a year in the Fall/Winter, but if there are significant announcements, we occasionally send a second newsletter in the Spring/Summer. Note that your email will never be shared with anyone else and will only be used by the John Bissell Scholars Fund to provide updates on The Fabindia School.

Please email Katherine Allen at k.allen@fabindia.net and let us know your email and your preference.

NEW NAMED SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

With a one time gift or an annual commitment, donors may establish a scholarship in memory of or in honor of someone whom you specify through our "Named Scholarship" program. We will link you with your scholarship recipient who will write you updates twice a year.

Permanently Endowed Scholarship

A gift of US\$5,000 (Rs 2,25,000) will endow a permanent annual scholarship for one student in honor of someone you name.

12-Year Scholarship

A one-time gift of US\$2,500 (Rs 1,12,500) or an on-going gift of US\$250/year (Rs 11,250/year) for 12 years will provide a complete education for a child in honor of someone you name.

For further information, please contact Katherine Allen of the John Bissell Scholars Fund at k.allen@fabindia.net or at the mailing address below.



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. Started in 1992 with 11 students, the school now has 785 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 students.

For comments or further information about the fund, contact Katherine Allen at k.allen@fabindia.net or write to the following address:

JOHN BISSELL SCHOLARS FUND
P. O. Box 1, Collinsville, CT 06022, USA

Ph: 860-693-1123; Website: www.fabindiaschools.org

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THE FABINDIA SCHOOL

Newsletter

Spring 2011

10th ANNIVERSARY OF THE JOHN BISSELL SCHOLARS FUND

I remember a phone call ten years ago from Charley Todd, an educator and family friend, informing me that he and my nephew William Bissell had been discussing the need to create a fund-raising organization in the U.S. for the Fabindia School, and he wanted my reaction. I was thrilled with the idea of an entity that would fund scholarships for girls at the school because I knew that women's education was not a priority in much of India. Charley, who had served 28 years as a school head, volunteered to coordinate this project and I was eager to help.

It struck both of us that it was appropriate to name the fund in memory of my brother, John Bissell, who had supported the school from the start and who was deeply committed to equal education for girls.

We sent out our first fund-raising letter in 2001 and received gifts from 30 donors. Since then this relatively small, but expanding community of dedicated supporters have collectively achieved an amazing milestone - \$500,000 in donations equivalent to thousands of girls' scholarships. Of this, over 80% has been from individual donors. In 2005 we were delighted to hand over management of the fund-raising operation to Katherine Allen who has done a superb job in expanding the base of donors and in obtaining substantial grants from organizations such as the Rohatyn Group.



Thanks to the generosity of so many, the school has become a model for education in rural Rajasthan. Opening with 11 boys and girls in 1992, it has grown to nearly 800 students with 39% girls from pre-school through Class X11. It has provided a top-quality English language education to over 7000 students. In what was once a bare, arid plot of land, a series of bright, airy buildings stand, with 24 classrooms, a library, computer center, two science labs, playground, and sports field.

On visits to the school I have witnessed how strongly the climate supports equality for girls, who hold many leadership positions and speak up with confidence in class discussions.

Many of you reading this have helped to make these achievements possible and we are tremendously grateful for your support.

- Marie Bissell Prentice



John Bissell scholars fund thanks Kathy Sreedhar, Head of UU Holdeen India Program, for 10 years of support as our fiscal sponsor



The John Bissell Scholars Fund extends its deepest gratitude to Kathy Sreedhar and UU Holdeen India Program for acting as our fiscal sponsor since we started raising funds for The Fabindia School in 2001. With only a small, but dedicated group of supporters, we have managed to raise just over \$500,000 during this time, with more than 80% of that coming from individual donors. Of the total funds donated, a remarkable 95% has directly reached the school. This translates into thousands of girl students who otherwise may never have had the opportunity to receive such a high quality education. We are forever grateful for the total support of Kathy and the UU Holdeen India Program for making all of this possible.

