

EYE2EYE



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Dear friends,

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This has been an amazing year - thanks to each and every one of you, we now have 8 hospitals up and running. Two new hospitals were inaugurated this year: the Anand hospital in Gujarat was inaugurated on October 19th and the Shimoga hospital in Karnataka was inaugurated on October 12th amid huge fanfare and thrill. The Sankara teams in India and the United States appreciate your support in making this happen despite the global financial crisis. These hospitals will be performing over 100,000 free eye surgeries a year and that is taking us nicely towards our goal of 1 million surgeries per year by 2020. The second phase of Guntur hospital in Andhra Pradesh was completed as well and the hospital is exceeding all expectations. The Bangalore hospital which has been functional since March is performing better than planned and is serving the rural population well while attracting paying patients for quality eye care. However, more funds are needed for the three hospitals inaugurated this year. There are several ways you can donate – one of the popular ways is to donate in the form of Wall of Founders. Not only will your contribution go a long way, your name will be etched forever on the wall of founders.

As we ramp up surgeries in the eight hospitals, we are seeing an acute need for funds to support these surgeries. We encourage you to donate \$360 for surgeries/year – “Open An Eye A Month” which will sponsor a surgery each month of the year. You can find all the options available on our website, www.giftofvision.org.

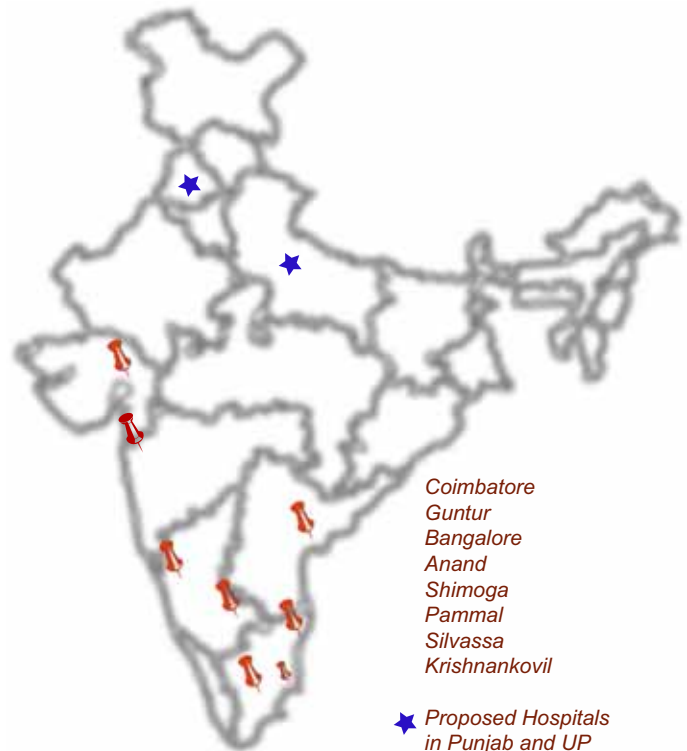
We are very pleased to announce two new projects in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. We are beginning to raise funds for these two hospitals. Construction for these two hospitals will begin once we have 70% of the funds – which works out to about \$2.1 million each (of the total of about \$3 million need for each hospital). We are building the project teams to drive fundraising for these two hospitals and we'd like to invite you to join these teams. Your support – whether it's by providing funds or by volunteering for our activities – is appreciated.

As Sankara Eye Foundation is growing and expanding across the United States, we are looking for more volunteers to join the organization in various cities. Please contact us at info@giftofvision.org if you would like to volunteer some of your time.

We are grateful for your unwavering support and we feel honored that you are part of the team that brings Vision 20/20 by the year 2020. Let us make 2009 even more memorable than 2008 and continue our journey towards eradicating curable blindness.

Wishing you and your families a very happy holiday season,

Muckai K Girish, K. Sridharan, Divyogi Patel, Sundar Radhakrishnan, Murali Krishnamurthy



Calendar

SHAM-E-GHAZAL

Musical night

December 13, 2008 at 7:30PM

Venue: Mirage banquet Facility in Edison, NJ

For ticket and sponsorship information please call 732-529-5107



Dear Friends in SEF,

Greetings from Sankara Eye Care Institutions, India.

As we move towards the end of 2008, we shall look back with pardonable pride.

2008 has been an action packed year for all of us. In US, all of you were on your toes; reaching out to every possible opportunity to raise support for our "Mission for Vision". In India, we were busy putting up all the 3 hospitals, a hat trick in one year. Sankara Eye Hospitals have come up in Bangalore, Shimoga and Anand during this year. Together we made it happen!

It was hectic over here. The construction activities, coordinating with the Architects, Engineers, Consulting agencies, coping with the ever increasing prices of raw material and trying to finish the project on time,..... It was an experience. It is none other than our Hon. Project Director Mr. C.N.Srivatsan, the most dynamic, committed and unassuming "Team Sankara person" who made all these things happen. Three cheers to him and his Vision 2020 team comprising of Mr.Pranesh, Mr.Rajkumar and Mrs.Parimala.

On the other front our Directors of Human Resources Dr.Radha Ramani and Mr.Subbarao had their hands full giving the finishing touches for their training programs. Thanks to their efforts, today all the three new hospitals have a full compliment of trained, motivated and committed Human Resource.

It was Dr.Janakiraman who stood by Mr.Srivatsan and ensured the completion of all the three Projects. He teamed up with Dr.J.K.Reddy and with Mrs.Seetha to equip the hospitals right on time. They had a helping hand from Dr.Kaushik.

Having taken all these efforts, it was a soul satisfying experience to look at the finished product at the time of inauguration. All the 3 hospitals are Master pieces.

We had the privilege of SEF Board member's participation in all the inaugural functions. Some of the backbones of SEF like Mr.Vaishnav Rajagopal and Mrs & Mr. Harshad Uka joined us on these occasions. I am sure all of you would have seen the web telecasting and subsequently the video films and still photographs uploaded in our website.

All of us at SEF and SECI are justified in rejoicing on this year's performance. At the same time, we need to remember that we have miles to go.....

Yes, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh have been announced !
The giving season is about to commence.
Let us all gear up with fresh energy and enthusiasm.
Let us make things happen. Let us together rewrite history !

Our Best wishes for the festive season.

Dr. R.V.Ramani
Founder & Managing Trustee, Sankara Eye Care Institutions - India

Dr.S.V.Balasubramaniam
Chairman, Sankara Eye Care Institutions - India

Magic of Light Touches Gujarat

K. Sridharan

From the serene settings of Shimoga, we come to the Industrial city of Anand. Surrounded by Amul Chocolate factory, a very nice boarding school, and various industries on National Highway 8 (NH8), stands the tall, the beautiful, the modern building that takes your breath away. You can feel that it has life- it is trying to create its own atmosphere, its own environment, and it is standing out. The beginning of the greenery it is trying to create for it to live under is clearly visible. This beautiful creation, with its distinctive eye-shaped structure in the front carries its name proudly on its head as a crown: Sankara Eye Hospital. The uniquely shaped temple which combines the Northern and the Southern styles stands tall- a testament to the "Sangam" of the regions.

