

# MS

MEDICAL STUDENTS

*E. P. C. M. S.*

Going to India, you see it the moment you step out of the airport. It is tough to avoid in any city but easy to become immune. Poverty - a vicious cycle, especially in India, traps more people than the population of the United States combined.

Between school lectures, clinic visits, and preparing for board exams, medical school can get grueling. We start school with the dreams and ambitions that helped us write personal statements. But as we get deeper and deeper into our medical school studies, our inspiration seems to be fleeting. "Voice for the Deprived" (VFTD), was founded here in El Paso at PLFSOM as a way to remind us of why we are here, and as a way to make a difference. We believe in the mantra, "What can be done now, should not wait till later."

This idea came about while interacting with the Urban Health Resource Centre, a non-profit in New Delhi, India that works with the urban poor. The group was founded and is run by a physician, Dr. Siddharth Agarwal. Dr. Agarwal and the UHRC dig into solving the health care issues faced by those who are underprivileged in major Indian metropolises.

VFTD's purpose is to open up a channel through which we can hear the deprived in India whose voices we tune out because they become a normal part of the backdrop. Our long-term plan is to go to India and make a short series of documentaries showcasing the lives of the underprivileged. We will not bring a storyline with us because the subjects of our documentaries will make the story. They themselves will be the stars and we will act as their crew providing them with the resources that they need. The documentaries will be used as a tool to seek solutions that can be implemented to better the lives of the deprived.

VFTD is a venture that crosses borders by working with established documentarians and social activists. Our team consists of dedicated professionals from the US, Mexico, Uruguay, and India. Everyone on the project is donating their time to help further the greater cause. Our goals have even been embraced by a local film production studio in El Paso. They helped film a promotional video at the PLFSOM facilities starring a few medical students. Staff at the ATACS center of the medical school graciously helped us in the filming.

Our next step is to raise awareness of the project by the promotional video, which is currently in production. We will continue gathering footage throughout the year from, our partners in India, Agency Eleven100. A bulk of the project will be completed on a trip to the subcontinent this coming December. We are planning on working with the poor in New Delhi, India's administrative capital, and Agra,

## Voice for the Deprived

Ritik Tiwari, MSII  
Kanika Monga, MSII



India's tourist capital. Agra will provide the backdrop for a stark contrast between two things that the country is well known for: poverty and the Taj Mahal.

We will continue to report project updates in this space of the El Paso Physician, but if you would like to stay updated, please visit our website, Facebook group, or contact us. Stay tuned...

website: [voicefordeprived.org](http://voicefordeprived.org)  
email: [info@voicefordeprived.org](mailto:info@voicefordeprived.org)

Ritik Tiwari, MSII, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center - Paul L. Foster School of Medicine.

Kanika Monga, MSII, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center - Paul L. Foster School of Medicine.

