

**Help the Blind
Foundation**



PIONEER IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

NEWSLETTER



4 HTBF Beneficiaries Secure Admission in IIM Ahmedabad

We are thrilled to share some incredibly uplifting news that four of our beneficiaries have achieved a remarkable milestone that fills us with immense joy and pride. **Mr. Sharath Kumar, Mr. Munnur Rahul, Mr. Baddam Akash Reddy, and Mr. Daya Praveen**, all recent graduates from Sathyabama University in Chennai, have been offered admission to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), including the esteemed IIM Ahmedabad!

This extraordinary accomplishment is a testament to their hard work, dedication, and resilience. These young individuals have overcome significant challenges and are now poised for further success in their academic and professional journeys. The road to IIM is notoriously competitive, with thousands of aspirants vying for limited seats each year. For our beneficiaries to secure spots in these elite institutions is truly commendable. It showcases not only their academic prowess but also their determination to excel despite the obstacles they've faced. This achievement is also a powerful reminder of the impact that support and opportunity can have on an individual's life. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters, donors, and volunteers. Your unwavering commitment to our cause has played a pivotal role in enabling these individuals to reach new heights and unlock their true potential. Every contribution, big or small, has helped create a ripple effect of positive change. As we celebrate this incredible milestone, we're reminded of the importance of our mission. Success stories like these fuel our passion to continue working towards a more inclusive society where visual impairment is not a barrier to achieving one's dreams.

HTBF Funds Tech and Law Courses for Students

At Help the Blind Foundation (HTBF), we're committed to breaking barriers and opening doors for visually challenged students in the realm of higher education. Today, we're thrilled to announce our latest initiative aimed at encouraging these bright minds to pursue technical and professional courses.

We're proud to support four exceptional students as they embark on transformative educational journeys:

- **Three talented students will be pursuing their postgraduate studies in Digital Product Design and Management at the prestigious Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Bangalore.** This cutting-edge program will equip them with the skills to shape the future of digital products and services, ensuring that accessibility and inclusive design are at the forefront of technological advancements.
- **Another ambitious student will be undertaking a 5-year Integrated Law Program in Nagpur.** This comprehensive course will prepare them for a career in the legal field.

These scholarships represent more than just financial support. They embody our unwavering commitment to fostering inclusive education and creating opportunities for visually challenged students to excel in fields that are shaping our world.

Meet our new Managing Trustee, Ms. Deepa Krishnamoorthy

We welcome **Ms. Deepa Krishnamoorthy** as our new Managing Trustee, effective June 1st. She succeeds Mr. Sivaji Rao, who served from 2020 to May 2024. This change aligns with our policy of rotating the position every 3-4 years. Ms. Krishnamoorthy, a Trustee since 2018 and daughter of our Founder Mr. DK Patel, is poised to lead HTBF to new heights. We thank Mr. Sivaji for his significant contributions, which expanded our activities and improved our technological infrastructure.

We're pleased to announce Mr J Radhakrishnan, ex Bank of Maharashtra and long time volunteer of HTBF is joining us as a new trustee, bringing valuable experience to our team. Simultaneously, Mrs K Kanti, former faculty member of Queen Mary's college, Chennai is stepping down from her trustee role. We extend our gratitude for her dedicated service and contributions to our organization's growth. We wish Ms Kanti well in her future endeavours and warmly welcome Mr Radhakrishnan.



Providing Exposure to Students with Cognizant, Chennai

 **8th April 2024**

HTBF's Placement and Skill Development teams organized a visit to Cognizant for 11 students from the EMET 2022-2024 batch. Cognizant VP Mr. Ramesh shared insights from his 30-year career in operations and led an interactive session focusing on team management and success factors.



HR representative Mr. Dileep emphasized employability skills, particularly communication, and explained Cognizant's recruitment process. The visit included mock interviews for students, providing practical experience for their job search. A follow-up session with Cognizant is planned, facilitated by Mr. Lakshmi Narayan and Ms. Divya from HTBF placement team. This visit offered students valuable industry exposure and hands-on experience to support their future career pursuits at Cognizant and beyond.

