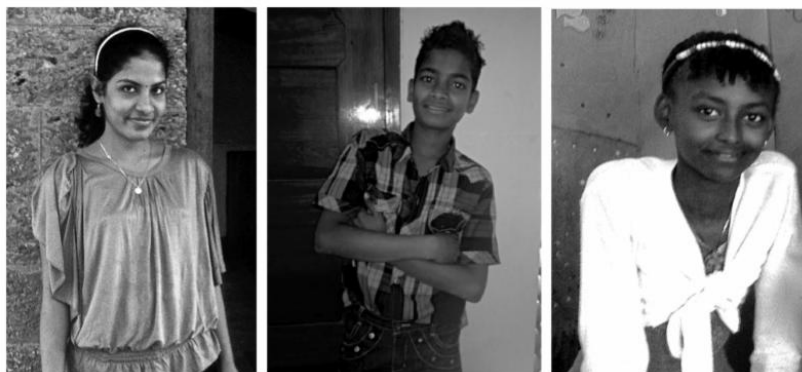


SEPTEMBER 2014

**From Executive Producer  
Anthan Sunder ...**

## "Voices of Empowerment" Film Documents Inspiring Stories of Visions Youth



This summer we began work on "Voices of Empowerment," a short documentary film that tells the compelling stories of youth Visions serves in Sri Lanka, India, and Ethiopia. Highlighting the daily hardships and obstacles faced by Visions-supported youth, this documentary features one student from each country. In July 2014, Visions was thrilled to formalize Anthan Sunder as the film's Executive Producer, generating a great boost of encouragement and support to the work of filmmaker Mimi Gibbon. Anthan has been a long-time supporter of Visions and even traveled to Sri Lanka in 2013 to serve as a volunteer at a Visions youth leadership training.

### **Our campaign goal is to raise \$30,000**

while sharing the powerful stories and challenges of the youth we serve. The proceeds of this fundraising campaign will not only cover the cost of the film, but will fund a full year of After-School Programs and the Visions Leadership Academy in North and East Sri Lanka. Collectively the funds raised through this campaign will support more than 600 youth and provide \$20,000 worth of education programs.

### **We are still in need of Executive Co-Producers**

(gift of \$5,000), Producers (gift of \$2,500) and Associate Producers (gift of \$1,000) for the film. All Producers will receive film credits and

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### In This Issue

["Voices of Empowerment" Documentary Film Gives a Voice to Marginalized Youth](#)

[Summer Service Learning Trips in Ethiopia & India Spark Cycles of Change](#)

[Upcoming Visions Events](#)

[Recent Visions Events](#)

## Our Impact

(since 2003)

LEADERSHIP & TEACHER TRAININGS	2,119
AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS	1,029
SCHOLARSHIPS	103
OTHER PROJECTS	14,427
VOLUNTEERS	500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,178</b>

## Visions Chapters

We invite you to get involved with one of our many Visions Chapters today or start your own. Please feel free to contact any of the following individuals if you are interested in joining.

### DAVIS:

Ahalya Prakash & Irum Ahmed  
ahprakash@ucdavis.edu;

recognition on publicity materials (print, social media, and online). You will also receive a copy of the DVD and VIP passes to attend the 2015 film premier in Los Angeles when the film is complete.

Donations of all sizes are welcome! **Donate any amount** to become a Champion Sponsor. Contributions can be made online by clicking the PayPal logo above or through our special campaign website:

<https://voices-of-empowerment.squarespace.com>

## Visions' 12th Year of Summer Service Learning Trips Spark Cycles of Change



*Visions India leadership students planted 25 trees as part of a special 2-day session on Environmentalism*

For the 12th year running, Visions conducted its annual summer volunteer trips -- this time to Ethiopia (9 volunteers) and India (8 volunteers). What a motivating and inspiring experience it is to spend time on the ground working side by side with our local partners and the youth they serve!

In Ethiopia, our volunteer team hit the ground running, starting with meetings in Addis Ababa with representatives from the Ethiopian Women with Disabilities National Association (EWDNA) and

iahmed@ucdavis.edu

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Ethiopian Human Rights Commission today, including Ethiopia's former Ambassador to the UN and current Chief Commissioner of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission Tiruneh Zena. They then headed to Bahir Dar where they conducted a 3-day capacity building training with 17 local colleagues from Addis Ababa and Bahir Dar designed to help empower and foster a thriving deaf civil society in Ethiopia. These local leaders are both deaf & hearing and come from a variety of backgrounds (interpreters, teachers, lecturers, students, and nonprofit leaders). Immediately after, a 3-day program was held for 73 youth (ages 6 - 29) at the 3rd annual "Ethiopia Deaf Education & Empowerment" youth camp in Bahir Dar. Each year the program grows along with our impact, thanks to the amazing commitment of our local partners and teachers.

It is through our volunteers' testimonials that we know we are truly making a difference and offering a unique international service experience. As one of our volunteers stated:

*"The opportunity to go on the Visions Deaf Education and empowerment Service Trip in Ethiopia has truly been a gift. Participating in the Deaf Leadership Capacity Training was informative, thought-provoking and productive. It really got all the participants thinking about goals for developing a "Thriving Deaf Civil Society in Ethiopia." It was fantastic to see the Visions model for encouraging and empowering local partners to take ownerships of their work and become leaders.*

*It was such a joy to work with the Deaf children at the Bahir Dar School. I really enjoyed the positive energy of the students. I loved being able to experience Ethiopian Sign Language and compare the similarities and differences to American Sign Language, and it was great to be immersed in the Ethiopian culture. It was a fantastic trip!"*

*~ Rebecca Swenson, Visions Ethiopia 2014 Volunteer & Lecturer at SUNY New Paltz*



*Local deaf leaders, interpreters, & teachers took part in a 3-day capacity building training designed to help build up a more thriving Deaf civil society in Ethiopia*

In India, our group had a full schedule with conducting >special 2-day leadership program for 37 Visions India Leadership Academy students, a 3-day "Introduction to Leadership" training for 51 Dalit youth, and a 2-day program for 139 children and teachers at the

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## Stay Connected with Us!

Keep up to date with Visions and all our efforts, events, upcoming trips, and more...

#### **FACEBOOK**



#### **TWITTER**



#### **YOUTUBE**



#### **RAZOO**

<http://www.razoo.com/story/Visions-Global-Empowerment>

Join Our Mailing List!

young, and a 2-day program for 100 children and teachers at the SAWED Radiance School for Tribal & Dalit Children. The 2-day special leadership program on "Environmental Consciousness & Community Impact" was a particular highlight with lessons focusing on the inspiring work of Dr. Jane Goodall in promoting conservation, primatology, and environmental education and on the legacy of Wangari Maathai and the ongoing work of the The Green Belt Movement in reforestation and community development. After learning about the amazing leadership of these women, the students planted 25 trees in "oxygen zones" in 2 nearby villages.

Thank you to all our volunteers, both international and local, who gave time, efforts, and resources toward making these service programs a resounding success yet again.

## Upcoming Visions Events

### Rochester: September 27th

**What:** Experience Ethiopian Culture & Cuisine: Nazareth College Ethiopia Trip Benefit

**Where:** Taste of Ethiopia, 155 State St., Rochester, NY14614

**When:** 6:00 - 8:00pm

\*Evening includes Ethiopian buffet, cultural show, traditional coffee ceremony, and auction. Tickets are \$30/person.

### New York City: September 29th

**What:** "Loss & Hope: Perspectives from Sri Lanka" - An Art Exhibit & Social Hour

**Where:** Suite Bar, 992 Amsterdam Ave, New York, NY 10025

**When:** 5:00 - 10:00pm

\*\$10 suggested donation and drink specials, featuring art by Francesca Bremner.