A special heartfelt thank you

Come July 2011, how hard it will be for us all not to feel your loving hand behind our backs egging us on to do more, to do better, and forever making the process as easy for us as possible. You are an angel indeed - sent to help and strengthen with your love those for whom you have become a benefactor in the true sense of the word. The Fabindia School, and the Bissell family, owe you a huge debt. But for you the school would not so seamlessly have moved so far ahead. In our hearts if not on school land we have erected this massive sculpture of you as Devimata Kathy Sreedhar Ji the great!

- Bim Bissell, wife of school co-founder, John Bissell, and mother of school co-founder William Bissell

Save the Date - Tuesday July 19, NYC - Party for The Fabindia School

On July 19th in NYC we are planning a party to celebrate the Fabindia School. Two Fabindia students will have just completed a summer program at Hotchkiss School in CT - a momentous first time in the history of our school for our students to go abroad for educational opportunities. The party is an opportunity to honor these students before they return to India and share with more of our friends the remarkable achievements which the Fabindia School is having in rural India. We hope you can join us and please bring a friend who you think would be interested in learning about the school.

The John Bissell Scholars Fund
is pleased to invite you to

A Celebration of The Fabindia School (Rajasthan, India)

at the home of Hector and Erica Prud'homme
90 Riverside Drive, Apt PHB New York City
6-8pm Tuesday, July 19th, 2011
drinks and appetizers served

Special Guests

Two Fabindia School students
who will just have completed the
Hotchkiss School Summer Portals Program
&
Bim Bissell

Limited Space, RSVP required by July 12
RSVP to Katherine Allen k.allen@fabindia.net, Ph 860-693-1123

Founders Circle

The John Bissell Scholars Fund wishes to celebrate our 10 year Anniversary by honoring the incredible commitment and support of the following donors who have given every year over 10 years and/or who have given over \$5,000. Thank you!

Cely Arndt, Christopher and Patricia Arndt, Sally Bowles James and Phoebe Boyer, Margaret Hamburg and Peter Brown, Jacqueline Lundquist & Richard Celeste, P.C. and Amita Chatterjee, Lincoln and Marty Chen, Rachel Child, Phyllis Nauts & Hendon Chubb, Jerome and Joan Lebold Cohen, Ellen Moon and David Colbert, Dave Wilson & Belle Cole, Milton and Margaret DeVane, Jim and Isabelle English, Bill and Gray Felstiner, Graham Family, David and Lois Hager, Adam and Arlie Hochschild, Richard A. Horvitz, Aylette Jenness, Tom Pollack and Evan Jenness, Joe Lelyveld, Elizabeth B. Moynihan, Pell and Louise Osborn, Brewster Perkins, Arthur and Barbara Powell, Tim and Marie Prentice, Hector and Erica Prud'homme, David and Cristin Rich, Howard and Tezi Schaffer, John and Julia Scott, Elaine Seiler, Evie Lovett and Jeff Shumlin, Lew and Carol Simons, Wendy Sommer, Jennifer and Jonathan Soros, Richard and Gretchen Swibold, Charley Todd, Susan and Jerry Webman, Elizabeth Bumiller and Steve Weisman, C. Dana White, Wolfensohn Family, Bob and Blaikie Worth



2011 is sure to be a historic, life-changing year for four Fabindia students who have received full scholarships to attend American educational programs at the Hotchkiss School and the Loomis Chaffee School. We look forward with great excitement as the Fabindia students come to the US and we hope that these wonderful partnerships will continue to flourish over the coming years. We feel truly honored by what these two top American schools have done for the children and the school. While the Fabindia School has hosted many overseas volunteers and visiting students, this is the first time that our students will have the opportunity to travel abroad for an educational program. We can't wait to hear all about their experiences and share their stories with you.

Hotchkiss Summer Portals, Lakeville, CT, USA

For three weeks from June 26 through July 17, 2011, two Fabindia students - Aditi "Tina" Rathore (Class IX) and Nishank "Raja" Bhati (Class IX) - will be enrolled in the Hotchkiss School Summer Portals Environmental Studies program in Lakeville, CT. With very generous financial support from The Hotchkiss School and enormous assistance from our champion Patricia Redd Johnson, Senior Associate Dean of Admission, the students will be receiving full scholarships to cover their tuition and travel costs, making it possible for our top students to enroll with a need-blind admissions policy. The two Fabindia students will learn from and live with 30 teachers and 90 students from around the world. They will be conducting labs, traveling on field trips and exploring nearby ecosystems across Northwestern CT.



