



DISTRESSED
CHILDREN &
INFANTS
INTERNATIONAL

DCI Newsletter

Michael Turco, Well-Known American Magician, Becomes Goodwill Ambassador for Distressed Children & Infants International



Michael Turco, the well-known American magician, has begun to work with Distressed Children & Infants Intl. (DCI) as a Volunteer Goodwill Ambassador.

On June 26, DCI Executive Director Dr. Ehsan Hoque officially honored Michael Turco as DCI's newest Goodwill Ambassador. Mr. Turco has begun his cooperation with DCI in the fight for child rights and sight worldwide, and has promised his commitment to this noble mission

for many years to come. Dr. Ehsan Hoque said, "It is with great delight that we welcome Michael to our team as a DCI Goodwill Ambassador. We really appreciate his desire to help improve the lives of underprivileged children worldwide. It is the compassion and leadership of people like him that makes DCI's work possible, helping to spread the word about our mission and ultimately making it a success."

Michael Turco is a nationally renowned magician who has received critical acclaim for his dazzling and mystifying stage work. His magical tricks and warm stage-presence are enjoyed by all generations. Michael's performances have won him several awards and he has recently been seen on NBC's "America's Got Talent."

Now Michael hopes to bring the issue of child rights to the public eye by lending his voice to Distressed Children & Infants International. He has pledged to support the DCI vision through campaigns and publicity. From now on, he will attend DCI events and functions whenever possible and represent the organization as a Goodwill Ambassador spokesperson nationally and internationally. "I am extremely honored and excited to be named your DCI Goodwill Ambassador," Michael said. "I am looking forward to working with DCI toward a great future and confident that together we will bring new life and hope to many children".

Together

let's

create

a better

world

for

tomorrow.

NEWSLETTER TEAM:

Asahi Hoque
Ian Burzynski
Simon Bayley

DCI at BMANA

(Bangladesh Medical Association of North America)



DCI Information Booth at the BMANA Conference

This year's BMANA convention was held in Manhattan, New York on July 2nd and 3rd. DCI youth volunteer Ryan Chowdhury and Executive director Dr. Hoque presented at the convention. Ryan presented his experience as a co-sponsor and expressed how he was later able to create a DCI chapter at Stony Brooke college with his classmates. In his presentation, Dr. Hoque thanked the BMANA members for DCI's success. At present, DCI has over 200 BMANA members as sponsors and donors. Many of them have played crucial roles in DCI's success from its inception. DCI also had an information booth at this event operated by youth volunteers Asahi and Moushmi, who did a great job informing guests about DCI's mission and programs.

Besides helping underprivileged children, one of the core components of DCI's missions is to create a relationship between our youth here in the US and children in less developed countries. Through encouraging youth participation in all of our activities, we hope to make them aware of the poverty that affects millions of children around the world, and get them involved in humanitarian activities. Ryan is a great example of a youth volunteer who went from a co-sponsor to a leader in DCI's cause!



DCI Executive Director, Dr. Ehsan Hoque with BMANA leaders

www.distressedchildren.org

DCI Opens Child Rights Youth Awards

The nomination process for the 2011 International Child Rights Youth Awards has officially begun. Individuals, organizations and government agencies are invited to nominate a young person between the age of 12-20 years old who is making extraordinary efforts to improve or otherwise raise awareness of children's rights initiatives. The deadline for nominating a child is August 15, 2011. You can submit a nomination through our online form.

The International Child Rights Youth Awards are presented bi-annually at the Conference on Child Rights & Sight. This initiative was created as part of DCI's Youth Leadership Program to recognize and elevate selfless young individuals whose remarkable acts have made a significant difference in countering problems affecting children across the globe, regardless of political, religious or geographical boundaries.

Goal: The goal of the Child Rights Youth Awards is to draw attention to outstanding young leaders who wish to pursue a career in the field of child rights. By formally celebrating their achievements at the Conference on Child Rights & Sight at Yale University, we hope to contribute to their future success and advance them on this vital path. These awards assure that our young heroes are motivated and encouraged, so that they can raise awareness and further contribute to our shared mission of creating a better world for children.

The International Child Rights Youth Awards are presented in the form of the following three awards

1. **Child Rights Champion (Gold Award)**
2. **Child Rights Hero (Silver Award)**
3. **Child Rights Defender (Bronze Award)**

How Mithila Became a Sun Child Home Family Member



Mithila

Five year old Mithila Akter was living with her maternal grandmother in the streets of Dhaka. Her grandmother told us about her story. Mithila was living with her parents and two older brothers and sisters. Her father was a rickshaw driver and her mother worked in a garment factory. Her grandmother was taking care of her while her parents worked.

Unfortunately, Mithila's father had a bus accident and passed away. Mithila's mother felt helpless. After 6 months she remarried to save her large family, but shortly afterward her new husband left her. She did not know how to support her family, and Mithila's grandmother started begging to help them survive. She took Mithila with her, and they stayed in different places each night.



Mithila with her friends at the Sun Child Home

Mithila's mother and grandmother were very anxious about her welfare. They were looking for a place to keep her safe. Ultimately, she came to our Sun Child Home for Orphans. Upon arrival, Mithila was very thin and weak. Our doctors checked her health and she was able to sleep and eat properly shortly thereafter. Now Mithila has been admitted to school and is attending regularly. Besides the education, she has the opportunity to play, learn dancing and draw.

