

# Empower the Children



Fall 2019



*There are many problems,  
but I think there is a  
solution to all these  
problems; it's just one,  
and it's EDUCATION.*

*Malala Yousafzai*



Dear Friends,

While the ground is shifting beneath the feet of large populations around the world, **Empower The Children** offers *stability* to young children living in the slums of Kolkata. Each year brings a new batch of youngsters eager to explore the world of education that is now within their reach. Through ever-expanding programs, **ETC** offers a comprehensive curriculum that allows students to go beyond the normal expectations of rote learning, creating a richer experience in the classroom.

During the past 17 years, **ETC** has played an important role in shaping the lives of future generations by helping them develop critical thinking skills, strong values and a desire to make their world a better place. Thanks to multi-faceted programs, the dedication of staff and you, our loyal donors, each year **ETC** continues to prepare a greater number of students to earn a viable living for themselves and their families.

For this, we are immensely grateful and ever cognizant of the part that you play in the lives of **ETC** students. Without your kind generosity, many of these children would suffer the indignities that befall children living in the slums of Kolkata. Instead, **ETC** students enjoy the *enrichment of an education* which, as Malala envisions, will resolve the many problems in the world today.

When one child succeeds, the **ETC** ripple effect helps others to progress with greater confidence and determination. Thank you from our Kolkata kids.

*Love,*

*Rosalie Giffoniello*

Thanks to our new webmaster, Mark Jacobs, we have made exciting changes to our website. Please visit: [www.empower-children.org](http://www.empower-children.org)

A Conversation with Rosalie Giffoniello: "Sailing the Wings of Grace"  
<http://www.conversations.org/story.php?sid=583>

# The Future is Here



In Western culture, it is never too early to start dreaming a child's future! Some parents start a college fund and others introduce their babies to classical music while still in the womb. In contrast, the daily struggle of illiterate parents in Kolkata's slums to provide the basic necessities of life is a daunting task and comes with the realization that most likely, their children will inherit their indentured servitude, endemic to the culture for centuries past.



*ETC  
College Fund*



It is natural for people to dream of a better future. In 2001 Empower The Children fulfilled its promise to bring opportunity into the lives of children living in the slums. By laying the groundwork for schools, tutorial centers, and vocational training programs, parents slowly awakened to the idea that their children could have a better life. In 2009, ETC welcomed the first ETC college student who expressed her desire to secure a degree in Hotel Management. Today, ETC's college fund supports these five aspiring college students through your generous donations.



Fast forward to 2018-- ETC now honors the dream that most westerners envision for their own children-- the opportunity to advance through higher education. By opening wide this window, ETC's *college fund* now supports every student who seeks a degree in engineering, teaching, business, computer technology and other professions.

It is never too late to "dream high," for these students have become an inspiration, not only to their parents and siblings, but to other students who aspire to follow in their footsteps. We at ETC thank YOU, our supporters, as you continue to help us build a brighter future for all our children.

## Thoughts from Margaret

*"If we help each other, we will gain more kindness out of every single kind act that we do." Putri Agustina*



Margaret Wallace

Fifteen years ago, while working as a Computer Systems Engineer, I was searching for volunteer opportunities. A fundraiser for Empower The Children peaked my interest in helping the slum-dwelling children in Kolkata, India. I joined the ETC Board and found that maintaining the database for ETC was an excellent fit for me.

I recently retired to Delaware, where part-time positions in my church and another as House Manager at a transitional home for women and children are keeping me very busy. Although I am retiring from the Board, I will always cherish the friendships I've made with other ETC board members who continue to make a difference in the lives of these children who live halfway around our world.



*THE BODY SAYS WHAT WORDS CANNOT.*

*Martha Graham*

*Empowering Lives  
Through Movement*

**Why dance?** In the slums of Kolkata, large families are confined to one room shelters without privacy, running water or sanitary facilities. Is it any wonder that Kolkata Sanved's movement classes have created a space where ETC students appreciate a sense of lightness, joy and freedom!

These experiences are reflected in weekly journaling which helps students to express their inner feelings.... *"When I'm dancing, I feel that I can do anything!" "Dancing helps me to imagine a different way of living."*

These powerful movement classes have proven to be positive motivators for building self-confidence. This, in turn, encourages otherwise vulnerable students to stay strong, reinforcing the belief that transforming lives at ETC takes shape in many diverse and unique ways.

*Poushali Chatterjee and Amirh McNeil trained by Kolkata Sanved conducted weekly movement classes at Preyrna 3 School for three months.*

*Learning A New  
Language*

*Step*

*Glide*

*Spin*

*Jump*

*Sway*





Karen Patrick Mackolin, a board member of Empower The Children, worked for the Jackson Board of Education as a speech and language teacher for 30+ years. Her passion for teaching did not wane after she retired—she now devotes many hours developing lesson plans for **ETC** students. Her curriculum featuring the human body has become a favorite, engaging students with experiments and anatomical models that enhance their understanding of how their bodies work.