### New York City: October 8th

**What:** "Cocktails with a Cause"

**Where:** Whitman & Bloom, 384 3rd Ave, New York, NY

**When:** 7:00 - 10:00pm

\*This is a joint benefit event for Visions and Baal Dan. \$20 suggested donation.

### Edmonton: October 11th - 13th

**What:** Recycling Drive; volunteers will be collecting cans, bottles, and other recyclable items during Canada's Thanksgiving

**When:** October 11th-13th (tentative dates).

\*Please contact Leka at [lsivakum@ualberta.ca](mailto:lsivakum@ualberta.ca) for more information or to get involved.

### New Paltz, NY: October 27th

**What:** Ethiopia Service Learning Trip 2015 Presentation

**Where:** SUNY New Paltz

\*Details to be released shortly. Please contact Rebecca Swenson at [swensonr@newpaltz.edu](mailto:swensonr@newpaltz.edu) for details or to express interest in the trip scheduled for June 15 - 27, 2014.

### Rochester: November, 2nd

**What:** Ethiopia Benefit Concert

**Where:** Private Residence, Rochester, NY 14614

\*Details to be released shortly. Please contact Betsy Finigan at [finiganbetsy@yahoo.com](mailto:finiganbetsy@yahoo.com) for event details or to purchase tickets.

## Venita's "30 for 30" Campaign

This year, Visions Board member Venita Sivamani is celebrating her 30th birthday. In honor of this momentous occasion, she has launched an ambitious campaign to raise \$30,000 to support Visions education program for youth affected by poverty, conflict, and disability. Having traveled with Visions in all 3 countries (Sri Lanka, India, and Ethiopia), Venita has witnessed the need first-hand to support the children in these communities. Please support her by giving today at <http://visionsglobalempowerment.org/30for30/>.

## Nazareth College Ethiopia Trip (June 15-27, 2015)

We are excited to announce the dates of another upcoming accredited trip to Ethiopia in partnership with SUNY New Paltz, scheduled for June 15 - 27, 2015. While students who attend can earn academic credit, the trip is also "open" for anyone who would like to join. Please email us at [visionseducation@gmail.com](mailto:visionseducation@gmail.com) to express interest and join our mailing list.

## Recent Visions Events

### Edmonton--July 27th

Our Visions Edmonton team continues the tradition of excellence and service...last month they held a BBQ in the park complete with games, food, and great company. The event raised CAD \$1,300 for Visions' ongoing educational programs in Sri Lanka. Many thanks to all who organized, attended, and made a contribution!

### Maryland to Pennsylvania--July 2014

This past July our volunteer Visions Director of Strategic Planning Lorraine McCall embarked on a epic bike ride from Maryland to Pennsylvania and beyond to support Visions' deaf education and empowerment efforts in Ethiopia! Her perseverance and commitment are a great inspiration to our team. She is still collecting funds; please consider supporting her incredible journey by making a donation here: [\*\*SUPPORT LORRAINE'S BIKE RIDE\*\*](#).



### New Paltz, NY--September 9th

At the SUNY New Paltz Study Abroad Fair, trip information for an upcoming accredited Visions service learning opportunity in Ethiopia

(June 15-27, 2015) was officially unveiled and the opportunity shared with students by Rebecca Swenson, Lecturer in Communication Disorders and recent Visions Ethiopia volunteer. This marks Visions' 4th partnership with a US-based university. While students who attend can earn academic credit, the trip is also "open" for anyone who wants to join. Please email us at [visionseducation@gmail.com](mailto:visionseducation@gmail.com) to express interest and join our mailing list.

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[www.VisionsGlobalEmpowerment.org](http://www.VisionsGlobalEmpowerment.org)

## **PLEASE MAKE A CONTRIBUTION!**

***Invest in the world's marginalized youth. Invest in the leaders of tomorrow. Invest in Visions.***

**We can only do this important work with your support. Donations are accepted online through our website OR can be mailed to us. Please make checks out to "Visions". All donations are tax-deductible [tax ID#26-3386678].**