

VIDYULLEKHA



Convocation Issue
2024





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**First Convocation of
Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning
22nd November 1982**

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

In His Divine Benedictory Convocation address on 22nd Nov 1994 Bhagawan Baba exhorted His Students thus...

"Today in the Convocation you have taken an oath administered by the Vice-Chancellor. Oath taking is like giving a promise. You must take the oath whole-heartedly. It would be a great sin if you conduct yourselves in daily life contrary to the oath.

Students! Whether you are aware of it or not, Mother Bhaarath is pining for you. You are not even recognizing the fact that you are born in the sacred land of Bhaarath. Mother Bhaarath has hidden an enormous treasure for you--the treasure of knowledge and spirituality.

You may return to your places and conduct yourselves in keeping with human dignity and the type of training that you have obtained here. Do not get a bad name either for yourselves or for your parents. You should be free from ego, jealousy; arrogance and be full of humility, nobility and sacredness. Service to society and the nation must dominate your thought, word and action."

In this Convocation issue of Vidyullekha we dwell upon the formation of the Sri Sathya Sai Students Association (SSSSA) as a formal body, uniting alumni across the world, as a watershed moment in the history of Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions. The convocation is when students emerge with an academic degree but the process of refinement by Bhagawan continues before and after one is a "student". This Convocation issue is the proverbial tip of the iceberg about Sai Students who have made their mark across disciplines, verticals and walks of life.

In Bhagawan Uvacha, we have an excerpt from the momentous Declaration by Bhagawan of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning receiving formal recognition as a University.

The cover story is about the formation, structure and function of the SSSSA, describing the goals, objectives and benefits of a formal association as envisaged by the founding members along with some Executive Committee members sharing their thoughts.

The Alumni Profile section is a collection of alumni who have risen, with their sincere effort, ingrained with the value systems of Bhagawan to positions of preeminence, commanding the respect of peers, seniors and juniors alike.

In Love in Action, we have a compilation of full-time social entrepreneurship endeavors by Sri Sathya Sai alumni.

With this convocation issue of Vidyullekha we pray to Bhagawan that His Students continue to build, serve and sustain society, exemplifying both professional excellence and personal evolution.

We dedicate this edition at the Lotus Feet of Bhagawan. Do write to us at Vidyullekha@saistudents.org with your feedback

With gratitude and love, Team Vidyullekha

Sri Sathya Sai Alumni



**Convocation Address
by Founder Chancellor
Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

Bhagawan Uvacha

The Unique University

Excerpt from the Divine Discourse of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

This day, I am announcing an event which will give you great joy. Sai is ever full of joy. Anxiety, grief and unrest cannot approach Sai, not even as near as millions of miles, Believe it or not, Sai does not have the slightest experience of anxiety, for Sai is ever aware of the formation and transformation of objects and the antics of time and space and of the incidents therein. Those who have no knowledge of these and those who are affected by circumstances are affected by sorrow. Those who are caught in the coils of time and space become the victims of grief. Though Sai is involved in events conditioned by time and space, Sai is ever established in the principle that is beyond both time and space. Sai is not conditioned by time, place or circumstance.

Therefore, you must all recognise the uniqueness of the Will of Sai, the Sai Sankalpa. Know that this sankalpa is Vajrasankalpa - it is irresistible Will. You may ignore its expression as weak and insignificant but, once the will is formed, whatever else undergoes change, it cannot change.

Fifteen years ago, while inaugurating the College at Anantapur, I had said that it will soon be transformed into a University. People thought that Sai Baba uttered those words in that strain merely to enthuse them. We established a College at Prasanthi Nilayam only last year. While doing so., I said "This will be transformed into a University next year and so, we must ensure a stable basis." When I said so, Bhagavantam remarked: "It is impossible". "Institutions working for twenty or even thirty years, having acquired many distinctions and equipped themselves with postgraduate faculties, have yet to realise this goal. Swami is declaring thus! What course will this Sai Sankalpa take"? he thought within himself. He knows what course it will take. Still, it appeared to him doubtful that it would become a University in the very second year of its existence.

This is the second year of the Prasanthi Nilayam College. Since Swami's will is the Almighty Will, the Government of India has agreed to the inauguration of a University by us here. Therefore, this very day, Vijayadashami, the College at Prasanthi Nilayam and the College at Anantapur are raised to the status of constituents of the new University. This University will not be imparting in its Botany Course merely a knowledge of trees in Nature; we will spread the knowledge of the Tree of true living. It will not be imparting the knowledge merely of economics; the knowledge of theistic ethics too will be included. It will not be merely teaching Chemistry (Rasayana Shasthra); it will also unravel the mystery of "Raso vai sah," the Supreme Embodiment of nectarine sweetness, the Atma. It will teach not only the science of the material world (padartha); it will also teach the science of the non-material world (parartha). It will not differentiate the material from the non-material or treat the nonmaterial as irrelevant to the material. We have decided that this shall be the uniqueness of the University.

This will not, like other Universities, adopt a few faculties and burden their alumni with degrees, which they can present as begging bowls while clamouring for jobs. This university will confer on its alumni the courage and confidence, the knowledge and the skill, to shape their careers by their own efforts, standing on their own feet and relying on their own strength. So, we have proposed that spiritual education is to be integrated harmoniously with the teaching of ethical, physical and metaphysical sciences in this University.

Divine Discourse | 08 October 1981 | Dasara, Vijayadasami | Prasanthi Nilayam



Chancellors Room
Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning
Administration Block

SRI SATHYA SAI STUDENTS

THE ALUMNI SOCIETY (<https://ssss.sssihl.edu.in/>)

It was around the Vijay Dasami of Oct 2010. Swami expressed a desire that a formal alumni body be set up to provide structure to the varied alumni activities across the globe. We saw the will of Bhagawan unfolding on Apr 18th 2024. Under the leadership of the Vice Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prof B Raghavendra Prasad and guidance of Sri R J Rathnakar, Managing Trustee Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, the alumni diaspora now has a formal organisation in the form of a legal society structure named ‘SRI SATHYA SAI STUDENTS’ in place. The body has representatives appointed across the regions to spread Bhagawan’s message & create a collaborative network with more than 10,000 alumni – His Students in whom Bhagawan invested so much personally. The body will include alumni from the university as well as both the primary and higher secondary schools.

“As alumni of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute, you have to stand out as exemplars to the world. Your conduct should be ideal and exemplary in every respect. That is what I expect from you, and this is what will give Me Joy” - Sri Sathya Sai Speaks (Vol 22 – 14th Jan 1989, Sankranthi)

Benefits of a formal alumni structure:

Communication: The alumni body would act as a channel of communication bringing together all the global alumni communities for the many alumni events and seva opportunities. There are also plans for deeper collaborative opportunities that will benefit from the alumni network.

Service Projects: The alumni body would be the official gateway to contribute back to the alma matter and express gratitude to our beloved Bhagawan. The alumni body provides an opportunity to come together as alumni groups to organize seva projects and events in Prashanti Nilayam & through local chapters in respective regions.

Identity: As the alumni community grows in number, reserved seating in Mandir, specially during festivals will require identification process which will be through an I-Card system issued by the alumni society. The registered alumni will also have opportunity to be part of the alumni AGMs. The alumni body currently operates out of the administrative block of the University at Prashanti Nilayam and has three full time employees who work towards achieving the objectives of the alumni organization.

The immediate goals set for the alumni body are:

1. Supporting the infrastructure development of the Sathya Sai Institutions – laboratories, classrooms and hostels
2. Contributing towards the academic excellence of various departments, till the final placement of the students
3. The local chapters will continue to support initiatives of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization in the areas of Educare, Medicare and Sociocare.

Key Long term objectives of the alumni association are as follows:

1. To support the Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions towards fulfillment of their objectives as set-forth by Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust (SSSCT).
2. To institute studentships, scholarships, stipends, medals, prizes etc.
3. To institute endowments, academic chairs, travel support to faculty & students to attend international/national academic events, awards etc.
4. To establish, support and maintain skills development centers, academic infrastructure, research facilities and centers of excellence at Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL).
5. To establish, support and maintain hostels for students and residential infrastructure for faculty.

