



Mitra Jyothi is a registered trust (under Indian Trust Act) located at Bangalore in the State of Karnataka and has been working for people with disability in general and visually impaired in particular for almost three decades (started in 1990). It is run under the able guidance of Ms. Madhu Singhal (National Awardee) who has accomplished many milestones not only in India but also abroad despite her own disability. Mitra Jyothi's Mission is to assist visually impaired individuals lead independent and dignified lives through Education, Training, Counselling, Communication & Technology so as to integrate them into mainstream families and society at large. The organization and its founder have received many awards and accolades over the years for the exemplary service they have been providing. March 2015 heralded the recognition of the exemplary services rendered by Mitra Jyothi to society by awarding an Honorary Doctorate to Ms. Madhu Singhal by the State Women's University, Karnataka.

Your support will help us:

- ➔ *To help the blind to read via audio or accessible digital or braille books; we produce and distribute books for most of the blind schools and colleges in Karnataka and few across India.*
- ➔ *To enable the blind people through computer training which can create more employment opportunities which is not feasible otherwise for educated blind people*
- ➔ *To enable the blind women from rural part and marginalized communities through life skills to get employment or to live independently*
- ➔ *To provide safe and secure, disabled friendly stay for working disabled women from marginalized communities.*

Some highlights of our Work

Computer Training Center (CTC): Started in 2005 with capital investment support from IBM, the centre imparts basic and advanced computer usability skills to visually impaired and low-vision students. This training is provided through the use of Non Visual Desktop Access or NVDA which is a free screen reading software which enables blind and vision impaired people to use computers. The CTC runs a Basic Program (3 months duration) and an Advanced Program (6 months duration). These programs make people "Computer literate" and opens up the world of Computers and the Internet to people with visual disabilities. Mitra Jyothi also provides accommodation and food during the course of these programs. More than 1000 beneficiaries have so far been trained under this program since its inception.

TCS works in collaboration with Mitra Jyothi and conducts job specific training once a year for people with visual disability. They have already trained more than 100 people and absorbed more than 50% of them into their workforce. The rest have been hired by IBM, Cisco and other MNCs and IT Companies.

Educational Resource Centre (ERC): Mitra Jyothi provides accessible educational and general reading material to people with print disabilities. Various formats such as e-Text, Human Voice, Braille Prints, Large Print and other options are available. The "Digital Accessible Books Production", "Talking Book Library" (TBL) and the "Braille Transcription Centre" (BTC) are the Programs that cater to these requirements. With this, the need of both a young school child who will find Braille books more useful and adults who may switch to audio libraries and text to speech conversion technology for faster and more efficient reading, is addressed.

About Mitra Jyothi

With about 3000 individual members and 75+ institutional members leading to 8500 primary beneficiaries and 45000+ secondary across India, the Talking Book Library at Mitra Jyothi is a pioneer in the creation of Audio Books in South India. Thousands of beneficiaries have completed their education and are leading independent lives as contributing members of mainstream society because of the availability of text books for schools, colleges and universities, other study material and books for general reading from Mitra Jyothi's Talking Book Library. The Talking Book Library works on creating digital audio libraries where printed books are converted into the "DAISY" (Digital Accessible Information System) format. DAISY is designed to be a complete audio substitute for print material and is specifically designed for use by people with visual disabilities and dyslexia. More than 50,000 cassettes and audio CDs have been distributed over the years. Library members effectively utilize close to 3000 "Master" digital audio books whose copies are made and distributed to them. Apart from automated text to speech conversion of books, most of the books are converted to the digital format with the help of volunteers who read the books.

Mitra Jyothi is now extending its reach to people online through *Sugamya Pustakalaya* which is a collaborative effort of several organizations to end the book famine faced by people with print disabilities. Through this wonderful initiative, our Audio Books are now available online to Mitra Jyothi beneficiaries! So far Mitra Jyothi has contributed more than 1200 books in Kannada and English covering various topics including but not limited to text books, reference books, fiction, non-fiction etc for people of various age groups to Sugamya Pustakalaya. More are uploaded every day. Books are also sent to beneficiaries as CDs for the off-line requests we receive. Mitra Jyothi is also a part of *Bookshare*, an accessible Online Library for people with print disabilities. Mitra Jyothi is the main contributor of books in Kannada to "Bookshare". (<https://www.bookshare.org/cms/bookshare-me/who-qualifies>)

The Braille Transcription Centre converts educational books/magazines/specific articles/text books/selected items of interest into electronic format and prints it in Braille format. Hundreds of thousands of pages have been scanned and saved in electronic formats for creating e-texts in the past year alone. Lakhs of pages have been printed in Braille. Braille books are especially helpful to school students, who are either visually impaired or have low vision. The BTC also has a tactile embosser that can print pictures and diagrams in tactile. Tactile Pictures are images that use raised surfaces so that a visually impaired person can feel them. They are used as teaching aids to help children with visual disability learn about the form of various objects from fruits, vegetables, basic objects, animals to more complex maps and paintings. Mitra Jyothi has currently taken up the big project of printing text books in Braille for students of class 1 through class 10 (Karnataka State syllabus). Providing **text books in Braille** free of cost to 30+ schools for the blind across Karnataka has been our flag-ship project since 2017!

Along with text books, books of various kinds including but not limited to fiction, non-fiction, inspiration life stories, cookery, sports, leaders, health & hygiene, legal rights and other topics are being transcribed into Braille in Kannada and English for children of all age groups. These books shall be used to build Braille Libraries across the various schools for the blind in the state of Karnataka.