 **22nd April 2024**

HTBF and Cognizant office in Thuraipakkam, Chennai collaborated on an event to showcase the impact of the EMET course. Three EMET students interacted with **Mr. Mark Levin, Cognizant's Global Leader of Compliance and Policy**. The Cognizant outreach team discussed the benefits of the HTBF program, sponsored by the Cognizant Foundation. Students provided feedback on recent career guides conducted by Cognizant. Mr. Bala, the Cognizant outreach team head, expressed satisfaction with the HTBF collaboration and interest in continuing the partnership. The event, jointly conducted by HTBF's placement and skill development teams, provided students with exposure to corporate IT roles and strengthened the relationship between Cognizant and HTBF.



EMET Students Gain Corporate Insights: Visit to Sutherland Global Chennai

On March 27, 2024, 14 EMET students from various colleges visited Sutherland Global Services in Chennai, accompanied by HTBF trainers and placement team members. Sutherland, a leading BPO company, employs over 10,000 people globally and has around 50 visually impaired staff through its collaboration with HTBF. The visit aimed to expose students to the corporate environment and inspire them to pursue careers in the BPO sector. Mr. Ram Bubesh, Senior Manager, shared his career progression story, while Mr. Senthil, a Senior Director, discussed the selection process and key skills required. Ms. Caroline, a Communication Trainer, along with three visually impaired employees, provided insights on interview preparation and the importance of a positive attitude. She also conducted interactive activities to reinforce these concepts. Mr. Venkat Kupraj from the management team evaluated the students through self-introductions and provided feedback to the HTBF placement team, suggesting areas for improvement in communication skills. The visit proved beneficial, with students gaining valuable insights into the corporate world and recognizing areas for personal growth. They left motivated to meet Sutherland's expectations and pursue careers in the BPO industry.



"Walking with a friend in the dark is better than walking alone in the light"-
Helen Keller

EMET Students Gain Industry Insights During Ad Astra Company Visit, Bangalore

On May 5th, 2024, the 2022-24 batch students visited Ad Astra for an industrial tour. Ms. Jayanthi, the company director, welcomed the group with an introductory speech. Ms. Priyanka, HR Head, guided the tour and explained the recruitment process in detail. Students actively participated, asking questions about job skill improvement and HR's role in the company. The interactive session provided valuable insights to the students. The visit was arranged by the placement team and Mr. Lakshmi Narayanan, with support from the Bangalore team.



SVG Pro Distribution and Demonstration Event for Students in Delhi

An event was held on May 6th 2024 to introduce and distribute Smart Vision Glass Pro (SVG Pro) to students. It began at 11:30 with a welcome speech for attending dignitaries, including project officer Ms. Pooja, volunteer, Mr. Nand Kishore, technical expert Mr. Ibrahim, and other team members. Ms. Pooja shared insights about Help The Blind Foundation's (HTBF) journey, while college coordinator Ms. Ritu Gupta encouraged students to participate in the courses. The event's highlight was Mr. Ibrahim demonstration of the SVG Pro, followed by its distribution to students. The event was described as inspirational and impactful, showcasing innovation in assistive technology.



Educational Visit to Mother Dairy Plant, Noida

A group of students visited Mother Dairy's plant on April 23rd 2024 to learn about milk processing, guided by Mr. Pillai and Ms. Neha. Students showed interest in job opportunities. Many observations prompted plans for an awareness session in Noida Sector 1 to promote inclusive employment. The visit included a tour of milk processing stages, discussions about job opportunities, and sampling of milk products and ice cream varieties.



