

Sewa Milan 2021

Sewa International Central Jersey Chapter's Annual Volunteer Appreciation & Award Ceremony

The Central New Jersey Chapter of Sewa International conducted their third Sewa Milan on Sunday, January 23, 2022. The 2-hour virtual event recognized the year-long efforts made by the Chapter's volunteers from the LEAD program, Family Services, Helpline, Disaster Relief teams, and honorees of the President's Volunteer Service Award for 2021. The high school volunteer participants of the LEAD (Leadership, Education, And Development) program collectively put in 32,000 hours of community service this past year.

Congressman Frank Pallone Jr., of the 6th Congressional District of NJ, was the Chief Guest at the event. The Guests Of Honor were Mr. Arthur Kapoor, Founder and CEO of HealthEC, and Dr. Suresh K. Jain, Board of Directors, Sewa International USA.



Chief Guest Congressman Pallone Jr. in his address appreciated Sewa Central Jersey Chapter's efforts and social service during the COVID times with projects like the drive-thru PPE distribution to first responders, hot meals to support the homeless, and others. He said, *"Central Jersey chapter does a lot of things here. Let me thank all the student volunteers who are presented with Presidential awards & their parents present for raising civic-minded children. Hinduism teaches us that protecting our community is part of our dharma or duty, and this is something that has to be a major focus of your life, and it has also to do with being a good citizen carrying out civic duties, and getting involved in the community, particularly in these troubling times."*

Guest of Honor Mr. Arthur Kapoor was also very impressed with the work the LEADs were doing. He spoke to inspire young minds by presenting himself as an example of dreaming and realizing the dream. He appreciated Sewa and all the volunteers for their phenomenal job at a very young age. He said, *"If you set your mind to something you can achieve it. Always remember whatever you envision or dream, you can make it. If you don't dream, nothing will happen. Dreaming is a good thing to do"*. He also insisted on the importance of giving back to society.



Guest of Honor Dr. Jain of Sewa International USA, praised the chapter's achievements, *"I am speechless. It was inspirational, it was motivational. The collective energy, the collective work, planning, execution, and the passion came together. As a Sewa LEAD volunteer, experience the joy of giving and develop a strong sense of inspiration and motivation. Bring the communities together."*

Chapter Highlights

- ❖ Sewa Milan
- ❖ SACO Covid testing site assistance
- ❖ AttachAvi Program
- ❖ Manavi Support
- ❖ Surya Namaskar Yagna

Center Highlights

- ❖ Sewa Meals
- ❖ Radha Gopinath Temple

Volunteer Spotlight



Sirisha Maganti Ji has been with Central Jersey Sewa since September 2020. From the get-go, she has been volunteering alongside her 2 kids who are Somerset center leads. She is always ready to assist the center activities in whatever is needed. She is one of the first volunteers to come forward especially if it's a project supporting little children. She has been a great help with the Toy/Book drives and to plan & make Sewa meals for the homeless. Outside of Sewa, she is an avid Committee Member of Boy Scouts Troop 102G. She has been working as a Software Engineer with Accenture for 12 years. Originally, she is from a town near Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. Now, she lives in Princeton, New Jersey with her two kids, Sreeya and Suhas, and her husband, Srinivas. Sirisha Ji enjoys gardening, exercising, reading books, spending time with her family and friends, and giving back to the community.

Central Jersey Chapter Coordinator, Rajesh Sharma, showed the roadmap of the Central Jersey Chapter and how the Chapter strength has grown in size as well as achievements from the year it started in 2018.

He further shared a message from Governor Phil Murphy and a letter from Senator Cory Booker. In his message, Governor Murphy had said, *“How impressed I am by everything you are doing for our Indian and non-Indian brothers and sisters. Cannot thank you enough, so impressive in this awful tragedy and hour of need.”*

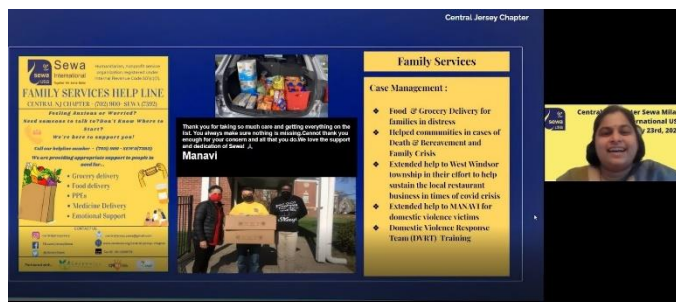
In his congratulatory note, Senator Cory Booker said, *“Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, your organization’s selfless, compassionate efforts to create positive change has truly met the moment. Sewa reminds us to be socially conscious stewards of our communities, who uplift the undeserved and who fight for the underprivileged.”*



Sandesh Kamath, a joint coordinator of the Central Jersey Chapter, provided a summary of the LEAD program and all that was accomplished by the Chapter despite the constraints and limitations of Covid.



Anitha Krishnamurthi, a joint coordinator of the Central Jersey Chapter, recalled her recent visit to one of the girls’ hostels supported by the chapter in Nagappattinam, TN, India. She walked the audience through the hostel facilities and shared some beautiful artwork of the students from the hostel.



Rekha Ravi, Family Service coordinator, went over the various critical cases that the chapter has handled, the assistance provided at FEMA vaccination sites both in and out of state, scheduling vaccination appointments for the elderly, and supporting partner organization MANAVI for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The 240+ attendees included dignitaries and leaders of many partner organizations from various townships including President Arun Kankani, Director of Programs & Project Prem Pusuloori, Vijay Mallampati, and Anita Kant attended the program from Sewa International.

Rev. Karen Hernandez-Granzen of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Trenton, NJ said, *“You see the divine within you calling you to serve the divine in others. We are blessed to have you to serve hot meals to so many people in Trenton.”*

Pastor Cyndi Stouffer of United Methodist Church said, *“Thank you from the bottom of our heart in all the ways you have helped our community to allow our ministry to serve so many lives, especially our friends living on the street. Just keep serving, our world desperately needs you.”*



The program started with a traditional Deep Prajwalan (lighting the lamp) ceremony followed by the national anthems of the US and India. The welcome to the guests was accompanied by a Sewa Geet presentation.

The LEADs themselves managed the entire event, including planning, emceeing, performing (instrumental music, dancing, and singing), presenting, and providing tech support. AttachAvi Autism foundation’s young adults performed dances to appreciate Sewa’s volunteer work at the foundation. Folk dances and the piano performance added a cultural touch to the program, and the quiz questions sprinkled throughout the event kept everyone engaged.

The program concluded with the Shanti Mantra (peace for the world prayer).

Sewa LEADs 2021!

Cherry Hill Center



Ananya Bongoni



Anjela Anand



Dhriti Cagathi



Dinesh Karnati



Pranav Reddy Palle



Praveen Prabharan



Raghav Akula



Rijul Verma



Riya Mandala



Sarayu Nalamalapu



Shrenik Vemulakonda



Tanay Durg



Vaman Rajagopal

Congratulations!

Chesterfield Center



Adit Tummala



Advita Gavini



Akshara Narahari



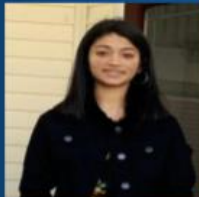
Amit Guiadeen



Ananya Madireddy



Aniketh Chadive



Anisha Sai R Pavani



Anjali Menon



Ankith Keshireddy



Annol Dhingra



Anshu Andhavarapu



Anusha Gupta

Congratulations!

Chesterfield Center



Anvitha Naikoti



Arnav Thareja



Aryan Katragadda



Astha Rajpal



Avijith Karthikeyan



Avinash Sai R Pavani



Joshika Aravelli



Krithi Paidipally



Manavi Gupta



Medha Singireddy



Meghana Dheram



Navya Mangala



Parthiv Valmikam

Congratulations!



Pranav Ramagiri

Chesterfield Center



Prisha Batra



Rahi Dhopte



Rithvik Bonagiri



Rithi Joghee



Riya Patel



Saatvik Kambhampati



Sahar Paladugu



Sai Skanda Tummala



Sanjay Guideen



Sanketh Kamath

Congratulations!



Sanya Rana

Chesterfield Center



Saumya Khurana



Shreya Nayak



Shriya Joshi



Shubham Dhingra



Siddarth Tadi



Srinitya Tadisina



Sumanth Donur



Tania Saravanakumar



Tanushri Aravind



Tanvi Kundur



Tarak Nelluri



Trisha Velloor

Congratulations!

Edison Center



Aashka Dave



Aditi Kudva



Akshara Gupta



Anish Akkala



Archisha Sharma



Archit Dwivedi



Arush Bhardwaj



Ashish Manavarthe



Darsh Bhalala



Diya Patel



Heet Chauhan



Hyndavi Kakuru

Congratulations!

Edison Center



Manas Gupta



Nithya Kanthan



Pari Agarwal



Pranavaswaroopan Nagarajan



Raashi Maheshwari



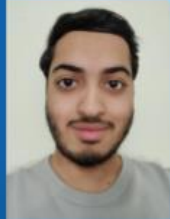
Raima Khan



Ramya Lakshmi



Ridhi Gannamaneni



Rithvik Kuchuru



Sahas Murthy



Sanjay Ravishankar



Shriyah Venkateshprabu

Congratulations!

Edison Center



Shruthi Saravanan



Shubhransh Joshi



Sidharth Ponram



Subiksha Ganesh



Suhas Murthy



Suraj Patel



Tanya Sriram



Thianesh Kalaiselvan



Vinay Laroia



Siddhanth Ravi

Congratulations!

Monroe Center



Aarya Radhan



Adithiya G Karthik



Aditi Mahendran



Advait D. Nair



Aiden Matt



Akhil Mannam



Aniketh Byram



Anirudh Prodduturu



Anurag Tadapaneni



Areeni Sharma



Avaneesh Subramanyan



Devanshi Voleti



Jaabili Kuruvella



Krishna Soneji

Congratulations!

Monroe Center



Mahathi Chitti



Nandini Miryala



Rohan Sharma



Saanvi Damera



Safa Biradar



Sanika Bane



Shresta Damera



Shreyoshi Ghosh



Siri Koppiseti



Srimaye Chennapragada



Srushti Basapuri



Sukhmani Dehar



Vedant D. Nair

Congratulations!

Somerset Center



Meera Batra



Anushka Dasari



Hrishik Epuru



Sreeya Kavuri



Suhas Kavuri



Chahel Kumar



Muskan Seksaria



Shriya Simha



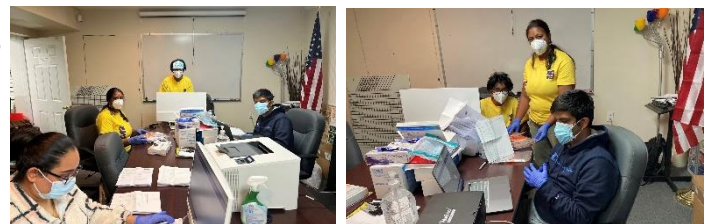
Suja Sudhakar

Congratulations!

SACO Covid Testing Site Assistance

The South Asian Community Outreach (SACO) ran a free mega Covid testing site at Papiani Park in Edison, NJ. They were in need of additional support and our Central Jersey Chapter immediately mobilized volunteers within a short period. The volunteering effort involved managing the incoming cars and directing people to the testing windows. They further went on to assist with the data entry and in generating lab test orders for test samples. Over 400-700 testing samples were processed at the site per day and our volunteers put in long hours with a total of over 60 hours! We especially appreciate and want to thank our below listed volunteers who stepped up for this effort at the covid testing site when Omicron was at the peak!

Akhil Kalepalli, Chahel Kumar, Chitra Kuppaswamy, Kunal Maniar, Medha Inapuri, Mitsui Dave, Neelam Gupta, Rahil Dave, Rajesh Chauhan, Rakesh Subramani Kaleshwaran, Runa Rakshit and Sirisha Inapuri.



AttachAvi Program

In collaboration with AttachAvi Autism Foundation, Sewa Central Jersey Chapter started a two-year all-inclusive program on social and emotional learning for special needs young adults. Our youth volunteered for the program and showed their support for young adults on autism spectrum from the foundation.

