February 19, 2024

# SCHOOLMELA 2023

#### **Contents:**

- School Supplies Distribution in India (p.2)
- 3rd Schoolmela Quiz District Level (p.4)
- Supporting Schools in U.S. (p.6)
- A Needy Student (p.8)
- Updates (p.9)
- Testimonials(p.10)
- Schoolmela's 15 Year Milestone (p.11)
- Photos (p.12)
- Thank you... (p.14)

@ ZPP HIGH School Pillamedu

School Supplies Distribution

#### What is Schoolmela?

Schoolmela

Help Rural Education

Schoolmela is a non-profit organization committed to providing education resources for underprivileged children in rural India. Our team, comprised of like-minded individuals with rural backgrounds, established this initiative to give back to the community. We aim to empower rural students by offering career guidance and mentoring services. Based in Central Texas, USA, our mission extends to supporting education in Rural India and also helping disadvantaged students in Cedar Park, Round Rock, and more.



## **School Supplies Distribution**

**S**ince 2009, Schoolmela has been dedicated to distributing essential school supplies to rural schools, initially starting as a small group making a localized impact. Over the years, our influence has expanded significantly.

Our approach involves assembling school supplies tailored for each student, encapsulated in what we term a "Scholarship Package." Each Schoolmela school bag is meticulously prepared, containing essentials such as shoes, a dictionary, notebooks, textbooks, an umbrella, clothing, pens, pencils, and more. Annually, we select 15-20 economically disadvantaged students from each adopted high school to receive these packages. Importantly, receiving a "Scholarship Package" signifies that Schoolmela will support the student's entire high school education (8th-10th grade). This commitment has empowered more than 250 students each year. The entire process, from identifying students to purchasing, packing, and distributing

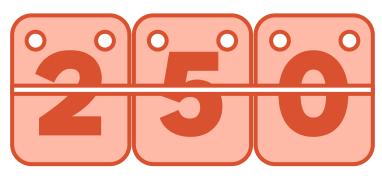
"When we call the name of a student while handing out school supplies, their faces light up with joy. At that moment, I feel an equal amount of joy as a coordinator."

- Venkatesh G, Schools Coordinator

supplies, spans 6-8 weeks.

From small beginnings, we initially adopted four schools and sponsored 60 students. Schoolmela has now adopted 16 schools and is sponsoring 250 students. Additionally, we extend our support beyond tangible supplies, offering crucial career guidance and mentoring to these children. Our goal is to give access to education for needy children, ensuring they can attend school without financial concerns. We strive to stop school dropouts and ensure that rural students receive their education at the right time without any hindrances.

## Q: How many students did we support in 2023?







## District Level 3rd Quiz

The district-level quiz competition was organized by Schoolmela in collaboration with the NSS unit of IIT Tirupati at the IIT Tirupati campus on 8th October. The event aimed to promote education and awareness among the rural students of government schools in and around the district. Around 50 government schools participated in the competition, which tested their knowledge on various subjects such as science, mathematics, history, geography, and current affairs.

The prize money and certificates were distributed to the winners and runners-up of the competition by Shri Kumar, Dr. NN Murthy, and Mahesh Kumar Mulakala. The first prize was awarded to High School Urandur followed by 2nd position High School Sirasambedu, and 3rd position High School, R Mallavaram.

The event was a grand success and received positive feedback from the participants, teachers, and guests. The quiz competition was a memorable and enriching experience for all involved.



Schoolmela Quiz 2023 @ IIT Tirupati



Schoolmela Quiz 2023 @ IIT Tirupati

"Great work! I sincerely appreciate all of your support to Schoolmela. Your effort and passion for uplifting rural high school kids is really amazing and wonderful. Of course, the efforts of volunteers and coordinators are incredible." - Rajesh J, Schoolmela Board



#### Communicated Schools:



The Dean of Student Affairs, Dr. NN Murthy, also addressed the participants and congratulated them for their performance and participation. He highlighted the importance of quiz competitions as a means of enhancing one's knowledge and skills. He also praised the initiative of Schoolmela and the NSS unit for creating a platform for the students.