Publications from Mitra Jyothi: Two audio magazines and two braille magazines are published by Mitra Jyothi. Audio magazines in Kannada, 'Sanchaya' provides useful information on a variety of topics, including current affairs, health and IT while 'Spardha Shrunkhala' guides students on competitive examinations. Thousands of copies of Sanchaya and Spardha Shrunkhala have been distributed to Mitra Jyothi's library members and hundreds of students have benefitted from it. "Jnaana Samhitha", a monthly magazine in Kannada and "Insight" a quarterly magazine in English are produced and printed in Braille and published from our Braille Transcription Centre.

Independent Living Skills (ILS) Program: The ILS Program is the most fundamental hands-on program at Mitra Jyothi that enables persons with visual disability to initiate self-reliance and instil in their minds the confidence needed to do so. It is a residential 4-6 month program started in 1997 and has been running successfully since its inception. More than 1000 individuals have benefitted from this program over the years and many are living independent lives while working in various government and private sectors including the field of Information Technology. The following primary needs are addressed in this program;

- Basic home management skills from identification of grains and spices to cooking safely with fire.
- Personality development and personal grooming,

About Mitra Jyothi

- Mobility Training – both indoor and outdoor mobility
- Reproductive health, personal safety and Sex education
- Basic craft work like sewing, basket making, envelope making and handicraft work that help them in their day to day lives as well as enables them to take up employment with small scale industries.
- Need based training designed specifically for the requirement
- Conduct On-site “Train the Trainer” Programs

Job Placement Cell: In 15 years since its inception in 1999, the cell has provided job placement assistance to more than a 1000 people with visual disability. Providing the necessary grooming, soft skill training, resume preparation and logistical support are some of the holistic readiness and support provided by this cell to the visually impaired. The cell achieved major success in finding job opportunities in the IT sector as well as other government and private sectors.

Center for Empowerment of Women with Disabilities (CEWD): With a focus on women empowerment, Mitra Jyothi has set up the "Centre for Empowerment of Women with Disabilities" in Electronics City, Bangalore. CEWD is a state-of-the-art disabled-friendly, safe and secure accommodation for working women with disabilities. It is a full-fledged hostel facility available for working/studying women with any kind of physical disabilities including vision impairment, speech and hearing impairment, orthopaedic disability etc. More than 50 women from under-privileged society now reside at the CEWD. The success stories of each of these residents is an inspiration to all. Their raise from abject poverty and dependence to a life of not only being financially self-sufficient but in a position to support their families back home, bring our vision and mission to life!

How you can help:

Partner with Mitra Jyothi by being our volunteers, by supporting enablement programs or being our event sponsors. Donations to Mitra Jyothi can be made in cash and/or kind. For making financial contributions (Net banking/credit & debit cards/cheques) please refer to our website www.mitrajyothi.org and click on the “Donate Now” button. To make donations in kind please call us to check current needs. Financial donations can also be to Mitra Jyothi through direct bank transfer online. Grocery items will always be needed as there will be 20 – 30 trainees staying at Mitra Jyothi Campus at all times.

Volunteering opportunities Mitra Jyothi:



Mitra Jyothi
To Inspire and Enable the Visually Impaired

JOIN HANDS WITH US

"PARTNER WITH MITRA JYOTHI BY BEING OUR VOLUNTEERS, BY SUPPORTING ENABLEMENT PROGRAMS OR BEING OUR EVENT SPONSORS."

Educational Resource Centre

- Book reading and recording
- Text editing
- E-Book Editing
- Book scanning
- Book Binding & Packaging and Shipment
- Data Maintenance
- Packaging and Shipment

Computer, Independent Living Skills Program & Centre for Women with disabilities

- Spoken English classes
- Personality development classes
- Soft skills training
- Inspirational talk and Leadership programs
- Art and craft work

Generic Activities

- Market research and related data sourcing
- Content creation
- Preparation of Case Studies
- Creation of marketing media in various audio/visual formats
- Database updates
- Gardening support
- Housekeeping support
- Support fund raising



Few Media Coverage

Here are few links to various media coverage received by Mitra Jyothi in the recent months. Our website has links to many more.

1. The New Indian Express <http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/bengaluru/2017/jan/08/a-ray-of-light-in-the-dark-1557403.html>
2. Prajavani (Popular newspaper in Kannada)
http://epaper.prajavani.net/pv_fs/011918/photo/pv_mepj_b_gc19_pg02-v1_mr.JPG
3. AlJazeera <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/12/madhu-singhal-champion-indians-disabilities-161229083154429.html>
4. Better India writes about MJ and the ambitious Kannada Braille Book Printing Project: <http://www.thebetterindia.com/69339/mitra-jyoti-blind-braille-reading/>

Attending/hosting *Workshops & Conferences* for people with disabilities, conducting *Educational Excursions*, supporting *Social Work Internship Programs* and *Need Specific Training Programs* are some of the other areas Mitra Jyothi is engaged in.

Mitra Jyothi is registered under The Indian Trust Act Reg No. B/IV 335/89-90, u/s 80G Income Tax Act 1961, Foreign Contribution Act u/s 6(1) and allotted Reg. No. 094420627, Give India, Credibility Alliance & NITI Aayog.

Partner with Mitra Jyothi and help us Inspire and Enable the visually impaired!

Contact Us

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