

My dear friends and NYF supporters,

Believe it or not, it is 35 years since I first regaled you with the stories of children in NYF's care.

In the early years, I agonized over the tremendous needs of the children we encountered. For a paltry sum in dollars, I could change forever the life of a child – if only I could raise the funds. So I started to write – and write – and write, deciding that if I told these stories to my friends, they would surely respond with generosity. Thankfully, they did.

Now, decades later, these youngsters are still in our lives – as successful adults and solid citizens. Many of them have grown into advocates for change in their home communities, and some are hard at work providing critical assistance during COVID-19.

One of these young adults is Nirmala, who often visits my Kathmandu garden on sunny spring days. I will never forget my first sight of her in the late 1980s – a beautiful little girl, six years old, with shiny, black hair and an enormous grin. Because she came from a remote village and was blind, she had no prospect for an education. Her parents could not afford to send her to the schools for the blind in Kathmandu.



Giving Nirmala a scholarship was one of the best decisions we ever made. A tenacious and hard-working student, she excelled from first grade onward. After high school, she was awarded a Fulbright scholarship and earned a Bachelor's degree from a university in Colorado.

Now the Executive Director of a foundation dedicated to improving the lives of Nepalese children with disabilities, Nirmala is a passionate advocate and dear friend to every such child she meets. She has spent her time in lockdown working to ensure these children and their families have access to resources like food, water, cooking gas, and other necessities.



Nirmala shows off athletic medals won while at K House

Nirmala is just one of the more than 50,000 children NYF has helped over the last three decades. How miraculous, to witness such transformations in the lives of some of the most impoverished children on the planet—not only in their own lives, but in the lives of those they touch!

As NYF responds to COVID-19, I am so proud of the children we have cared for who, like Nirmala, have taken NYF's mission and values to heart in their adult lives by stepping into their communities, determined to help. I cannot help but see the work they do as an extension of ours—the simple promise of an education growing into a network of resources and advocacy we had never imagined.

Thank you all for helping to build NYF's legacy of love and growth.

With hope and joy,

Olga Murray
Founder and Honorary President

Empowered Women Use Their Freedom to Fight COVID

During COVID-19, in the Freed Kamlari Development Forum's (FKDF) first months of independence from NYF, the Tharu community in western Nepal has faced new challenges. Because all Tharu communities live along the Nepal-India border, many young Tharu people support their families through work in Indian agricultural or factory jobs. When the pandemic began, these young people were sent away without work, and those without their own farmland have been unable to provide for themselves in the months since. Many small business owners in the region have had to shutter their stalls and workshops to comply with social distancing requirements. The economic impacts of ongoing border closures and travel restrictions threaten to harm the health and education of each family.

Fortunately, with their home-grown NGO established in the area, these communities have been scraping by together.

Trained peer counselors within the Freed Kamlari community are reaching out by phone to provide emotional support and problem-solving guidance wherever possible. Through their locally operated co-ops, the FKDF has also been able to provide emergency financial relief to families. Finally, the FKDF is coordinating with local- and district-level government bodies to run community awareness programs against COVID-19. They're hard at work keeping their families, villages, and futures safe.

That's a special kind of freedom.



An FKDF delegation meets with government officials in Kathmandu

From K House Star to Nonprofit Leader

Nirmala Gyawali moved into K House (NYF's girl's home before Olgapuri) when she left her boarding school for the blind to integrate into an advanced school. At her new school, she would become the only student with a disability. She was 14.

"Nirmala is a star," Olga wrote in a 1994 newsletter. "She radiates good humor and has an unquenchable optimism. She is also one of the most tenacious and hardest-working students I have ever known. She is going to be an important person someday, and we will see to it that she gets the education to go as far as her talents will take her."

Olga was right. At her new school, Nirmala consistently scored in the first place in her entire class. She then earned a degree in the United States, then worked for the United Nations, volunteered at schools for the blind, started the first Braille Library in Kathmandu, spoke out over the radio concerning rights for those with disabilities—and more.



Nirmala visits scholarship recipients at a school for blind children

Nirmala is now the executive director for the Ability Development Society of Nepal, a small NGO focused on education, rehabilitation, and empowerment for children with all types of disabilities. (www.adson-nepal.org) The ADSoN works in partnership with the Rose International Fund for Children (<https://trifc.org/>), based in Bellevue, Washington (founded by Rob Rose, a friend of our very own Olga!). They serve over 500 children each year.