HTBF and GLG Empower Visually Impaired Students with New Resource Centre at Ahmednagar College

On April 27, 2024, a Resource Centre was inaugurated at New Arts, Science and Commerce College in Ahmednagar. HTBF donated 16 laptops, sponsored by GLG Ltd., to establish a dedicated computer lab for visually impaired students. Mr. Sivaji Rao officiated the inauguration. The event was marked by alumni with visual impairments sharing how their college education led to employment opportunities. Previously, the college's skills training program, conducted by Pune Blind Men's Association, lacked an exclusive computer room. This new facility addresses that need. The event received media coverage, featuring in Aakashwani news program and the Marathi newspaper Lokmat.



EMET Nagpur Celebrates Growth and Transformation at 2022-2024 Batch Farewell

On April 5th, 2024, the 2023-2025 batch organized a farewell for the 2022-2024 batch in Nagpur. The event featured guest speakers who shared valuable insights:

- Mr Ramani, Founder member and ex-managing Trustee of HTBF discussed introducing the EMET project in India.
- Mr Radhakrishnan, HTBF Trustee highlighted the program's growth from three students to over 55.
- Professor Manoj from Dr. Ambedkar College emphasised appropriate language usage when referring to visually impaired individuals.

Outgoing students shared their EMET experiences and how the program impacted their lives. The junior batch presented tokens of appreciation to their seniors. The program showcased the bonds formed within the EMET community and the transformative power of education and mentorship, concluding on a note of optimism for the initiative's future in the Nagpur region.



Snapshots from the event involving the distribution of SVGs at Andhra College, Vijayawada, on April 23rd 2024



Snapshots from the event involving the Distribution of Laptops, Keyboards and OTG at Madras Christian College, Chennai, on April 22nd 2024



HTBF Checks: Low Vision Assessments for EMET Students

📍 Blind People's Association, Ahmedabad

On April 6, 2024, a low-vision assessment was conducted for the EMET 23-25 batch at the Blind People Association (BPA) in Ahmedabad. Eight candidates, three from Vadodara and five from Ahmedabad, were evaluated. The assessment was arranged with BPA's support.

📍 Narayana Nethralaya, Bangalore

Low vision eye check-up was done for our students in 3 batches at Narayana Nethralaya on 3 different days. We took 15 of our 2023-25 batch students and one alumni student and one computer trainer. Our students were very excited to try the assistive devices. The hospital staff were friendly and helpful.