**Participated Participants:** Schools: **Finalist** Winners: Schools:

The NSS Program Officer, Mahesh Kumar Mulakala, also spoke on the occasion and thanked Schoomela for their support and partnership. He also thanked the IIT Tirupati administration, faculty, staff, and volunteers for their cooperation and assistance in conducting the event. He expressed his hope that such events would continue in the future and benefit more students.

#### Supporting Schools in the US





**K**nown for its support to schools in India, Schoolmela decided to broaden its impact by extending assistance to schools in the US in 2023. Specifically targeting those with limited funding to prepare for the upcoming school year, we directed our efforts towards schools in the Austin, Texas area. These schools cater to foster children, special-needs children, and economically disadvantaged children, intensifying the urgency of our support.

To embark on this mission, securing funds became our initial challenge. High school students in the Ranch at Brushy Creek area enthusiastically embraced the cause, organizing a successful juice drive within their community during the summer of 2023. Simultaneously, kids in the Parkside Community conducted a similar drive, contributing significantly to our fundraising efforts.

Noteworthy support also came from corporate entities such as Costco, Walmart, Target, and the Cheesecake Factory, offering valuable contributions to our cause.

"I have been involved in Schoolmela activities since I was a small child and after seeing the smiles Schoolmela brought to adopted schools, I feel motivated to work harder and spread more happiness." - Satwika G, Schoolmela Volunteer



The accumulated funds have been strategically utilized to assist RRISD schools. We donated \$600 worth of gift cards and we also gave bags of traditional school supplies to Voigt Elementary, Old Town Elementary, and Union Hill Elementary. This initiative reflects

Schoolmela's commitment to addressing educational disparities and ensuring a positive start to the academic year for all students.



School Supplies Distribution @ Voigt Elementary



### A Needy Student

p.8

"There are many children in our area who do not have access to education and good guidance like me. I am there to help them all. My motto is to help everyone as much as possible."



Anuradha P. 12th Grader

		<u>Name</u> : Anuradha Ponnuswamy			
		<u>From</u> : Anaippalayam (rural s	om: Anaippalayam (rural suburb),		
	$\bigcirc$	150 km from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu			
		Background: Parents work for daily-wages			
		Need: Cannot continue education			
		due to financial			
		issues and looking			
		forward for support	Schoolmela is currently considering Anuradha's		
			application for financial		
		<u>Goals</u> : Study Engineering,	support from the Schoolmela Trust.		
		Help Others,	Please donate to support Anuradha and her goals! :)		
0 _		Support Family			
8					

## Trust Registration in India

**S**uccessfully completing the registration of Schoolmela India Trust, we ensure that all donations raised in India are directly deposited into the trust's bank account. The funds will be utilized for Schoolmela programs with strict adherence to the guidelines governing foreign transfers and donations in both the USA and India. To guarantee transparent financial management, our Indian trust partner receives contributions and allocates funds responsibly.

In compliance with regulatory requirements, an Indian CPA (accountant) has been assigned to audit our accounts and complete tax filings annually in India. This meticulous financial oversight ensures accountability and transparency in our operations. Expanding our reach, we aim to engage more friends and families in India, encouraging them to support and contribute to our Indian channel, thereby extending crucial assistance to students in need.

## **Goals Progress**



"I have been involved in Schoolmela activities since I was a small child and after seeing the smiles Schoolmela brought to adopted schools, I feel motivated to work harder and spread more happiness." - Satwika G, Schoolmela Volunteer

p.9

## Testimonials

On behalf of your friends at Union Hill Elementary, we wish to extend our sincerest gratitude for the school supplies you've given us! Our students and staff are beyond excited for the amazing headphones and our teachers are super thrilled to be able to offer supplies for our students and families who struggle. This is one last thing for them to worry about thanks to Schoolmela. I just want to humbly thank you, again, for your contribution to our Union Hill Community. We just appreciate your thoughtfulness and would love to work with you again in the future!

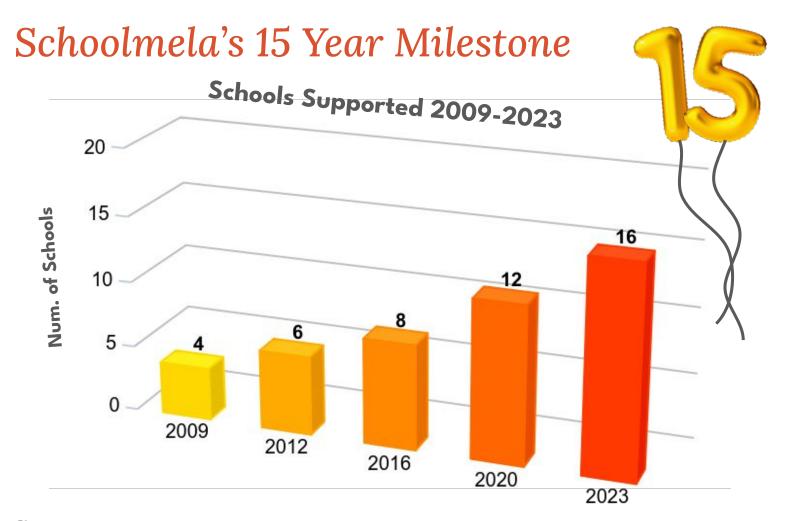
Maja McElveen and Gloria Valentin - Counselors Union Hill Elementary - RRISD

We are very grateful for the donation of gift cards. Old Town Elementary is a Dual Language campus but not Title 1 therefore we do not receive extra funding to support our students' individual needs as they arise. This donation will allow me to purchase school supplies that families are not able to provide. Collaborating with Schoolmela has been a wonderful experience and makes my job as the counselor that much easier. We appreciate you!

Mrs. Cabrera - Counselor Old Town Elementary - RRISD

Our school may be in an affluent, suburban school district, but we have a high percentage of low-income and homeless students, which makes getting enough school supplies to support their learning can be a challenge. Schoolmela was able to lift that burden from students, their families, and teachers by providing a full set of school supplies for every single classroom on our campus. They even provided gift cards for us to share with families to help them with needs outside of the school setting. which is such a blessing that will further benefit our students. Thank you, Schoolmela, for your generous partnership with our school!

Julia Strange - Counselor; Voigt Elementary - RRISD



**S**choolmela has successfully conducted three ITMELA workshops (job melas) in India, where we have facilitated job opportunities for 8 to 10 individuals with small startups. Today, these individuals have found great success, establishing themselves in the US, Bangalore, and Hyderabad. Our commitment extends to supporting special students whose college education was halted due to financial concerns. Schoolmela stepped in to assist six students who are now settled in prominent positions at IBM, Cognizant, serving as school teachers, and working as electrical engineers in different towns. Additionally, our impact has reached the high school level through a small quiz program, which has now expanded to nearly 100 schools participating at a district level. The program maintains high standards to acknowledge and reward students for their achievements.

With a dedicated team of over 20 volunteers, including one full-time volunteer serving since 2009, Schoolmela attributes its progress to these committed individuals. Without their contributions, our accomplishments would not have been possible. We take immense pride and joy in our association with friends and families from various places in the USA, including Austin, Dallas, Florida, California, New Jersey, Denver, and others. It is the kindness of these families and friends that enables us to support rural causes. We express gratitude to our friends in India who have consistently helped and contributed throughout the years.



