

Disabled World

For many people who are physically or otherwise challenged the world is cruel. The world was full of prejudices against those who were earlier called as dumb, deaf, lame, unstable minded, chronically diseased or blind. They were not given equal rights in the society. They had little or no means to survive in a harsh world. Opportunities were denied and even moving from one place to another was nearly impossible for many.

Today all of that prejudices have nearly vanished or being eroded. We see 'differently-abled' people going to work, driving motor vehicles, working as teachers and even participating in sports. Yet, there is always more to be done to lift these persons from despair. This is why Rotary emphasises the need for vocational service and lays great faith in the ability of Rotarians to change lives of those who were sulking due to minor or major disabilities. The Rotary Foundation recognises the fact that every life is a miracle and that each person has something to contribute.

Disabled or 'differently-abled' persons were first taught not to waste time and be angry about their disability. They were given the confidence that they can get on with life and most of them have done well. Disabled persons were labeled as unfit or people with little worth till good Samaritans found out how to use their hidden talents. The Trustees of The Rotary Foundation knew that the goals of their welfare programmes must be positive and constructive. James Baldwin, the American novelist said, "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." The Rotary Foundation decision to support vocational service projects meant for



Vocational training centre.

the 'differently-abled' persons was an experiment that proved successful. Rotary clubs have now started taking projects in the much neglected avenue of vocational service.

Rotary Club of Udaipur, RI District 3050, joined hands with Rotary Club of Scarborough, RI District 9455, Australia, to provide equipments and materials for training and skill enhancement of the physically challenged children in Udaipur. The club contributed US \$ 6,500 and the District Governor added another US \$ 10,000 from the DDF. With the international partner giving their share of US \$ 7,500 The Rotary Foundation matched the contributions with a grant of US \$ 24,930. The total budget for the project is US \$ 58,930.

The vocational service project of the club was inaugurated in the Silai Prashikshan Kendra which was sponsored by Dr. Yashwant Kothari Charitable Public Trust. The Viklang Kalyan Samiti which benefits from this project organised sewing machines as the first

phase of the project and started training programmes for the physically challenged people. District Governor 2010–11 Kranti Mehta and PDG Nirmal Singhvi have motivated the club to dream big and take up a good project.

"A true friend knows your weaknesses but shows you your strengths; feels your fears but fortifies your faith; sees your anxieties but frees your spirit; recognises your disabilities but emphasises your possibilities," said William Arthur Ward, America's most quoted writer. The Rotary Foundation is one such true friend.



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