

EYE2EYE



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Murali's Corner

Dear Friends,
Namaste to all of you from San Jose, California.

As always, a lot is happening at Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF), USA and Sankara Eye Society (SES), India. Sankara Eye Hospital (SEH)-Shimoga will be inaugurated on October 12 and SEH-Anand will be inaugurated on October 19 this year. Please come to the inauguration and bless the Hospital. At this time we are thinking of Uttar Pradesh and Punjab as our next stops – I will provide more details in the next few months.



SEF has seen very good growth in the San Francisco Bay Area and now is the time to take SEF to the same or higher level of growth in the other parts of the country, especially New York, New Jersey and Seattle. This year we hope to perform over one hundred thousand free eye surgeries at the eight Sankara Eye Hospitals run by SES and other partners in India. We have a grand Goal of taking this to one million free eye surgeries by the year 2020 all over the country. I know that it is also your Goal and for that to happen we need to scale our operations several fold and this is where we are seeking your help and active participation. There are several ways to participate in this cause and in this issue we have documented various exciting initiatives by donors and volunteers all over the country.

This year, again, our focus is New York, New Jersey and Seattle. We need many more volunteers and volunteer coordinators in these areas. We need to organize more booths and conduct at least four or five fundraising events each year in these areas. You can undertake any initiative(s) – big or small – and we will support you all the way. You will be successful if you are proactive and take the lead.

The following are some ideas:

1. You can distribute SEF literature to friends in your apartment community or neighborhood
2. Invite a few friends to your house and show our powerful nine minute Video
3. Arrange for SEF booth at an event organized by other organizations in your area
4. If you are willing to take bigger initiatives, you can organize a fundraiser for SEF; we will support you all the way regardless of the size of the funds raised as we want you to succeed
5. Start a SEF Chapter at your College or University
6. Or if you have any other ideas please let us know

C'mon friends! EMail us at volunteer@giftofvision.org today or call me at 408-425-1268.

I would like to close with my thoughts on what I have personally gained from volunteering. When I started volunteering ten years ago, I felt we were only helping the visually handicapped poor in India. But slowly it dawned on me that we were personally benefiting in many different ways. It is a very positive experience, nay a spiritual journey. You meet with hundreds, if not thousands of people who are giving selflessly in various ways. I am learning that mistakes are a part of learning and your hard and sincere efforts are always rewarded. This is a very supportive environment where you can take chances, achieve and gain a lot of experience. I have made hundreds of friends and consider myself very fortunate and privileged. My confidence has increased multi-fold and I sincerely believe that anything and everything is possible in this world if a group of good, sincere, committed and hardworking people come together, set a big Goal and work towards that confidently.

SEF is a big open family which is constantly growing and we sincerely and affectionately invite you to become a part of this family and let us, together, eradicate curable blindness – Vision 20/20 by 2020.

Sincerely yours,
Murali Krishnamurthy

Calendar



August 23 - 4th Annual Sankara iWalk
Shoreline Park, Mountain View, CA

October 4 - First Annual Sankara iWalk
Boston, MA

November 15
Roshni 2008
Niru & Rajendra
and Naach,
Chabot College PAC,
Hayward, CA



October 4, 11 - SEF Dandia 2008,
Santa Clara Convention Center,
Santa Clara, CA

October 18 - SEF Dandia 2008,
Carramerica, Pleasanton, CA



October 11 - SEF Nrutya Sangam, Dallas, TX
October 17 - SEF/South Asian Pharmaceutical Council (SAPC)
Silent Auction-Fund Raiser event,
Jasna Polana Resort, NJ

Hi,
I'm Megha Sheth and I volunteer with my mom for Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF). The SEF volunteers are truly devoted and dedicated, and constantly look up at their one goal: vision 2020 by year 2020. They have truly inspired me to give blind people in India a new and bright variety of colors in their lives. Just like any human would get bored of wearing the same pair of clothes, blind people get tired of seeing that same black color every moment of their lives. The only difference between us is that when we don't want to wear the same pair of clothes over again, we go buy ourselves a new pair. However when blind people don't want to see black, what can they do? We are the people that need to make a difference in their lives, take it as a privilege and a responsibility, and give their helpless lives a right turn. That is my goal: to change their lives and do this by raising money. My goal is to raise \$3,000 but the only way I can do this is using your help. In the upcoming iwalk, I request you to please sponsor me; but don't think of this as sponsoring. Instead think of it as giving hopeless people new hopes, new dreams, new choices, new open doors to walk through, and a new reason to be happy - a privilege that we have everyday. And thank you.



Thank you for doing what you have already done, taking the time to read this message. Thank you for your generous help, as it is truly appreciated more than words can speak, more than expressions can present, more than actions can recite, but only what a heart full of joy can thank. And please keep in mind, what's important is to donate from your heart, not your pockets! Again, thank you and may God bless you!

- Megha Sheth
San Jose, CA



Walk/Run as an individual or as a team
Free food - Carnival - Games

Distance: Half Marathon, 10K, 5K
When: Saturday, August 23rd, 2008
8 AM - Half Marathon
9 AM - 5K, 10K Walk / Run
Where: Shoreline Park, Mountain View, CA
Cost: 10K, 5K - \$15 till Aug 17. \$20 afterwards
Half Marathon - \$40 till Aug 17. \$50 afterwards
Exclusive Half Marathon training available for all fitness levels.
Chip timing for accurate results.

Contact - Manjula 650-533-2459 Suniti 408-421-8690
Rajavelu 510-709-5581 Anu 510-324-2924

Summary report on Sankara Eye Hospital Bangalore

Vaishnav Rajagopal

The Sankara Eye Care Institutions have spread their wings to Karnataka. With the formal inauguration on 9th March, 2008 the Sankara Eye Hospital at Bangalore carries forward the "Tradition of Excellence in Eye Care", that our parent organization at Coimbatore is renowned for and in this short period of time, come to be accepted as among



the preferred providers of quality eye care in this region.

Established on 4.5 acres of land on the Varthur main road, this 225-bed specialty ophthalmic centre offers comprehensive eye care in all ophthalmic sub-specialties and caters to a large population of visually handicapped persons in Bangalore and the other southern districts of Karnataka.

Karnataka accounts for a relatively high percentage of blind and visually impaired in India with around 5% of its population suffering from vision loss due to cataract alone.

Equipped with the latest in eye care diagnostics including ultrasounds, LASERS, Digital angiography (ICG,FFA) , computerized

visual fields analyzer, Corneal Specular, Electrodiagnostic Services (ERG,EKG,VEP) and OCT, we offer the best in contemporary vision care. The six operation rooms cater to all ophthalmic surgical cases. The refractive surgery (LASIK) centre, offers the latest in technology to help correct refractive errors.

Since its inauguration, the centre has completed over 5000 out patient consultations. The preventive eye care program has covered 23 centers and 5 schools and screened over 2500 children. The Infosys Community Eye Care Centre is our commitment to serving the rural population of Karnataka. The Centre has comprehensive eye testing facility, diagnostic services, inpatient facility and operation theatres to offer sight restoring procedures to the economically under privileged. The Gift of Vision rural Outreach program has identified patients from the districts of Bangalore Urban,

Bangalore rural, Mandya, Hassan, Mysore, Kolar, Tumkur and Chamrajnagar. Over 1250 sight restoring procedures have already been performed.

To meet the need for trained manpower, Robert Bosch Foundation, Germany , has supported the hospital in establishing a training program in community ophthalmology which will train medical, para medical and administrative staff.



Sanjana and Sahana

Siblings from the small town of Iglooru in Ramnagara District, Sanjana and Sahana were born with congenital cataract in both eyes . Three year old Sanjana and nine month old Sahana have lived in darkness since birth.

It was not ignorance about their condition but helplessness that prevented their parents from seeking medical help. Being blind in the initial years of life can be very frustrating for both parent and child. However medical care seemed unreachable for the couple who lived in a small village and were unaware of services available elsewhere. "We did not know where to go and how we could afford treatment." says their mother.

These sisters were brought to the Sankara Eye Hospital, Bangalore. On examination they were found to have a microcornea in addition to the cataract. The mother and grandmother were counseled and the children underwent surgery in one eye. As their mother requested that the other eye be operated on, the children were retained in the hospital for the second surgery. Due to the coexisting eye disease an Intraocular lens could not be implanted. Special glasses were ordered and have been dispensed . They were provided food, and medicines and stayed on for post operative care. The girls have gained vision in both their eyes .The joy is evident in both the mother as well the girls themselves.

With a lot of learning to catch up with and a bright future awaiting them, their formative years promise to be colorful and fruitful.



Latest laser treatment technology – now in Bangalore

SES India

The i-Perfect Laser Vision Correction Centre at the Sankara Eye Hospital Bangalore, offers the people of Karnataka state-of-the-art LASER vision correction. Sankara has invested in the best, safest and latest laser eye treatment technology available which is also confirmed by rigorous US FDA clinical trials. The Wavelight Alegretto EyeQ 400 Hz Blue Line Laser is the fastest, most technically advanced laser in the world, treating most prescriptions in less than 10 seconds or around two seconds per



dioptr.

Mr. R Balasubramaniam , Director welcomed the august gathering. He emphasized on the uniqueness of the activities of Sankara. Our patients regardless of their economic status are provided high quality eye care.

The facility was inaugurated by Mr. R K Mishra, winner of the LEAD INDIA campaign (a Times Leadership initiative). Mr. Mishra lauded the work of the Sankara Eye Care Institutions and wished to project the Sankara model to people across India, to dispel the myth that "hospitals focused on community centered work are not state of the art". He appreciated the work of the Sankara Eye Foundation in the USA and Europe which has enabled such specialty facilities across India.

Dr R V Ramani , Founder and Managing Trustee presided over the function and recognized the community participation in establishing Sankara. Dr Y Umesh elaborated on the features of the Allegretto Eximer LASER. Mrs. Hema Chamraj, volunteer from Sankara Eye Foundation USA as well as core group members and well wishers participated.

This new laser correction center will allow us to provide shorter, more comfortable procedures for our patients while maintaining the highest standards of quality and safety.

Gene therapy improves vision in a rare genetic eye disease with blindness since birth - Dr. Suma Shankar

Imagine being the parents of a healthy baby and being told that your beautiful baby "cannot see" and "there is no treatment available" - this is a hard reality for many parents of children with genetic eye diseases. Genetic eye conditions are diseases that are caused by mutations (alteration of the coded information resulting in diseases) in the genes. We all carry information that is passed on from our parents in the form of genes that are referred to as the "units of heredity". These genes are packaged in chromosomes and every individual has 46 chromosomes (23 from each parent). There are an estimated 30,000 genes in humans and the information carried in these genes is vital for the normal development and functioning of an individual.

Leber Congenital Amaurosis (LCA) is one such rare genetic eye disease that results in retinal degeneration causing very poor vision since birth and usually progresses to complete blindness by 30- 40 years of age. Patients with this disease have nystagmus (wobbly eyes) or roving eye movements and do not fixate or follow faces or objects. The ophthalmologist often finds a normal appearing eye and report a non-recordable electroretinogram (ERG), an electrical measurement of the functioning of the retina.* Hitherto, there is no effective treatment for LCA. The first gene responsible for causing LCA was identified in 1996. Currently, twelve different genes are known to cause LCA. Of these, the gene RPE65 merits special mention. A strain of Briard dogs with a naturally occurring mutation in RPE65 causing a similar eye condition, provided the much required animal model for LCA. Gene therapy was performed in this animal model in the year 2000 and resulted in improvement of vision that has remained stable in this model for 8 years.

Spurred on by the improvement of vision and the safety of gene therapy in this animal model, scientists and physicians performed the first clinical trials in humans in the UK and USA. Two groups, Bainbridge et al. and Maguire et al. reported on the first results of separate clinical trials investigating the short-term safety and preliminary efficacy of gene therapy for Leber's Congenital Amaurosis in the New England Journal in April, 2008. The preliminary results of these investigations have been very encouraging. Both groups reported that in the short term, the procedure is safe and one group Maguire et al, reported effectiveness in improving the vision of patients from detecting hand movements to recognizing letters on an eye chart.

We should however, remember that many questions remain - will the improvement in vision continue? How safe is the therapy over longer periods? Will it work in other degenerative retinal diseases? Nonetheless, "gene therapy" is an innovative treatment for LCA and brings HOPE to many families with retinal diseases and heralds a new beginning in the management of genetic eye diseases.

For more information on LCA refer Genereviews- LCA <http://tinyurl.com/57yacn>

White House recognizes SEF volunteer Sonal Solanki

SEF is proud to announce the Presidential award received by Sonal Solanki for her selfless volunteer service.

Sonal in her own words:

"I learned about SEF after my Dad passed away in a sudden, tragic car accident, and I was looking to make a small donation. Initially I donated a small amount, but the way I received the follow-up detailing how each and every dollar was used as well as the name and age of the person benefited by that, I was quite impressed by the organization.



Being a finance person, the transparency of the financial matters and donations impressed me all the more. Hence, gradually I started volunteering for SEF, and the more I found out about it, the more time I wanted to spend volunteering for the cause. SEF is now my family and to say that it has been a very enriching experience volunteering for this noble cause is an understatement.

The Presidential volunteer service award came as a reminder that if such a small award feels so great, imagine how it would feel when we eradicate curable blindness in India!!! Actually thinking that we would be catalysts in bringing a positive change in millions of lives - is euphoric! The magnitude of it only multiplies when we think about the change it would bring to the families of these blind people.

This award is a tribute to this great cause, to the Sankara family and to my Dad's life - his life is an example of how we should weave good deeds like these in our daily life, rather than waiting until tomorrow or when we have more time.

It is exciting times at Sankara with all the different parts of the country buzzing with activities- with lots and lots of events, walkathons, booths, all across the country, and everyone - from all age groups - participating for this generous cause - the excitement and zeal is totally contagious. It is hard to keep up with so many activities, and at times we feel we want to be part of all of it. The best part of it is, we can all contribute in whatever small or big way - as time permits and the tiniest tasks, when added up, makes a big difference to our goal! Never thought about 15 years ago, that we could actually be living in the US or any other part of the world and bring a positive change of this magnitude in India. It is magical and it is fortunate! Curable blindness in India - here we come!!! Determined to achieve vision 20/20 by 2020!

What does the number system

3 - 2 - 1 imply? Countdown starts!

Ravinder Singh Saini

Yes, this is what kids did at Prana Prathishta ceremony for Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF) in newly opened Hindu Temple in Grand Rapids, MI (www.westmichiganhindutemple.org) on Jun 13, 14 and 15th. By raising \$321 through lemonade and pop booths and spreading information about SEF to all devotees, these young kids have started a countdown for many such drives in the future all over

USA. How did it start! First, the idea of raising funds for SEF's noble cause was communicated to the temple committee that gave its wholehearted support for the drive. Then, a mail describing the mission for vision was sent to the parents of all kids who attended "Balavihaar" (education and recreation for children with the objective of familiarizing them with Indian culture). Many parents came forward and contributed to the drive by giving lemonades, pops and money. To make sure that booths had enough supply, pops of different varieties such as Sprite, Coke, Sunkist etc were bought by participating elder members. A detailed schedule for manning the booths was also laid out that listed hours and responsibilities for each young volunteer. To gain the attention of incoming devotees in the temple, banners with catchy Slogans "Vision for Mission", "FUNd-raising for the temple", "Support our Eye-Opening experience" were placed in the booth. Pops were sold for \$.50 and lemonades for \$.25. Since the price was apt, people bought lemonades and pops to quench their thirst from the scorching Sun. They very much appreciated the kids and thought that it was more of a service than fund-raising. While serving the devotees, the kids explained that it takes only \$30 to perform a corrective surgery to cure cataract and other forms of curable blindness. The enthusiasm and vigor in the kids to make a positive change and make life better for some unknown face in India touched every devotee who came to the booth. The funds raised (\$321) is a sign for countdown. Surely, such drives involving kids, propelling them to positive action can be replicated all over USA with the active involvement of our Hindu temples. Although the fund collected by these kids is just a drop in the ocean, the ocean would have been smaller because of that missing drop!

SEF volunteer Savita Vaidyanathan receives Paul Harris Award

Anu Sumanth

Savita Vaidyanathan, SEF volunteer and member of the Rotary Club of Cupertino, California secured a grant of about \$36,000 from the



Rotary Club to procure a 65 seater bus for the Sankara Eye Hospital at Bangalore. The grant was received by the Rotary Club of Bangalore-IT Corridor, which will work with SECI to procure the bus.

In recognition of her service, the Rotary Club has bestowed on her the Paul Harris Award.

Savita was initiated into SEF through her daughter Anagha, an active SEF youth volunteer. Also, Savita's family was the first donor to SEF's Vehicle Donation Program.

Your Gujarat Hospital

Ritesh Tandon

With your incredible support we are in the FINAL phase of Sankara Eye Hospital (SEH) construction in Anand, Gujarat. The inauguration for this hospital is planned for Oct 19th 2008. All this would not have been possible without your support. The Gujarat team along with all SEF family members likes to thank you for making our vision a reality. The 225-bed Sankara Eye Hospital is located in the heart of Gujarat – three kms from “Chikodra Ni Chokdi” enroute to Baroda. With your generous donations we raised \$2.1 million for this Gujarat hospital; we need \$400K more to complete its construction.



Sankara Eye Foundation Family and Gujarat team like to invite you to be part of the hospital inauguration. You are also welcome to visit this hospital in Anand (Gujarat) – made possible by you – any time you visit Gujarat.

Some key points:

- Sankara Eye Hospital (SEH), Anand will be inaugurated on Oct 19th 2008. Construction will be completed over the next few months.
- Project plan includes 225 beds in the hospital and complete eye care services at no cost to the poor in Gujarat and neighboring states.
- 40+ staff hired from Anand, Gujarat is undergoing training at Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore. Staff will be ready to work by end of September. Doctors for this hospital have also been identified.
- We have so far raised approx. \$2.1 Million in donation and pledges for SEH Anand (Gujarat). An additional \$400K is required to complete construction of this hospital.

It is worth noting here that the Gujarat team and SEF family members had successfully organized a fundraiser banquet for SEH, Anand Hospital during which \$200K+ was raised/pledged (included in the \$2.1 Million raised/pledged so far). Following the banquet, the Gujarat team, without taking a break, immediately got down to planning the Dandia scheduled for Oct 4th, 11th and 18th. Kudos to the Gujarat Team and SEF family members for their time and dedication to SEH Anand Hospital. Most of funds for this hospital are raised in US.

We are very thankful to our partners in service (those who have helped raise \$100K+ for this hospital) for helping us in this beautiful journey. Our partners in service are:

- Harshadbhai and Naynaben Patel (Los Angeles)
- Charotar Leua Patidar Samaj (CLiPS – bay area)
- Asian American Hotel Owners Association

(AAHOA)

The Focus Gujarat team is blessed with great people like Nilaxiben and Ajith bhai Patel, Anil ji, Bipinbhai Patel, Mukeshbhai (AAHOA), Rameshbhai and Geetaben Patel, Daaji, Asvini bhai patel and many more. These people, besides the SEF board members, helped the Gujarat team reach this important milestone. Harshadbhai is not only our partner in service, he is also the biggest donor for the Gujarat Hospital

How you can help: (1) Become a founding member of the Sankara Eye Hospital in Gujarat by donating \$1000 (2) Sponsor clinics, equipment etc....the cost of which is outlined on the website www.giftofvision.org under Sponsorship Detail. (3) Help raise \$400K by telling all your friends, relatives and associations about this venture. (4) Volunteer your time by doing events in your area that can help us make the required money by year end.

Email – focusgujarat@giftofvision.org for more information

Focus-AP Project update

Venkat Maddipati

Our Sankara Eye Hospital in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh continues to provide great service in eradicating curable blindness in the region. Doctors at the hospital have performed over 45,000 free eye surgeries since the hospital's inception with 100 free beds and 20 paid beds in March 2004.

Hospital expansion with an additional 100 free beds and an eye bank is almost complete and will be inaugurated soon. Our sincere thanks all the donors whose generous donations helped this cause and without whom this project wouldn't have been possible.

We also got the opportunity to spread Sankara's message at the American Telugu Association (ATA) convention. ATA organized its 10th convention in the Prudential Center at Newark, New Jersey from July 3rd to 5th. As usual, our SEF team was there to promote "Vision 20/20 by year 2020 - Eradicating Curable Blindness in India by Year 2020". Our volunteers from the tri-state area Seetharam Balusu and his wife Chandra and the two of us along with our two year old Siddhartha were present on all three days. We set up our SEF booth on the 4th and 5th. Our local volunteer Srinivas Guda helped at the booth on the afternoon of the 4th while local volunteers Manish Parekh and Muthu Kumar helped us on the afternoon of the 5th.

Convention attendees started trickling in to the booths area after the inauguration of the convention on the morning of the 4th. By evening we had a good number of visitors at the booth. Several visitors asked us when we are going to build another hospital in Andhra Pradesh, especially in the areas they hail from. For example, one of our existing donors asked us how he could help SEF build a hospital in Anantapur district i.e., whether he could donate land or a substantial amount of money or both.

That same evening, a gentleman came forward to sponsor 20 rooms in the Guntur hospital. We thought we misheard the number and assumed he wanted to

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TCS Chicago Initiative

Ravinder Singh Saini

More than 70 associates from Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (TCS), (from Walgreens relationship) donated more than \$1,500 to SEF. In addition, many also signed up for monthly donations towards free eye surgeries in India to help the cause of providing free treatment to the underprivileged people in India who suffer from curable blindness.

This contribution was collected in the month of May through Corporate Sustainability Group of TCS, which propagates the TATA group philosophy of investing in social and charitable initiatives. This group decided to take part in SEF's mission to eradicate curable blindness in India by 2020.

We at SEF appreciate the generous contributions from associates of TCS Walgreens relationship, and specially thank two TCS associates: Ankur Jain and Deepak Ralli who pledged to expand SEF's horizon by raising funds as well as spreading awareness about SEF among other TCS associates. This task was not simple since many associates were not familiar with SEF. With the TCS associates' hectic schedule at client sites, inspiring other associates to join the drive was an uphill task. Coming up with a comprehensive plan of action, they arranged information sessions and motivated fellow associates for the drive. These initiatives will go down in the history of SEF as very memorable events. The day is not far when SEF contributors like Ankur Jain & Deepak Ralli will rapidly grow all over the globe similar to how TCS has grown globally across all continents.

It was a great opportunity to raise awareness among them about the Sankara Eye Hospitals at Shimoga and Bangalore. SEF volunteers interacted with many attendees who stopped by the booth during breaks between the grand cultural extravaganza and the various seminars. We handed out fliers, newsletters, and brochures, and spread the word about the SEF cause and mission.

Sankara Eye Foundation also sponsored the 'Konkani idol' which was a big hit among the youth. We hope the conference attendees took back with them the 'Sankara vision' and will support our mission in a big way.

VSNA – A Partnership in Making

Manjula Jonnalagadda

VSNA has its Annual convention during the July 4th weekend. This year the convention was held in San Ramon, CA. We held our booth on Friday and Saturday. It was an opportunity for us to talk to many VSNA members and spread the word about Sankara.



A little 10 year old girl Meghan Kotrappa donated \$70 from her piggy bank. There is a rule in her house. If her



Konkani Sammelan 2008

Girish Baliga

It was the July 4th weekend. Mercury was reaching record highs at the San Francisco Bay area. However, this did not deter a group of dedicated Sankara volunteers from managing a booth at the Konkani Sammelan.

Over a period of three days, about 1300 Konkanis gathered at the Santa Clara Convention Center to be part of the "Awaken the Konkani in you" experience.

father annoys her, he gives 50 cents. If she annoys her father, she gives him 50 cents. She divides the money she gets into three parts. One part is for her expenses, the other for savings and the third for charity. She had heard about SEF at AKKA last year. Inspired by the video, she chose Sankara as her first charity.

VSNA leaders like Mr. Doddamane, Prabhu Patil, Sundaresh, Sada, etc stopped by the booth. They showed keen interest in taking the partnership to the next level. From this event, our hope that VSNA will become our partner in service at the Shimoga hospital has strengthened.

Happy 10th Birthday SEF!

Rajeev Narasimhan

2008 is a very special year for everyone in the SEF family. It is the year SEF turned 10. Founded in 1998, SEF is now growing rapidly and marching ahead towards the goal of eradicating curable blindness in India by year 2020.

To mark this special occasion, we organized the first all US volunteer meet in the San Francisco Bay Area in February 2008. The goals of the meeting were to share progress report from FY2007 efforts, review the vision and roadmap for FY2008, provide a platform for volunteers from across the country to interact and last but not least, re-energize the volunteer base through the festivities.

The event was organized by the SEF Volunteer Resource Management (VRM) team and was held at the TiE auditorium in Santa Clara, CA. Volunteers from several parts of the country including Texas, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Southern California and Seattle amongst others poured in. The volunteers were invited to stay with local Bay Area volunteers and their families. Sankara Eye Foundation is like a family and this event was another opportunity for us to show our hospitality and warmth to all our volunteers in attendance.

The meeting started with the US national anthem



and was followed by a welcome message by Murali our SEF USA chairman. We then reviewed the State of SEF. Padma, our CFO delved into a financial review and our fiscal responsibility, Girish set the stage for the flagship events and related management in 2008, and Sridharan talked about the overall strategy. An open Q&A forum followed these presentations, giving our volunteers to ask questions to the SEF board members. The focus then shifted to the four capital projects currently underway. Ritesh reviewed Focus Gujarat project, Balaji delved into Focus Bangalore, Vaishnav shared an update on

Focus Shimoga and Venkat briefed us on Focus AP-Phase2 efforts. This segment helped raised awareness on the challenges ahead and highlighted areas where volunteers could collaborate towards achieving our goals for 2008.

In keeping with the spirit of this summit, we invited our outstation volunteer leads to present to the rest of the volunteer base, their fund-raising efforts, and challenges in growing SEF presence in their regions and how other volunteers could help them on these fronts. Chandra talked about Detroit region, Ravi brought us up to speed on Arizona, Suveen outlined the efforts in Seattle and related campaigns on site at Microsoft, Harshad reviewed the Southern California, Vatsa focused on Texas, Raagini covered Boston, and Malavika talked about partnering with non-profits in the New York/New Jersey areas. This segment shed the light on the volunteer efforts throughout the country and provided a platform to share experiences and learning. It was great to see the passion, energy and dedication of all volunteers in making SEF's vision of eradicating curable blindness in India by year 2020, a reality.

No volunteer meet is complete without acknowledging the distinguished services of its volunteers. In recognition of their dedication and selfless service, we handed out ten year distinguished service awards to eight volunteers and five year service awards to nearly fifty other volunteers. We are truly blessed to have such a dedicated group of volunteers who have given so much to the cause and continue to come together in so many ways to help SEF stay focused on the mission.

The volunteers were then treated to a sumptuous Indian dinner buffet. In light of SEF's 10th birthday, a small cake cutting ceremony was executed by the tiny tots in attendance. The evening wrapped up with the Indian national anthem as a salute to the homeland.

While the VRM team led the overall event planning, several other Bay Area volunteers helped with several pre and post event tasks. Ramanan and Manjula coordinated the lodging and transportation for all our outstation volunteer guests. Shruthi the emcee and Anju our timekeeper helped keep the proceedings on

track. Shruthi shared several trivia throughout the evening to help preserve a lively atmosphere. Kalyani led venue logistics management, Sahitya helped with dinner arrangements, Srinivas helped with transportation, Smita took charge of the auditorium decorations while Jawahar and Veeru helped with A/V setup, to name a few.

In all, about 180 SEF volunteers and their families participated in the event and 10th anniversary celebrations, including around 40 outstation volunteers. This was a truly memorable and fun evening for the entire SEF family – a befitting way to mark the historic milestone.

On the following day, a breakfast meeting was held at a local restaurant. This brought together key SEF leaders from different parts of the country to strategize on the plans for 2008 and explore partnerships in getting there.

At the end of the two day summit, the participants were unanimous in their feedback. They thoroughly enjoyed all the interactions and felt it was a very good platform to connect with their peers. They also credited the Bay Area volunteers for doing an impeccable job with hosting them. They were also inspired by the contagious energy and passion which was bound to motivate them in so many ways. They had a renewed confidence that anything is possible when we come together as the cause is bigger than all of us.

This event brought us all closer together and presented us with the opportunity to meet fellow volunteers in person. It also enabled us to understand the strategic vision and plans of SEF so we stay focused on working towards the targets for this year. The organizing team hopes to be able to convene similar forums in the years ahead, to foster collaboration and also groom future leaders to help us make aggressive strides towards our vision 20/20 by year 2020. GO SEF! GO!

Behind the Scenes

Abirami Gopalan

"Oh!!! Why do you volunteer for SEF?" "How did you get introduced to SEF?" "What do you do in SEF?" These are some of the typical questions which arise when we talk about SEF to non SEF-family members. Introducing SEF and talking about its activities is easy. The answer to the question "WHY SEF" is something that is unique for each individual. Social service is the inherent motive. But it still does not answer the question "WHY SEF".

I am curious to find out various SEF volunteers' answer to the "WHY" question and to find out what motivated them to join SEF. Let's visit the New England area this time where the volunteers are currently gearing up for the first iWalk event. Please join me to find out more about the volunteers of the New England team in this edition of "Behind the Scenes".

Rathna Iyer, working for Neuroscience Drug Discovery, saw her father struggling with poor eyesight all his life. It became worse when he had macular degeneration which caused total blindness in both his eyes. As a person who just loves reading books, this was a very difficult period for him. It may be very hard for us to imagine how difficult a period this was for him. Through SEF, Rathna is trying to fulfill her father's wish for good eyesight and is putting all her efforts to help out poor people who are in similar situation.

Sudha could hardly ignore the camaraderie and the commitment of the other volunteers at SEF. She got introduced by her friend Manjula, an SEF volunteer. Sudha has volunteered for a couple of SEF events and every time she volunteers for an event, she gets even more closely bonded with SEF. She is determined and motivated to replicate the Bay area iWalk success at Boston and is all set

with her team in achieving this.

Sapna Reddy is well aware of the importance of eyesight as she comes from a family of physicians and medical professionals. She is currently enrolled in an Optometry program and aims to work for an SEF hospital in India. She learnt about SEF's achievements, initiatives, goals and plans at the Annual Volunteers Conference in San Jose, CA. According to Sapna "The eye is such a vital part of our lives and ensuring the health of the eyes in my patients is very rewarding and fulfilling to me"

Ramanan could not resist the excitement of meeting diverse people and the dedication of the group working towards eliminating curable blindness. He has been with SEF from 2003 and has been actively working towards collecting funds for SEF. Currently he has moved to Boston and is working hard to create a successful team in New England which is still burgeoning.

Raagini Jawa along with her mother Dr. Amal Jawa has been with SEF for the past three years. Raagini's father, an ophthalmologist, gave gift of vision to many impoverished individuals in India. She wanted to continue what her father had started and found volunteering for SEF as the best way to do that. She and her mother were introduced to SEF during their project Amar Jyoti Par Vijay, geared towards Indian youth population in America. They have designed and sold t-shirts to spread SEF's 2020 vision and goals. As a writer of this article I am really motivated after hearing from New England's volunteers and feel very proud to be a part of Sankara Eye Foundation family. Indeed it shows that a small step taken by each individual makes a huge difference in another person's life.

The SEF chapter in New England is one of the youngest and energetic chapters in SEF. This team is currently preparing to organize a successful iWalk event as soon as possible. Please stay tuned to hear more from them. Our best wishes to the team for a successful iWalk. "Chak De" – SEF New England team!!!

To know more about SEF activities at New England, please feel free to contact the volunteers below:

Rathna Iyer : rathna.iyer@gmail.com
Sapna Reddy : sappi6483@yahoo.com
Sudha Rajamani : crazeepriion@gmail.com
Ramanan Balakrishnan : ramanan.balakrishnan@gmail.com
Raagini Jawa : indiankaratekid@juno.com

For Students:

Sankara Eye Hospital offers Clinical Internship, Clinical Volunteering, Clinical Observership. check www.giftofvision.org for details

Continued from page 6

sponsor 2 rooms. We met the gentleman the next day for a follow up and he confirmed that he indeed wanted to sponsor 20 rooms. Venkat and Seetharam Balusu convinced the gentleman to sponsor 100 bed free ward by donating \$100,000 since there were no additional rooms at the Guntur hospital. This magnanimous man made our day shine and our trip to ATA a memorable one. We got some donations and lots of appreciation about the quality of care and service provided at Sankara's Guntur hospital.

Working at our SEF booths has always been a great experience: it has motivated us to do more, find inspirational people that want to help and has given us a wonderful opportunity to meet people from different walks of life. It has been a fulfilling journey sharing with people the kind of work we do, explaining how they can be a part of "Vision 20/20 by year 2020" and how they can change lives by giving sight.

You can donate \$1000 and become a founding member of the hospital. This (Wall of Founders) is a very popular sponsorship item with about 550 families already signed up as founding members of this hospital. By becoming a founding member, you can have your name along with your loved ones name on the Wall of Founders list in the hospital premises forever, either in English or in Telugu.

In addition to Wall of Founders, here are other sponsorship options you could consider helping us with:

Kitchen and Cafeteria building - \$62,500
Guest house - \$37,500
Doctors Quarters - \$12,500 for each of the 4 quarters
60 seater bus - \$30,000

If you need any information about Focus-AP Project or our Guntur hospital, please do not hesitate to contact Venkat Maddipati either at (408) 421.6372 or at vmaddipati@gmail.com

SEF in partnership with CLIPS
(A fund raiser for Gujarat Hospital)

SEF DANDIA 2008

**The Biggest Dandia in Bay Area.
Sold out for the last 5 years !**

**Dates: Oct 4 & Oct 11th 2008
Santa Clara Convention
(50,000 sq ft dancing area)
Singers: Preeti Shah & Group**

**Oct 18th, 2008
Venue - CARRAMERICA
Singers: Rhytham Master & Group**

Starts: 7:30 PM

**Free admission for kids under 5
Free Dandia lessons - Free Parking
Special Kids dancing area**

**Ticket: \$15 (For special discounts buy tickets online) Buy online: www.giftofvision.org
For information call**

Mohit Purohit - 732-322-0916
Bina Patel - 408-741-1830
Email: sefdandia@gmail.com

Raaga Music - 408-616-8864
Kumud, San Jose - 408-979-9229
Dulhan, Fremont - 510-794-8201
Balaji Samrat - 408-261-8896
Kamal Spices (Pleasanton) - 925-227-1600
Mirch Masala (San Ramon) - 925-838-7865



AAPI

Mansi Shah

The Association of American Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) held its 26th annual four day convention in Las Vegas, Nevada in which 11 SEF volunteers participated. Murali Krishnamurthy, Sahithya Onukuri, Raj Panchapakesan, Chitra Venkatramani, Sonal Solanki, Naushik Desai, Kumar Thiagarajan, Bhanu Shah, Charmi Shah, Khushali Shah and Mansi Shah worked vigorously in order to spread knowledge about SEF and curable blindness to approximately 2,000 physicians from all over the nation. The event was planned meticulously by the SEF volunteers, some of whom arrived a day before the convention to help AAPI board members with pre-registration. In addition, volunteers also helped AAPI with event organization and registra-



tion on each day of the convention. Although AAPI registration was a stressful task, SEF volunteers handled it with utmost patience and dedication.

Volunteers took an active role in educating physicians about SEF and its goal: Vision 20/20 by year 2020. As the exhibition room was filled with booths, many volunteers set out to personally talk to physicians and their families about our goal. They distributed SEF tote bags filled with literature and donation cards. Physicians were then directed to the booth to learn more about our cause. Hard work from the AAPI convention certainly paid off as SEF received donations both during and after the event from physicians and their families. SEF hopes that in the future, AAPI will become its partner in helping eradicate curable blindness in India by the year 2020.

Summary of SEF- SoCal activities

Sid Nair and S.R. Nair

Entrepreneur, inventor, and philanthropist Harshad Patel-Harshadbhai, as people fondly call him—has raised over \$250,000 for Sankara over the past four years from his own funds and through his fund-raising efforts. Yet he is dissatisfied. “We have only touched the tip of the ice-berg,” he laments. “There is so much more to do.” Notwithstanding the significant work done by SEF-USA, Harshadbhai feels that the fund-raising efforts have hitherto been restricted to the Indian diaspora, which forms only a tiny fragment of the general population. That SEF-USA has been able to contribute in such a significant manner is a tribute to the tireless efforts of SEF volunteers and the generosity of Americans of Indian origin towards their less fortunate brethren. Harshadbhai thinks it is extremely important to bring the Foundation’s cause to mainstream society. Indeed, he has a point. Americans are a generous and giving lot. The

average American gives 7 times more than the average German and 14 times more than the average Italian. In 2007, despite the economic slow-down, Americans donated over \$300 billion, including \$13 billion to international charities. As the world becomes flatter and smaller, giving transcends national boundaries. Harshadbhai and Sankar—the driving forces behind SEF’s efforts in Southern California (SoCal)—are developing a strategy to bring SEF into the mainstream consciousness. They plan to develop and distribute flyers at key locations such as malls to introduce Sankara’s efforts to a broader audience. Sankar has been a key person for SEF-SoCal for the past nine years.

SEF-SoCal organized the Udit Narayan concert at the La Mirada Theater on May 9, 2008. In addition to Udit, his wife Deepa and son Aditya also performed. Bollywood actress Preeti Jhangiani and a support troupe of 15 dancers and 15 musicians also performed. The event required considerable effort and expense to organize and was much larger in scope and scale than concerts organized in previous years with Nitin Mukesh and Hariharan. Although ticket prices were as high as \$500, the concert was a huge success. Apart from the profits and positive publicity generated for SEF, the experience will stand SEF in good stead for planning future events.

SEF-SoCal is trying to increase awareness of SEF and its activities in affluent San Diego County, which has a sizeable Indian population. SEF is also trying to field more volunteers amongst the SoCal youth. It now has a handful of 8-10 dedicated and enthusiastic youth volunteers. Three such volunteers helped organize the first UCLA walkathon for SEF on May 11, 2008 at the Elvin C. Drake Stadium. Sisters Khushali and Mansi Shah and their friend Charmi Shah came up with the idea after witnessing the success of walks for other organizations. Co-sponsors of the walkathon included the Students Council, Indian Students Union, Muslim Students Association, Pakistani Students Association, and the Pre-Optometry Society.

The walk was conducted within months of conception. Khushali described the process: “We had weekly meetings where we would discuss the logistics of the walkathon and would start implementing programs such as an iWALK info night, in which Harshad Patel came to talk to UCLA students about Sankara. The same night, students started registering for the walkathon.” The registration fee was \$5 for which the participants received a SEF T-shirt and free lunch. All walkers were required to raise a minimum of \$30 to sponsor one eye surgery. The effort attracted over 60 people and raised about \$4,000 dollars.

Despite the success of the event, the organizers were quick to point out things that they could do differently in future events, reflecting a desire for perfection that is critical to any organization and bodes well for Sankara. To ensure sustained success for the program even after graduation, they are forming a SEF chapter at UCLA to plan major events every quarter. Although some of the events have yet to be finalized, the walk is scheduled to occur annually due to its success.

Mansi is currently getting ready to organize the SEF booth at the Independence Day celebrations. She plans to make goodie bags with candy, information on the foundation, and a donation card. There will be an informational video and free mendhi.



Seattle and NY/NJ Activities

Abirami Gopalan

As part of our goal to achieve vision 2020 by 2020, exciting fund raising events are scheduled in Seattle, New York and New Jersey.

The Seattle team organized an event "Tollywood Thriller" on July 26th. This is a Telugu light music event. The volunteers in Seattle have been successful in organizing this event each year for the past three years. This event is organized with the help of a group named "eSwara". In addition to electrifying live Telugu music, there are usually dance performances and skits that make this a sought-after event every year. This has helped raise funds for SEF.

The Seattle volunteers also participate in the Annual Microsoft Giving Campaign in October. This event happens during the whole month of October and the volunteers spread the word about SEF at Microsoft. With the Microsoft matching dollar for dollar, the team raises over 200 thousand dollars every year during the giving campaign alone. Further they match their volunteer hours to raise



more funds for SEF. In addition to the above mentioned activities, the Seattle area volunteers also organize informational booths during various Indian cultural events organized in the Seattle and adjoining areas.

The volunteers are very enthusiastic and are making all efforts to come up with more such successful events in the near future. The Seattle volunteers can be reached at

Suveen Reddy: suveen.reddy@microsoft.com
Sharath Malladi: msharath@gmail.com
Hari Gollamudi: harpra@hotmail.com
Amar Nalla: amarnalla@yahoo.com
Raju Dantuluri: djraju@gmail.com

A major event on the east coast is the Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF)/South Asian Pharmaceutical Council(SAPC) joint Silent Auction-Fund Raiser at the exclusive Jasna Polana resort in New Jersey on 17th October, 2008.



This is an SAPC initiated event where corporate and individual sponsorships are targeted for the benefit of SEF. This is the first year SEF and SAPC are partnering in this fund raiser. It's going to be an evening dinner and a gala event combined with silent auction targeted primary at New Jersey, New York & Pennsylvania resident companies and individuals in order to raise funds of which part of the proceeds will go to SEF.

SAPC is a non profit organization targeted towards advancement in leadership, networking, and professional development of South Asians in the Pharma industry. They also support initiatives aimed at improving access to health care in South Asia. SEF's goal of vision 2020 by 2020 happened to correlate with their vision of improving health care access which motivated them to initiate a joint event with SEF, as part of their outreach program.

They found SEF, which has a strong base in USA as well as India, as a medium to return back to the society. SEF is indeed very happy to partner with SAPC for this event. The articles for the silent auction are collected by the volunteers. Further there is a possibility of live auction of one item which will be conducted by an auction professional. This is a great opportunity for people in Tri-State to meet, network and increase public awareness about SEF & SAPC. Many such events will be coming up in the East Coast and SEF volunteers are working hard to make these events successful.

In addition to the above event, the volunteers in East coast have set up several SEF Booths/Events in Tri-state area with no overhead expenses. Some of them are:

- A three day SEF Booth at ATA conference at Newark, NJ.
- A SEF Booth at Shri Balaji Temple at Bridgewater, NJ by Sitharamji on 26-27 July
- A SEF Booth at Shri Sharda Peeth, Stroudsburg, PA by Prof. Dathatriji on all weekends from July 12th to 27th.
- An Independence day Booth at Penns Landing, Philadelphia, PA and Manhattan, NY
- A three day booth during the Labor day long weekend at Zee Carnival in NJ.
- Diwali dinner

For further information on the October event as well as to volunteer for the organization/event, please reach out to the East Coast SEF volunteers at their following e-mail addresses:

Sejal Dave: sejaldave@gmail.com, Sanket Patel: sanket@ruair.net,
Prof. Dattatri: dathatyn@farmingdale.edu, Ram Balusu: rambalusu@yahoo.com, Manish Parekh: mgpnj@hotmail.com,
T.T. Bhat: ttbhat@rocketmail.com, UshaRani Sampath: samsar11@aol.com, Ashok Shenoy: shenoy.ashok@gmail.com,
Malavika Khullar: malavikakhullar@gmail.com

Your Generous Donations at work



You are cordially invited by Sankara Eye Society
to attend the inauguration of
Gujarat Hospital on
Sunday October 19, 2008

In presence of Honorable Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi
and Holiness, Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam

Address: Sankara Eye Hospital, Anand
N H 8 towards Baroda,
MOGAR 388340 ANAND

With best compliments from: SEF USA

For more information please visit
www.giftofvision.org or call 1-866-SANKARA

You are cordially invited
to attend the inauguration of
Shimoga Hospital on
Sunday October 12, 2008

In presence of Honorable
Karnataka Chief Minister B. S. Yediyurappa

Address: Harakere, Thirthahalli Road
(Just opposite Shiva Statue)
Shimoga, Karnataka

With best compliments from: SEF USA



Focus Karnataka

Vaishnav Rajagopal

We have completed another eventful quarter. Thanks to your support, the Kumbabishekam of the temple in the hospital was conducted on July 9th. The basic structure of the hospital is complete and the interior of the hospital is currently being worked on. The inauguration for the hospital has been set for October 12th; The Karnataka Chief Minister Mr.B.S. Yediyurappa will inaugurate the hospital.

The team has been very busy lately. We participated in the VSNA and Konkani Conventions in the Bay area. In the east coast we had a booth for a fortnight at Sringeri Vidya Bharathi Foundation (Stoudsburch). These events helped us reach out to a new demographic of people. But over the last quarter we raised only \$50,000 and \$400,000 more needs to be raised by October. Please help us by spreading the message to all your friends, your support is extremely important in the final months.

In the near future, we will be attending the AKKA convention at Chicago during the Labor day weekend and request all SEF patron who will be attending the event to stop by at our booth. We are also having a dinner banquet planned by SAPC and SEF in NY on Oct 17th (details in another article). Events are also being planned in Dallas and Boston; please visit our web site for more information.

We request all of you to attend the hospital inauguration. For those who cannot make it, we will have a live web cast of the event (details will be on the SEF website on Oct 10th/11th).

Sowing the seeds

"Earlier this year we saw an advertisement on Zee/Sony TV about Sankara Eye Foundation. We were very touched when we realized that due to lack of \$10-\$20 many can not care for their eyes. We checked the website and read about the good work done by the foundation. Since that day we made the decision that we will contribute in whatever small way we can. To get started we decided that instead of accepting presents we would request our son's friends to contribute to a charitable organization on his birthday. Our son Shlok who is three years old used to celebrate his birthday by inviting his friends to his birthday party. For past two birthdays he got lots of gifts. Most of them he outgrew before he would play with them. We decided that when his friends see him making this they will also get influenced. We send Sankara website link with the inviting email. We got a very good response. Shlok's four friends decided on that very day to follow the same path. We want to teach our son that God has already given him so much. He is a privileged child. Now it is his responsibility to give it back in whatever form he can. He is too young to understand, but we are trying to sow seeds of good thoughts in him at early age."

-Parents of Shlok Dholakia



A couple's wedding gift to Sankara

"We wanted to donate our wedding gifts to charity because we feel very blessed with where life has taken us. So instead of gifts for ourselves, we wanted to give back to our community.

We had our gifts donated to Ekal Vidyalaya as well as Sankara. The reason we picked Sankara as one of them is for their creed, the gift of vision. It was very touching for us to learn that there are so many people that suffer from so many vision related issues and for a small amount of money, a person could get an eye surgery that would rectify their problem. We wanted the money donated to be impactful, and we felt that Sankara was just the place where a small amount of money could go a long way."

-Bonna Chaudhuri and Amit Patel



Can donating be contagious?

Ruhi Prasad, 8 years old, lives in Chandler, AZ. She had heard about Sankara Eye Foundation when they sponsored a musical event in the Phoenix area and knew that they "helped the blind see". She wanted to help them in their cause, but did not know how to. Then one of her friends had donated to the Sankara Eye Foundation for her birthday. So Ruhi told her parents that she "wanted the same". Her parents had heard her say this before, when she was referring to her friends' toys :-)

For her 8th birthday, Ruhi wanted her friends to have the choice of donating to Sankara Eye Foundation, in lieu of a gift for her. Her friends were thrilled to help. Together, they donated their gift money to give the gift of sight to the needy through Sankara Eye Foundation. Her friends also were telling their parents that they "wanted to do the same" for their birthdays.

Ruhi and her friends realized that no gift is too small, and her parents realized that donating can indeed be contagious!

Giving with a heart

It surely was very touching. Swami Satyanand Bharati just walked in the office, asked us if anyone of us could speak Gujarati. I said I could help him with my broken Hindi :-). He said he saw the ad in the news paper and wanted to donate to the Sankara hospitals. He initially wanted to donate \$ 4000 to the Anand hospital, but he changed his mind when he read about all four hospitals. We were not sure if we could accept big amount of Cash(auditing purpose), but he pointed out the column on the donation form where "cash" was clearly typed, indicating donations can be made in cash. After confirming with Padma, the CFO of Sankara, Swami filled up the form himself...very beautiful hand writing for an 81 year old. He prayed to Swami "Rajneesh the OSHO" while donating. He then handed over the forms and money that he neatly folded and secured with rubber bands.

He wept as he left the office, saying it was all his social security money he saved over the time in his Swami's (Swami Rajneesh) name and that he was happy that he could donate for a good cause.

I just couldn't put him out of my mind for rest of the day.

Just wanted to share with you all!!

Thank you

Neela Blon,
Sankara Office Manager
May 2, 2008



No Gifts Please!

Naman Barman

What do most teenagers like to do when they turn 16? Many of them will spend lots of money and go out of the way to have a memorable event. However, Divya's act of kindness is truly memorable and something she will cherish forever.

16 year old Divya Paramesh decided to donate her gifts from her birthday party to Sankara Eye Foundation and was able to collect \$1001. Divya wanted to do something selfless and righteous for her birthday and decided to turn this into a fund raising event. She requested her friends to donate money to Sankara instead of buying her gifts. Impressively, she accumulated donations from 31 donors. It is her wish that it be put to good use in Bangalore.

Divya's act of kindness is a simple and effective way to raise money. Her small act of kindness has gone a long way and will benefit many patients in India. Sankara truly applauds Divya for her remarkable donation and selfless act. She is definitely not the average 16 year old!





Sankara Eye Foundation Donation Form

501(C)(3) Non Profit Organization Tax id - 77-6141976
1-866-SANKARA

www.giftofvision.org

Join the mission to eradicate curable blindness in India

With your help, Sankara Eye Foundation can reach its mission to build Sankara Eye Hospitals all over India and aim to perform million surgeries per year by the year 2020. You can help either by donating for the Central Services or Capital Projects.

Central Services Surgeries

- Surgeries (\$30)
- Corneal Transplant (\$100)
- "Open an Eye a Month" (\$360/year)

Other

- Food for patients (\$200 a day)
- Medical Staff Education
- Entire Service Activities of the Hospital (\$400 a day)

You can do a special request for your donation.
e.g. "In the name of"/"In the memory of"; request a day for the service, or for a child etc

Capital Projects "Wall of Founders"

Become a Founding Donor
and get your name inscribed on the
"Wall of Founders"

- \$1,000 - to become a Founding Donor we will contact you for the names
- 5,000 or more. Check our website for the latest sponsorships at each hospital

Choose the Project

- Focus AP Phase II
- Focus Bangalore
- Focus Gujarat
- Focus Karnataka

Special request: _____

I would like to donate by:

- Cash
- Check
- Credit Card

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sankara Eye Foundation, USA

Credit Card # (Visa or Master Card only)

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Will your company match your donation? Yes/ No Company: _____

On-Line Donation: www.giftofvision.org

Car Donation: email to cargiving@giftofvision.org

eBay: Buy or Sell on eBay and donate to Sankara Eye Foundation <http://givingworks.ebay.com>

Stocks, Payroll, Bank Transaction etc: contact SEF @ info@giftofvision.org or 1866-726-5272

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Spouse Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone # _____ Email: _____

If first time Donors: How did you hear about us? _____

I would like to volunteer.

Mail to: Sankara Eye Foundation, 1851 McCarthy Blvd. # 218, Milpitas, CA 95035

Sankara Eye Foundation, USA
1851 McCarthy Blvd, #218
Milpitas, CA 95035

Return Service Requested

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SAN JOSE, CA
PERMIT NO. 437



1-866-SANKARA
(1-866-726-5272)
<http://www.giftofvision.org>
info@giftofvision.org
Fax 408-456-0790

Thank you for your support

46,792 and Counting

Naushik Desai

J Mariamma, 45 years of age, lives in Uppugonduru village, about 110 km away from Guntur. A very poor lady, she lives with her husband Krishnaiah, and ekes out a living as a daily farm laborer. She had difficulty managing their daily needs with their meager earnings. Together they earn 150 rupees which is insufficient to run the household. The couple lives in a small hut with no friends, relatives or children.

Recently Mariamma stopped working as her vision started failing. She complained of blurred vision. Her husband was helpless. Nobody advised them to get her examined by an eye doctor. Mariamma was unaware that her decreased vision was due to cataract and that it did have a cure. She simply gave up.

Sankara Eye Hospital did hold an outreach camp in November, 2007 in her village, but due to her lack of knowledge Mariamma did not attend. Fortunately for her, a lot of other people from the village did attend. Many were identified and operated for cataract surgery by us with happy outcomes. Soon the word spread about us, when these patients returned to the village, and sure enough it reached the ears of Mariamma.

It prodded her to look out for the next camp, and lo behold, a camp was scheduled at Kothakota on 8th June, 2008. Kothakota is 40 km from Mariamma's village. When we examined her, she was taken aback to know that her eyes had fully developed cataract. She had no visual recognition of anything except her hand movements.

She was brought to our hospital this July. After a successful surgery, lights were shining back in her eyes. Her post-operative vision was 6/6, better than most of us!!! She was elated.

At the review camp the sight of tears welling up in her eyes gave us the sense of gratitude in Mariamma and we returned to the hospital with joy in our hearts, happy that we were successful in helping yet another human being; the **46,792**nd to be exact in our short history at the Guntur Hospital.

