

Leavey School of Business, SCU

Global Fellows Program

Placement

Name of organization & website URL:

Aarti Home

<http://www.aartiforgirls.org/>

Location of Organization:

Vijay Foundation Trust (Assn)
D.No. 20/539-B,
Opp. Municipal Stadium, Kadapa – 516 001.
Y.S.R. DISTRICT,
Andhra Pradesh (State), India

Description of organization (history, mission, focus):

History:

It began with a single child year 1992. We found a 3-year old girl child abandoned in the streets of Kadapa. When we enquired about her whereabouts, we were told that her mother was killed by her father and she had nowhere to go. Instead of abandoning her again on the streets, we decided to provide her shelter.

To our delight, we found that many were willing to come forward and support her. To our horror, we found that there were many more abandoned girls like her. Aarti has grown over the last 20 years from a home with 4-5 girl children, to a shelter for 100 children, to a school for 250 children, to livelihood and awareness programs. Vijay Foundation Trust is now an umbrella organisation which plans and implements programs that address the larger issues hampering the progress of women in society.

While it is a matter of pride for us that we have been able to help abandoned girl children, it is also a matter of shame that we as a society continue to abandon girl children. And changing that we know is a journey of thousand miles. A journey we have just begun to walk.

Mission:

At Aarti, we believe in the ultimate empowerment – for a woman to be able to write her own story. We realize that gender equality is beyond just the survival of a girl child or for that matter, economic independence of women. It is only when women have the power to make choices for themselves and for their children can we consider them to be liberated.

→Core Purpose: Aarti exists to ensure that women survive and are empowered to exercise choices over their lives.

Programs:

Shelter and Schooling: It is not possible to recreate a lost home for a child. What we try however is to provide the kind of care and opportunities that every child has a right to expect from its parents – to be there through the storms of life. This has meant going beyond shelter and schooling, to get the children admitted in the right college or finding life partners for them. The commitment does not end with someone stepping out of Aarti's premises and into the world. Even after someone gets a job and is married, they still need a home to return to.

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Global Fellows Program

Placement

Empower Women: Aarti Livelihood programs address this issue. Till date, about 5000 women have been trained in various forms of income-generating skills such as Fashion Design and Tailoring, Beautician Training, Hand and Machine Embroidery, Handicraft Training including toy-making and Block Printing. Lalita Cooperative is a registered charity and was established to provide marketing support to women so that they could be economically independent.

Raise Awareness: Most issues surrounding gender equality are a result of ignorance, of laws, of rights, of what is the right way of being. As we move into the third decade of our work, we see awareness as the key driver of change – for if we can positively impact the way men think about women and women think about themselves, we can bring about lasting change. We provide knowledge and information to fight these issues through awareness camps for health and legal rights, campaigns against eve-teasing and domestic violence, family counselling and campaigns against dowry. We also believe that the future lies in what the next generation holds as its value system and hence conduct numerous programs in schools and colleges to educate them regarding gender discrimination issues. We have had heartening results in terms of not just making girls realise their worth but also in sensitising boys.

How many interns can you accommodate this year?

(Minimum of two students per location)

2 Interns

Please Answer the Following Questions for EACH Available Job:

Job Description: What will the student intern be doing?

Sponsorship: One intern will be responsible for keeping an up to date database on child sponsorship. Through donors, Aarti has been able to solicit financial sponsors for each child to cover the cost of education, food, and living expenses. The duties of this position will include keeping each child's file up to date, consistently communicating with sponsors via email, and keeping documentation of each interaction. Interns will have the opportunity to meet with each child and learn about his or her most recent interests and experiences at Aarti and then write a brief summary to send to the sponsor. Proficient English is a must. Additional skill set includes strong written communication skills, proficiency in Excel and Microsoft Word, and meticulous attention to detail. Independent learning and self-motivation is of utmost importance.

Home Visit Documentation: Throughout the summer months, Aarti employees will be working on a short term project in which home visits will be conducted to ensure the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of the children who return to a family member's home during holiday breaks. The intern responsible for working on this project will meet with the individual who conducted the visit and receive a summary of the assessment. He/She will then be responsible for writing a summary of each home visit and adding the assessment to each child's file. It would be beneficial if this person has a background in psychology or a social science field so that he/she can begin to draw basic clinical connections between home life and presenting behavior of the child.

Computer Teacher(s): Aarti School has well established computer lab with wonderful technology that helps the students not only learn Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power Point but also practice their written and spoken English.

Leavey School of Business, SCU

Global Fellows Program

Placement

Two interns will be responsible for creating a computer curriculum filled with age appropriate projects and ways in which children can interact on the computer. Throughout the interns time at Aarti they will teach computer classes as well as document their lesson plans so that projects can be replicated in the future and the curriculum can be sustainable.

Additional Responsibilities:

1. Each intern will be responsible for planning and conducting two English lessons per week at Aarti School.
2. Each intern will be responsible for planning and conducting at least one small group per week on an extracurricular activity of the volunteers choosing. These can include weekly sports groups, art groups, dance groups, etc.
3. Writing short, half page reports after special events or activities that take place at Aarti Village or Aarti School.