Manavi Support

The Central Jersey Chapter Family Services group have partnered with Manavi, an organization that addressed the needs of South Asian women who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Our volunteers shop and provide grocery and any other necessity to these survivors.

Sewa Meals

Our Central Jersey Chapter LEADs began this year on a good note where they prepared meals for the homeless.

Monroe LEADs prepared and delivered 120 adult meals and 8 kids' meals to United Methodist Church, New Brunswick. The year's first offered meals consisted of chickpeas salad, vegetable pasta, dinner roll and freshly baked cookies. Our LEADs, as always, did a fantastic job of working together and getting meals together quickly and efficiently. This month's sponsors were LEAD Saisiddharth's family and LEAD Rohan's family. Thank you to all the LEADs and families who helped with the meal preparation!



Somerset LEADs prepared and delivered 120 adult meals and 8 kids' meals to United Methodist Church, New Brunswick. The year's first offered meals consisted of chickpeas salad, vegetable pasta, grilled cheese sandwich, corn muffin and chocolate chips muffin. Our LEADs, not only did they do a wonderful job of working as a team and getting meals ready, but also ensured it was delivered efficiently and in a timely manner. Thank you to all the LEADs and families who stepped up once again!



Edison LEADs prepared multiple dishes such as vegetable pasta, rajma beans, cheese sandwiches, salad, cupcakes, and peas pulao/rice, which were then given to the Ozanam Homeless Shelter, helping 40-50 people in need. We appreciate the generosity of the LEADs' families, which had gone to help the shelter celebrate special events as well as provide for everyday needs of its members.



Radha Gopinath Temple Volunteering



Edison LEADs volunteered at the Radha Gopinath Temple and assisted the temple staff by cleaning the temple kitchen, helping with food prep for the prasadam, packing food to distribute to temple attendees, cleaning, and scanning books. The staff at the temple were committed to making our time with them as productive as possible, and all of the LEADs left the temple feeling fulfilled at being able to help the temple and give back to the community. After long hours of work, the temple staff encouraged all of the LEADs to stay and eat a meal at prasadam as a reward for all the hard work done.

Surya Namaskar Yagna

Sewa International participated in the Surya Namaskar Yagna, a 24 hour Yogathon on January 29, 2022. This Surya Namaskar drive is a special initiative by Consulate General of India and is part of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations that are undergoing in the 75th year of India's independence. The goal was to execute a total 75 Crore (750,000,000) rounds of Surya Namaskar all over the world but the number has far surpassed the expectations!

India's ancient sages developed the Surya Namaskar as a unique combination of physical and spiritual activity. It is a 10-step combination of 8 poses, done with rhythmic breathing (Pranayama) and chanting Mantras. Besides being a great cardiovascular workout, Surya Namaskar is also known to have an immensely positive impact on the mind and body.

Our volunteers from Central Jersey Chapter participated in this great event and did around 1200 Surya Namaskars!



Newsletter Team



Aashi Mishra

Grade: 11
Interests: Painting, Reading,
Computer science, Hiking
Favorite Project: Radha Gopinath
Temple volunteering



**Adwita
Jagannathan**

Grade: 8th
Interests: Singing, Reading, and
Writing
Favorite Project: Music concert at
Bridgewater temple



Ankhita Prakaas

Grade: 9th
Interests: Silhouette Painting,
Cooking & baking
Favorite Project: Music
concert at Bridgewater
temple



Niyathi Sanku

Grade: 10th
Interests: Reading, Dance
Favorite Project: Sewa Meals,
Making Bracelets



**Shreenidhi
Ravishankar**

Grade: 8
Interests: Painting, Reading,
Computer science, Hiking
Favorite Project: Radha Gopinath
Temple volunteering

Upcoming Events

- ❖ Neshaminy Park Reforestation
- ❖ Birthday Cards and Bracelet Making
- ❖ Sai Pariwar Temple volunteering
- ❖ Sewa Meals
- ❖ AttachAvi Kids Class
- ❖ Manavi Support

Communication Channels

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

Web: <https://Sewausa.org/centraljersey-Chapter>

Twitter: @JerseySewa

FB: @JerseySewa or Sewa Central Jersey

Instagram: [sewainternationalcentraljersey](https://www.instagram.com/sewainternationalcentraljersey)

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