



Houston Scores Again – Over \$300,000 Raised!



Sewa Families attending the annual fundraiser organized by Sewa International - Houston chapter

It is gala time for many Sewa International chapters. As the year end is approaching, many Sewa chapters are preparing to conduct Sewa Dinner Gala Fundraisers in their respective cities. This event provides a great opportunity to Sewa teams to connect with their donors and supporters and showcase what they have done throughout the year. Sewa volunteers work hard to put this event together and have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to support various humanitarian projects in the US and abroad. We carry two reports in this newsletter about successful galas organized in Houston and San Antonio.

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Executive's Corner

Dear Sewa Families & Friends,

Wow! We are already in last quarter of 2019. Indeed, time flies!

The last three quarters of Sewa's journey this year were very encouraging. Chapters have conducted numerous events, and some chapters have come up with new initiatives. During the summer, some conducted the LEAD program, summer internship programs, and Sports for Sewa events. Some of you have done well attracting new volunteers.

The LEAD program inculcates leadership qualities in young adults, and it prepares them for handling leadership roles in their schools and local communities. This year, an impressive number of youth volunteers have participated in these programs. Generally, LEAD program runs for at least three to four months in the spring and summer. During this period youth will participate in highways and parks cleaning, conducting blood drives in their local communities, participating in local food drives, teaching under-privileged children, etc. This is a good platform for youth for honing leadership skills and developing lifelong friendships.

A couple of chapters have conducted summer internship programs by involving college students and some high school students. Internship programs run for six to seven weeks. For example, Sewa interns have created a survey questionnaire to identify the information gap among local school authorities, students, and parents. Also, Sewa interns have conducted classes during weekdays to help school children in completing homework, teaching math, science, and other subjects.

This year, a couple of chapters have hosted family camps

in the summer. This is a relatively new initiative. Camps were conducted to create friendships among volunteers and engage them in fun filled Sewa activities. This initiative highlighted that involvement of families is the key to success of Sewa work. Hopefully, we will get to see more such camps conducted next year.

For the last six years, Sewa chapters have organized sports events to raise funds for Sewa International projects. Among these events are cricket, badminton, volleyball, and chess tournaments, as well as 5K runs. It is interesting to note that around 40 teams have participated in the New Jersey/New York Metro Chapter Cricket for Sewa event. Sports events are very useful in bringing the younger generation to Sewa, apart from fundraising. These events help in spreading our message in our local communities.

This last quarter, all chapters have started working on fundraising events. Raising funds for local and international projects is essential for Sewa. Chapters have planned Dance for Sewa (Nrithya Sewa), Sewa gala events, musical nights, and round-table fundraising events.

Lastly, I am very excited to announce the opening of new chapters by the end of this year. Work is in progress!

I will conclude here by humbly requesting all donors to kindly open your hearts to chip in and donate to support Sewa projects. Serving humanity is serving divinity!

R. S. Kosgi

Syam Kosgi
VP Organization



Houston Scores Again – Over \$300,000 Raised!

Sewa Houston celebrated another year of community service with a tremendously successful gala event held at the Stafford Center on Sunday, September 8. By the end of the night, Sewa had exceeded its \$300,000 pledge goal, which will allow the chapter to expand its mission of serving the Houston community.

The focus of the gala was service -- highlighting activities and programs that are in place; encouraging people to actively serve the community; and acknowledging the contributions of Sewa volunteers. The gala brought together more than 600 people from across Texas.

Gitesh Desai, President of the Houston Chapter, introduced the program and highlighted the importance of giving time to the community. His message of "Service to humanity is Service to God" created an inspiring atmosphere throughout the event. Chief guest, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) urged the Indian community to participate in public activities and help bring Sewa's spirit to Washington DC.

Among the speakers that night was Kaushiki Tewary, who shared her experience as a Sewa intern. Houston Independent School District (HISD) officer Ann Scott spoke about how the Sewa team helped seven HISD schools that had suffered during Hurricane Harvey. These schools were able to continue school services despite the tough circumstances they found themselves in, thanks to the great work of Sewa volunteers, and support from the Sewa chapter.

Many people and organizations were acknowledged at the gala event. Among the people whose continuing support Sewa acknowledged was that of Jugal Malani, a long-time Houstonian and successful entrepreneur.

The audience enjoyed performances by the Gazelle Turkish Dance Group, Sunanda's Performing Arts Center, and the Kanaga Odissi Dance Center. Short video clips about ASPIRE and the Rebuild Project were played. Some of the family stories highlighted in these videos moved the audience to tears.

Concluding the program, Surrender Trehan highlighted the work of Sewa in children's education, and Nikhil Jain expressed a vote of thanks. The gala concluded with a delicious Indian meal.

San Antonio Chapter Conducts Successful Gala

The San Antonio Chapter of Sewa International had its premier fundraising gala on August 24, raising nearly \$7,000 by the end of the 3-hour-long event at the Hindu Temple. The focus of the gala was Sewa's *Sponsor a Child* program.

With Dr. Hetal Nayak at the Chapter's helm, the goal of the gala was to bring awareness to Sewa's activities in the community, increase the volunteer pool, and promote sponsorship of children's education. Over 300 people, including 60 performers and 50 volunteers, attended the gala, making it a huge success.

The emcees, Vikas Bhatnagar and Sharvari Parghi, engaged the audience, while the students of the Kalalaya School of Indian Performing Arts introduced the program. Vikas Bhatnagar and Anjana Rao welcomed Sewa board members and the chief guests. Dr. Hetal Nayak, the Chapter Coordinator, gave an inspiring speech. She informed the audience of Sewa's services to the local community, which include family services, Gaatakatha, Hindi Pathshala, and I-do-Yoga classes. She also spoke about Sewa's accomplishments and presented the 2018 financial report of Sewa San Antonio.