Payge Kerman, Loomis Chaffee 10th grade student

PATRICIA JOHNSON OF THE HOTCHKISS SCHOOL VISITS THE FABINDIA SCHOOL

My trip to the Fabindia School was nothing short of amazing. The Fabindia School is a green school which is state of the art in a rural section of Bali, Rajasthan. The architecture lends an air of grace to the buildings and the school is accessible to all kinds of students. The students were strong willed, competent and clearly comfortable in their setting.

Speaking to the students was a delight. I asked what questions did they have for me. Their hands shot up and I thought, "whew" now here are some quick minds. One student asked, "If I came to an exchange program at Hotchkiss, what could I bring to the students that would be of interest to them?" Now I must tell you that this question gave me food for thought. I told them "It would be wonderful if you could demonstrate your beautiful dance to us." (They had performed a beautiful dance upon my arrival.) I also thought, later on, it would be interesting to bring our history to them, especially since the founder of our school is Maria Bissell Hotchkiss, a distant relative to the same Bissell family who founded the Fabindia School.

What I did determine pretty easily was that though these young students lived in rural India, it was not indicated by their behaviors, nor their attitudes. They were very sharp in their questioning and were quite lucid about what they thought that they might see in America. When I asked who might be willing to come to an exchange program, they seemed to be quite interested to come. In my observation of the entire school and teachers, I saw a sophistication that was truly remarkable in the Fabindia students. The Fabindia School is indeed "putting its money where its mouth is" for the greater good of society.

Patricia Redd Johnson
Senior Associate Dean of Admission
Director of Multicultural Recruitment
The Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, CT, USA

The Loomis Chaffee School, Windsor, CT, USA

Two Fabindia girls (Shaily Jain and Shefali Sankla) both entering Class XI, have been accepted to the Loomis Chaffee School for academic year 2011-12. The girls will attend the Fall and Winter semesters, from September 2011 to March 2012, returning to India in early March at the end of Winter semester for their annual Indian exams. Both girls have received \$47,100 in financial aid to pay for their full tuition as boarding students, travel, books, and insurance. We owe tremendous



Anisa Knox, Loomis Chaffee 12th grade student, volunteers to help build a new rain water harvesting system at the school

gratitude to an especially generous individual donor whose financial support enabled the girls to live on campus as boarding students and further benefit from all that this world class school offers. We also extend very special thanks to Erby Mitchell, Assistant Head of School for Enrollment, and Betsy Tomlinson, Director of International Students, who both visited the Fabindia School and were incredibly committed to supporting this partnership. We are overjoyed for this amazing opportunity which will clearly be a life-changing, formative experience for the two Fabindia girl scholars.

AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM LOOMIS CHAFFEE GO TO THE FABINDIA SCHOOL

In March, 16 American high school students from the Loomis Chaffee School in Windsor, CT accompanied by two faculty members went to India during their spring break to do a community service project at The Fabindia School. This was the first year that we organized this program and based on how successful it was, we hope it will continue for many years to come.

Loomis Chaffee Blog Posts while at The Fabindia School

We finally arrived at the Fabindia school yesterday morning. For the first day, we all helped in the classrooms and were overwhelmed by the incredibly positive energy and enthusiasm of the students here. The welcoming assembly included a beautiful traditional Indian dance performance. Today we've begun work digging to expand a bridge that will help the school harvest rain water. Some students are helping with the English classes and some are visiting a local preschool.

-Betsy Tomlinson, Director of International Students, accompanied LC students

It feels amazing to be surrounded by a group of people with a common interest, which is providing a better environment for the students at Fabindia. The students have been extremely welcoming and warm to all of us Loomis students and faculty. They display a strong desire to learn and get to know us LC kids. To think how underprivileged they are compared to kids in the U.S., yet they always manage to have a smile on their faces. It's extremely inspirational. I have come to the realization that no matter how many luxuries and privileges I receive at home, I should be grateful for all the little things. A family who loves me, friends who care and a school with people who want me to succeed.

-Kimberly Casillas, 11th Grade