

## Bharat Independence Day Parade – The Tiranga Yatra

In the month of August 2023, with pride and honor the Sewa International Central Jersey Chapter participated in the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual India Day Parade, a well-organized event by the Indian Business Association marking the 77<sup>th</sup> Independence Day of Bharat that is India.

**India that is Bharat** is one of the oldest civilizations in the world, with a history that spans over 4,000 years, and known for its cultural diversity and the fusion of various customs and traditions. The history of Bharat includes periods of colonial rule, which had a profound impact on the nation. The journey from colonialism to independence in 1947 and the subsequent development as an independent nation is a remarkable part of the nation's history. With significant strides in the global economy over the years, Bharat is now considered one of the world's leading economies, with a rapidly growing and dynamic market. This transformation of Bharat has instilled a sense of national pride among its citizens, both within the country and among its diaspora worldwide.

### *Nation First, Always First*

This was the theme of this year's celebration, a powerful message that emphasizes unity and the importance of putting the nation's interests above individual differences. With the "Har Ghar Tiranga", people brought home the flag to hoist and celebrate the Tricolor/Tiranga and a movement ensued where Bharatiyas all over took part in the "Tiranga Yatra" which has become symbolic of dedication to nation-building.

Sewa International's vision of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam - The World Is One Family" aligns with the idea of global unity and cooperation, emphasizing that we are all part of one global family. The Central Jersey Chapter walked with pride and honor, supporting the theme of nation-building and Sewa International's vision. Events like the India Day Parade not only showcase the vibrant culture but also serve as a reminder of the shared values that bind people together, regardless of their backgrounds.



Here is the wonderful description of the event by the Chapter's very own LEAD volunteer...

"The rays of the sun fell gracefully upon the tricolor Indian flag. Hoisted high, and gleaming with a bright luminous glow, the flag paraded through the streets. The excitement of the crowd seemed to fill the entire township of Edison with pride. The zeal of the marchers soaring high. Carrying beautiful posters and banners, Sewa volunteers wearing their yellow t-shirts, represented the ideal of the organization: Commitment to selfless service.

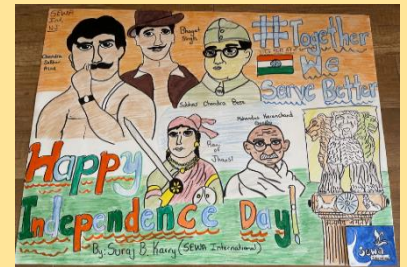
Handmade and authentic, the posters added color to the vibrant parade. As we walked across Oak Tree road we were greeted by an ecstatic crowd. Chanting "Vande Mataram" and "Bharath Maatha ki Jai", we showcased our boundless enthusiasm and rejuvenated the onlookers. The march continued forward as the sounds of announcers on the floats and the roaring cheers became ever louder. Volunteers beat the heat of the August sun with refreshments. Rose milk and Butter milk rejuvenated thirsty volunteers, as others enjoyed the sweet taste of Kaju-katli and laddu.

**Mayor Sam Joshi**, joined by the members of the **IBA**, inaugurated the parade with insightful words and praising the hard work and dedication of everyone involved. The march consisted of talented dancers, music, a stunning bike display and an enthusiastic announcer on the floats. All of them gathered to celebrate India's roots, and display the rich heritage to be found. A diverse community uniting as one. The march offered us the opportunity to strengthen the bonds with our culture and our fellow volunteers. Instilled with the values of service and passion through volunteerism, we brought Sewa into the spotlight.

