

# about the service corps fellowship

The Service Corps Fellowship gives a select group of young American professionals the opportunity to serve with Indian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for ten months. The program is an exchange of technical skills and intellectual resources which aims to build the capacity of Indian NGOs while developing American leaders with a deep understanding of, and continued commitment to, India.

Since 2001, 178 Americans have worked with over 90 Indian NGOs through the Service Corps Fellowship.

The Service Corps is a life-altering experience for the fellows. For most, the profound lessons learned while working with marginalized communities in India stays with them and influences their professional trajectories, as change makers and social entrepreneurs in the US and around the world. For some, the experience of applying their skills, ingenuity and initiative to creating solutions in an Indian NGO gives them a sense of their own impact in enabling social change. For others, the greatest takeaway is learning to understand and adapt to a culture vastly different from their own. A number of Fellows have chosen to stay on in India at the end of their tenure with the Service Corps so that they can continue the hands-on development work that they began with AIF.

The Service Corps Fellows, who stem from diverse educational and professional backgrounds, are linked in their desire to help unearth India's potential. The Gandhian essence of the Fellowship calls upon a sense of commitment and self-reliance in its Fellows as well as a deep desire to help others empower themselves.

The 23, 2008-09, Service Corps Fellows are an exceptionally qualified and diverse group, selected through a rigorous process conducted by a panel of international development and volunteer service experts from India and the United States. Each fellow comes with a strong professional and academic background in a variety of development related fields.

"We are a new organization still trying to find our feet and our AIF Fellow landed right into the pandemonium... Within one month, it seemed like our Fellow had been in KHAMIR forever and it was inconceivable that we could have functioned without her before that! Overall the program was enriching... in terms of cross cultural understanding, in terms of understanding levels of professionalism across countries, building deep, warm relationships and to realize that each of us have special skills which make the whole."

- Meera Goradia, Director, KHAMIR Craft Resource Center. Kutch, Gujarat



Captions (left to right) Brian Heilman, Street Survivors, West Bengal. Diana Chester, Digital Equalizer, Bangalore and New Delhi. Emily Carlson, Samya, New Delhi.

"My time at APV definitely marks a significant period of personal, as well as, professional growth. I cannot recall a more fulfilling, contented year in my life and for that I am indebted to the American India Foundation for providing me with such a rewarding opportunity."

- Chad Robertson, Service Corps Fellow 2007-08

"When I think of myself as a Service Corps Fellow, I define myself by what I gave to the organization, locality, people and environment that surrounded me for the past year...I will stay true to my course and ... I believe that people will come to join me. In many ways my fellow fellows are already those people, responding to the very call to action that Rabindranath Tagore was writing: *If, having heard your call, no one comes to your side, then go it alone!*"

- Brian Heilman, Service Corps Fellow 2007-08

## About the American India Foundation

AIF's mission is to accelerate social and economic change in India. By mobilizing people and resources in the United States, AIF has invested in over 100 Indian non-governmental organizations since its inception in 2001. AIF awards grants to education, livelihood and public health projects in India - with emphases on elementary education, women's empowerment and maternal and child health respectively. AIF also administers two programs: (1) Digital Equalizer, which bridges the "digital divide" by providing computers, Internet access and training in under-resourced schools, and (2) Service Corps, which builds the capacity of Indian NGOs by placing qualified young American professionals for ten-month volunteer assignments. President Bill Clinton serves as Honorary Chair of AIF.

### AMERICAN INDIA FOUNDATION

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# Service Corps Fellowship



Photos: (top) Maria Kasparian, Street Survivors, West Bengal. (bottom, left to right) Vaani Garg, Saheli, Pune. Katie Potter, Mamta, Uttar Pradesh. 2007-08 Fellows at Endpoint, Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand.

# past fellows' accomplishments

# 2008 - 09 fellows

# 2008 - 09 fellows



## ARUN GUPTA

Arun Gupta was placed at Seva Mandir in Udaipur, Rajasthan. During his Fellowship, Arun established a lentil procurement and marketing operation for local, impoverished farmers from the Adivasi region of Kotra Tehsil. His project stands to greatly improve the incomes of hundreds of poor farmers.

## VANITHA SIVARAJAN

Vanitha was placed at DHAN in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. She completed a detailed review and assessment of a group of restored water shed tanks operating in Tamil Nadu. Vanitha's work included conducting extensive interviews with the farming communities who benefit from the restored water tanks. DHAN's work on water programs has established Tamil Nadu as a lead innovator in the area of local, sustainable water programs throughout India.



