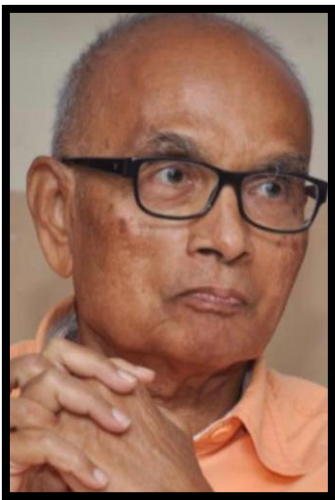


## Obituary: Our Founder Trustee, Mr. D.K.Patel, passes away



It is with deep regret that we announce that our Founder Trustee, Mr. D.K. Patel, passed away on 10th February 2020 in Hong Kong. Help The Blind Foundation was founded in Hong Kong by DK in 2005 with prominent local residents as directors.

Initially the focus of the foundation was to help blind school-going children by building/improving existing schools. Later his vision shifted to providing visually impaired students in India access to university education in \*integrated colleges\*, which alone would give them the confidence to integrate into society and empower them to obtain decent employment. HTBF India was hence established in Chennai in 2010 with academics and professionals as Trustees to implement the mission of the Foundation and the journey of the Foundation began in earnest with DK at its helm.

For the past 10 years, he not only played an important role in the growth of the Foundation but as a visionary built up a strong and capable team to carry on its activities. His wife Mrs.Niti Patel, his daughters Ms.Deepa and Ms.Meera, and son-in-law, Mr. Sridhar have been taking active interest in the activities of the Foundation. Ms.Deepa is a Trustee in HTBF, India. Mrs.Niti and Ms.Meera have been Directors in HTBF, Hong Kong for several years and Sridhar has more recently consented to be Director in HTBF, Hong Kong. Mr. Kaushal Tikku, a long-time resident of Hong Kong who has been Director of HTBF since the last 2 years, has taken up the lead role in Hong Kong. He is a chartered accountant by profession, and has 20 years' experience with Price Waterhouse Coopers and currently heads the Taxation Department of Hutchison group, Hong Kong. The set-up in India and USA have also been strengthened over the last 2 years with the joining of academics and professionals. The operations in India continue to be managed by experienced professionals and a strong team of volunteers.

At this hour of grief, we, the Trustees, Directors, volunteers, staff and other associates are determined to take Mr. Patel's vision far and wide, which is the best way to honour his legacy. Mr.Patel's spirit will live with us forever. We will continue to take the Foundation to greater heights with the continued support of well-wishers like you.



## A year of hectic activity culminates in the Annual meet

HTBF saw a year of hectic activity end in the Annual Meet at Chennai between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2019, at Loyola College. Volunteers and participants were apprised of the key events of 2019, successful completion of scholarship distribution and the several steps being taken to further the cause of visually-impaired students. It was also a time for bonding and exchange between the trustees, volunteers and blind students.



*Mr.D.K.Patel, our founder, is seen with a HTBF beneficiary during the Annual Meet.*

## A heart-warming note of thanks

We received a moving note of thanks from a parent of one of our beneficiaries, which we reproduce below:

“I am happy to share you that, because of your time to time support, my son Vedant Mundada, Nashik (Maharashtra) has cleared First Group of Chartered Accountant intermediate examination. Now he is preparing for second group. He is also pursuing his third year B.Com with Costing. Thank you very much to you all and Team Help the Blind.” Regards, Umesh Mundada.

Vedant Umesh Mundada is a 100 % blind student from KTHM College, Nashik. He was a topper in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade commerce stream and scored 90%. He broke all records till the date. Most of the blind students took up Arts subjects, but Vedant took up Commerce. Presently he is pursuing his third year B.A. with Costing as a subject. He is being supported by HTBF Scholarship since the last three years.

Considering his performance, HTBF gave the first laptop in Nashik to Vedant Mundada three years ago. Today he says that the scholarship & laptop given by HTBF have proved to be motivational & encouraged him in pursuing his education.