Yatish Jakatimath spoke about other Sewa programs, and Sharvari Praghi spoke about *Sponsor a Child*. A fashion show by the Aarti School of Dance and songs by Kalalaya and Swaranjali School of Music made the entire night memorable.

The gala ended with a scrumptious dinner made by the volunteers, and an auction of unique brassware from India. By the end of the evening 116 sponsors had committed a total of \$3,800 for the *Sponsor a Child* program. Through the sale of Gaatakatha items, another \$1,865 was raised, and the live auction raised \$1,072. An additional amount of \$211 donated brought the evening's total to nearly \$7,000.

Sewa International – Usage of Name and Logo

Sewa International's National Director of Marketing, Viswanath Koppaka, has drawn attention to the correct usage of the name of the organization. For any clarification, please email DirMarketing@Sewausa.org or call (404) 304-0563

- We are **"Sewa International"** and not **"SEWA"** or **"SEWA USA"** or **"Sewa USA"**
- Please keep in mind - when we use **"SEWA"** or **"SEWA USA"** or **"Sewa USA"** we are promoting some other organization and not Sewa International. There is another organization already registered as Sewa USA.
- Please use the following pattern in all of our external or internal communications such as press releases, newsletters, event flyers, poster and letters.
- When using internationally – and on social media like Facebook/Twitter -- follow this rule:
 - **"Sewa International" <Country> - <Chapter>**
 - Sewa International USA – Houston
 - Sewa International USA – Atlanta
- When using domestically (within the United States) – on flyers, invitations, letters, etc., do the following:
 - **Sewa International <Chapter name>**
 - Sewa International – Houston
 - Sewa International – Atlanta

Sewa International is also an organization registered in India and it goes by the name of **Sewa International**. Its website is www.SewaInternational.org

Sewa is registered as **"Sewa International Inc"** in the US, and www.sewausea.org is our website. Sewa International in UK and Australia follow similar guidelines and their websites -- www.SewaUK.org and www.SewaAustralia.org – reflect the same naming pattern.

Here is a note about the logo used by Sewa globally. The Indian organization uses **Sewa International** whereas organizations in other countries add the country to the word **"Sewa"** in their logo. Examples:

- **Sewa USA**
- **Sewa UK**
- **Sewa Australia**

Kannada Organizations Donate \$7,500 for Flood Relief

Various Kannada language organizations in the US raised \$7,500 in support of the rehabilitation efforts in Karnataka for flood relief. Heavy rains have inundated vast areas of the state, and the money collected was handed over to Sewa International to carry out the relief and rehabilitation efforts.

Kannada Koota of Bloomington, IL ("koota" in Kannada means club/ gathering) raised \$4,000 in a fundraiser organized at the local Hindu Temple. Volunteers for the club cooked and served food at the event.

Similarly, Kannada Koota of Northern California raised \$2,000 and Triveni Kannada Sangha in the Bay Area raised \$1,500 for Sewa's disaster relief fund.

These donations to Sewa's core work of disaster relief are an indication of the success achieved by Sewa chapters in developing long-term relationships with local Indian organizations. "We are proud that fellow Indians have begun to recognize the good work we are doing, and very grateful for the support from these organizations for the work we are doing on the ground," said Swadesh Katoch, Vice President, Disaster Relief, Sewa International.

Chitra Koti has been associated with Sewa International Atlanta for over three years and is at present the Chapter Joint Coordinator. She says that working for Sewa gives her immense happiness and joy as she is able to reach the community and serve people in the most efficient and thoughtful way as possible.

Chitra came to know about Sewa through a close friend of hers who has been involved with a non-profit organization for the past fifteen years. Working for Sewa and getting to know Sewa philosophy has been a satisfying journey for Chitra. She says, "Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam and Sewa hi Paramo Dharam -- these are not just lines from a song or text but what Sewa volunteers practically follow in their everyday work. This ideology binds me to Sewa International and I feel extremely blessed to be part of this deeply committed humanitarian organization".

Chitra is an Information Technology professional. She earned her B.Tech degree in Electronics and Instrumentation Engineering from the Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University in Hyderabad, and is now working as a Senior Quality Assurance Analyst in the Atlanta area.

Chitra is married to Ram Doma and they have two beautiful children -- Sai Deekshitha and Sai Dhruv



Upcoming Events

- Jan **19** to Dec **21**, 2019 : Sewa Atlanta | *Food for Hungry* | Otwell Middle School Cafeteria, 605 Tribble Gap Road, Cumming, GA
- Aug **1** to Jun **30**, 2020 : Sewa Bay Area | *Authentic Yoga to prevent, Control and Manage Diabetes* | Fremont, San Jose, San Ramon, Saratoga in Bay Area, CA
- Oct **18**, 2019 : Sewa Atlanta | *Annual Gala Dinner* | Holiday Inn Atlanta/Roswell, 909 Holcomb Bridge Rd, Roswell, GA
- Oct **19**, 2019 : Sewa Houston | *Serve Houston Oct 2019* | Constellation Field, Skeeters Stadium, Sugarland TX
- Nov **1** to Nov **10**, 2019 : Stop Diabetes Movement Yoga Camp - Nov 2019 | Sugar Land, Katy & West Oaks Mall
- Nov **2** to Dec **14**, 2019 : *Authentic Yoga to Prevent, Control and Manage Diabetes* | Santan Dharma Kendra, 3102 Landess Avenue, San Jose, CA

Sewa International

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