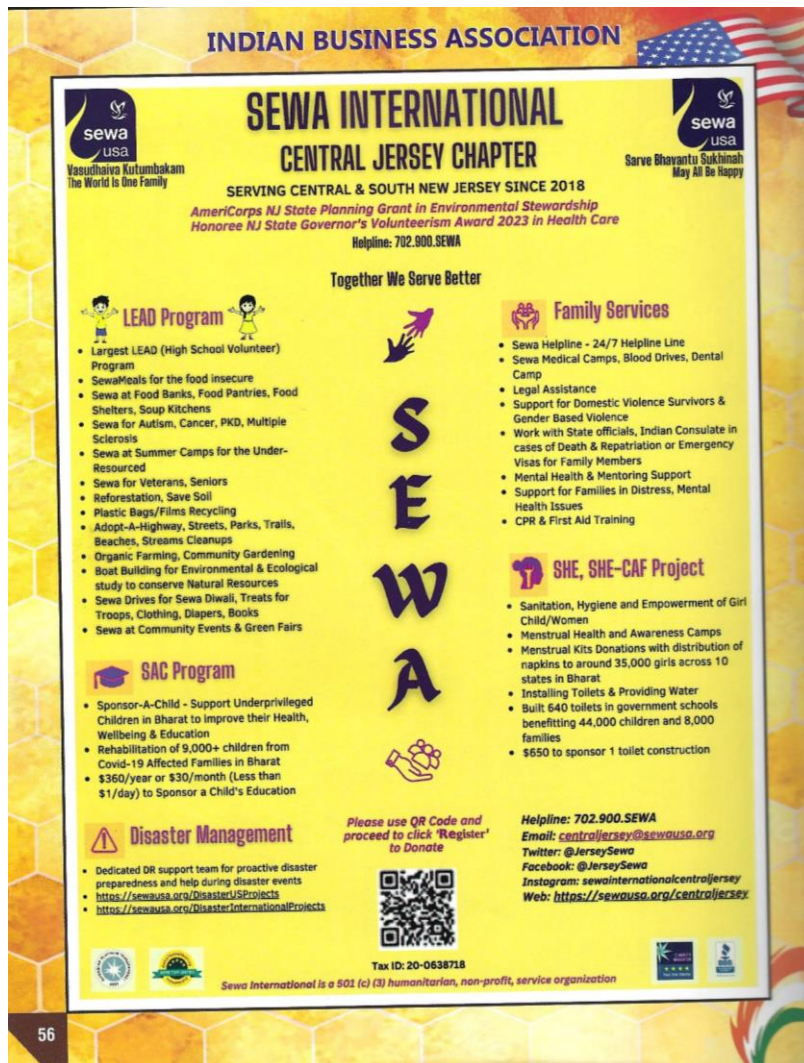
Heads raised high and flags even higher, the India Day Parade emanated with immeasurable spirit, as we gathered around the stage to chant and wave once more. Afterwards, we enjoyed a hearty meal from the temple with one another. As the sun set across the horizon; the sky turned orange; the clouds a brilliant white; the grass a luscious green. The flying colors of the Indian flag, envisioned in the sunset. We stared at the soft emanation of the sun's rays, as the last round of cheers from the stage brought the day to an end."

### Chapter Highlights

- ❖ Bharat Independence Day Parade
- ❖ Sewa Central Jersey Flier
- ❖ Funds Raised for Sewa
- ❖ Sewa Through the Year: Educational and Fundraising Initiatives
- ❖ Youth Engagement and Support Programs
- ❖ Healthcare Services
- ❖ Sustainable Agriculture, Biodiversity Conservation, and Environmental Services
- ❖ Feeding Programs for Hunger Relief
- ❖ Community Outreach & Engagement
- ❖ Serving Places of Worship



## Sewa Central Jersey Flier



The flier is a yellow and white document with a honeycomb pattern border. At the top, it reads 'INDIAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION' in blue. Below that, the 'SEWA INTERNATIONAL CENTRAL JERSEY CHAPTER' logo is prominent, featuring the words 'SEWA' and 'USA' in large, bold letters. The flier lists various programs: LEAD Program (largest LEAD, SewaMeals, food banks, etc.), Family Services (Sewa Helpline, medical camps, legal assistance, etc.), SAC Program (sponsor-a-child, etc.), and Disaster Management (dedicated DR support team, etc.). It also includes contact information: Helpline: 702.900.SEWA, Email: centraljersey@sewousa.org, Twitter: @JerseySewa, Facebook: @JerseySewa, Instagram: sewainternationalcentraljersey, and Web: https://sewousa.org/centraljersey. A QR code is provided for registration and donation. The bottom of the flier features logos of partner organizations and the text 'Sewa International is a 501 (c) (3) humanitarian, non-profit, service organization'.

**INDIAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

**SEWA INTERNATIONAL**  
**CENTRAL JERSEY CHAPTER**

SERVING CENTRAL & SOUTH NEW JERSEY SINCE 2018  
AmeriCorps NJ State Planning Grant in Environmental Stewardship  
Honoree NJ State Governor's Volunteerism Award 2023 in Health Care  
Helpline: 702.900.SEWA

**Together We Serve Better**

**LEAD Program**

- Largest LEAD (High School Volunteer) Program
- SewaMeals for the food insecure
- Sewa at Food Banks, Food Pantries, Food Shelters, Soup Kitchens
- Sewa for Autism, Cancer, PKD, Multiple Sclerosis
- Sewa at Summer Camps for the Under-Resourced
- Sewa for Veterans, Seniors
- Reforestation, Save Soil
- Plastic Bags/Films Recycling
- Adopt-A-Highway, Streets, Parks, Trails, Beaches, Streams Cleanups
- Organic Farming, Community Gardening
- Boat Building for Environmental & Ecological study to conserve Natural Resources
- Sewa Drives for Sewa Diwali, Treats for Troops, Clothing, Diapers, Books
- Sewa at Community Events & Green Fairs

**Family Services**

- Sewa Helpline - 24/7 Helpline Line
- Sewa Medical Camps, Blood Drives, Dental Camp
- Legal Assistance
- Support for Domestic Violence Survivors & Gender Based Violence
- Work with State officials, Indian Consulate in cases of Death & Repatriation or Emergency Visas for Family Members
- Mental Health & Mentoring Support
- Support for Families in Distress, Mental Health Issues
- CPR & First Aid Training

**SHE, SHE-CAF Project**

- Sanitation, Hygiene and Empowerment of Girl Child/Women
- Menstrual Health and Awareness Camps
- Menstrual Kits Donations with distribution of napkins to around 35,000 girls across 10 states in Bharat
- Installing Toilets & Providing Water
- Built 640 toilets in government schools benefitting 44,000 children and 8,000 families
- \$650 to sponsor 1 toilet construction

**SAC Program**

- Sponsor-A-Child - Support Underprivileged Children in Bharat to improve their Health, Wellbeing & Education
- Rehabilitation of 9,000+ children from Covid-19 Affected Families in Bharat
- \$360/year or \$30/month (Less than \$1/day) to Sponsor a Child's Education

**Disaster Management**

- Dedicated DR support team for proactive disaster preparedness and help during disaster events
- <https://sewousa.org/DisasterUSProjects>
- <https://sewousa.org/Disaster/InternationalProjects>

Please use QR Code and proceed to click 'Register' to Donate

Helpline: 702.900.SEWA  
Email: [centraljersey@sewousa.org](mailto:centraljersey@sewousa.org)  
Twitter: @JerseySewa  
Facebook: @JerseySewa  
Instagram: [sewainternationalcentraljersey](https://www.instagram.com/sewainternationalcentraljersey)  
Web: <https://sewousa.org/centraljersey>

Tax ID: 20-0638718

Sewa International is a 501 (c) (3) humanitarian, non-profit, service organization

Here is a look at the Sewa International Central Jersey flier as printed on the annual brochure of the Indian Business Association (IBA).

The flier gives a comprehensive view of the varied sewa/service activities of the Central Jersey Chapter and flagship programs of Sewa International.