## How My Body Works

### Skeletal System

Did you know...

My body has 206 bones, 32 teeth, 27 bones in each hand, 26 bones in each foot, and that every bone, except the hyoid, is connected to another.

My bones protect my soft organs, keep my body straight, store calcium and phosphate and supply minerals when needed.

I love to stretch!



### Respiratory System

Did you know...

My left lung is slightly smaller than my right to make room for my heart. As I breathe in oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide, my diaphragm helps my lungs to move.

Smoking injures my lungs so I will breathe in only fresh air to keep my lungs clean.

I will not smoke!



### The Dangers of Smoking

Did you know...

Smoking causes:

- Smelly Clothes
- Yellow Teeth
- Coughs and Colds
- Shortness of Breath
- Low Energy
- Cancer
- Empty Wallet

**DON'T SMOKE!**



Buddha says..... *“To keep the body in good health is a duty... otherwise we shall not be able to keep our minds strong and clear.”*

## Circulatory System

Did you know...

My heart is a muscle that stays strong when I exercise and eat healthy foods. The right side receives blood from the body and pumps it to the lungs and the left side receives blood from the lungs and pumps it to the body. I will always keep my heart happy because it must work all day and all night, making it the busiest muscle in my body.



## The Five Senses

Did you know...

I have two **EYES** so I can **SEE**,  
I have a **NOSE** to **SMELL**,  
I have 10 **FINGERS** that can **TOUCH**; they do it very well.

I have two **EARS** so I can **HEAR** the birds up in the trees;  
I have a **TONGUE** inside my mouth to **TASTE** the food I eat.

## Digestive System

Did you know...

From start to finish, digestion is a long journey. Chewing food creates saliva in my mouth; food then passes through my esophagus, stomach, 22 feet of small intestine, liver and 5 feet of large intestine.

I can help digestion by drinking water and eating fruits, vegetables and whole grains to remain healthy and strong.



Did you know...

Activities can be **FUN** and **EDUCATIONAL!**

Students had lots of fun pinning human organs onto a body poster—not so easy blindfolded. They also enjoyed the challenge of assembling a 200 piece puzzle which re-enforced their understanding of how the body works!



# SHAPES TO INSPIRE

FUN

SMOOTH

3-D

WOODEN

TOYS

*that foster*

CREATIVE  
THINKING

and

PROBLEM—  
SOLVING



A video chat from Kolkata, connecting Rosalie with Shelley Warren's Art History class at the University of Vermont, initiated a project that would create a feeling of camaraderie felt half-way around the world. To facilitate this work, award-winning, professional toy designer Karen Hewitt was invited to share her expertise with UV students who created attractive, uniquely-shaped toys that illustrate the dynamic aspects of 3-Dimensional design and stimulate imagination and discovery in a young child's mind. ETC students, the recipients of the project, took as much delight in playing with these finely crafted toys as those who created them, completing the Vermont-Kolkata connection. Thank you to Shelly, Karen and the students at UV for your lasting gift of love.

*"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."*

Mother Teresa



# Reaching for the Stars



What could be more exciting than for **ETC** students to go star-hopping at the Birla Planetarium. As Kolkata's golden sunrises struggle to burn through dust particles in early dawn and polluted night skies are devoid of light, is it any wonder that gazing at the dome's starlit sky would open young minds to their world as well as their own awesome potential? As these children searched the heavens, it was apparent that they too could explore the mysteries of outer space and their unlimited imagination.

## *Meet Empower The Children's New Partners*



Women's Rehabilitation Group



Jairabhoy Foundation



Indians for Collective Action

**Tennis Serves Others** is a service organization that provides basic necessities for children worldwide. Their generous donation will go toward the lunch program at Preyona 2 School. New friends are always welcome at ETC's growing family of partners.



### BEHIND THE SCENES.....

Empower The Children is delighted to welcome four new partners...Women's Rehabilitation Group of Scotch Plains, NJ, Indians for Collective Action, Palo Alto, CA, and the Jairabhoy Foundation and Tennis Serves Others, Los Angeles. Each group has a long-running record of working on behalf of the disadvantaged. Their generous contributions to **ETC's** educational programs continue to uplift impoverished children living in the slums of Kolkata.

THANK YOU ALL!

# Empower the Children

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“Like” us on Facebook—Empower The Children



## MEET THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# Empower The Children Programs



NUTRITIOUS LUNCHES



VOCATIONAL TRAINING



TUTORIAL CENTERS



SPECIAL NEEDS



Today's preschoolers  
are tomorrow's  
ETC's college graduates.

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Computer Technicians

Now that's Progress!

ETC'S COLLEGE FUND



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