The entry to Anand was also memorable. Having just finished a whirlwind tour of Coimbatore, Bangalore and Shimoga landing in Ahmedabad, Gujarat was totally a new experience. Am I really in India- or has the plane detoured to the United States of America or Singapore? The smiling and welcoming faces convinced me- I can be in no other place but India. The infrastructure, the roads, the cars, the facilities, the shops, the hotels were all modern and state of the art, but had its own Indian ambience.

The Sankara Eye Hospital at Anand, Gujarat was inaugurated on October 19th. This was probably the best organized, most visible inauguration that I have been a part of. On the dais, we had HH Sri Sankaracharya of Kanchi Mutt and one of the most dynamic and efficient administrator that India has seen- the Honorable Chief Minister Narendra Modi. We also had a minister from the state, the SEF and SES board members, and our partners in Service Mr. Harshad Bhai and Mrs. Nayna Uka. In the audience we had the Tandon family, including our own focus Gujarat coordinator Ritesh Tandon's parents, Divyogi Bhai's (SEF board member) brother Asvini Patel & their friends. Our friends and partners from SEF UK also joined us at the event.

The event started with a melodious invocation song in Gujarati, Vaishnava Janato, by SEF Chairman Murali Krishnamurthy. The

hospital was inaugurated by the Honorable Chief Minister Narendra Modi. We had speeches by Dr. S V Balasubramanian, Chairman of SES, Dr. R. V. Ramani and Mr. Murali Krishnamurthy. After paying his respects to the Acharya, the Honorable Chief Minister gave a very powerful speech- appreciating the hospital, its service, and its philosophy of self-sufficiency with a plan to have 80 percent free and 20 percent paying patients. This was followed by an excellent speech by the Acharya, in Hindi, where he blessed the hospital and wished our continued success. Our partners in Service were honored. Harshadbhai, Divyogibhai and Sundar gave brief, but powerful speeches. It was a short, but a very memorable event. There were about 100 people from the press covering the event and the entire event was webcast live all over the world.

This hospital is also extremely well staffed- headed by the chief medical officer Dr. Sandeep Phansalkar, Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Uma Patel, and a well trained supporting staff. The paramedical staff had been trained in Coimbatore for about a year. Since they were trained in Tamil Nadu- where the poor patients mainly spoke Tamil and Malayalam, the staff had learnt those languages, and still remembered them. When Dr. Radha addressed them in English- the staff requested her to talk to them in Tamil!! Again, it was very nice to see the beautiful blend. The hospital opened to the outpatients the next day and we saw a few patients coming in.

Apart from the beautiful hospital, its staff and the wonderfully executed inauguration event, the stay in Anand was memorable in its own right. The

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Magic of Light Comes To Shimoga

K. Sridharan

Banks of the Tunga River, with green fields all around, and serene settings reminding one of all the beauty of India: in the center of it all stands a magnificent structure which is both modern and classical- with red tile roofs and the building wide enough to screen the rainbow- proudly displaying the name Sankara Eye Hospital. Right across the road, facing the hospital gate, stands a 45 ft tall statue of Lord Shiva- after all, the place is known as Shivamuga- blessing the hospital.

The Sankara Eye Hospital at Shimoga, Karnataka was inaugurated on October 12th. SEF board members & focus Karnataka coordinator Vaishnav were there with our partners in service, Dr. Ashok Sonni and Mrs. Rajeswari Sonni, and Ashok from KKNC/Katte. We also had Mr. Jagdish Chanrai from the Jaslok family trust and the mission for vision trust, Mr. Dayananda Pai, and Mr. Venkata Reddy. The entire SES family and friends from Coimbatore, Bangalore and Chennai were also present at the event. The hospital was inaugurated by Minister of Medical Education Mr. Ramachan-

Major highlights of the event included an excellent speech in Kannada by Dr. S. V. Balasubramanian and the speeches by Dr. R. V. Ramani, ministers and our partners and finally by SEF chairman, Murali Krishnamurthy. Minister of Medical Education, Mr. Gowda, lauded the efforts of the organization to reach out to the poor patients by offering free eye care. He said that it would serve as a source of inspiration for other service oriented organizations to offer free medical service to the underprivileged. The hospital is extremely well staffed- headed by the chief medical officer Dr. Ravi Shankar, and a well trained supporting staff. The paramedical staff had been trained in Coimbatore for 3 years- and we could see how naturally the hospital had started operating on the first day after inauguration. Dr. Ramani's mother was the first outpatient, and on the first day itself it served about 43 outpatients. For me, personally, it was a journey that I would remember for my lifetime. It was great to have my cousin suddenly deciding to drive me from Bangalore to Shimoga- a wonderful trip, in itself, and



dra Gowda, since the Chief Minister Mr. Yediyurappa could not attend due to a last minute engagement.

The inauguration was a glittering function- extremely well organized by the Sankara family. The dream that four doctors and friends- Drs Vrinda and Narendra Bhat, Dr. Venkateshmurthy and Dr. Manjunath had with the Sankara family of bringing a Sankara Eye Hospital, a super specialty eye care institution, to Shimoga to serve the poor and needy became a reality. Of course, this could not have happened without the support of all our donors, our partners in service including AKKA, KKNC, Katte and Dr. Sonni and major contributions by the Jaslok Family trust, Mission For Vision trust and other supporters from India.

attending the great dinner event arranged by the local doctors and friends on Saturday night. Dr. Narendra Bhat, Ashok of Katte and Murali Krishnamurthy also joined the music troupe and sang some beautiful songs. It was great to see our uncle, Mr. P. Balasubramaniam- who has been the main inspiration behind Sankara Eye Foundation, USA, sitting with a smile on his face in the first row during the inauguration, full of energy. The train trip back to Bangalore from Shimoga with the entire group of friends from Coimbatore and Bangalore was a treat in itself.

I would encourage all of you to go visit the hospital and experience it yourselves- it is really an out-of-the-world experience.

Focus-AP (Sankara Eye Hospital, Guntur) update

Visala & Venkat Maddipati

We are glad to inform you that on September 11, 2008 the expansion project (Phase II) of Sankara Eye Hospital, Guntur in Andhra Pradesh was inaugurated by our Managing Trustee Dr. R V Ramani and the land donor Smt. Madala Sakuntamma. On behalf of Sankara Eye Foundation we want to thank all of you who donated generously without which this wouldn't have been possible.



There has been a lot of demand to start LASIK at the Guntur hospital, so we plan to add LASIK facility as early as possible. In this giving season, we hope you would continue to support generously towards this LASIK facility. This would cost about \$250,000.

In Phase II, we added 100 free beds, an eye bank and new Retina and Glaucoma wings. Now we plan to expand our operations geographically to Nalgonda, Khammam and Warangal districts and increase the free surgeries from 225 to 500 per week. The eye bank would be functional by early January '09, once we receive the



necessary approvals from the government. The success of the eye bank and eye transplantations would largely depend on the community willing to donate eyes. Please encourage your relatives or friends back home to sign-up for donating their eyes after their life time. This would be a golden opportunity to give vision for those who need it and to have the donor's eyes live through another life time.

You can donate \$1000 and become a founding member of the hospital. This (Wall of Founders) is a very popular sponsorship item and there are about 570 families to date that are 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 either in English or 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
Four Doctors Quarters	---	\$12,500 per 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

Why Volunteer

Kalyani Subramaniam

Times of India , 11 Oct 2007 features an article on the blindness in India .

It says "India is now home to the world's largest number of blind people. Of the 37 million people across the globe who are blind, over 15 million are from India. What's worse, 75% of these are cases of avoidable blindness, thanks to the country's acute shortage of optometrists and donated eyes for the treatment of corneal blindness."

(http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/India_has_largest_blind_population/rssarticleshow/2447603.cms)

Should we as the privileged few, who have the best of many many things our fellowmen do not – do something about it? Something in addition to the donations we make to Sankara Eye Foundation?

Think about it – we have about 20,000 active donors . If each one of us decides to raise \$1000 each by the end of the year – we can raise (20000*\$1000) about 20 million. For a minute – think how many eyes that money can open ? How many gifts of vision it can give ?

Is fundraising hard ? No – not that hard .

Half the battle is won by identifying the goal - \$1000 by each donor before the end of the year 2008.

\$1000 is only 20 donors willing to donate \$50 each or 50 donors willing to donate \$20 each. Even if one out of 5 people you approach makes a donation – you need to approach a maximum of 250 people only.

Next – what else can be done?

1. Email giftofvision@yahoo.com and request some newsletters, brochures.
2. Know more about SEF – its activities, its mission, its current projects etc.
3. Make a list of 250 people you know – include your neighbors, friends, colleagues, your banker, your loan agent, your doctor, your grocer, your kid's schoolteachers. It is amazing – when we work with a focus how our mind constantly keeps working on it in the background and how it mentally keeps adding to your list – within a week you will have the list of 250 people
4. Send out emails to them – send the brochures to them – you have your personal experience with Sankara – it has been very good. Tell them about that. Send them the link to the SEF site www.giftofvision.org
5. Also request them to let you know once they have donated – so that you can update your work sheet
6. Ask often and ask frequently. Have a schedule and remind them. They may be meaning to donate to your favorite charity and all it needs is a gentle push

It gives immense satisfaction to know that we made a positive difference in even one person's life. And if we all collectively can make a major difference – we as the privileged few have done part of our duty towards our brethren.

Let's celebrate in December 2008 on reaching our goal.

Iwalk 2008- A Walk that will be remembered!

Iwalk, one of the most anticipated and successful fund-raising events of Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF), has been becoming popular among people of all ages, races and professions in the San Francisco Bay Area over the years. This year, Iwalk 2008 was held on the 23rd of August at Shoreline Park, Mountain View. The goal was set to raise record breaking funds to support a new hospital undergoing construction in Shimoga, India. The pre-registration activities started about three months prior to the event. The very first online registration was received on Active.com on the 1st of June. But that was just the start and volunteers were motivated to take this event to the next level by improving on its previous ranking of 61 among top 100 running events in the country. The event's promotion was done at various places including India's Independence Mela, Fremont and on facebook and runners websites.

Weekly conference calls on Wednesdays followed by fun-filled meetings with pot-luck dinners on Fridays were started with to chalk out the various details for the event. Manjula and Balaji, the overall coordinators of the event, made strategic decisions to ensure that this event could surpass the previous ones in terms of success and popularity. E-mails were sent to volunteers of SEF requesting them to post iWalk 2008 flyers at various companies/public places and encouraging them to form work teams for the event. By reaching out to partner non-profit organizations for support, SEF was ready to make iWalk a huge success. Suniti and Raj, other enthusiastic coordinators for the event, put in their best efforts to promote the event through SEF's website and facebook/myspace links. Raj was also the coordinator for publicity and event's day management. The event was gaining a lot of attention through ads in radio stations and newspapers such as the SJ Mercury News.

As August approached, coordinators for various tasks started on their assigned roles with full fervor. Anu, the registration activity coordinator was checking day-by-day progress of the registration activities. Manjula kept coming up with innovative ideas such as group discounts during the conference calls to boost the registration numbers. As many as 500 registrations were received before the event and with many participants registering on-site, the number soared to 870.

On the day of the event, volunteers reached the park early in the morning to help Mohit, the set-up coordinator. The on-site registration was very busy with many registrants, but Anu and her group managed all of it with success. Sahithya and her

team were in charge of complimentary food and beverages on the site and were happy to see a lot of people enjoying the snacks. The kids enjoyed all the carnival style activities set up by Rekha and others. The beautiful weather made the event even more charming. Rajeev, Raghu, Vaishnav and JP



coordinated with other volunteers to ensure that everything went smoothly. The marathon concluded successfully followed by a prize distribution ceremony. Muraliji and Jayaram Komati Ji praised each participant for joining the walk for a noble cause and awarded the trophies to the winners. With each passing year, this event has attracted more enthusiastic volunteers and spirited participants and keeps getting better. We thank all volunteers for making Iwalk 2008 a huge success.

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visitors from SEF stayed with Asvini Patel (Divyogi's brother) and his family and friends. Some of us stayed in PM's house (PM stands for Prafulbhai) and they made us all feel like prime ministers. Our uncle Mr. P. Balasubramanian and I stayed in a neighbor's house. PM's family and friends hosted a wonderful dinner followed by standup comedy by well known artist, Dinkar Mehta. They made us feel so much at home, that going back to Anand to visit the hospital is an event we are all looking forward to.

The Hospital looks great inside and out. The main board in front is the best we have seen so far- with glimmering gold lettering on black board displaying the names of our partners in service: AAHOA, CLiPS Bay Area, Harshadbhai & Nayna Uka, Nilaxi & Ajit Patel. Once you walk in, the hospital looks very similar to Shimoga with one difference: the waiting hall has essentially been covered with Wall of Founder boards- it looks beautiful.