## LAURIE MASON

Laurie Mason was placed at Bodh Shiksha Samiti in Jaipur, Rajasthan. Laurie created two comprehensive laboratory manuals to accompany science classes for 9th and 10th grades. She taught portions of physics classes and created detailed science curricula. Laurie also completed an evaluation of Bodh's slum school program in Jaipur by interviewing Bodh school graduates and their families.

## CHAD ROBERTSON

Chad's primary goal at Ashram Paryavaran Vidyalaya (APV) at Shree Bhuvaneshwari Mahila Ashram (SBMA) was to broaden awareness and increase the visibility of the school's innovative curriculum. Chad created a communication portfolio for the school, including a website, a documentary film, two recorded albums of the students performing APV songs, and a general brochure for a national and international supporters. He collaborated with past Service Corps Fellows to set up a US-based organization to raise funds for APV. Chad also successfully obtained a grant from Plan International that enabled APV to train students and teachers from 28 government schools in APV's pedagogical techniques.



## KIRSTEN ANDERSON

NGO: AID INDIA  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

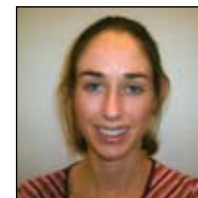
Kirsten graduated from Grinnell College in 2000 and has an MA in TEFL from the University of Birmingham. She has worked as a program assistant for South India Term Abroad and led a Studies Abroad for Global Education (SAGE) summer trip to India. Additionally, she taught English on the JET Program and at Tibet Charity in Dharamsala, India.



## POOJA BHATIA

NGO: BEROJGAR MAHILA SEWA SAMITI  
Bhilai, Chattisgarh

Pooja graduated in '06 from Northwestern University with a BA in Psychology and Spanish. After graduation, Pooja worked as a Strategic Planner in the Marketing Communications department at Apple, Inc. During college, she was on the Executive Board of Dance Marathon, the largest fully student-run philanthropy in the country.



## DIANE COFFEY

NGO: YUSUF MEHERALLY CENTER  
Kutch, Gujarat

Diane received her BA in Sociology from Villanova University in 2006. She spent a semester abroad in Jaipur, India, where she worked with Bodh Shiksha Samiti researching adolescent girls' education. Diane is taking a year off her MPA studies at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School.



## EKTA DHARIA

NGO: NAVSARJAN  
Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Ekta graduated from Duke with a BA in Environmental Science in 2008. During college she interned in India with the NGO Saathi. She also interned with the United Nations. At Duke, she taught a course on 'Addressing Social Justice Issues at Home and Abroad' and volunteered at Urban Ministries, a homeless shelter.



## HOWARD MATTHEW FRENCH

NGO: KAGAS  
Uttarakhand

Matthew received his BA in psychology from the University of California at San Diego. In 2008, he received a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Washington where he worked as a research assistant in the Department of Epidemiology.



## NINA MATURU

NGO: AKANKSHA FOUNDATION  
Pune, Maharashtra

Nina graduated from New York University in 2006, where she was awarded the Hale/Chavez Community Activism and Service Award. During college, she worked with the New York Civil Liberties Union. After college, Nina taught ESL in Japanese public schools and worked with activists in Japan concerning homelessness and migrants rights.

## PRAVEEN BASAWAN

NGO: SOUTH INDIA AIDS ACTION PROGRAM  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Praveen received his BA in Psychology from Brown University where he served on the Minority Peer Counselor team for three years. Most recently, he worked as the Program Manager of the University Consortium for Sexuality Research and Training at the National Sexuality Resource Center in San Francisco.



## TAHMID CHOWDHRY

NGO: SAATHI  
Kolkata, West Bengal

Most recently, Tahmid worked as a psychosocial worker with Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance, a non-profit in Cairo, Egypt. Previously, he worked for the New York City government with the Medical Insurance and Community Service Administration. He received his BA at Columbia in '06 in Neuroscience and Behavior, and co-founded the Barnard-Columbia Undergraduate Public Health Society.



## RICK DESAI

NGO: SAATHI  
Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Rick received his BSBA in Finance and International Business from Georgetown University in 2004. Most recently Rick worked at Madison Dearborn Partners, a Chicago-based private equity firm. Prior, Rick worked with Lehman Brothers Inc. in New York. Rick served as the Chicago Chair of the Georgetown Alumni Class of 2004.



