

A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



Educators and scholars in India and the United States are scrambling to keep up with the demands of students and employers to prepare for, and be effective in, our globalizing economies. University campuses that we often imagine as placid oases for contemplation and scholarly discourse are seriously reviewing their strategies for competitiveness in the global market of ideas.

The libraries, colloquia and coffee shops will not disappear. Rather, intellectual centers are finding new ways to collaborate across time and distance and creating new partnerships that are revolutionizing the face of contemporary education. The consequences will be enormous for our global engagements, with vast opportunities for people to improve their lives, as well as the welfare of their families, communities and nations.

India's young people are well placed to benefit from the new global knowledge marketplace. India is ahead of all other nations in sending its students abroad for higher studies. More than 60 percent of the 123,000 Indian students abroad are in the United States. America welcomes more students from India than from any other country in the world.

We have devoted almost half of SPAN's annual "education issue" to information for these prospective students and their parents, including insights from recent U.S. graduates, choosing an appropriate institution, tips on visas, what to pack, housing and using research tools.

In India, where 54 percent of the population is under 25, young people have aspirations that cannot be met without higher education. Not everyone can afford to study abroad, but Americans are eagerly joining with Indian educators to bring the best educational opportunities here—to build campuses, exchange faculty and students, and conduct joint research on subjects as varied as agriculture, fighting disease and exploring space.

In our main story, "U.S.-India Higher Education," Sebastian John outlines some of the collaborative efforts underway between Indian and American institutions and individual scholars and researchers, and describes others that as yet are only dreams.

Our cover captures a moment of joy in learning and intellectual achievement that we can all remember from our experiences as young people. It shows two schoolgirls from Bangalore learning to use a school computer. The girls are experiencing a new world of education beyond their families' dreams because of a collaboration between Indians and Americans trying to make the very best in education available to all. Their story, by Richa Varma, on the use of radio, TV and computers to train teachers and inspire children in rural India reflects the vision of another dreamer, Mohandas K. Gandhi: "Money invested in the promotion of learning gives a 10-fold return to the people, even as a seed sown in good soil returns a good crop."

We agree, and hope you do, too.