All the focus Gujarat volunteers, the donors, the supporters and the entire SEF team should be extremely proud of what has been accomplished- it is a state-of-the-art hospital, wonderfully constructed, will serve both paying patients and the free patients. The SEWA organization has already identified many patients for the outreach programs. Please go visit the hospital and see it in its full glory- it is an event that will remain in your memories for ever.

Nritya Sangam 2008 in Texas

Nine dedicated volunteers of Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF) undertook the massive task of planning a dance and music event, "Nritya Sangam 2008", in Dallas, Texas on the 11th of October. Nritya Sangam comprised of performances by 18 dance troupes with 100 participants, enthralled the audience with Bharathanatyam, Kuchipudi, Bhangra, Bollywood and Instrumental music. Jagath, responsible for theatre set-up, showed excellent leadership skills as his team coordinated sound, audio and lighting for 18 different groups within a short span of three hours. All the performers were satisfied by the attention given to their needs. The Bhangra and the Bollywood fusion dance by grad students from the University of Texas, Dallas received a lot of applause from the audience. Volunteers manned the booth, managed crowds, took pictures of the event and spread awareness about Sankara's activities. "Each one of the Sankara volunteers was very accommodating and polite!" said a member of the audience, and that reveals the secret behind the event's success.



Jab We Dance in Seattle

The show was sold out two days before the show, but that didn't stop 70 additional people from lining up at the box office for tickets. Despite a limited number of volunteers, the show with 400 members in the audience was a big success. With only a month's time for planning, SEF volunteers Sharath, Sankar, Sathish, Hari, Ronak, Kireeti, Amar, Maruthi, Sreedhar, Raju, Krishna, Kundana, Srivalli, Moin, Bonny, Lavanya, Paresh, Suditi Simantnee, Srivalli and Mikin laid out a very professional action plan involving weekly status meetings and managing event day tasks. The event comprised of dance sequences and a Bollywood Drama. Many sequences were performed by a local team, Pratidhwani. The volunteers also spread awareness about SEF's activities during the show. SEF's volunteers are determined to make this event even larger next year. If you happen to be in Seattle around the same time next year, don't miss the SEF Seattle's most eagerly awaited show "Jab We Dance"!

Tollywood Thriller in Seattle

Tollywood Thriller, a musical event, mesmerized its audience in Seattle this year on 26th July. The SEF volunteers' dedication helped make this show more successful than last year's. Many members from the Washington Telugu Samithi (WATS) helped SEF members supported SEF in promoting the event.

On the day of the event, volunteers assisted the eSvara team in setting up the stage and the sound system. Volunteers meticulously managed all the activities including food serving and booth management during the show. The audience warmly received a short movie on SEF created by Hari. Suveen worked diligently with eSvara team, dancers and MCs behind the stage to ensure a professional presentation. Ravi, the MC kept the crowd entertained with his wit. The song dedications and auctions kept the audience engaged throughout the show that ended at 11 PM. There are many other dedicated volunteers who took time out of their busy schedule and participated in various activities. The event was very popular and next year's venue might be bigger than this year's. And the day is not far when SEF Seattle's Tollywood Thriller would be one of the most sought after events of the year in SEF's US Chapter!



Hospital Management Asia 2008

Sankara Eye Center won the Asian Hospital Management Award 2008 for its "Diabetic Retinopathy Project for Rural India". The mission of the Asia Hospital Management awards is to recognize and promote best hospital management practices in the region. The community service project is awarded to the project that made a difference in the improvement of healthcare in the community. The project selected for a specific award is an outstanding one that deserves recognition and may serve as a benchmark for other hospitals.

Diabetic retinopathy, a common complication of diabetes, is a largely preventable condition. The ultimate goal of the project is to make the early diagnosis of diabetes retinopathy more accessible to the rural inhabitants of India in order to prevent needless vision loss and blindness.

The award was presented to Sankara Eye Center at the Hospital Management Asia conference held at Manila, Philippines in September 2008. <http://www.hospitalmanagementasia.com>

SEF Dandia 2008 - named Best Dandia of the Year

Sankara Eye Foundation continued to amaze their patrons with more sold out events this year on Oct 4th and Oct 11th. For the past five years there have been huge crowds dressed in vibrant colors at the Dandia events organized by Sankara in the Santa Clara Convention center. All praise goes to the SEF volunteers for such huge, well organized events.

The Dandia events were a celebration of Navratri (a nine day festival in honor of the Goddess Durga) and hosted around 3,500 people of the bay area community at the convention halls. It was a joyful gathering for friends, families and community members to participate in the dance rituals called garba and dandia raas. "A Garba" is a social dance done in a meditative circular movement and spiraling around the center by clapping of the hands. "Dandia Raas" is a folk art form of dance performed by using a pair of wooden sticks striking to a rhythmic beat of the drums. The audience, young and old alike, dressed in dazzling attires, danced gracefully. The crowd seemed to enjoy the event, laughing, dancing and celebrating. The singer, Preetysha from Los Angeles, also known as the Indian Nightingale of California, mesmerized the audience for five hours and left the audience asking for more. Preetysha released her album, Shree Jai Ambe a compilation of dandia and garba songs during the event and pledged 25% of its proceeds towards SEF.

The event was also a fundraiser for the Sankara Eye Foundation. The event raised more than \$70,000 in donations. The year 2008 has been a significant milestone for Sankara Eye Foundation with three hospitals being inaugurated in the year. The first one opened in Bangalore early this year. The management committee took the opportunity to thank the community for its support and extended an invitation to the inauguration of the Shimoga hospital on Oct 12th and the Anand hospital in Gujarat on Oct 19th. The Dandia event also launched the next hospital projects for Sankara Eye



Foundation. Pankaj Patel, Senior VP, Cisco Systems announced the beginning of the Uttar Pradesh hospital project while Anil Lal, the ardent supporter and long time SEF donor announced the Punjab hospital project and made donations of \$25,000 towards the pediatric ward at the Punjab hospital.

The sponsors of the show included Excellor, PNG jewelers, Zee TV, Kingfisher airlines, Oneplace, Axiom Estates and Bhindi Jewelers who raffled off jewellery worth \$1,500. For more information about SEF and the inauguration webcast please visit www.giftofvision.org

BATA Cricket

Aishwarya Shyam Sundar

Another beautiful weekend celebrating the result of our SEF volunteers' vivacity – the 5th Annual BATA Cup Cricket tournament was held on Aug 9th and 10th, 2008, under the auspices of BATA (Bay Area Telugu Association) in Milpitas, CA. The event wielded a dynamic and enthusiastic bunch of 180 cricketers – 6 players in each team (totally, 30 teams) – comprising both men and women. The BATA organizers had executed every detail diligently and smoothly and the association marked its grace by donating a generous sum of \$2000 to SEF.



The tournament mandated the use of tennis balls and the order of play was 6-overs-6-aside. The players were armed and thorough in their play, and the spectators surrendered to many moments of anxiety. Agog with nail-biting moments around both the women's as well as the men's teams, the whole tournament was pivotal in bringing forth the best of the best in everyone. The spectators provided unstinting encouragement to the teams. Among the women's teams, the winners were the 'Angels' and the runners-up 'Rangeela', with the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the series being Lakshmi. Among the men's teams, the winners were Champs and the runners-up Neme6, with the MVP of the Finals, Anand (Champs), and the MVP of the Series, Abhi Nandan (Champs). The women's segment was replete with vim and vigor till the last ball was played. The men's segment was equally apportioned – tense, yet spirited.

Several board members from the main sponsors of this tournament – DPMG (Deccan Pacific Medical Group) and Western Union – were part of the post-event prize-giving ceremony, in addition to the BATA board. Votes of thanks followed, during which time Venkat Madipatti and Murali Krishnamurthy of SEF were present to humbly thank BATA for choosing SEF as their donee.

Over the course of the past 5 years, this tournament has been magnanimously mobbed by cricket enthusiasts all over the bay. Among the many challenges in organizing this event was the ability to consolidate the playing schedule to two days of the weekend as well as limiting each team to 6 players. It was delightful to see the spectators cheer enthusiastically for their home teams. While funds from this event will change many lives for the better, the players and volunteers had a great time at the event. It's refreshing to see an organization raise funds in fun and creative ways.

On the whole, this was a high-octane event – energetic as well as fulfilling!

Retinoblastoma

Dr. Nikki Rai

Recently life threw me a curve ball in which I was to move from the glamorous city life of New York to the unfamiliar territory of Bangalore. Although I was terrified of this move I had some consolation knowing that my free time could be devoted to Sankara. After our volunteer meeting in California, one could not let the energy go unused. Upon settling in Bangalore I paid a visit to Sankara Eye Hospital Bangalore. I met with Dr Ravishankar, a Retinal Specialist who has since transferred to the new facility in Shimoga. He was kind enough to give me my first tour of a Sankara facility. My jaw dropped as I walked through the facility as it truly was world class...clean, organized and professional staff throughout. What I marveled at most was that the paying and non paying side looked no different which meant that all patients are treated with the utmost respect and care. The purpose of this article is not to describe the hospital as many have visited and seen that the Sankara standards are superior and replicable across all hospitals. However it is to illustrate with my experience how important our job is as volunteers.

As we continued my tour through the facility I heard the echoes of a baby crying. We walked towards the cries and opened the door to a room and saw three hospital personnel hovering over a baby. When asked what the problem was we learned that the baby was getting prepared for a chemotherapy session. The baby's diagnosis was Retinoblastoma. The definition of this disease is basically cancer of the eye, more specifically the retina which can be thought of as the "movie screen" of our eye. Retinoblastoma is the most common primary intraocular tumor in children, with an incidence of 1 in 15,000 live births. The estimated incidence of retinoblastoma in India is about 2,000 a year. I left the hospital that day amazed that Sankara is not only helping the world see via glasses and cataract surgeries but they

have branched out to combat one of the most horrible diseases of our time; cancer.

The following week I spent some more time in the hospital and another baby crossed my path. Baby Asma (4y/o)

was walking around the hospital with her head down, eyes swollen shut and hands held on both sides by her parents. I learnt that baby Asma was diagnosed with bilateral (both eyes) advanced Retinoblastoma. There are two forms of the disease; a genetic, heritable variant and a non-genetic, non-inheritable form. Approximately 55% of children with Retinoblastoma have the non-genetic form. The disease in her case was the genetic form since her father had lost an eye and her sibling had already passed away due to the same condition. Baby Asma's condition was known to the parents two years ago as they had consulted another hospital but they could not afford the medical treatment at the time. Finally they were referred to Sankara where she presented on Oct 7, 2008. She was very fragile, unable to walk or move herself as she was in an advanced stage. The next day Baby Asma began chemotherapy. On October 31 was when I met her and according to the staff she was in much better shape than her previous visit to the hospital; walking and eating herself.

I stumbled upon another such case worth mentioning, Baby Sanjana, only 2 years old. In her case her right eye was worse than her left but still her diagnosis was also bilateral retinoblastoma. She presented with leukocoria (white pupil reflex) which is a common presentation of the disease. This child was extremely cute, talkative, and alert but not seeing much of the world. As she bid me "tata", I felt sad but thankful at the same time that at least she was here in the hospital and there was treatment available to her. Prompt medical attention and aggressive therapy are important for the best prognosis.

So while children in North America enjoy their Halloween "loot", Baby Asma and Baby Sanjana are being prepped for their chemotherapy sessions. The ocular oncology ward is a new branch at SEH Bangalore. Apart from the Bangalore centre there are only 4 other known centers specializing in ocular tumors across India! This fact alone demonstrates the importance of the hospital. Moreover SEH Bangalore is looking to expand the Oncology ward and also begin radiotherapy and phototherapy (alternative treatments used in cancer cases).

As our volunteers across the USA gear up for the festive holiday season, please be reminded of how important our effort is. Baby Asma and Baby Sanjana's cases are examples of how a small SEF booth in the local temple one Sunday afternoon can make such a difference! We are not only saving vision but saving lives! As I am not there to fight the cause with you all on that side of the world, I encourage you to reach out and create awareness of our cause. Help us to expand the Oncology ward in Bangalore so that we may continue to battle this dreadful disease cancer. GO SEF GO!



Not Your Average High School Student

Naman Barman

School's Out! Like many excited teenagers, Krishna Kalpathy decided to make some money over the summer by getting a job. However, about ten days into the job, he developed a corneal ulcer in his left eye.

"The pain was unbearable and I was in bed for a few days," said Kalpathy.



The condition grew worse, as he had to apply 4 different kinds of drops every half hour. The ulcer soon occluded his vision and left a scar even after it healed. Luckily, the scar formed just above his field of vision, but it still took about two months for the vision to fully come back. After all this trauma, Kalpathy knew exactly what he wanted to do.

"I decided to donate my paycheck from the summer to Sankara because I was thankful for my good fortune. I figured that the \$1500 would be put to much better use by Sankara than buying an iPod or other goods."

His message: "Anyone can help."

Kalpathy's small step forward has impacted the lives of many helpless victims of poverty. Because of his donation, vision is no longer a dream for many people in India. The gift of vision is truly the best gift anyone can give. Kalpathy encourages everyone to give back to those less fortunate, and he has definitely proven that even a teenager can impact society.

He is definitely not your average high school student!

Sankara: A Gift of Vision for My Life

Sejal Dave - Regional Director (Tri-State) Fundraising and Volunteer Management

On a Saturday morning, in January 2001, I was watching television with my family and saw a commercial for Sankara. The black and white photograph of a visually handicapped child stirred up an overwhelming sense of compassion and responsibility within me. At the time, I was 17 years old and training to be a Kathak dancer. I could not get that image out of my mind and so I decided to organize a show with my friends and to donate the proceeds to SEF. Little did I know, that soon SEF was to become my lifeline. Three months into the planning of the show, I suddenly and tragically lost my father. The ground beneath me seemed to slip away but my sense of responsibility and my commitment to SEF was the only thing that I could hold onto and so I said, "The show must go on!" On a Thursday night in South Brunswick, NJ, \$40,000 was raised for SEF and donated in memory of my father. That was the beginning of a long and loving relationship with SEF.

Many people often say that we as volunteers do so much for SEF, but I must state otherwise. SEF has done a lot for me. It has given me outlet to contribute to the eradication of curable blindness in India, a stage upon which I can fulfill that sense of responsibility that I have as a member of the South Asian Community, and most importantly, it has given me peace of mind.

Over the last 7 years, I have graduated Summa Cum Laude from Rutgers University with two Bachelors degrees in Public Health and Women's & Gender Studies. In 2007, I graduated with highest honors from the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey with a Masters Degree in Public Health. Sankara has enabled me to identify my true passion- Healthcare. I believe that quality healthcare is a basic human right. As such, I have now committed myself full-time to SEF's Vision 20/20 by 2020, and assumed my current position with the organization. I am blessed that my passion is my profession.

I want to renew people's belief in grassroots movements and the power of every person to significantly contribute to the eradication of curable blindness in India. Over the next few years, I hope to find a place for SEF in the hearts and minds of people across the country, irrespective of class, race, religion, age, or gender. I genuinely feel that SEF volunteers are the true driving force behind its mission and respect each one of them for the unique talents and passion that they bring for SEF. I thank SEF, today and always, for giving me the Gift Of Vision for my life and making it an enriched and blessed journey.

Candy Wallas

Sankar T



Meet the Irvine candy wallahs.

Nishal Uka, Luv Buch, Kush Buch, Akhil Gosai and Niraj Gosai. They are students of the Pioneer Middle school in Irvine.

At any event organised by SEF in Southern California you can notice the stall selling soft drinks and candy. It is entirely managed by them. So far they have kept these stalls during the last four SEF events in LA and have generated more than a thousand dollars for SEF.

Sankara Eye Hospital A Place of Hope

Shankar Iyer – A write-up of my volunteer work at Sankara Eye Hospital, Summer 2008

My parents have been volunteering since the year 2000, and so I got involved. My mom always tells me, "A hand that gives is better than a lip that prays." Now, my whole family volunteers at the various fund raisers for Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF) in the US.

I only knew one side of SEF until July 21, 2008. All I really knew well about SEF is the money raising part. My parents wanted me to experience first hand what difference I am making in the community. My ambition is to become a doctor, so I saw this as a really good opportunity to see how doctors work.

The staff was all helpful in many ways like translating what I said to patients or showing me around the hospital. I had not studied optometry before beginning to volunteer, so I thought I wouldn't really get what I was doing. After going through part of my day, I felt comfortable. There were so many new tools and equipment as well as many words I'd never heard of. It took me most of the week to understand everything.

I worked at 7 stations total for the 5 days I worked at the hospital. They were preparing admission tickets, passing out lenses for cataract surgery, recording blood pressure, passing out lunch, identifying fit and unfit patients, labeling the dispatch summaries, and dispatching patients. For the admission tickets, I wrote down the patient number, and I stamped down the dates and name of the village the patients are coming from. For passing out lenses, I kept track of all the lenses that were given, what number and day, and I also had to write down the number of the patient onto the lens box that I was handing to the patient. I also helped send the patients inside to the operation theatre waiting room where I passed out the lenses. For recording blood pressure, I had to write down several things for each patient, the name of the nurse that was finding the blood pressure of the patient, recording the date and time, mmhgs (systolic and diastolic), and beats per minute. In the hospital, I had an extremely new experience, serving food. This was intense because all the patients kept calling for me, telling me to get something for them. Another task I helped with was identifying fit and unfit patients by giving the fit patients green tokens and the unfit ones red tokens. I also labeled the dispatch sheet summaries with the name of the doctor that worked with the patient. Lastly, I dispatched patients by giving them their summaries, their admission tickets, and their eye drops.

There were some funny parts in my experience volunteering at the hospital. Many patients were really surprised because they saw me everywhere because I was everywhere. Also, one or two patients thought I was a doctor when I did not even

finish high school. One patient basically said, "Oh my, this boy is going to be operating on me!" This was extremely funny to me as well.

During my time volunteering at the Sankara Eye Hospital, I interviewed several patients to find out how their lives are. All of the non-paying patients are from small villages and it is important for me to understand their stories because then I would really understand what kind of people SEF is helping. One of the patients I interviewed was a girl I met in the pediatrics ward, who was exactly my age. Her name is Mangamma. As my interview with Mangamma progressed, the other kids gathered around us with smiles as they got drawn into our conversation. Mangamma began to tell her story. Mangamma had lost her eyesight at the age of 13, not too long ago. The main cause was Diabetics Mematies (DM). She also had the fever and the chicken pox. It was really sad that she had lost her eyesight because of diabetes at such a young age. She was sent home with medication and will be brought back to the hospital for evaluation after her diabetes is under control. She wants to have a career as a teacher when she grows up.

Volunteering at the hospital was a really enjoyable learning experience. Serving the less fortunate makes me aware of my good fortune. The week I spent at the hospital is one of the most memorable times of my life. I hope to spread the word to my friends so they can help out and make SEF's goal of 20/20 by the year 2020 a reality.



Company Giving

Uma Suresh

As this newsletter rolls out, hopefully we all can shake off the financial let downs of the past few months and look forward to a better, year 2009, in the not so distant future. With the American elections just behind us, we all can feel the optimism in the air and the buzz words are going to be “change”, “hope” and an ensuing “peace” for the world. At SEF we of course have had a lot of reasons to celebrate with the inaugurations of two new hospitals in Shimoga and Anand and the next two in Punjab and U. P. ready to go next!

Yes, that brings us to our next goal – fundraising for, these two hospitals and more so for those numerous pairs of eyes waiting to see the light of the day, or just the sight of their own family, in some remote village in U. P. /Punjab.

We all understand that we at SEF and many other such non profit organizations are going for the same pie (or donors!) and wonder what to do when the pie seems to be shrinking in these difficult financial times. Well, we just go back to basics and recollect what many of our Board members and particularly Murali has time and again reiterated – we achieve the big goals through the individual efforts when united under the common cause of “Vision 20/20 by Year 2020.” Folks let’s think traditional and out of the box .Creativity is the name of the game. Let’s think from encouraging and soliciting pledges for special occasions to corporate matching programs. Your ideas are as unique as you are!

So, let’s think about,

Corporate matching program that help double the returns for your individual contributions/gift.

Brown bag lunch sessions at work places where we can put out some colorful SEF fliers and maybe have someone talk about our hospitals etc.

Put a little notice board in the lunch room and pin a calendar with individual contributions and maybe a countdown to an amount that your group/team has adopted to achieve over a given period of time.

Network over a nice cup of coffee/tea with other SEF volunteers who are already a part of corporate programs such as in Intel, Micro-soft, Google, HP, Cisco, etc. I am just naming the very obvious ones here, please look beyond these.

Communicate with Board members if you learn of “giving” programs in your company that needs planning and protocol to proceed.

Silent auctions at company events like, a holiday lunch/dinner.

E-fliers and small info table near the coffee machine with your contact information.

A Christmas tree with little “gifts of vision” that employees can adopt for \$30 and more. Remember holidays bring with them a sense of giving.

The list my friends can, go on and be simple yet as unique as you. You will never know until you ask and talk about it at work, in your social circle, at your country club, places of worship or with your golf buddies! Amazingly, opportunities pop up at the most unusual and unexpected places – but the key is to talk about it and ask. Think about it what do we have to loose here, nothing because there could be only two answers. “No”, which is okay because that is where we started or a “yes/maybe” which is great because that is where we are all headed. So towards many such positive “YES” and with “HOPE” in our hearts let’s move towards a new year to achieve the “CHANGE” that we all want and aspire as individuals and as a team!

To discuss any opportunity feel free to contact Hema Chamraj at hchamraj@yahoo.com.

Teenager finds independence



17 year Kartikeyan had defective vision since birth. His parents being daily wage workers encouraged him to go to school for the free meal being provided by the government. As a part of the Comprehensive pediatric eye care services being provided at coimbatore, he was identified, counseled and was provided vocational training.

Karthikeyan has started making phenyl, soap oil and soap powder and his mother helps him in marketing the same. They have a few fixed clients through their contacts and now he is able to earn about Rs. 900 to Rs. 1200 per month. He is continuing his school education and this economic independence has given him the confidence to face life cheerfully.

SEF - AKKA

SEF and AKKA forged a partnership to raise awareness and funds for Sankara Eye Hospitals in Karnataka, to give the gift of vision to thousands of our visually impaired brethren in the state of Karnataka, which ranks 3rd in the country for the number of blind people. AKKA became a partner-in-service for the Bangalore hospital by raising \$100K in funds at the 2006 convention. The SEF team took the opportunity to thank the AKKA audience gathered in Chicago for the AKKA 2008 convention and to appeal for donations towards the Shimoga hospital.



Vasanthram pitched in the rest to create matching funds of \$102,500. This matching funds made a huge difference by encouraging the donors at the AKKA convention to support SEF.

Among the many promotion items used at this event was a huge banner of 10x10ft at the entrance of the booth area. It was a big highlight at the convention as it provided a bird's eye view of the Bangalore hospital to the donors; the banner also had messages thanking the donors and requested support from all for the Shimoga hospital. During the pre-event planning, the team brainstormed on different ways to reach out to people, including placing marketing collateral in the registration bags, posting advertisements and articles in convention magazines, video appeals etc. On the day of the event, the volunteers spread out to market SEF's cause to the donors. SEF set up several booths, created video based appeals and also had an on-stage appeal by Mr. Murali Krishnamurthy, SEF Chairman. SEF also sponsored a comedy stage play called "Desi Dilemma" by Alamelu Iyengar from the bay area in an effort to promote SEF's cause. The planning and execution went smoothly and helped raise an additional \$80,000 in donations and pledges towards the Shimoga hospital.

We are grateful to the AKKA organization for providing us the opportunity to promote SEF to the AKKA audience. The Shimoga Hospital was inaugurated by Minister of Medical Education Mr. Ramachandra Gowda on Oct 12th and AKKA's name has now graced the board on the hospital premises. This board displays the names of partners-in-service who played a key role in making the hospital a reality. This partnership has already achieved many milestones and SEF hopes to continue this partnership to benefit the visually handicapped in Karnataka.

EnVISIONING the Future

South Asian Pharmaceutical Council & SEF
- Neelima Rao

SAPC (South Asian Pharmaceutical Council) and SEF (Sankara Eye Foundation) joined hands and held a Fundraiser event on October 17, 2008 at the Jasna Polana, a picture perfect TPC Golf Course nestled in the beautiful surroundings of Princeton. Added by the beauty of the fall foliage, the breathtaking venue, ornamented with antique tapestries, original Empire furniture and paintings by the 18th and 19th century European artists, coupled with travertine wainscoting, antique flooring marble mantelpieces and a reflecting pool, made Jasna Polana an exquisite venue for the SAPC-SEF Fundraiser that featured a silent and a live auction.

The evening was kicked off by Mark Stevens, the president of South Asian Pharmaceutical Council, who introduced the audience to the mission, vision and the three pillars of the organization. Mr. Stevens went on further to share the organization's commitment to making a difference in the community by improving healthcare access for people. Mark's words were complimented by a brief speech by T T Bhat, a Tri-state volunteer for Sankara Eye Foundation. Emphasizing on the phenomenal growth that Sankara Eye Foundation has made so far, Mr. Bhat inspired many in the audience to contribute to this laudable and worthy cause to achieve its vision of 20/20 by the year 2020. Making a perfect segue into the evening, the event marked a SEF video on the basic "right to sight" that many unfortunate people in this world currently do not enjoy.

The evening was graced by Miss India World 2007, Sarah-Jane Dias, who left the audience speechless, as she shared a part of her personal story about blindness in her own family. Sarah-Jane put forth some alarming statistics of number of blind people in India and highlighted that a large percent

Continued on Page 14



Mark Stevens (Founder of SAPC) and Vikram Bhat (SEF Tri-State Volunteer)

Did you know that contributions to SEF are 100% Tax deductible !!!

SEF would like to wish you and your family a happy Holiday season and a very prosperous New Year. As the giving season starts, many of our donors plan their charitable contributions for the current tax year. All contributions to SEF are 100% tax deductible, as permitted under IRS Section 501© (3). While cash donations are the most popular, one can also contribute in-kind by donating stocks, used Vehicle and new Computer hardware and software. In-kind donations are also tax deductible to their fullest fair value as permitted by IRS.

By giving the gift of vision, make this Giving season a memorable one for you and for someone less fortunate, as well.

