

## About Uddami

The aim of Uddami is to reduce poverty through workforce development and capacity building using information and communication technology (ICT). That's a complicated way of saying that we teach computer skills to poor students so they can get a job that pays them a decent wage. We also help other organisations do this for their beneficiaries.

Across India 80% of all students who enrol in school drop out of the formal educational system before they finish Class 12. Even for those students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who manage to achieve a Class 10 or 12 Pass, entering the mainstream job market is difficult. Their education (mainly rote learning of often outdated information) just doesn't prepare them for a job in an overcrowded, competitive job market.

Practical computer skills combined with soft skills (communication, problem solving, creative thinking) give our students access to wider economic opportunities. These are the skills we focus on to empower our students' potential.

## UCTC (Uddami Computer Technology Centre)

UCTC HAS THREE MAIN AIMS:

- Computer training
- Workforce development
- Capacity building

## Computer Training

We teach practical, job-oriented computer skills to the underserved in Kolkata. Our method of teaching as well as our approach to learning is focused on teaching how to think. The basic UCTC course is free as long as the students attend classes regularly, come to class on time, respect everyone at our centre and maintain a 70% average. Our students are youth (aged 18-26), who know computer skills will get them a better job, and women, who would like to acquire employable skills that would give them some financial security. All of our students are from poor communities.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Statistics**  
47% of our graduates are working  
36% have gone on to further education
- **Intern for Deaf Students**  
June-August - Michelle ("Mich") Sherbondy, deaf intern from Gallaudet University, taught ASL (American Sign Language) to a group of deaf students and our teachers. She gave a workshop and ongoing classes in computer skills including basic web design using Dreamweaver for our deaf students and deaf students from two local schools. These classes took place at UCTC and at The Daywalka Foundation.
- **New curriculum**  
During the last year we have given our curriculum a major overhaul to try to better meet the needs of our students. We intend to regularly evaluate and edit the Uddami curriculum because we feel that as technology and the job market changes, we need to revise our lessons and the skills that we teach.

### UCTC WEBSITE

Rabia Khatoon keeps the website updated and Nivedita Pal writes the copy for the articles. Our students who are learning HTML create web pages about themselves which we add to the site so that you can learn more about them and their dreams <http://uddamiindiafoundation.org>.

### UCTC LIBRARY

Our library continues to be popular with all our students and teachers, past and present. Our library now has over 200 books, in English and Bengali.

## *Workforce Development*

### TEACHER TRAINING

We train graduates of UCTC as computer teachers for other organisations. Five teachers were trained to work in four new partner organisations:

- GURIA GOWALA and SUKLA MAJUMDAR, for Narendrapur Home (Sanlaap India)
- SUMITRA GHOSH - Soma Home (New Light)
- REENA SINGH and SUJATA GAYEN(Shiksamitra)
- Provided a teacher (KHOKON DAS) and teacher training for a nonprofit in Gariahat

## *Capacity Building*

### UDDAMI PARTNERS PROGRAM

- SANLAAP INDIA started a computer school in their Narendrapur home so that the women and girls they work with could learn computer skills to help them obtain employment. Uddami provided curriculum, technical advice and two trained teachers.
- NEW LIGHT started a computer program in Soma Home for girls at risk from the red light area of Kalighat. We provided a computer teacher and curriculum.
- SHIKSAMITRA is an alternative school working with drop-outs from the regular school system. We are providing software, technical assistance and advice, as well as a computer teacher. We are working together to create a curriculum relevant to the needs of their students and school.

### WORKSHOP ON COMMUNICATING WITH THE DEAF

This workshop was given by MICHELLE SHERBONDY (Mich) in American Sign Language with translation she provided. This workshop was hosted by our partner *The Daywalka Foundation* and included members of six other Kolkata NGOs. Mich discussed deaf history, her own life as a deaf person and ways that hearing people can communicate with deaf people.

### TECHNICAL TRAINING

Khokon Das now working for Uddami Software Services, gave several workshops in computer maintenance for staff members of *International Justice Mission*, a local NGO.

---

### Future Plans

- Partner with two organisations in 2007 to help them develop a computer course or centre based on the UCTC model.
- Develop a Spoken English curriculum
- Research job sources for our graduates

### Acknowledgement - thanks to these individuals and organisations for their invaluable support:

THE DAY WALKA FOUNDATION  
MRS. HARSHAMANJARI NANDA  
NEW LIGHT  
MISS NIVEDITA PAL  
MISS RABIA KHATOON  
SANLAAP INDIA  
SHIKSAMITRA  
SHUKTARA  
MR. SOMNATH SARDAR  
TOMORROW'S FOUNDATION  
UDDAMI SOFTWARE SERVICES