The Chapter would like to deeply thank IBA for providing their recipients access to all the relevant information on the various service programs of Sewa International.

It is partnerships and collaborations of this kind as shared between Sewa International Central Jersey and the Indian Business Association that can help raise awareness and support for important community initiatives.

## Funds Raised in appreciation of Sewa

In June 2023, the Central Jersey Chapter partnered with the **EKAM**, a non-profit organization, in organizing a 5K Run/Walk event to support new mothers and children in need of medical care. In appreciation of the excellent service contribution of the Chapter volunteers, EKAM has contributed **\$720** towards the good causes of Sewa International.

The Chapter deeply appreciates this contribution from EKAM and would also like to thank the dedicated Chapter volunteers who worked hard to make this event a success and appreciates their contributions to such noble causes of EKAM as well as Sewa International.

EKAM's generous contribution to Sewa International is a testament to the impactful work that both organizations are doing and reflects the spirit of unity and service that defines such initiatives.

## Sewa Through the Year – Recurring Service Activities by the Central Jersey Chapter

"Sewa" a *Sanskrit* term that means "selfless service" or "voluntary service", is a concept found in various *Hindu* spiritual and philosophical traditions, emphasizing the idea of serving others without any expectation of personal gain or recognition. 'Sewa' is associated with acts of charity, kindness, and compassion towards those in need. In contemporary contexts, "Sewa" refers to various forms of community service, volunteering, or philanthropy aimed at helping individuals or communities facing challenges or hardships. "Sewa" is deeply rooted in the *Hindu* values of selflessness and empathy and is considered a virtuous and noble way to contribute to the betterment of society.

The Central Jersey Chapter has played a significant role in recurring "Sewa" activities in community engagement, social impact, and personal growth through the year and this month too, the service continues.

### Educational & Fundraising Initiatives

Chapter LEADs have been planning and executing fund raising activities this summer to raise funds for multiple causes for Sewa International.

LEADs hosted a two-week Algebra camp for children in grades 7 – 9 where they were taught various topics in Algebra including linear equations, systems of equations, functions, exponents, and radicals. The fundraising from the camp was donated to the SAC and SHE programs.

#### **Sewa Beneficiary:**

SAC and SHE, SHE-CAF Program, Sewa International



### Youth Engagement and Support Programs



Kiddie Keep Well Camp (KKWC) is a non-profit organization providing residential camping to under-resourced children in Middlesex County. Central Jersey Sewa LEADs volunteered at the camp in shifts, Monday through Friday throughout the summer. They helped with various activities including dicing vegetables for meals, setting up tables for breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as cleaning up the tables and neatly arranging the chairs and tables after each meal.

#### **Sewa Beneficiary:**

Kiddie Keep Well Camp, Middlesex County

### Healthcare Services:

LEADs helped the New York Blood Center with their blood drive at Metuchen YMCA where they assisted with checking in the registered donors and walk-ins. They also worked in the canteen, providing the donors with snacks, juice, and water to prevent fainting, lightheadedness, or reactions post giving blood. Chapter LEADs worked efficiently at the blood drive which is essential to maintaining the availability of safe and compatible blood for medical treatment, emergencies, and the well-being of individuals in the community and beyond.

LEADs also assisted at the NJ Health Camp, with free medical check-ups, consultations, and health education sessions for attendees. The primary focus was on promoting well-being, raising health awareness, and addressing the healthcare needs of marginalized populations within the local community.

#### **Sewa Beneficiaries:**

New York Blood Center  
Metuchen YMCA  
Indian Health Camp of NJ (IHCNJ)



## Sustainable Agriculture, Biodiversity Conservation, and Environmental Services

With the summer almost coming to an end, the Chapter LEADs took advantage of the good weather and toiled to grow produce in their backyard – a service project the Chapter undertook since the previous year. LEADs continued to care for their vegetable garden which included chilies, tomatoes, cucumbers and other produce which were then donated to various food pantries.