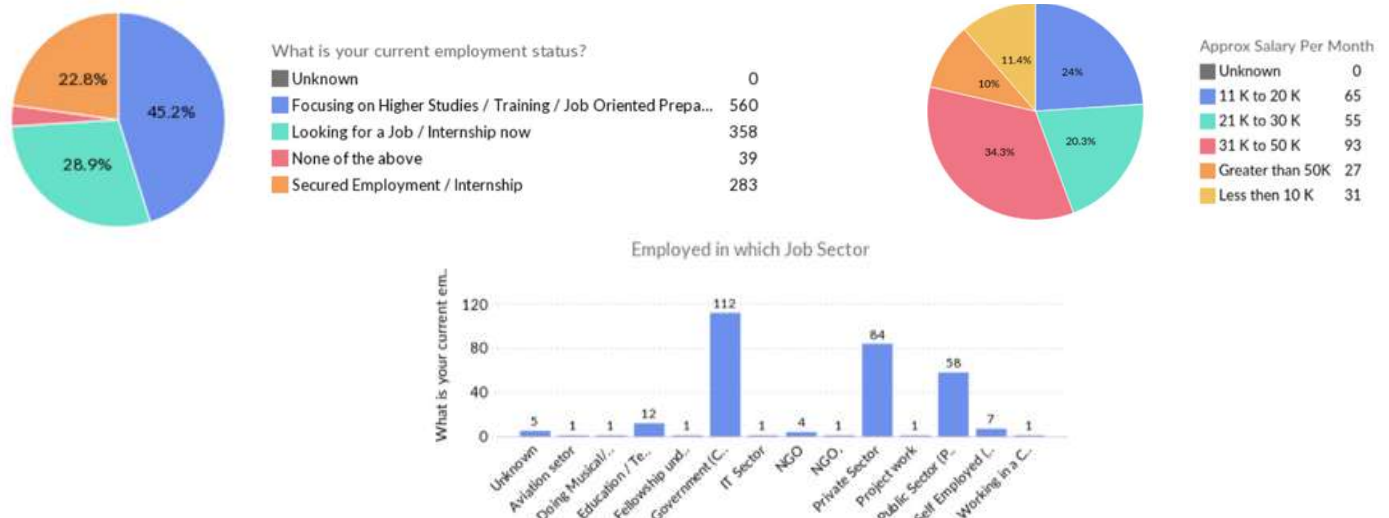


Alumni Survey: Tracking Graduate Success

Over the last two months, with the help of our volunteers and a few EMET Trainees, we have been contacting our scholarship beneficiaries who have graduated in the last 3 years, through a telephone survey. These surveys were conducted with the aim of:

1. Maintaining contact with our beneficiaries, and
2. Trying to find out what our students who had availed our scholarship are currently doing.

Questions were asked about their current employment status, skills and plans for the future. The findings from this survey have been very positive and will help us to keep in touch with our Alumni students and identify initiatives and programs to help our beneficiaries improve their chances of finding gainful employment.



Ms. Karthika, A Visually Impaired Student Excels, Inspires Others

Ms. Karthika, a visually impaired beneficiary of HTBF, has achieved remarkable success in her **B.A. Tamizh examinations**, outperforming even her sighted classmates. Her academic prowess extends beyond her major, as she surprised observers with her fluency in English despite being a Tamizh student. In a recent interaction, Ms. Karthika highlighted the crucial role of her parents' support in her journey. She shared her talents and delivered an inspiring message to other visually impaired students: "You can do it." This simple yet powerful statement encapsulates her belief in the potential of individuals with visual impairments to achieve their goals.

Ms. Karthika's success challenges societal perceptions and serves as a testament to what can be achieved with proper support and determination. Her story is not just one of personal triumph but also an inspiration for greater inclusivity in education. Looking ahead, Ms. Karthika is now preparing for her civil services entrance examination. We extend our best wishes to her as she pursues this ambitious goal, continuing to pave the way for visually impaired individuals in academia and public service.



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Breaking Barriers at BHU's Science Academies' Summer School

The Science Academies' Summer School at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) from June 10-29 showcased the remarkable potential of differently-abled students in science and mathematics. This program, held at SN Bose Hall, emphasized inclusivity as a fundamental right and aimed to provide equal support for impaired students. Among the standout achievements, four visually impaired girls - Ms. Ranjana, Ms. Priyadarshini, Ms. Nikita, and Ms. Leona - successfully determined Planck's constant, a significant feat in quantum physics. Ms. Priyadarshini, a Help The Blind Foundation (HTBF) beneficiary, also delivered an insightful presentation on the universe's origin. Other HTBF beneficiaries excelled too. Mr. Ankit from Mumbai explored fractals with Prof. Sanjay Kumar, while also working on bandwidth determination. Mr. Soumyodeep exemplified peer support by assisting two orthopedically disabled students. The program, directed by Prof. Bhabani Prasad Mandal and coordinated by Mr. Rabeet Singh, created a supportive environment for learning and growth. Special recognition goes to Ms Raka, HTBF volunteer, who played a crucial role in welcoming and caring for the students throughout their stay. Her dedication contributed significantly to the students' comfort and success during the program. These achievements highlight the immense potential of differently-abled students when given the right opportunities and support. HTBF continues its commitment to empowering visually impaired individuals, providing resources and opportunities for them to excel in their chosen fields



SCIENCE ACADEMIES' SUMMER SCHOOL
FOR THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED STUDENTS IN PHYSICS

10-06-2024 TO 29-06-2024

Department of Physics,
Institute of Science,
Banaras Hindu University



PROGRAM DIRECTOR: PROF. BHABANI PRASAD MANDAL
PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR: DR. RABEET SINGH



Thank you for your support



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