DCI Volunteers in Bangladesh



Samia Alam

Student of Washington and Lee University, VA



Torsa Islam

Student of Brooklyn Technical High School, NY



Fabliha Ibnat

Student of Harvard University



Popy Schell

Student of University of Florida

Health Care for Underprivileged Program

Kohinoor Begum's Story

Kohinoor Begum got married 27 years ago and has six children. Her husband is too ill and physically disabled to do any type of work, so Kohinoor has had to take on all responsibilities for the family and does hard labor work. She began suffering from uterine prolapse after the birth of her fifth child. She did not get doctors help immediately so the condition became critical. Kohinoor's sister lives at Shyamoli Housing, Mohammadpur, Dhaka and is a household servant. Kohinoor took shelter at her sister's house, where a similar had been arranged in a house. However, because she was often ill, she could not continue her work. Fortunately, Kohinoor's sister knew about DCI's Health Clinic and took her there in the first week of August, 2011. There, a doctor examined her and advised her to have an operation.

DCI took her to the Ibn Sina Medical College Hospital in Kallyanpur, Dhaka. After the examination, doctors advised an immediate operation which would cost about 45 thousand taka. The operation was very expensive. DCI has a relationship with Ibn Sina Medical College Hospital, and took responsibility for the operation and so it was carried out as an academic case. DCI provided all medicines and the expenses for several tests and the hospital provided all other support. On August 18, Kohinoor's operation took place in the presence of DCI officials. The operation was successful and she was released from the hospital before Eid-al-Fitr. Now Kohinoor is doing well and DCI officials are monitoring her regularly.

There is a large number of women in Bangladesh who suffer from this type of health problem. Most of them are unwilling to communicate their needs because of ignorance or shyness. DCI's clinic and social workers are doing their best to identify women like Kohinoor and provide them with the critical medical support they need and deserve.



Before operation (Health Clinic, Kallyanpur)



Kohinoor admitted to IBN SINA Hospital for operation



Kohinoor just after being released from the hospital



After operation she is happy & smiling at DCI clinic

A Brighter Future for Sunita Behera

Sunita Behera comes from the village of Gumaparda, near Dhenkanal. Ten year old Sunita had already lost vision in her left eye due to a birth defect. She was also born with squint, and the left part of her face was beginning to grow disproportionately larger than the right.



Sunita's mother Champuth is a housewife, while her father Aju Kumar is a company worker earning Rs. 3000 a month. With his salary barely enough to pay for feeding and clothing the family, Aju Kumar could not even consider surgery in order to treat his child's condition.

Fortunately for Sunita, the family heard of **Distressed Children & Infants International (DCI)**'s Blindness Prevention program through Kalinga Eye Hospital. They took Sunita to Kalinga Eye Hospital for treatment. On June 17th 2010 Sunita was examined, and the following day she underwent surgery to correct misalignment in her left eye. Surgery for squint is only done for cosmetic reasons, with no improvement of vision. However, correcting eye alignment also prevents the face from becoming further disproportionate. The surgery was successfully completed, and Sunita was able to return home the following day.

Sunita's mother Champuth said: "It was not in our capacity to help our daughter. I pray for Distressed Children & Infants International (DCI) and all the people involved with DCI for saving my child. This is like a dream for us. Although she was treated too late to regain eyesight, she has been released from the burden of disfiguration, and that combination had been tragic. Now Sunita lives without feelings of self-consciousness, and she looks like a normal, healthy young girl."



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Zaynah Chowdhury's DCI Volunteering Experience

It was a pleasure getting to work with DCI and RSC over the summer. I found out about DCI through a relative of mine who is involved in recruitment and advocacy for the organization in the U.S., and thought I would see if I could do anything to help them while I was in Bangladesh.



Since my interests lie in the medical field, I spent time at the Urban Health Care Clinic in the Mohammadpur slum. It was compelling and a great learning experience not only to be present when the patients were coming in, but to speak with the doctors about what kinds of problems the slumdwellers face. Most of the health issues were expected, but it was interesting to see the different skin infections they came in with as a result of living over sewage and it being the monsoon season. We got to speak with the women in

the waiting room as well, who gave us firsthand accounts about their lives in the slums and how they came to live there. We also were able to make a trip to the slum and talk to some of the people there. It is amazing to see how they are managing to live in such accommodations, how the children still have fun, and how there is still a sense of community in the slums. The children were excited to see us and play with us, and the women we spoke to were very kind and responsive.

I was very impressed with the eye surgery camps that DCI-RSC put on through the support of sponsors, so I asked my mother and grandmother to sponsor a camp. I am glad the donated money was able to support so many eye screening and cataract surgeries, and think improving/restoring eyesight is a very important cause that should be targeted for the health and welfare of the poor in Bangladesh.

I think my favorite part of DCI's mission is the Sun Child Sponsorship Program. Targeting young children and fulfilling their basic education needs is a very big step towards breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. The website that is set up for sponsoring children is easy to use, and I think it is great that a personal connection is made between donor and child by way of drawings or other such signs of progress that are sent to the donor. Now that I am back in the U.S., I will definitely do my best to recruit donors and advocate for DCI's cause!