## CAROLYN FLOREY

NGO: BREAKTHROUGH  
New Delhi

Carolyn graduated from Tufts University in 2003. She then received a Fulbright grant to study in Jeonju, South Korea. She has worked as a Junior Professional Associate at the World Bank's Development Marketplace (DM), where she was a member of a four person team implementing the prestigious 2008 global competition.



## JAMES B. GALLOWAY

NGO: KHAMIR  
Kutch, Gujarat

James graduated from Carnegie Mellon University in 2006. In 2007-08, James worked in the Poverty Reduction and Millennium Development Goals sector of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Thimpu, Bhutan. James also taught at the Thimpu Primary School.



## JOY MISHLEY

NGO: DEEPGRIHA  
Pune, Maharashtra

Joy received her BA from Duke University in 1999 and her MSW from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2007. While at UNC, Joy was awarded the C.V. Starr International Scholarship to serve as a social work intern at the YMCA in New Delhi.



## ANN SOPHIE NAMY

NGO: KAGAS  
Uttarakhand

In 2008, Sophie completed a Masters degree in International Studies and Public Affairs, with a certificate in Global Health at the University of Washington. In 2006 she was awarded the Elaine Chang Fellowship for International Peace and Development, and interned with UNICEF investigating village planning interventions in a rural part of Maharashtra.



## CLARA PRESLER

NGO: DHAN  
Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Clara received her BA in History from Carleton College in 2004. From 2005 to 2008, Clara worked at Human Rights Watch in New York on Women's Rights and HIV/AIDS.



## NATASSIA ROZARIO

NGO: SAATHI  
Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Natassia Rozario received her BA in Political Science from Columbia University in 2004, and received her MPH from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in 2007. For her Masters project, Natassia used epidemiological techniques to analyze human trafficking among North Korean women in China.



## KALPANA SIMHAN

NGO: DR. REDDY'S FOUNDATION  
Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh

In 2007 Kalpana received an M.A with Distinction in International Education from the University of Sussex, focusing on gender in South Asia. For 10 years she worked with International NGOs. Most significantly, she was the Director of Education Programs, and later, Managing Director, of the World Affairs Council of Washington, DC.



## DIEGO SOLARES

NGO: SAHELI  
Pune, Maharashtra

Diego graduated from the University of California at Irvine in 2008. In college, Diego was a program assistant for the Community Knowledge Project. He also received the Kristin Rosten International & Community Service Award and the Freeman-ASIA Fellowship.



## MICHAEL YAU

NGO: SEVA MANDIR  
Udaipur, Rajasthan

Michael graduated from Duke University in 2004 with a BA in economics and religion. He most recently worked for Nautic Partners equity firm based in Providence, RI. Prior, Michael was an analyst at Peter J Solomon Company.

## ANINDITA PAL

NGO: PRAYASAM  
Kolkata, West Bengal

Neela Pal worked with the Business and Society Program of the Aspen Institute, an international leadership development and dialogue think tank in New York City, since 2006. Neela graduated from the University of Virginia in 2006, majoring in English Literature and Foreign Affairs.



## SUZANNE RIZZO

NGO: MANN VIKAS SAMAJIK SANSTHA  
Satara, Maharashtra

Suzanne received her BA from Wellesley College in 2008, where she was a Women's Studies tutor and a Sexual Health Educator. She spent a summer abroad with the Tibetan Women's Association in India, teaching English to Tibetan women enrolled in a vocational training program and helping to organize the Tibetan People's movement.



## HEMANT SHARMA

NGO: JAN MITRA NYAS  
Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Hemant graduated from New York University in 2004, where he studied finance and economics at the Stern School of Business. Hemant spent the next three years working for the investment banking practice at Greenhill & Co. in New York.



## MEERA SINHA

NGO: DIGITAL EQUALIZER BANGALORE  
Bangalore, Karnataka

Meera Sinha graduated in 2006 from Duke University, where she studied Film and French. After graduating, she worked at the Chicago International Film Festival. In March 2007, Meera joined Free Spirit Media. In Chicago, she was also a freelance videographer for Community Renewal Society.



## HAMSA SUBRAMANIAM

NGO: SAATHI  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Hamsa graduated from University of Notre Dame in 2007 with a BA in Political Science and International Peace Studies. After college, she worked for the U.S. Department of Justice. Hamsa has interned with the UN Information Center in Washington, DC and at the UN office of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in New York City.