LEADs also helped at Marlboro Community Garden, where they helped with pulling out weeds, filling up the compost bins and cleaning out the wood chips and at the Sri Guruvaayoorappan Temple Garden, LEADs helped in weeding and harvesting produce for the temple.

At the Watershed Institute's Butterfly Festival, the LEADs partook in a series of tasks, such as being doorman to the butterfly house - to make sure participants could enjoy the butterflies without allowing them to escape, serving lemonade as a refreshment to visitors, assisting in activities for the kids, and setting up the lawn games. Volunteers also assisted in the Arts and Crafts tent, placing tattoos on the attendees of the event. They also helped in collecting visitors' feedback on the event.

"Rows for the Hungry" embodies Sewa International's dedication to addressing food insecurity and community welfare. Through this initiative, volunteers engaged in cultivating various vegetables and fruits to provide sustenance for those in need.

### **Sewa Beneficiaries:**

Marlboro Community Garden, Morganville  
 Rows for Hungry, South Brunswick  
 Watershed Institute, Pennington  
 Jewish Relief Agency, PA  
 RISE Pantry, Hightstown  
 Sri Guruvaayoorappan Temple, Morganville



## Feeding Programs for Hunger Relief



As part of the SewaMeal program, LEADs worked hard in their homes to prepare a variety of dishes that were donated to those in need.

And this month, we received a generous donation of more than 400 pounds of assorted produce from Ramblin Sol Farm, which brings us to a huge total of 900 pounds this season! We also added several fresh vegetables from our LEADs' home gardens to some boxes which were delivered to local organizations!

**Meal Items:** Chickpea Salad, Macaroni Salad, Garlic Bread, Pasta, Chickpea Burgers, Channa Masala, Brownies

### **Meals' Sponsors:**

LEAD Advait Koli and family  
 LEAD Tanya Kumar and family  
 Geetha Ragi & Sai Kiran Nagineni  
 Divya Joshi & Himanshu Pant  
 Karuna & Venu Keshireddy  
 Puja & Sameer Jain  
 Malini & Muralidharan Krishnan,  
 Shilpa & Mukul Rathi (State Farm)

### **Meals' Recipients:**

The United Methodist Church, New Brunswick  
 Westminster Presbyterian Church, Trenton  
 Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen, New Brunswick  
 Radha Gopinath Temple, Edison  
 SriVari Sri Balaji Temple, Somerset

## Community Outreach & Engagement

As part of Chesterfield Township's initiative, Chapter LEADs have worked towards the Pet Census project where they worked to proactively connect with nearly **1,800** households to conduct the pet census. They have gone around to numerous households where they informed pet owners about pet registration rules and vaccination information.

At the Jewish Relief Agency, LEADs packed and delivered non-perishable food items as well as basic needs such as toilet paper to families in need.

LEADs helped stock shelves with food and hygiene products, as well as sorting and preparing fresh produce for distribution at the Franklin Food Bank through the month of August.

LEADs also volunteered at the Franklin Township Night Out, where they were able to intertwine community safety with effective fundraising.

### Sewa Beneficiaries:

Chesterfield Township  
Franklin Food Bank, Somerset  
Jewish Relief Agency, PA  
Franklin Township



## Serving at Places of Worship



At Umiya Dham Temple, LEADs turned into camp counselors where they helped the kids at the summer camp participate in various activities that included yoga, arts and crafts, chanting slokas, and playing games.

At Om Sri Sai Balaji Temple, LEADs helped with various activities such as cleaning the floors, vacuuming the carpets, organizing and tidying up their storage facilities, packing prasad bags and setting up the events board in the lobby. LEADs and parent volunteers also actively helped with unwrapping and storing Lakshmi idols prior to Varalakshmi Pooja and with dismantling and storing Lakshmi idols after the event.