#### విద్యార్థులకు విద్యాసామాగ్రి పంపిణి



#### (శీకాళహస్తి రూరల్, మనం న్యూస్.

మండలంలోని తొండమనాడు, అక్కుర్తి, ముచ్చువోలు జిల్లా పరిషత్ ఉన్నత పాఠశాలల్లోని 45 మంది విద్యార్తులకు స్మూల్ మేకా స్వచ్చంద సంస వారిచే చేశారు. విద్యాసామగ్రి සුදාන పంపిణీ పరిషత్ తొందమనాదు జిలా ప్రధానోపాధ్యాయులు కృష్ణయ్య మాట్లాడుతూ ప్రభుత్వంతో పాటు పేద విద్యార్థులకు సామాగ్రి పంపిణీ చేయడం అభినందనీయమని తెలిపారు. విద్యార్తులను ವಿದ್ವಾ ట్రోత్సహించడం స్వచ్చంద సంస్థలు తమ వంతు కృషి చేయడం గ్రామీణ ప్రాంతాల్లో పేద విద్యార్థులకు ఎంతో ఉపయోగకరమని తెలిపారు. కార్యక్రమం లో స్కూల్ మేళ స్వచ్చంద సంస్థ కోఆర్డినేటర్ వెంకటేశ్వర్లు, ప్రజా ప్రగతి ట్రస్ట్ కోఆర్డినేటర్ చంద్రశేఖర్, ప్రదీక్ కుమార్, గాంధీ, ప్రధానోపాధ్యాయులు లక్ష్మయ్య, చిరంజీవులు పాల్గొన్నారు



RTI EXPRESS 3075, 1070 18 Aug 2023 - Page 8

(శీకాళహస్తి, ఆగష్టు 17(ఆర్టిఐ ఎక్స్[పెస్ [పతినిధి పెంచలయ్య): శ్రీకాళహస్తి మందలం తొందమనాడు, అక్కుర్తి, ముచ్చువోలు జిల్లా పరిషత్ ఉన్నత పాఠశాలల్లో 45 మంది విద్యార్థులకు స్కూల్ మేళా స్వచ్ఛంద సంస్థ వారు నేడు విద్యాసామగ్రి, బట్టలు పంపిణీ చేసారు. ఈ కార్యక్రమంలో తొందమనాడు జిల్లా పరిషత్ ప్రధానోపాధ్యాయులు కృష్ణయ్య మాట్లాడుతూ, ప్రభుత్వంతో పాటు పేద విద్యార్థులకు విద్యా సామాగ్రి పంపిణీ చేయడం అభినందనీయమని తెలిపారు. విద్యార్థులను [పోత్సహించడం, స్వచ్ఛంద సంస్థలు తమ వంతు కృషి చేసి గ్రామీణ ప్రాంతాల్లో పేద విద్యార్థులకు ఎంతో ఉపయోగకరమని తెలిపారు. స్కూల్ మేళా స్వచ్చంద సంస్థ వారికి ప్రత్యేక ధన్యవాదములు తెలియజేసారు. తదనంతరం కోఆర్డినేటర్ వెంకటేశ్వర్లు మాట్లాడుతూ, (శీకాళహస్తి మండలంలో 15 పాఠశాలల్లో 250 మంది విద్యార్థులను గుర్తించి వారికి విద్యాసామగ్రితోపాటు నాన్ యూనిఫామ్ బట్టలు పంపిణీ చేస్తున్నామని తెలిపారు. ఈ కార్యక్రమంలో అక్కుర్తి జిల్లా పరిషత్ ఉన్నత పరిషత్ పాఠశాల ప్రధానోపాధ్యాయులు లక్ష్మయ్య, చిరంజీవులు, ప్రజా ప్రగతి ట్రస్ట్ కోఆర్టినేటర్ చంద్రశేఖర్, ఉ పాధ్యాయులు, క్లస్టర్ రిసోర్స్ పర్సన్స్ (పదీప్, కుమార్, గాంధీ, ధన శేఖర్, విద్యార్థులు, తల్లిదండ్రులు పాల్గొన్నారు.







p.12

School Supplies Packing USA







p.13

#### Thank You...





#### NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME Indian Institute of Technology Tirupati

**Rural Education Collaboration Partner** 

**Companies That Have Supported Schoolmela** 



#### **SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF YOU :)**

Schoolmela is a not for profit organization registered under Internal Revenue Code 501 (c)(3) in USA. All donations to Schoolmela are tax-deductible. www.schoolmela.org schoolmela@schoolmela.org