

LET THERE BE LIGHT :



Name : **Bharat Manilal Waghela**
 Age : 24 Yrs
 Sex : Male
 Disability : **Low Vision**
 Address : 11, Chamundanagar,
 Nr. Aadarsh Kamdar, Chandlodia
 Ahmedabad.

*M*anilal Waghela was a labourer in a textile mill in Ahmedabad and his wife looked after the home. After the birth of his daughter, Manilal was a very happy man and when a son was born, their happiness was complete. They proudly named the son "Bharat" after whom India was named "Bhaarat". Bharat was like any other child – playful, naughty and endearing. He was the apple of his parents' eye. They thought no other child could be as perfect as Bharat. They however, noticed that one eye seem to be smaller than the other.

One day, a man came for the census details and when he looked at Bharat, he said, "your son has a vision problem". The family was shocked but did not believe this story because Bharat could see. They had no idea about low vision and that it is different from total blindness. Bharat went to a normal school, but soon could not cope up in the class due to his low vision. Very reluctantly Bharat's Dad shifted him to a school for the blind. Bharat did very well in school and soon he came to the BPA to join the Motor Rewinding course of the Technical School for the Blind. He surpassed all records in this department by being very skilled in his work. Very soon, he was absorbed in the Motor Rewinding and Electric Department of the Adult Training Centre for the Blind. Sighted people are shocked when he goes to their house on behalf of the ATCB for installation of electrical fittings. He climbs upon ladders and does the electric work without any fear. Truly, he is a role model and ambassador of blind people.

This proves the important role of parents in the confidence building and acceptance of people with disabilities. Let's never forget parents – we bow to them. Though Bharat cannot himself appreciate the light and colours, he knows what these mean to people with sight. Wherever he goes, he repairs problems, presses the switch and presto! There is light.

THE DREAM MERCHANT :



Name : **Ms. Purnima Jayendra Dave**
 Age : 28 Yrs
 Sex : Female
 Disability : **Orthopaedically Handicapped**
 Address : 4, Harinagar Society,
 Ghatlodia, Ahmedabad – 61

Purnima, which means the full moon, was born normal. She was cute and cuddly with a round face – hence the name – Purnima.

But as the moon wanes so did Purnima's luck. She contracted polio when she was three years old and lost the use of her lower limbs. The pretty child who ran around wildly now dragged herself with her hands. Her parents cried when they saw their child's movements but continued to support her. She finished her schooling in a time in India when there was no Disability Act and schools were not accessible. Her hands were blistered in dragging her body but her spirit did not say.

She did not join college because she didn't want pity. She joined the BPA Hair & Skin Care Course. She was motivated by the BPA to complete her graduation while staying in the BPA hostels. Today, she is a much sought after beautician and makes home visits.

She has participated and won several medals in the Wheelchair Race event at the National Abilympic Competition.

Her cup of happiness overflowed when she received a scooter from the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. Today with her hair flying past her, she rides her adapted moped with confidence. She goes from home to home bringing beauty and hope to the lives of tired and lovely housewives. She is a dream merchant helping ordinary looking women to achieve their dreams of looking beautiful.

A WILL WILL FIND A WAY.....



Name : **Mr. Ashwin Pratap Thakkar**
Age : 24 Yrs
Sex : Male
Disability : **Partially Blind**
Address : Post : Jereda, Tal. Disa.
Banaskantha, Gujarat

*A*shwin was born in a bustling and loving family. He has five other siblings. Immediately, after he was born, the Doctors told his parents about his eye condition. They said that his optic nerve was damaged and that he would never see again. The family was initially disheartened but their basic optimism resurfaced. They took Ashwin to several hospitals in India but got the same response elsewhere. 11 precious years were spent in loving for a cure, a miracle but to no avail.

Finally, commonsense prevailed. They started looking for a school to educate Ashwin but was told he was too old and had missed the bus.

Ashwin's father heard about the ATC School which admits such children. Ashwin joined the school and very soon started showing his brilliance in the elocution competitions, Braille writing and acting. He showed his leadership abilities in organizing blind students.

He now has organized a Musical Band of blind students which organize professional programmes. At present, Ashwin is doing his telephone operating and computer programming at the BPA while preparing for his public service examinations. He is a boy with a clear vision, he is ambitious, determined that he will become a senior Bureaucrat – come what May. He personifies Swami Vivekananda's dictum "Arise awake and stop not till the Goal reached....."

THE RELENTLESS CRUSADER :



Name : **Ms. Yogini Chandubhai Patel**
 Age : 47 Yrs
 Sex : Female
 Disability : **Orthopaedically Handicapped**
 Address : 13/A, Parulnagar Society
 Bhuyangdev, Sola Road,

Yogini is the only daughter of her family. She has two brothers and they are all very united. Yogini was a healthy baby and was fond of dancing and singing. Unfortunately, she got a fever and contracted polio. Her dancing and running around stopped suddenly and the parents became gloomy. They however, continue to love and support her in her thirst for knowledge.

After passing 4th standard, it was time to get admission in middle school. Her parents took her to a school where she was interviewed. At the end of interview, the Principal said that they will not give her admission because of her disability. She and her family were shocked. First time she realized that she had a disability and that people discriminated and did not give her an opportunity. She refused to take admission in that school even though the Principal relented. She decided that day itself that she would fight with the world for her rights. She decided to acquire more skills and knowledge than other able body persons. She took admission in the school that was more welcoming to disabled persons. She did her graduation and post graduation and completed her law. Always the one thing in her mind was to do better than other students.

THE CACTUS FLOWER:



Name : **Daya Vinodbhai Vala**
 Age : 10 Yrs
 Sex : Female
 Disability : **Deafblind**
 Address : Dhanushdhari Society
 Sejpur, Bogha, Naroda,

Daya when she first came to us looked like an extra terrestrial being. She looked a cross between a human and a Martian. She was only 11 months old, could not hold her large head. Her eyes were like slits and she was of the size of a four month baby. We did not know what to make of this baby. Doctors told us that Daya was affected by the Rubella Syndrome.

We were shocked and felt very helpless. We had no idea how to rehabilitate this tiny little human being who did not seem to respond to anything. She couldn't hear, or see, or stand, or respond. How could any educator help her? We, however, learnt about her disability and trained our staff to understand her needs and deal with them efficiently.

We learnt that she had cataracts since birth was deaf and had a hole in her heart. We learnt that Daya would never speak or hear but she could be taught to communicate using different media. Our staff acquired skills along the way and Daya and her family also learnt with us. Today Daya has had cataract surgery, wears glasses to help her to use her residual vision. Her heart surgery has taken place and we now have a well-adjusted, giggly kid who is a heart stealer! Today Daya has started cycling furiously on her little tricycle, does painting, sorting, can eat independently. She is now integrated in the Adult Training School for the Blind in the 5th Standard.

[For more detail...](#)