Abhaya Project (European Commission - w/HRDs"): Aarti (VFT) is doing a project "Abhaya" which is supported by European Commission. The goal of this project is to provide physical, social, legal and psychological support and encouragement for Women Human Rights Defenders (w/HRDs). An Open Resource Centre (ORC) is part of this Abhaya Project, which is a discrimination free zone, a base for advocacy at local and national level through knowledge sharing. ORC will act as the venue for many programs such as leadership trainings, legal trainings, capacity building workshops, psychological counseling, open forum meetings with Judiciary, Police, Department of Women & Child Welfare & Media. The duties of the intern in ORC include writing summaries of these programs and documentation.

The intern will listen to the w/HRDs and write short stories of their experiences. He/she will encourage the w/HRDs to participate in some creative activities like enacting small skills etc to develop courage and confidence in them. This information will be shared with other local ORC's and at the national level also.

What helpful talents and/or skills should the student intern possess, if any, including major (business, engineering, etc.)?

The internship is open to applicants from all majors, however preference may be given to individuals who have a psychology or social work background, or demonstrate a history of working with individuals from different backgrounds and unique childhood experiences. Interns must be proficient in English and strong in communication. It is also important that the intern is culturally competent and understands what it means to live and work in a foreign country. It is important that the intern is a self started and can work independently. Lastly, we are looking for passionate, kind, and excitable students who care about the cause and are comfortable working with children!

What would a typical day be like in the office?

Interns usually eat breakfast around 8:30am before beginning their workday. Between the hours of 9:30 am and 4 pm interns will be working on their specific projects detailed above, either from Aarti Village or at Aarti School. As school ends at 4pm, children usually return to Aarti Village around 4:30pm. It is at this time that interns can hold small groups with the children and create fun activities. Children then have

Leavey School of Business, SCU

Global Fellows Program

Placement

prayer at 6:00pm and study hour from 6:30-8:00pm. Dinner is served at 8:30pm. The work week in India is Monday-Saturday, with Sundays off. Past interns have nicknamed this as "Sunday Funday" and have utilized most Sundays to take the children to the park, play games, or create fun activities or classes for the children to enjoy.

Any other special requirements?

Interns selected for the position will be expected to meet with an Aarti representative in the bay area two times before heading to India in order to gain clarity on Aarti as an organization and his or her role for the summer.

What is your date preference for students to work with you?

(Fellows are expected to spend 6 to 8 weeks working with an organization – ideally late June-August)

Interns are welcome at Aarti Home between July and September.

What is appropriate attire for internship (office) and within your region?

Interns are expected to dress modestly, as is the culture in Kadapa. Females should not wear skirts or dresses above their knees nor should tank tops be worn. Male interns should wear long shorts or pants. It is very hot in the summer, so light cotton is key! Sandals and Flip Flops are acceptable.

Do you regularly have interns working with you? Will there be other interns working with the SCU Global Fellows?

We do indeed! Interns at Aarti come from all over the world including the US, UK, Estonia, Sweden, Australia, New Zealand, and more.

If there is a mandatory language requirement, what language and how fluent must the fellow be?

Proficiency in English

LOGISTICS:

What are housing options and costs? Will you be able to recommend or provide housing for the interns?

Housing will be provided for interns either in the intern apartment or guesthouse. There will be no cost for housing or food. Interns should bring money for any activities or shopping they would like to do.

Leavey School of Business, SCU

Global Fellows Program

Placement

Please provide an estimate of other costs/week that the interns will need to pay for themselves. What does it include (meals, transportation, etc)?

- Food: All meals will be provided. If interns choose to eat out one day, they should bring money for these expenses
- Lodging: Housing will be of no cost
- Transportation (to and from airport, during the day): A car from the airport to Aarti is approximately \$70 or \$5,200 rupees. Autos from Aarti Village into town cost about 130 rupees or \$2
- Other: Many of our interns buy products from the tailors at Aarti Home and enjoy some shopping at the markets in Kadapa. On an average, interns may spend as little as \$50-\$100 in a month time or as much as a couple hundred depending on their outside expenses.

What is the nearest airport (with airport code)?

Chennai International Airport, CHENNAI (MAA);

Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru (BLR);

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, HYDERABAD (HYD)

From Hyderabad and Chennai, domestic air-flight facility is available from Chennai & Hyderabad to Kadapa.

What is the weather between late June and early September?

Extremely hot! Wear light cotton whenever possible and drink lots of water

What are some possible weekend excursions/activities for young people?

→Aarti Village is at the base of the foothills with a nice hike up to a temple. Interns often hike on the weekends here

→There are several temples close by that interns have been known to travel to

→There are overnight busses and trains to both Hyderabad and Bangalore cities, however it should be noted that interns should never travel alone

Any other helpful descriptions and comments:

Aarti is a wonderful place filled with love, laughter, and a vision for changing the lives of females and the mindset towards girl children. Aarti is located in a more rural part of India, and thus it is important to respect culture differences, including dress. Additionally, interns will always be expected to travel in at least pairs or with a member of Aarti Home if they go into town, shopping, for food, etc.