6. To establish, maintain, develop, and donate for the establishment, maintenance and development of book banks / libraries and online knowledge resources of Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions.
7. To organize lectures, seminars and symposia on arts, sciences, commerce, sports & cultural events, and other subjects of general academic interest to students.
8. To work with SSSCT, SSSIHMS, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organizations (SSSSO) and Sri Sathya Sai Global Council (SSSGC) in furthering Sai Mission by improving the society and contribute to nation building.
9. To assist by organizing educational programs for teaching crafts, engineering and similar vocational skills and industrial training including on-the-job training.
10. To provide relief in times of natural calamities like earthquakes, floods, famines etc. in coordination with SSSCT, SSSSO, SSSIHL, SSSIHMS and SSSGC.
11. To establish, run and aid free public reading rooms and libraries.
12. To provide amenities for holding discourses, discussions and debates on Indian philosophy, culture and traditional practices.
13. To establish innovation and incubation center at SSSIHL and ensure its smooth functioning. The purpose is to nurture the societally relevant innovations from SSSIHL and enhance the start-up eco-system to make these innovations available for the larger benefit of the society. The proceeds from the incubation center will further the Sri Sathya Sai Education System at SSSIHL.
14. To provide internship and placement opportunities to students at SSSIHL.
15. To enable and support various alumni service activities (rural, education and health), alumni meetings at Prasanthi Nilayam and/or any of the campuses of SSSIHL.
16. To help needy alumni and their families.

Thoughts of the founding members of the alumni society

Brother Venkatesh Iyer

“I believe that as alumni we have a responsibility to give back to the alma mater in whatever manner we can - whether financially, and/or by sharing our knowledge, exposure, experience and networks with the institutions and the students as well as faculty. The alumni association gives us a wonderful opportunity to formally engage with the Institute and do our bit for our alma mater. By being part of the alumni association, we get regular updates on what is happening in the Institute and what opportunities exist for engaging or supporting.”

Sister Sujana Pandit

As Sai brothers and sisters, we are a family. We must always be there for one another - in times of joy and grief, during good times and bad. Like an extended family, we should always stay connected and feel free to reach out to anyone when the need arises. Also, as recipients of Swami's love and free education, we must play our part to give back to society through service and prove worthy of His grace.

Sister Soujanya Pudi

It is a blessing to be part of the founding committee members of Sri Sathya Sai Students. It is humbling to be representative of an institution where the founder Chancellor was our beloved Bhagawan. The EC members are committed to the task of bringing together the alumni community as each person in the community is part of the Divine, touched by His Love.

Prasanna Sai

We all must remember that Swami always accepted our gratitude programs and alumni projects as a loving mother during Alumni meets of the institutions. It is therefore our duty to stay in contact with our Alma Mater to sustain being “His student” for life. We should contribute in whatever manner possible towards advancement of current students at these institutions. The Joy of doing such Seva is so endearing, I am convinced that such selfless service takes us closer to Swami.

Organization structure & members



Prof. B Raghavendra Prasad (MSc. 1985)
Vice Chancellor, SSSIHL
Ex-officio President



Sri R J Rathnakar (MBA 1991)
Managing Trustee, SSS Central Trust
Member, Prashanti Nilayam



Dr. Srikanth Khanna (M.Tech 2006)
Registrar, SSSIHL
Secretary, Prashanti Nilayam



Prof Pallav Kumar Baruah (MSc. 1993)
Dean of Sciences, SSSIHL
Member, Prashanti Nilayam



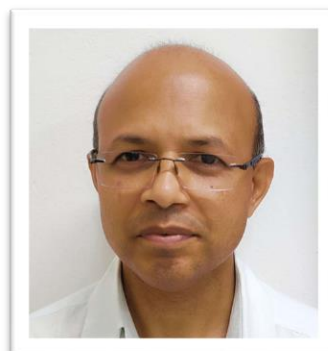
Dr. Prasanna Sai. V (M.Com 1987)
Founder, Sai Advisory services
Vice President, Chennai



