



SOCIAL DIARY • PARTY PICTURES • CALENDAR • SOCIAL HISTORY • THE LIST/CAMEC • HOUSE • DINING • PHILANTHROPY  
ART SET • TRAVEL • ACROSS THE WORLD • GALLERY • GUEST DIARIES • CLASSIFIEDS • SHOPPING DIARY • ARCHIVES • SEARCH



Gurbaksh Chahal, Raj Shah, and Melanie Kannokada.

#### Raj Shah of Nanubhai Education Foundation

by Kate Ballen

*Slumdog Millionaire* has not only raised interest in Indian movies stars, but the Oscar-winning film has also increased worldwide awareness of the millions of children living in extreme poverty in rural India.

“We have had 70 American teachers and Ivy college grads apply for two jobs to teach in India this year,” announces **Raj Shah**, the 30-year-old founder of **Nanubhai Education Foundation**. “Everywhere Americans are looking for more opportunities to give.”

Since starting NEF in 2004, Shah’s goal has been to modernize education in rural India by revamping the high school curriculum to include English and information technology classes. Shah brings over Americans teachers and interns to work in the overcrowded classrooms.

His initial focus has been a school of 2000 located in his father’s agrarian village of Kadod.

“We bought the first computers to this school,” reminisces Raj. In just a few years, high school graduation rates have



Lenore Kisting, Vanisha Gandhi, and Mary Katherine Brooks at Nanubhai Education Foundation's fundraiser (held on March 6th, 2009) celebrating its fifth anniversary, with honored guest speaker,

NEW YORK  
SOCIAL DIARY

Also in NYSD Philanthropy

NYSD  
PHILANTHROPY:

- 3.18.09: [Raj Shah of Nanubhai Education Foundation](#)
- 9.23.08: [The Icla da Silva Foundation – Helping Children with Leukemia](#)
- 3.13.08: [Susan Solomon](#)

already jumped from 25% to 75%.

actor **Kal Penn** (star of The Namesake and the television series, "House").

Sitting in the paneled upscale bistro in Chelsea, amidst boutique beer and bowls of mussels, this interview with Raj and one of his summer intern teachers (a Stanford graduate student, **Vanisha Gandhi**) couldn't be further from the abysmal poverty of India. But Raj, with cell phone in his hand and a quick, sophisticated intelligence, has seen a great deal more of the world than the small village of Kadod.



Sa Group Dancers.



**Gurbaksh Chahal.**

**Kal Penn.**

Raised in a small town in Georgia to Indian-born parents, Raj Shah has graduated from Princeton University, been an active Air Force officer who flew in Iraq, worked at McKinsey and now is about to graduate from Wharton School of Business as a Soros fellow. You can detect the inner MBA of Raj as he rattles off his careful plans for Nanubhai Education Foundation: Next year NEF will be expanding its program to include 4,000 more students in another two schools.

But for now Raj deserves a few minutes to gloat over his recent successful fundraiser, that is before he has to graduate from Wharton in May, decide what to do as a real "job," while continuing (of course) to increase opportunities for the poor rural students across India. [www.nanubhai.org](http://www.nanubhai.org).

- 12.13.07: [Gillian Minter](#)
- 11.28.07: [Eleanora Kennedy and Human Trafficking](#)

CONSULTANT'S CORNER:

- 8.29.07: [Changes in Giving and Volunteering, Part II](#)
- 8.7.07: [Changes in Giving and Volunteering](#)
- 7.11.07: [Practice makes perfect](#)

[More Philanthropy >>](#)



[BACK TO TOP](#)

EMAIL PRINT RSS