Greetings from Portland, Oregon! Hope you all are having a wonderful summer so far and must be getting ready for back-to-school and back-to-Bala Vihar.

As Pujya Guruji’s e-mail about CORDUSA mentioned, Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development’s (CORD) USA wing came into existence as an organization in 2009. Now that we have completed two years of activities, I would like to give you a glimpse of our past year’s happenings and apprise you about what is coming up.

In the year 2010, over and beyond the private donations which poured in after our plea for help with Chinmaya Vijaya’s building needs, we have been very encouraged by the following Chinmaya Mission Centers’ help in raising funds:

- Chinmaya Mission Tristate: $51,000
- Chinmaya Mission LA: $23,000
- Chinmaya Mission Portland: $20,500
- Chinmaya Mission Ann Arbor: $15,000
- Chinmaya Mission Boston: $10,200
- Chinmaya Mission Minneapolis: $7,500
- Chinmaya Mission Columbus: $7,200
- Chinmaya Mission Chicago: $5,000
- Chinmaya Mission Buffalo: $1,900
- Chinmaya Mission Newyork: $1,500

With your help, we were able to help build CORD Lathikata’s much needed volunteer rooms and community rooms last year. We also undertook the task of empowering the many war widows who were cast-off from the three decades of communal war between Colombo government and LTTE.

Administratively, we have kept any costs under strict control with 0% overhead in running CORDUSA and the money that you raised will go to the needy in its entirety. We are very appreciative of centers who continue to raise awareness and funds.

Since inception of CORDUSA, we have sent two groups of high school students for service visits to our CORD facilities in India. They return from their trips inspired with CORD’s work and core values permanently etched in their hearts to become our next generation ambassadors who will continue to raise hopes and funds for the recipients. The children who went last December to Chinmaya Vijaya came back and setup weekly Skype lessons for the girls and continue their wonderful work! I will update you about the group which just came back from CORD Sidhbari in my next email. We welcome you to go as a parent chaperone and/or send your children to experience the transformation yourself.
Over the past several years, many of our Chinmaya Mission centers in the U.S have been actively engaging in various humanitarian efforts in their respective communities. Highlighting these endeavors as well as our centers’ efforts in supporting CORD’s activities in India enhances our centers’ reputation in the community in the following ways:

- bestows increased recognition and visibility, thus drawing more non-members to our organization. Most of the American-Indians living in the suburbs of US can relate to our mission better, when we highlight the fact that we are engaged in working for the cause of the poor and needy in India and USA.
- infuses a deeper sense of pride and belonging in our members as well as in our children
- enhances our credibility as we will be perceived as an organization that ‘walks the talk’ of Vedanta
- helps us and our children put the pledge into practice and helps instill and ingrain the values of kindness; compassion and service in our children

In the continuing effort to coordinate all our humanitarian efforts under one umbrella, which will allow us to showcase our efforts and show our strength as a community, I would like to take this opportunity to survey the centers of their existing humanitarian efforts.

Please use the link here and participate in the survey by August 25th, 2011. If this link does not work, cut and paste this line into your browser: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HRLXV5B

This will not only help us exchange our best known methods of running the projects, but also provide valuable guidance to newer centers as well. At the end of the year, we can publish a summary of our humanitarian efforts as to how it is making a difference as one Chinmaya family. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Let us join hands to help the needy and be heard in the community.

Thank you!
Subha

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