

Intel Helps Empower Achievers in Assam, India

Top-performing students are rewarded with desktop computers powered by Intel® technology.



CHALLENGES

- **Expand interest** and participation in state high school exam
- **Motivate** the most promising students to reach their potential
- **Provide** incentives to continue education

SOLUTIONS

- **Enable** high-achievement students with technology tools
- **Recognize and reward** scholastic merit
- **Extend opportunity** to male and female students alike

Assam inspires its top achievers with a technology advantage

The government of Assam, a northeastern state of India located at the foot of the Himalayas, is integrating technology to encourage participative, collaborative education driven by critical thinking skills.

In 2005, State Chief Minister Shri Tarun Gogoi launched a new initiative that promotes technology while motivating students to pursue higher education: it began awarding PCs—many of them powered by Intel® technology—to students scoring above 60% (First Division) on their high school examination. The state's ambitious initiative to put a computer on the desk of every high-achieving student has evolved into a social phenomenon that is becoming a role model for other states across the country to emulate. It has won widespread acclaim from media, educators, and Indian society at large.



**Assam Electronics
Development Corporation Ltd.
(AMTRON)**

is the Nodal Implementing Agency
for the Department of Information
Technology under Government of
Assam, India

Assam's institutions of higher education—notably the Indian Institute of Technology, in Guwahati, and the National Institute of Technology, in Silchar—enjoy national repute and attract students from other states. Every year nearly one-quarter million students appear for the high school examination, and around 60% of them qualify.

Promoting technology and achievement: ARBAS answers the challenge

The Anundoram Borooh Award Scheme (ARBAS) is a program named for the first Assamese scholar to enter the prestigious Indian Civil Services. ARBAS rewards top-achieving students with a personal computer (PC) along with a certificate to honor their First Division status in the examinations conducted by the State of Assam. The program is synonymous with the Assam Electronics Development Corporation Limited (AMTRON), a government undertaking that has been instrumental in its implementation.

Every year hundreds of thousands of young Assamese across the state appear for the high school examination. In 2010, 270,930 students appeared for the exam, and 171,276 passed. Of those, 11% (19,034 students) achieved First Division status and were eligible for the award under the ARBAS program.

In 2009 each ARBAS award recipient received a package that included:

- A PC containing an Intel® processor 2.4 GHz plus chipset
- A 15.6" TFT monitor
- 160 GB hard disk
- 1 GB RAM

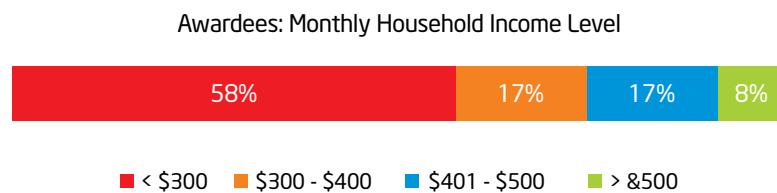
The award has been significant in exposing huge numbers of deserving students to modern technology they might otherwise have never experienced. A PC that can cost around USD 400 would only have been a distant dream for most of awardees' families—around 60% of them earn less than USD 300 per month. In this regard, ARBAS has had a revolutionary impact, extending the power of technology for productivity and learning to less privileged levels of Assam society.

After five years, ARBAS is widely acclaimed to be one of the most successful education programs in Assam. Intel has been a consistent supplier of processors and chipsets for this endeavor, helping to distribute nearly 20,000 PCs in 2009.

Leading-edge technology changes the lives of learners

TechAtEdu, an independent agency and leading Internet media platform for education in India, undertook an independent assessment during the fifth year of the award program. Its purpose was to measure recipients' satisfaction levels and determine how the program might better serve the target population. TechAtEdu surveyed top students across the state's 26 districts to understand their background, usage of the awarded PCs and their outlook toward the program's advantages and drawbacks.

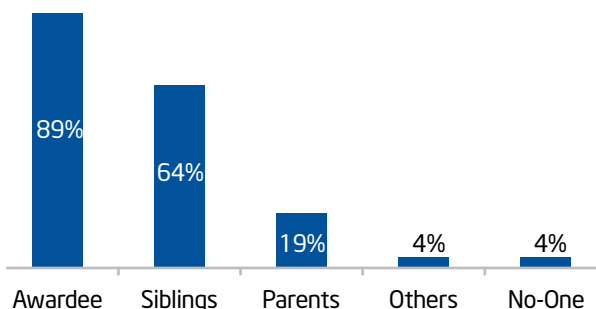
Figure 1. More than half of all ARBAS award winners' families report a monthly income of less than USD 300, as the program extends technology benefits to less privileged layers of Indian society.