Niranjana Vasant Mudbidri (B.Arts 1983)
Director, Maker's Nest Pvt Limited
Treasurer ,Bangalore



Rishi Seth (MBA 1993)
MD, HPL Electric and Power Ltd
Member – North India, Delhi



Venkateswar Prusty (M.Tech 1995)
Deputy Warden, SSSHSS
Member, Prashanti Nilayam

Organization structure & members



Vedanarayanan. K (BSc.1981)
Senior Teacher, SSSHSS
Member, Prashanti Nilayam



Prof. Srividya Nagarajan (Ph D. 2000)
Professor – SSSIHL
Member



Venkatesh Iyer (MBA 1989)
Head Commercial, Viatris - Latin America Region
Member – Western India, Mumbai



Dr. Soujanya Pudi (M.A Eng. 1996)
Prof. and Head Centre for Language & communication
Member- Eastern India. Kolkata



Tribhuvan Sachdeva (M.Com 1985)
Director, JBB Marketing Pvt Ltd
Member- Central India, Indore



Sujana Pandit (B.Com 2002)
Entrepreneur, Culinary Delights
Member



K Suresh (MBA 1991)
Director, Om Anandham Foods LLP
Member – Southern India, Bangalore

Love in Action

Sai Anandam - Located in Daruthenga village, 12 kilometers from Bhubaneswar, Orissa, Sai Anandam began as a small orphanage for seven boys and has since grown into a co-ed school. The project started with a house donated by a devotee from Barang, providing a sanctuary for orphans. In 2007, the initiative reached a significant milestone when the Orissa alumni sought blessings from Bhagwan to expand their work. Throughout its journey, Sai Anandam's growth was marked by an almost miraculous flow of resources and support. The founders never sought funds, yet financial assistance and human resources seemed to arrive whenever needed. Originally, alumni from Orissa and other regions provided funding, but today, contributions come from alumni and devotees from across India. The local Sai Organization supports the project through service activities such as cleaning and maintenance.

In 2015, due to changes in government regulations, the orphanage transitioned into an English-medium school. The school, modeled after Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School (SSSHSS) in Puttaparthi, follows the CBSE syllabus and offers co-education until the 5th standard, with boys continuing in higher classes.



Education is free, with students paying only for hostel facilities. The school now serves 186 children, with several teachers, including founding members, offering their services voluntarily.

A memorable event took place on August 14, 2010, when Swami appeared during an alumni meet and delivered a simple yet profound directive: "Make these boys into good boys." This reinforced their commitment to instill discipline and values in the students, aligning with the ethos of SSSHSS. The project's impact extends beyond the school's walls, transforming Daruthenga itself. Once known as a troubled area, the village is now affectionately called "Swami's village," where regular bhajans, Narayan Seva, and Nagar Sankeertan are regular. The spiritual activities have brought a significant positive shift to the community.

Over the years, several students from Sai Anandam have pursued higher studies at SSSIHL, and many have found employment there after. The project's influence continues to grow, inspiring hope and fostering positive change.

Sai Anandam is led by Brother Sushant and a dedicated team, including Devdutt Swain, Vivekanand Sahoo, Suryaprakash Pati, and Dr. Satish Pattnaik, who also serves as the state president for the Sathya Sai Seva Organizations in Orissa. As Swami's centenary birth year approaches, plans are underway to establish a separate wing for girls, furthering the reach of the school. Guided by Swami's words, "When you start any good work, I will help you," Sai Anandam remains a beacon of love and service, transforming lives and uplifting the community with every step.

Further details on Website: <https://srisathyasaianandamschool.in/>

Alumni looking to be involved in this Seva initiative can contact Brother Lala Susanta at +91 9437632059.

Love in Action

Palliative Care Centre - Sri Sathya Sai Palliative Care Centre (SSSPCC) in Andhra Pradesh offers patient-centered, free palliative care, focusing on holistic support rather than merely treating diseases. Established in July 2022 by United Care Development Services and the Palliative Care Society, Hyderabad, the center began as a 10-bed facility near the ashram, supported by the Sri Sathya Sai District Administration.

It serves patients with chronic, terminal illnesses across a 50km radius, including 160 villages and towns like Dharmavaram, Kadiri, and Penukonda. Around 70% of its 560 registered patients are cancer patients, while the rest include stroke survivors and individuals with other conditions, such as congenital disorders. Addressing an unmet need in India, where palliative care is scarce, the center provides a range of services: pain management, symptom relief, rehabilitation, helping mitigate neurological deficits through physiotherapy to maintain mobility and prevent arthritis. Specialized care for cancer pain involves managing long-term symptoms like nausea, bed sores, and breathing difficulties. Cancer screenings are held monthly, and patients receive advice on treatment options. For those unable to manage post-surgery or chemotherapy complications at home, the center stabilizes symptoms before patients continue curative treatments elsewhere.

The center's outreach program brings services to patients' doorsteps via homecare vans equipped with medications, mobility aids, and supplies for procedures like catheterization. Patient conditions dictate the frequency of visits, and a 24/7 helpline offers guidance. When symptoms worsen, patients can stay at the center for about a week or longer if needed. Additionally, the center provides daycare services, where patients visit during the day for treatment and return home in the evening.



SSSPCC's unique approach includes fostering a homely atmosphere with regular celebrations, Bhajans and cultural activities, supporting patients' emotional and spiritual well-being. Counseling and spiritual engagement are integral to alleviating the psychological stress that accompanies chronic illnesses. The center's compassionate care model aims to preserve dignity and offer a peaceful environment for both patients and their families.



In 2023, land near the ashram's West Gate was donated for a new facility named 'Sai Sharan,' to be operated by Swaasthyam Palliative Care and Cancer Foundation, an alumni-led organization. Scheduled to open in 2025, the expanded center will feature cancer surgery, chemotherapy, and dialysis facilities, further enhancing the scope of care.

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Love in Action

SSSPCC's daily operations are managed by a dedicated team, including 11 full-time staff, two medical officers, and seven nurses trained in palliative care. Volunteering alumni, local residents, and specialized professionals such as retired physiotherapists actively contribute to patient care. Additionally, remote teams and volunteers assist with counseling, patient monitoring, and logistical support.

As part of service activity this year during Avatar Declaration Day celebrations, a physiotherapy bed and walkers were donated by the Alumne of SSSIHL to Sri Sathya Sai Palliative Care Center Puttaparthi

SSSIHMS Helpdesk - The virtual helpline service for the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences (SSSIHMS) hospitals in Whitefield (WFD) and Prasanthigram (PSN) was initiated in December 2020 as part of the Premabandam seva initiative. This service was established in response to a sharp increase in patient inquiries during the COVID-19 pandemic, when traditional in-person communication was severely limited.

Initially, the hospital staff managed the helpline, but from December 2020 onwards, a dedicated team of approximately 70 alumni and devotees stepped in to take over the operations.

Utilizing cloud telephony technology, the helpline can manage an unlimited number of simultaneous calls, which is a significant improvement over the limitations of fixed landlines. Operating Monday to Saturday from 8 AM to 4 PM, the helpline now handles over 1,200 calls daily, connecting patients to vital healthcare services and resources. To ensure smooth operations, volunteers are organized into shifts, with around 10 members assigned per two-hour slot. This allows for comprehensive coverage throughout the week while accommodating the participation of volunteers from diverse geographical locations.

An essential feature of this service is its multilingual capacity, supporting close to 15 major Indian languages. Volunteers are trained to communicate in the patient's preferred language upon request, which greatly enhances patient comfort and understanding. This inclusive approach is particularly beneficial for patients who may not be fluent in English or regional dialects.

For patients traveling from distant states, the helpline encourages the submission of medical details via an online portal prior to their appointment. This submission allows hospital staff to review the reports beforehand, helping patients understand the kind of assistance they can expect. Additionally, this proactive approach allows for better scheduling of appointment dates, optimizing the overall consultation experience.

The helpline records all calls, which are documented in the Health4All system for quality monitoring and training purposes. A missed call service ensures that if a patient's call is not answered during operational hours, a volunteer will follow up promptly to provide the necessary information and support. This feature reinforces the commitment to patient care, ensuring that no inquiry goes unaddressed.

The quality control team, primarily composed of overseas volunteers, meticulously reviews the recorded calls daily. Each call is analyzed for service quality, and feedback is provided to volunteers to foster continuous improvement.

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Love in Action

The effectiveness of this initiative is a testament to the principles of the Sathya Sai educational system. Over the past four years, the helpline has significantly improved patient access to medical care, offering vital support to individuals and families seeking treatment at Bhagawan's hospitals. Its seamless operation reflects the dedication and compassion of the volunteers, who work tirelessly to provide the highest level of care and support to those in need.

Alumni looking to be involved in this Seva initiative can contact Brother Gunaranjan can be reached out at +91-9000183123 and gunaranjan@yousee.one

The center uses the Health4All application to systematically plan home visits and track patient progress digitally. This system ensures efficient care delivery, with one van assigned for planned routes and another reserved for emergencies. Monthly screenings involve visiting oncologists, and an oncology team will join once the new cancer facility becomes operational, marking a significant step toward comprehensive, accessible palliative care in the region.

Interested alumni can reach out to Brother Venkatadesikan (Ph: 0091 – 9632422311)

SSS Gramin Jagriti - Sri Sathya Sai Gramin Jagriti has been a beacon of service in rural India for 35 years, beginning with Amar's vision to bring education, healthcare, and vocational training to underserved communities. In 1990, Amar sought Swami's blessings for the project, outlining a need for 27 acres of land. Swami responded with, "You do not need land. You need My hand," setting off a series of miraculous events. Soon after, Amar was invited to Darwa village near Yamuna Nagar, Haryana, where the local panchayat unanimously donated the required land on July 17, 1991—Guru Poornima, a day Swami said marked the fulfillment of the disciple's resolution. Thus, Gramin Jagriti took shape, driven by divine will.

The institution serves the economically disadvantaged by addressing education, healthcare, and skill development. It operates a school up to the 10th grade, while the hospital offers outpatient services, a diagnostic lab, a minor operation theatre, and a day-care center. A team of 15 medical workers reaches out to rural homes, providing direct healthcare, including prenatal support. Though the hospital does not have in-patient facilities, arrangements with private hospitals in Yamuna Nagar allow patient referrals. All services are provided free of charge, funded entirely through donations.

Amid India's growing emphasis on formal education, many graduates still struggle to find employment due to a lack of practical skills. In response, the "SURE" trust was founded in 2020 to empower rural engineering graduates with essential skills. The initiative, supported by alumni and industry partners, offers a free four-month training program blending practical experience with theoretical learning. Conducted by 150 trainers across 28 courses, the program has already trained nearly 3,500 students, with 350 currently enrolled. Graduates receive internship placements and job opportunities upon completion.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Gramin Jagriti stepped up to provide relief, setting up a 50-bed COVID care centre at a Chandigarh sports complex equipped with oxygen facilities. To boost patients' morale, activities such as games and yoga were regularly conducted. The team also carried out Narayan Seva and distributed essential supplies to vulnerable communities in the surrounding areas.

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Love in Action

The latest addition to Amar's list of welfare initiatives is the "Sri Sathya Sai Manav Seva" project, which aims to establish a 52-bed hospital near Chandigarh. Launched on July 1, 2024, the project currently serves 110 outpatients daily and provides free medicine, a diagnostic lab, and dental care services. The hospital is an offering for Swami's centenary, and all services are provided at no cost to the community

Swami once explained the significance of the project's name: "Sri Sathya Sai" is the companion, "Gram" is the place, and "Jagriti" is the work. The essence of service lies in fulfilling one's duty with sincerity, guided by Swami's unseen hand.

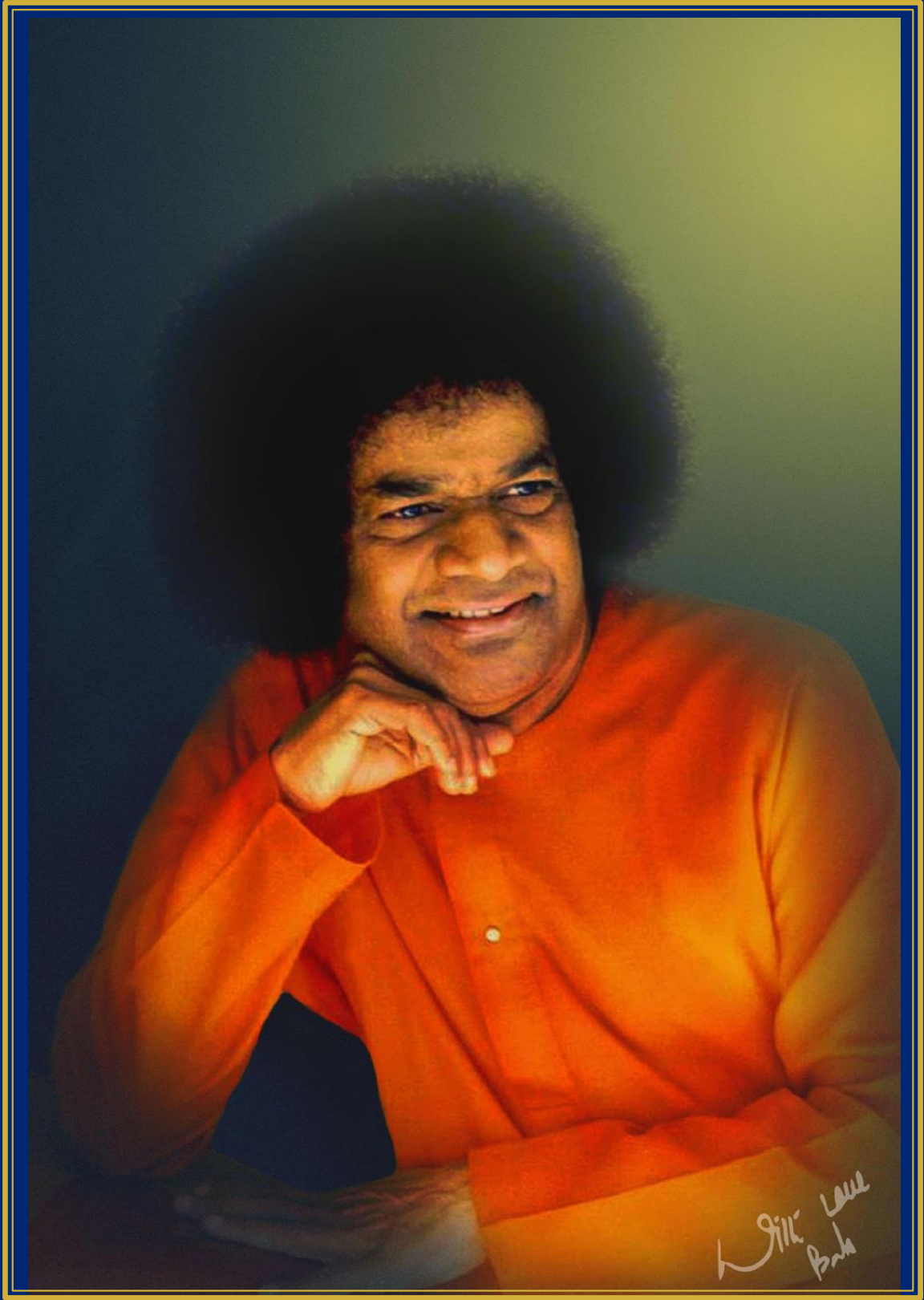
Information on SURE trust can be obtained on : www.suretrustforruralityouth.com.

Interested alumni can reach out to Brother Amar Vivek on +91-9814027754









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