It important to note that, simultaneously, he is also pursuing a career as Chartered Accountant. Vedant Mundada has cleared First Group of Chartered Accountant Intermediate Exam and now he is engaged in preparations for the Second Group. He is taking guidance for his preparations from Coaching Classes at Surat, Gujarat. The coaching class owners have written an article about Vedant, impressed by his extraordinary zeal and enthusiasm. HTBF is proud of Vedant Mundada’s outstanding performance.

## HTBF consolidates achievements

HTBF would like to place on record its deepest gratitude to the legions of supporters, donors and friends who made it possible to sponsor the education of 2278 students in the past year. This, and the achievements, were shared with our nationwide team of volunteers and associates at our Annual Meet in

Chennai in December 2019. Here, we share a few highlights:

### HTBF Supporters

Financial & Resources' Support

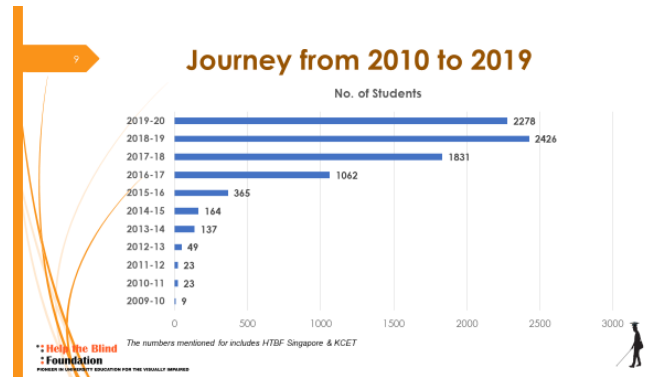
Project 1: Sponsorship	
2018-19	101
2019-20	173
2020-21	173

Project 2: Sponsorship	
2019-20	200 (Year 1)

EMET Training	
2019-20	227

Cognizant Foundation  
 Canara Bank: Donation of Rs.6 Lakhs under EMET Programme  
 HSBC: Data entry and help with interviews  
 CNCSI: Donation of 15 computers: support for data entry & current website maintenance  
 EnAble India: Provided the hall for Annual Meet free of cost for the last 5 years.  
 KJ Somaiya Institute of Management & Information Technology: Provided the hall for Annual Meet free of cost for the last 5 years.

Our knowledge partner for EMET Programme



## HTBF honoured with awards

It's always nice to be recognized for sincere work. We at HTBF feel honoured to receive recognition from organizations that appreciate and further our cause.

HTBF was awarded the "Best Service Award" by the Social Welfare Department of the Government of Tamil Nadu for its exemplary service to blind students.

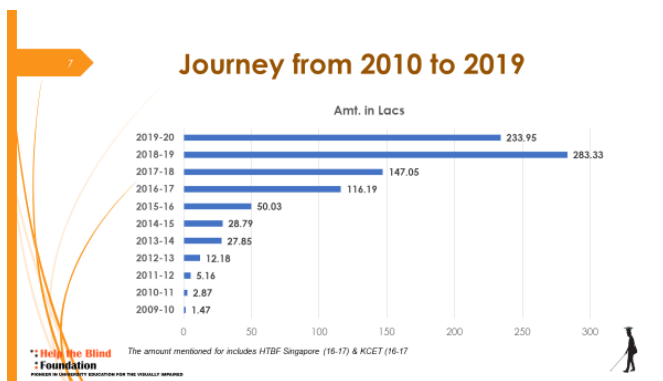


Mr. J.V .Ramani, our trustee, receiving the award from the Social Welfare Department of the Government of Tamil Nadu; and below: the

### HTBF Supporters

Financial & Resources' Support

ANDHRA BANK  
 Kamataka Bank Ltd.  
 Canara Bank  
 Zoroastrian Charity Funds Of Hong Kong, Canton & Macao  
 State Bank of India  
 HTBF Hong Kong  
 R.K INDUSTRIES  
 United Way  
 Chola MS  
 SUNDARAM HOME



citation.



HTBF was awarded by SDG World Records, Hong Kong, for its outstanding service to blind students.

We are deeply grateful to the Tamil Nadu Government and SDG for recognizing our work and thereby furthering our cause.



SDG World Records awarded HTBF India for outstanding service to visually-impaired students. Mr. D.K. Patel, our Founder, received the award on behalf of HTBF India on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.

## EMET makes a resounding debut

Technology, and the expanding digital world, has made it possible for people with visual impairment to cross

the boundaries of confinement and enter the mainstream. A visually impaired person can perform jobs across all cluster of careers including marketing, human services, business management and administration, health science, law, agriculture, and more.

HTBF decided to enhance its impact in this area by providing them financial assistance for their university education and also skill training (E-MET) in select colleges to make them employable.

E-MET Program is presently conducted by 21 Trainers in Bangalore, Chennai, Coimbatore, Delhi, Indore, Pune and Varanasi for 400 plus students studying in 17 colleges in these cities. The goal is to empower the visually impaired by placing them in productive jobs.

### E-MET Program

(Education, Mobility, Employability Training Program)

The objective of this 2-year program is skills-training at the college itself in:

- Computer
- English Communication
- Mobility
- Analytical ability
- Interpersonal relationship

<b>Curriculum: 2019 - 21</b>		
<b>Building Aspiration &amp; Awareness</b> (2-day workshop)	<b>Building Fundamentals</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)	<b>Building Employability</b> (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year)
Role of technology	Basic Computer	Advance Computer
Assistive devices	Basic Employability	Advance Employability
Careers	Life skills	Life skills
Private sector jobs	Mobility	Mobility
Higher education	English	English

Topics covered under **Life Skills** include: Setting up expectations, Daily Living Skill, Window shopping, Peer teaching, Analytical skills, Job Simulation, Training on Roles & Responsibilities, & Company Visits.

Topics covered under **Mobility Training** include:

- Guide Technique – Narrow Passage, Stairways, Doorways
- Pre-cane skills – upper body, lower body, listening sound
- Outdoor Techniques
- Travel – Road Cross, Bus, Landmarks.
- Exploring new places – train travel, trekking
- Advance Technology – Electronic cane, Shoe

### **E-MET Sponsors & Partners**

The EMET could not have borne fruition without the able support of our friends, sponsors and partners. We are delighted to announce our various sponsors for this programme:

### **Financial Sponsors**

- Cognizant Foundation
- Canara Bank
- Majestic Exports

### **Knowledge Partner**

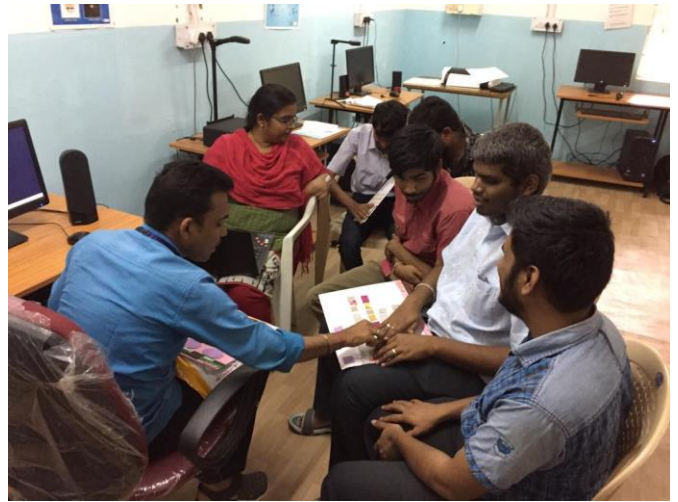
- Enable India, Bangalore

### **Training Partners**

- Samarthanam Trust, Delhi.
- Pune Blind Men Association, Pune.
- Silver Tongue, Coimbatore.