Empowering entire communities

ARBAS-provided PCs benefit not only the scholars but also siblings, family, and neighbors. These computers are being used for business-related functions as well as entertainment and educational purposes. Each PC is loaded with Ubuntu, an open source operating system, building users' awareness of the wide array of freely available software.

Figure 2. The ARBAS-awarded PCs benefit not only the high-achieving students, but also their siblings, parents, friends, and neighbors, maximizing the reach of new computing technology.



Opening windows of opportunity

ARBAS PCs introduce high-achieving students and their families to the applications of modern technology in daily life. These PCs are used primarily for studies and entertainment, but office software usage is particularly high among all the awardees. Programming and accounting software is being used by students who opt for careers in those fields of study. Internet awareness is helping them to better understand the world, access online information, and use online services such as Internet banking, railway ticket booking, and paying bills.



ENCOURAGING AND EMPOWERING FEMALE SCHOLARS

The education of young women is an area of ongoing concern in Assam and across all developed states of India. The award has been successful in bringing recognition to female students by letting them prove their competence, and in motivating parents to extend educational opportunities to daughters and sons alike. By winning an ARBAS award, young women can bring pride to their families and enhance their social standing.

ONE FEMALE WINNER'S STORY OF SUCCESS

"The computer I received in the award has changed my life. I can now change my dreams into reality. I am thankful to Assam Government and Polasa Bora, my husband and friend who made this possible for me.

"If I had not received the computer in award, my in-laws would have never understood my potential in studies. They might not have allowed me to continue my studies and now I can work towards achieving my dreams. In future, I would like to teach children and will motivate them to turn their dreams into reality as well."

- Priyanka Bora

Software Usage

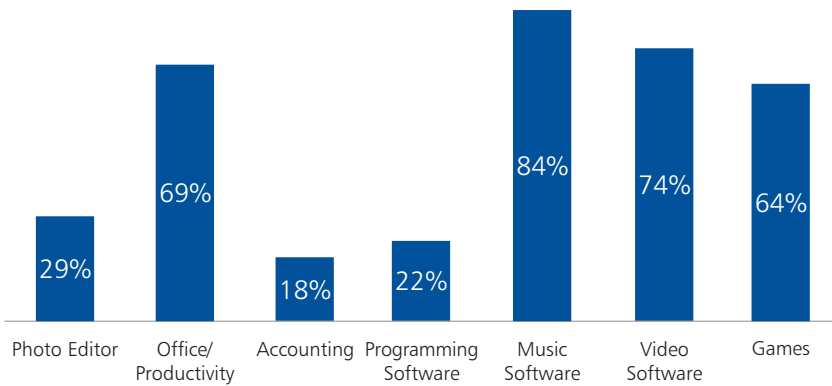


Figure 3. From multimedia suites to productivity applications, ARBAS-awarded PCs provide wide-ranging impact for work, school, and leisure.

Improving outlook on education

The award has helped broaden students' vision by motivating the awardees to opt for higher-level studies in science, commerce, and another fields of interest. It has also helped more than 80% of the students to improve their skill sets for future jobs, thereby giving them an edge over their peers.

Award Impact on Awardee Outlook

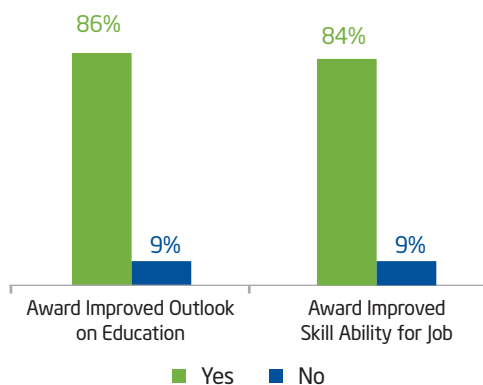


Figure 4. Students overwhelmingly credit their ARBAS-awarded PCs with improving their attitudes toward education, and providing a significant advantage in developing job skills.



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INTEL AND ARBAS: CHALLENGING SCHOLARS, CHANGING LIVES

Since its inception in 2005, the benefits of the Anundoram Borooh Award Scheme have touched every corner of Assam, impacting tens of thousands of young Assamese scholars and their families. More than 79,000 students have benefitted directly from the award, while an almost equal number have benefitted indirectly as siblings, family members, and friends. Program participation has grown at a rate of 9.2% over the past five years.

Building on the popularity and success of ARBAS, Intel continue to work with the Assam state government—and other educators in states throughout India—to expand and enhance the role of technology for rewarding young scholars.

SOLUTION PROVIDED BY:

