

participate in creating a pictorial history of chicago asian indians

All members of the Asian Indian immigrant community are invited to contribute to a pictorial history of Asian Indians of Metropolitan Chicago from 1900 to the present. On Saturday and Sunday April 7 and 8, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., stop by the Community Photo Fair to drop off contributions or mail to: Photo History, Indo-American Center, 6328 North California, Chicago, Illinois, 60659, to take part in this exciting record of Asian Indian life.

Arcadia Publishing, a leading publisher of the history of Chicago's ethnic communities, and the Indo-American Center are collaborating to produce this photographic account of Asian Indian lives and activities around the city. To make this a comprehensive and fully representative history of Asian Indians in Chicago, photographs and documents pertaining to Asian Indian life in the Chicago area are urgently needed. All Indian immigrant family members living in Chicago or its suburbs should search family albums to find photos depicting unique, interesting, and important events.

Photographs of good quality should be labeled with a name, address, donor telephone number, and should include information about the subject such as: who? what? where? when? context? or significance? Photos in the following categories will be considered for publication: Family Life And Events, Holiday Celebrations, Regional Diversity, Religion, Occupations, Recreation, Politics, The Arts, Service Organizations, Outstanding Individuals. All photographs will be returned to their owners.

You may help select individuals who have made outstanding contributions in their professions or to their community. Send a letter addressed to the Indo-American Center, with the following information included for each individual you wish to nominate: a name, a contact telephone number, and a description of their contribution.

Contact Padma Rangaswamy (630) 654-0168 or Dorothe Shah (847) 475-6853 with project questions or ideas.

iac receives generous state grant to expand senior services

The Indo-American Center received a \$84,000 DCCA grant under the Illinois FIRST program as a result of efforts by State Representative Louis Lang of the state's 16th district. On Sunday, April 8, 2001 at noon, Representative Lang will be honored at the IAC for his key role in securing this grant for the local South Asian American community.

The Senior Sangam Program, Citizenship Services, outreach services, educational programs, and the Legal Clinic will be primary beneficiaries of these funds, which are matched by generous gifts from Indo-American Center donors.

"State Representative Louis Lang has a track record of helping the Indian-American community and our Senior Citizens program would not have been able to take off without this state grant," stated Ranjit Ganguly, President of the the Indo-American Center Board of Directors. This grant came at an opportune time to launch several programs which the Indo-American Center has been hoping to offer the Asian Indian community.



—B. S. Subbhakrishna, IAC Seniors Committee, at a recent seniors event

Indo-American Center Mission

The mission of the Indo-American Center is to promote the well-being of Indo-Americans through services that facilitate their adjustment, integration, and friendship with the wider society, nurture their sense of community, and foster appreciation for their heritage and culture

Contributors

Shalini Gupta
Faisal Hadi (layout)
Veena Iyer
Lakshmi Menon
Padma Rangaswamy
R.S. Rajan
Vikram Sanghani
Depak Sathy
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Mr. Suleman Nathani

Ms. Veena A. Iyer

Mr. Faisal Hadi

Mrs. Prakash Verma

new program enhances lives of seniors

A new Seniors Program Initiative entitled "Senior Sangam" has been developed at the Indo-American Center in order to enhance seniors' feeling of "belonging" and their quality of life within the South Asian community.

Spearheaded by a Committee of the Board of Directors chaired by Shalini Gupta, the program has been launched with two successful events in March, which grew out of focus group discussions in February.

During weekly Thursday afternoon Senior Milan gatherings at the Center, seniors may socialize, play games, watch movies, create craft projects, do cooking demonstrations, and participate in computer classes. A focus of the program will involve families of Seniors, especially their grandchildren, in order to nurture communication between the generations. Seniors anticipate opportunities to gather with others to reflect and converse, to work collectively to assist each other in addressing personal and community problems, and to participate in health and fitness workshops. Plans are underway to offer yoga, low-impact aerobics, and walking club exercise sessions especially designed for Seniors.

Special functions will include field trips to museums, cultural performances, and religious sites of interest to participants. A speaker series on topics such as health education, nutrition, exercise, first aid, senior benefits, legal rights, job placement, and volunteer opportunities will be incorporated in the program.

Senior program committee members include: Dr. Krishna Lall, Daljeet Punia, Shobhana Sanghvi, B.S. Subbhakrishna, Jody Wadhwa, Neera Walsh and IAC staff, Veena Iyer, Suleman Nathani, and R.S. Rajan. Program Coordinator, Faisal Hadi, a 2000 graduate of the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, has been hired to organize, promote, and supervise a variety of activities.

"the colors of india" on view at the iac

"The Colors of India," a photography exhibition by Santhosh Veeg, is currently on display at the Indo-American Center from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily except Tuesday. The exhibition illustrates the vibrant colors and places of our motherland with 26 intriguing photos taken at a variety of locations throughout India.

Santhosh Veeg has worked as a photographer and in the film industry as an assistant cameraman with some of the top filmmakers in India. Photography is a passion for him, but his true aspiration is film-making. He is working to produce two documentaries, which aim to raise social consciousness regarding AIDS and eunuchs in India.

This is Veeg's first photography exhibition held in the United States. His next photography exhibition, "The Journey through Light" is scheduled to open in London in September 2002.

new faces at iac



Mohammad Faisal Hadi

Seniors Program Coordinator and Benefits Assistance

A recent addition to the regular staff at the Center, Faisal is responsible for developing new activities for the Seniors Program at the Indo-American Center, including organizing regular Thursday Milans and field trips.



Prakash Verma

English Literacy Instructor

Dedicated and patient, Prakash Verma adds greatly to the instruction of English at all levels at the Center. Additionally, Mrs. Prakash is fluent in a variety of Indian languages, offering bilingual guidance for introductory students.



Suleman Nathani

Benefits Counselor and English Literacy Instructor

With years of experience and college degrees in Social Work, Suleman Nathani continues to counsel local community members both with their linguistic quandaries and queries about their eligibility for various public benefits.

enroll in the summer fun program

Visit the Chicago Children's Museum! Watch puppeteers from Indonesia! Explore gadgets at the Museum of Science and Industry! Photograph your neighborhood! All by participating in the Indo-American Center's annual Summer Fun Program!

The program, which lasts from June 9 to August 19, 2001, will feature reading projects, arts and crafts projects, music and dance, storytelling, field trips, and other engaging activities for children ages 5-12. On Saturday afternoons from 1-3, the children will participate in a reading activity either at the Northtown Library or the Indo-American Center. On Sunday afternoons from 1-4, the program will invite outside guests, such as Natya Dance Company and the Steppenwolf Theater, to do related workshops with the children.

In order to register for this program or to find out more information, please contact Faisal Hadi, Seniors Program Coordinator, at (773)973-4444 or at hadi@uiuc.edu. We encourage parents, grandparents, and other caregivers to participate in Summer Fun activities with their children.

legal immigration and family equity act benefits eligible undocumented immigrants

On December 21, 2000, President William J. Clinton signed into law the Legal Immigration and Family Act (LIFE). This law affects various aspects of immigration law, including a temporary reinstatement of Section 245(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, the creation of a new nonimmigrant visa category or the "V" visa, and expansion of the "K" visa.

Section 245(i) provides eligible individuals an opportunity to apply for permanent residency while staying in the United States with their families instead of leaving the country to apply for an immigrant visa at a U.S. consulate abroad, which is the usual procedure.

Section 245(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act is available between Dec. 21 2000 and April 30, 2001 to individuals who were physically present in the United States on December 21, 2000, the date the Legal Immigration and Family Act was enacted. This provision allows individuals, who qualify to apply for permanent residency by paying a \$1,000 penalty to adjust their status in the United States. They must adjust their status because of violation of immigration law. For example, they may have over-stayed on a tourist visa or obtained employment while on a student visa. Normally, if the individual was unlawfully present in the United States for more than six months, s/he would not be allowed to return to the United States for three years and perhaps as long as ten years after going abroad to apply for an immigrant visa.

There are two ways an undocumented alien may become eligible for adjustment under Section 245(i). By April 30, 2001 either a relative, who is a United States citizen or a legal permanent resident, may submit a visa petition (Form I-130, Form I-140, Form I-160) to the Immigration and Naturalization Service or an employer may submit a labor certification application on the immigrant's behalf with the Department of Labor.

The new temporary "V" nonimmigrant visa is available to the spouses and minor children of lawful permanent residents who have been waiting more than three years for an immigrant visa based on an immigrant petition filed on or before December 21, 2000, the enactment date of LIFE. Individuals granted this status would receive employment authorization and are protected from removal.

The "K" visa status is expanded to include spouses of citizens of the United States and their children who are living abroad. The current "K" visa is also available to fiances of citizens of the United States who are coming to the United States to get married within 90 days of their arrival.

Individuals may meet with Mr. Punia, the Indo-American Center Immigration Coordinator for further information. For a free consultation on how LIFE may affect you, please call the Cyriac D. Kappil Legal Clinic at (773) 973-0411 and leave a message requesting an appointment with the Indo-American Center immigration attorney.

oleg malskiy discusses benefits

Oleg Malskiy, a benefits caseworker from Interchurch Refugee and Immigration Ministries, recently presented a seminar on public benefits available for seniors and other eligible individuals at the Indo-American Center. His comments were translated by IAC staff members into Hindi, Urdu, and Gujarati for the largely South Asian immigrant audience present for the seminar.

Mr. Malskiy reviewed eligibility requirements for a variety of public benefits programs providing a range of services for U.S. residents. Eligibility requirements were reviewed for Social Security, including Supplemental Security Income and disability benefits, Medicare and Medicaid programs, food assistance, Assistance for the Aged Blind or Disabled (AABD), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and KidCare health insurance for children. Programs that provide assistance with utility payments for low-income individuals, including Ameritech's Link-Up and Lifeline programs and the U.S government's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), were also briefly discussed. More information about these programs and information on eligibility can be acquired by contacting either Faisal Hadi or Suleman Nathani at the Indo-American Center (773) 973-4444 or by emailing hadi@uiuc.edu.



—Suleman Nathani chats with Oleg Malskiy on benefits eligibility

literacy student wins award

Usha Sishodia, a student in the IAC's Level One English Class, has been honored with the Literacy Volunteers of America New Reader Achiever Award. The award recognizes the achievements of English as a Second Language and Literacy students excel as students and as classroom leaders.

At the awards luncheon on March 24, Literacy Volunteers of America Executive Director Dorothy Miaso praised Usha for her dedication, determination, and persistence. She commended Usha for not simply learning English herself, but for also supporting and leading her fellow students. Usha received a commemorative plaque during the ceremony.

Usha enrolled in the IAC's Level 0 English class in September 2000. At that time, she could only ask and answer a few simple questions in English, but she quickly threw herself into the English classes, staying late to get extra help and practice. Within a few months, she moved up to the Level 1 classes, and she now initiates conversations and reads newspaper articles eagerly.

However, Usha has not only improved her own ability to understand and speak English. She has also greatly assisted her fellow students, teachers, and tutors. According to Ian Wilson, who tutors Usha and nominated her for the award, Usha plays an integral role in class for both the teachers and the other students.

"She is often the student who will raise the questions and problems that a number of students have on the tip of their tongues, yet can't quite articulate," Ian said. "This often includes raising questions that I, as a native English speaker, would not have immediately thought about."

Despite winning this award, Usha remains committed to attending and participating in IAC's English classes. In the short term, she aspires to pass the citizenship exam and to learn how to drive. Ultimately, she hopes to give back to the community by volunteering at the IAC and sharing her love of learning and communicating with a new generation of IAC adult learners.



—Usha Sishodia, center, with Veena Iyer, IAC, left

university of chicago educates teachers on "maps, identity, and world studies"

Between June 18th and 29th 2001, the University of Chicago will be sponsoring "Maps, Identity and World Studies," a workshop for middle and high school teachers. The course will explore how maps and map-making have evolved, how maps can affect self-perceptions, and how maps can illuminate world studies curricula. Each session will also focus on a specific region and time period. Most importantly, all of the sessions will focus on how teachers can incorporate maps and digital technologies into their classrooms and curricula.

The sessions will be held on June 18, 20, 22, 25, 27, and 29 from 9-4 at the University of Chicago. The June 20 session, however, will take place at the Newberry Library. To register or to find out more information about the program, contact the University of Chicago South Asia Outreach Program at (773)702-8635 or south-asia-outreach@uchicago.edu The course is approved for Lane Credit and for Illinois State Board of Education Recertification Credit.

experience a cultural mosaic at the chicago children's museum

“South Asia Here and Now: Experience a mosaic of diverse traditions and change” will be the theme of the Chicago Children’s Museum World Passport program in May and June. The Indo-American Education Project and representatives of other ethnic organizations are collaborating with the museum in planning a variety of special events.

Special performances, workshops, and activities will culminate with a festival weekend beginning at 5:30 on Thursday evening, June 7, when children and their families will enjoy a procession led by a troupe of Chanda drummers from Kerela in Southwest India to be followed by a Punjabi Cultural Association Bhangra Dance performance and workshop.

Highlights of Passport to South Asia will include performances and workshops by Kalapriya, Anita Sinha Foundation, and Natya Dance companies, sitarist Sunanda, cellist Nancy Lesh, magician Shreeyash Palshikar, yoga instructor Meena Sanghani,, storytellers Basanti Banerji and Devipriya Roy and a Garba Raas Dance workshop led by Northwestern University students Ankur Shah and Shivani Patel.

The museum will also host art activities and folk dancing on Thursday evenings and weekends throughout May and June. As part of these activities, IAC Literacy Coordinator, Veena Iyer, who with Ahalya Satkunaratham of Insight Arts, will present a story telling/dance workshop on Saturday, May 5.

The Center’s Summer Fun Youth Program has scheduled a family field trip to the Museum on Sunday, June 10 as well.

Chicago Children’s Museum is located on downtown Chicago’s Lakefront Navy Pier. On thursday evenings from 5-8 p.m. admission is free. Passport activities will be offered on Saturdays and Sundays from 1 - 4 p.m.



–Veena Iyer, IAC, left, consults with Childrens Museum staff

iac takes active part in gujarat earthquake relief efforts

An extraordinary opportunity for connection occurred in the wake of tragedy when people throughout the United States rallied to the appeal to offer a helping hand to victims of the January 24 earthquake in western Gujarat, India. The Indo-American Center joined dozens of other organizations who responded to the call by opening its doors and serving as a collection center for donations of needed goods.

Teacher Rachel Horovitz arrived with 2200 cans of food collected by her elementary students at Boone Chicago Public School. Her mother, Dovie Horvitz, a Glencoe resident who has visited India, delivered 140 sleeping bags from Gurnee



–Vikram Sanghani and R. Rajan, IAC, help coordinate relief

Mills to add to the collection of items offered by Asian Indians and friends in the Indo-American Center neighborhood.

These donations became part of over 12,000 pounds of canned and dry food, flashlights and batteries, sleeping bags and medical supplies delivered to the United Airlines cargo flight destined for the relief effort in Gujarat. The entire five day operation from packaging to loading the final cargo truck proceeded like clockwork despite the fact that donations continued to pour in until the last minute.

Mafat Patel, Rakesh Patel, and Rajesh Pandya of Raja Foods were instrumental in the speedy operation, donating additional manpower and special packaging equipment needed to complete the job. In addition, the IAC staff and several volunteers worked tirelessly to receive, sort, package, label and transport the items. IAC Board members Vikram Sanghani and Depak Sathy donated a day off work to spend Friday welcoming those who arrived with generous contributions as well as packing and loading donations. United Airlines and the United Airlines Foundation provided to the relief effort by furnishing free cargo transport to Gujarat.

The Indo-American Center is continuing to accept tax-deductible contributions to the Earthquake Relief Fund.

workshops promote understanding of ethnic heritage

The Center's Ethnic Dialogue program continues to inform the wider society about our immigrant community and its heritage even under occasional adverse conditions.

Having received word that the students from the International Business class of Logan High School in La Crosse, Wisconsin were already enroute to Chicago when the December 13 snowstorm hit, volunteer Padma Rangaswamy and performer Ahalya Satkunaratham as well as Center staff stayed by their posts although buildings all around them were closing and sending workers home. The busload of hardy Wisconsin travelers arrived two hours late to a warm welcome for which they were immensely grateful. The group was fascinated by Ahalya's Shiva dance and her accompanying explanation, as well as Padma's introduction to the history of the diverse Asian Indian community in Chicago. They left with reluctance, but with, as one visitor put it, "a fantastic insight into the Indo-American culture."

Education Project committee members are presently involved with helping teachers from Deerpath Middle School in Lake Forest prepare for a major unit on India and assisting the staff of the Children's Museum in Chicago plan a Passport to South Asia program for May and June.

During a mid-February workshop, Education Project committee members introduced both groups to resources and activity ideas. Members of the Chicago Children's Museum staff pronounced the Indo-American Center and presentations the "most well organized and impressive of all the ethnic groups they had dealt with in their Passport to the World series." Deerpath teachers agreed in a note thanking the Center "for organizing such a wonderful presentation" for them. Special appreciation goes to Deerpath parents Happie Datt and Cynthia Maloney for linking the Center with their children's school.

Student visits spring semester include groups from Evanston Township High School, North Shore Country Day School in Winnetka, and Maine East High School.

Presentations to participants in the Chicago Department of Tourism Ethnic Neighborhood Tours are scheduled for 10 a.m. on May 19, July 14, and September 15.

The Education Committee welcomes anyone who would like to participate in these events. Please call Dorothe Shah at (847) 475-6853 or Lakshmi Menon at (847) 432-0795 for further information.



-Lakshmi Menon, IAC Board, assists a student with a sari

imacf adds pediatric care to free clinic

The Indian Medical Association Charitable Foundation continues to offer services to needy adult patients at the Indo-American Center every Sunday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. In addition, during the same hours IMACF is operating a Pediatric Clinic, which includes an Immunization Program and a Well Baby Clinic.

IMACF president, Dr. Marella Hanumadass, who has served as liaison with IAC for the past two years, is now sharing that responsibility with Dr. Birendra Marwah.

upcoming events

April 7-8 <i>10am-5pm</i>	Community Photo Fair for an Asian Indian Pictorial History, Indo-American Center
April 8 <i>noon</i>	Appreciation Ceremony for State Representative Louis Lang, Indo-American Center
April 15	AIPHA Health Fair, Indo-American Center
April 21	Senior Excursion to Art Institute of Chicago
June - August	Summer Fun Youth Program, Sundays, IAC
May 19	Chicago Neighborhood Tours: Devon Avenue
May 3-June 30	Chicago Children's Museum Passport to South Asia
June 10 <i>12-5pm</i>	Summer Fun Program Family Field Trip Chicago Children's Museum South Asia Festival
April 21	Senior Excursion to Art Institute of Chicago
June 18-29	University of Chicago Outreach Workshop for Teachers; Maps, Identity, and World Studies
September 9 <i>4-10pm</i>	Indo-American Center Annual Banquet Oakbrook Marriot, Oakbrook, IL



-Students at a recent IAC educational event

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