LEADs have started service at the Sri Guruvaayoorappan Temple, where this month they helped in harvesting produce which are used to in the meals prepared for the Bhojanashala, to be served to the temple devotees.

### Sewa Beneficiaries:

Sri Guruvaayoorappan Temple, Morganville  
Umiya Dham Temple, Edison  
Om Sai Sri Balaji Temple, Monroe

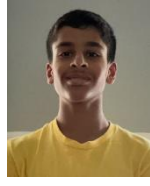
The key to these recurring "Sewa" activities of the Central Jersey Chapter has been the consistency and dedication of the Chapter volunteers.

*'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' – The World Is One Family  
Together We Serve Better*

## Newsletter Team



**Aadharsh Sakkaravarthy**  
**Grade:** 11  
**Interests:** Track, Writing, Animation, Engineering  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** Boat Building for Environment



**Aarish Esanaka**  
**Grade:** 10  
**Interests:** Volleyball, Math, Reading, Guitar  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** SewaMeal



**Anirvina Prabhala**  
**Grade:** 10  
**Interests:** Tennis, Coding, Computer science  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** Pumpkin Compost Drive



**Avaneesh Subramanyan**  
**Grade:** 12  
**Interests:** Swimming, Tennis, Volunteering, Economics  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** Marlboro Community Garden



**Chahel Kumar**  
**Grade:** 11  
**Interests:** Cars, Soccer  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** AttachAvi Autism



**Prasham Shah**  
**Grade:** 10  
**Interests:** Reading, Coding, Business, Martial arts, Debate  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** Food Pantry Packing



**Sairakshitha Ramesh**  
**Grade:** 12  
**Interests:** Hiking, Writing, Reading, Business/Finance, Art  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** Backyard Garden



**Shreenidhi Ravishankar**  
**Grade:** 10  
**Interests:** Dancing, Reading, Guitar  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** AttachAvi



**Srisaran Sivakumar**  
**Grade:** 10  
**Interests:** Cricket, Tennis, Cubing, Volunteering  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** KKWC Underprivileged Camp



**Srujan Potturi**  
**Grade:** 11  
**Interests:** Dance, Cricket  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** SewaMeal



**Tanay Motamarri**  
**Grade:** 10  
**Interests:** Volleyball, Cubing, Math, Cars, Soccer  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** SewaMeal



**Trisha Veloor**  
**Grade:** 12  
**Interests:** Dance, Tennis, Music, Volunteering, Outdoors  
**Favorite Sewa Project:** Ramblin' Sol Organic Farming

## Upcoming Events

- ❖ Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup
- ❖ Sewa for 5K Walk/Run for neurological disabilities
- ❖ Pet Registration & Vaccination Campaign
- ❖ Sewa at BookSmiles
- ❖ Edison Tower Clean up
- ❖ Harvest Fest & Green Fairs
- ❖ Community Gardening, Organic Farming, Produce Donations
- ❖ Sewa for Autism Foundation
- ❖ Sewa at Food Banks, Food Pantries, and Food Shelters
- ❖ SewaMeal for the Underserved at Churches/Shelters
- ❖ Sewa at Community Events
- ❖ Sewa at Places of Worship

### REGISTRATION

- Central Jersey SewaMeal Sponsorship  
Donation towards SewaMeal Sponsorship
- Central NJ Chapter General Donation  
General Donation to Central NJ Chapter of Sewa International

Register

Please use below QR Code or link and proceed to click 'Register' to donate



Click → <https://sewausa.org/event-5084580> and fill the information

## Communication Channels

Please visit our Chapter website and Follow us on Twitter, Facebook & Instagram

**Web:** <https://Sewausa.org/centraljersey>

**Twitter:** @JerseySewa

**FB:** @JerseySewa or Sewa Central Jersey

**Instagram:** sewainternationalcentraljersey

**Email:** [centraljersey@sewausa.org](mailto:centraljersey@sewausa.org)

**Helpline:** 702. 900.SEWA