### **Infrastructure Support**

- Rotary Bangalore Heritage - NCC.
- Sankya Vidya Foundation, Bangalore.
- CNSI, Chennai.
- Alphatech Solutions, Chennai.
- Bookshare.org



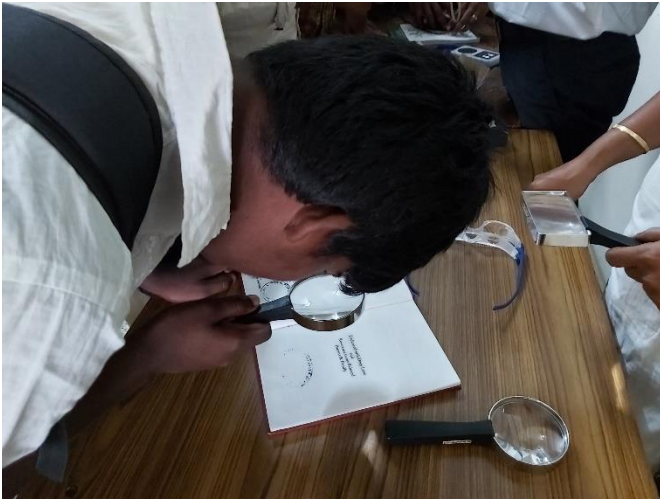
*Visualizing computer screen through touch*



*Mobility training as part of EMET*



*Using headphones to comprehend screen reader*



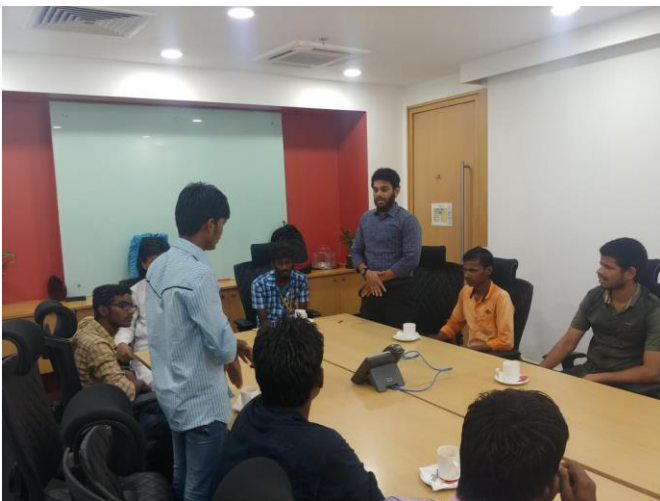
*Reading without Seeing – using assistive devices*



*A senior recruiter interacting with students*

## HTBF scholarship disbursement: Some highlights

We live for these moments – when the entire HTBF swings into action to disburse donor funds to deserving visually impaired students across the country. Here’s a quick snapshot of our scholarship application and disbursement activities across some of our partner colleges, ably led by our regional coordinators.



*During a company visit as part of EMET, Company HR addressing the students*



*At Rajdhani College, New Delhi*



*Certificate distribution after the programme. Seen in the picture are family members of our donor, Majestic Exports.*



At Satyavati College



At Satyavati College, New Delhi.



Mr. Damodaran, ED (Retd.) of Bank of India, and Mr. R.K. Mitra, General Manager. distributing scholarships at Loyola College, Chennai



Scholarships being given to VI students at Pachaiyappa's College, Chennai, by Mr. Manoharan, Chairman of Canara Bank and the Principal of the college.

## HTBF in the News, at Events



News 7 Channel, Chennai, covered our scholarship distribution process, "The Bridge of Compassion", and gave in-depth coverage of our activities.



Contact us at [info@helptheblind.in](mailto:info@helptheblind.in) or call us at +91 90033 30197

## Comments, Questions?

Please write to [sivaji@helptheblind.in](mailto:sivaji@helptheblind.in) with “newsletter feedback” in the subject line.

HTBF was a major beneficiary of a music program conducted in Chennai. The highlight of the program was an evening of melodious hits from playback singer Mr. S.P. Balasubramaniam. HTBF received a princely sum of Rs. 3 lakhs as donation from the event.

## Accolades for HTBF beneficiaries



*Runners up in national level blind tournament, (The Game Changer MSR Bengaluru) 2019. Ms. Bhubaneswari & Ms. Rajeswari our HTBF beneficiaries from Chennai.*

## How can you help HTBF?

HTBF welcomes your support and help. Here are various ways in which you can help HTBF:

- Donations
- Devices like laptops, recorders and readers, smart canes and add-ons such as I-Touch, Refreshable Braille Readers n printers
- Sponsoring of trainings and workshops
- Offering employment
- Volunteering for sponsorship related work