"It feels great to be able to work in our own country," she says. "There is so much need here." In considering her history with NYF, Nirmala is full of gratitude. "Olga-Mommy, Som-Uncle, and Sajani-Aunty and the NYF family have been instrumental in helping me find my way in the NGO world, guiding me to help ADSoN become a more impactful organization."

Nirmala's #LoveWorks – and we at NYF are incredibly proud of the work she continues to do.

Thirty Years of Love at Work

I hope this newsletter finds you well as this challenging year continues. Here in Nepal, cases are increasing rapidly, especially in Kathmandu Valley. Economic hardships are even more widespread.

Yet as 2020 unfolds, I am inspired by the NYF Family's capacity for offering meaningful, immediate aid—in large part due to our 30-year journey of love in Nepal.

When NYF was founded in 1990, the organization was small, but determined to help in any way it could. We grew slowly, gradually adding thoughtful, sustainable programs as we discovered needs in the communities around us. Now, in the time of COVID-19, we are discovering our unique strength as we utilize existing buildings, connections, skills, resources, and special expertise to combat a disaster unlike any we've seen before.

Our 30 years of history in Nepal have prepared us for this moment. In the past several months, our Kathmandu Valley NRH has served as a temporary Emergency Lifeline Halfway Home for Women. Our skilled nutritionists have repurposed NRH menus to provide pop-up Community Nutrition Kitchens for children in hard-hit neighborhoods. Staff members have distributed hundreds of pounds of Lito (an easy-to-prepare "super flour") to locked-down families unable to find work, supporting them against the dangers of malnutrition.



Our communities know NYF's #LoveWorks.

Because for the past 30 years, the NYF Family has been helping individuals overcome obstacles and live their dreams. Our powerful network of love expands every day, with each family fed and each child educated.

Thank you for being part of this incredible family.

With pride,

Som Paneru, President

P.S. Please join us on September 26th, 2020, for a free virtual event: "Celebrating Olgapuri Day Online: Share the Joy!" Registration is available at <https://nyf.news/olgapuri-day-rsvp>.

Access to Education in the Time of COVID-19

Alok was five years old when he arrived at NYF's boy's home, J House, in 1999. At the time, the gentle little boy was the youngest child under NYF's care. He was immediately embraced as a brother by the rest of the boys.

With the help of an NYF scholarship, Alok has studied for five years pursuing his bachelor's degree in architecture in Kathmandu. He is just about to graduate – with big plans in mind for designing improvements to Nepal's transportation system.

But since March, schools have been closed, with all events postponed – including Alok's graduation. Like the rest of NYF's scholarship recipients, Alok is in regular contact with NYF leadership, with resources available to him including safe housing and nutritious meals. We

are confident that Alok will be part of Nepal's successful recovery.

Many more students in Nepal are in limbo, just like Alok – but not all of them are confident they'll be able to return to school when the lockdown is lifted. That's why NYF is launching our largest COVID response yet—Access to Education, an innovative program bringing social-distanced satellite teaching centers to villages in rural Nepal. To learn more about this program and how you can help, please visit: <https://www.nepalyouthfoundation.org/access-to-education/>



Alok in 2020



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nepalyouthfoundation.org

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Lito for Life: A gift of only \$6 per week protects a family from malnutrition during the COVID-19 crisis. #LoveWorks



Celebrating Olgapuri Day Online: *Share the Joy*

Please join us on Zoom for this free virtual event

**Saturday, September 26th
6:30 pm PDT**

To attend, please register at
<https://nyf.news/olgapuri-day-rsvp>
or call us, 415-331-8585



Thank you so much to everyone who has found creative ways to support NYF! There are so many thoughtful ways to make sure your #LoveWorks. Here are just a few:

- ♥ Join our **Legacy Circle** by including NYF in your will
- ♥ Ask your employer if they have an **Employer Matching Gifts** program - many do!
- ♥ Order online through **AmazonSmile** and select Nepal Youth Foundation
- ♥ Write a review of NYF at **GreatNonprofits.org**
- ♥ Federal employees give through their **Combined Federal Campaign** - CFC# 84267
- ♥ Tell your NYF story on social media and use the hashtag **#LoveWorks**
- ♥ **Questions**, please call our U.S. Executive Director, Eric Talbert, 415-331-8585 ext. 105