Continued from page 13

percentage of this blindness is curable. She acknowledged Sankara for their extra-ordinary mission that they have been carrying out, as she emphasized her faith by asking the audience to join her in the mantra of changing "Eye Care to We Care"

As the evening progressed, many were provided with an opportunity to bid on several beautiful pieces of artwork and several other items of interest, as part of the silent auction. The venue, with its beautiful antique floors, fireplaces, tapestries and a suspended travertine stone staircase made a perfect place to display the artwork, collectibles and memorabilia. The event featured a crisp "live auction" section that was brought to life by the Master of the ceremonies and the auctioneer for the evening, Tom Cusack, as he got the crowd engaged and cracking with some novel stories woven around everything from politics to sports to culture. Many walked away from the event as the proud owners of items such as a designer Satya Paul saree, an original autographed NFL MVP Tom Brady football, a handmade Portugal silver choker, a game of golf at Jasna Polana, a beautifully matted and framed Micky Mantle scorecard with an autographed picture and many such proud possessions.

The evening also featured a traditional Bharatanatyam dance by the Natya Dance Theatre of West Windsor New Jersey. The unique dance performance enthralled the audience with a theme choreographed around a Shloka that highlights the five elements and senses and their interplay to create the essence and experience of life.

Both SAPC and SEF are volunteer driven organizations and it was applauding to see the teams thrust themselves into making this Gala a huge success. A great energy and enthusiasm existed among all attendees. Everyone was filled with a feeling of having spent an evening well for a worthy cause, as the gala was a true celebration of the right to sight. Thanks to the support of the guests and volunteers, the gala was fully sold out through sponsorship and individual ticket sales. Response to both the Silent and Live auction was very encouraging. This will go a long way towards fulfilling the vision of the two organizations and stop people from being needlessly blind in India!

About SAPC

South Asian Pharmaceutical Council is a 501(c)(6) tax exempt organization with a mission to provide forum for mentoring and networking to professionals in the Pharmaceutical industry. The organization sponsors meetings and conferences in the industry and supports initiatives aimed at improving healthcare education and access in South Asia. To learn more about South Asian Pharmaceutical Council, please visit www.sapcusa.org
Event pictures courtesy: Neelesh Jethwa (www.njphotography.biz)

Our Progress

Sankara Eye Care Institutions - India	
Summary - Till Sep'08	
Camp Conducted	7243
Population Covered	38171415
Outpatient Seen	1373396
Surgeries Performed	459848

Unit - Wise Details since inception						
Unit	Coimbatore	Krishnankoil	Guntur	Silvassa	Bangalore	Total
From & To	April '90 - Sep '08	April '04 - Sep '08	April '04 - Sep '08	Sep 07 to Sep 08	May '08 - Sep '08	
Camp Conducted	5667	1196	287	100	93	7243
Population Covered	34764150	1787806	1429459		190000	38171415
Outpatient Seen	1116265	127393	119667		10071	1373396
Surgeries Performed	367450	39808	49520	2913	3070	459848

Unit - Wise Details (Jan to Sep 08)							
Unit	Coimbatore	Krishnankoil	Guntur	Silvassa	Pammal	Bangalore	Total
Surgeries Performed	28236	9148	13106	2204	6500	3070	62264



Sankara Eye Foundation Donation Form
501(C)(3) Non Profit Organization Tax ID 77-6141976
1-866-SANKARA
www.giftofvision.org

NL1108

Join the mission to eradicate curable blindness in India

Donate for Surgeries or Donate for Hospital Construction

Cataract Surgeries & Other Services

- \$30** Open an Eye (One Cataract Surgery)
- \$90** Open 3 Eyes (3 Cataract Surgeries)
- \$200** Food for patients for one day
- \$360** Open an Eye a Month for one Year (12 Cataract Surgeries)
- \$1,500** Open an Eye a Week for one Year (50 Cataract Surgeries)
- \$3,000** Open 100 Eyes for a Whole Day (100 cataract surgeries)
- Other** \$

Want surgery done on a special day like Birthday, Anniversary? Please let us know and where possible, we will try and accommodate your request. **Special Request:**

Capital Projects - Hospital Construction

- \$1,000** Become a **Founding Donor** and get your name inscribed on the **"Wall of Founders"**
Visit www.giftofvision.org for latest information on each capital project.
\$5,000 and up --- Sponsor a room in the hospital of your choice.
- \$5,000+** Become a **Facility Donor** and **Sponsor a room** --- get a **Personal Plaque**
\$ Facility:
- Other** \$

Choose the Capital Project

- Punjab (New!)** **Uttar Pradesh (New!)** **Shimoga, Karnataka**
- Bangalore** **Guntur, Andhra Pradesh** **Anand, Gujarat**

Special request - eg in name of -- We will contact you to get details for the names:

Payment:

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) _____ Exp Date: ____/____/____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

My employer will match my donation. Employer: _____

**I would like
to volunteer**

Online Donation: www.giftofvision.org **Car Donation:** email to cargiving@yahoo.com
Stocks, Payroll, Bank Transaction etc: contact SEF at info@giftofvision.org or 1866-726-5272

How did you hear about us? Newspaper/Magazine: ____ Online: ____ TV: ____ Other: _____

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

Sankara Eye Foundation, USA
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Milpitas, CA 95035

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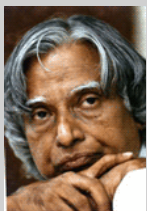
A "Real Diwali" - Naushik Desai

Mrs. Kanne Guttemma, 60 years old, lives in Gogulapalli, a remote village located on dry land and hilly area with no proper amenities. It is around 200 km away from Guntur, Andhra Pradesh. She lives in a small hut with her second son, who is a tractor driver, daughter-in-law and two children. Due to the harsh terrain, he works only few days a month and his earnings are meagre. Guttemma helped the family with her earnings. Now due to decreased vision, she is unable to get out of the house and has stopped working.

Earlier this October, Guttemma's son brought her to the Sankara camp at Kani-giri. The doctors determined that the diminishing vision was due to cataract and advised surgery on her left eye. Guttemma got very scared and did not want to come to the hospital for surgery because she believed that God was punishing her for sins she committed intentionally or unintentionally and that she was deemed to live with poor eyesight. However, the doctors at SEF persisted and with some counseling, convinced her to undergo the surgery.

She was admitted on 28th of October and operated on the next day. Her post-operative vision was 6/9 unaided. She was surprised to see so clearly again.

It is a real festival of lights for Guttemma. With her sparkling eyes she said "I can go to the fields and help my family and I am not dependent on anybody." We rejoice with her on this "Diwali".



"I have seen good service in hospitals, and I have seen devotion in temples and religious centers, but here in SES, I see service combined with devotion."

Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam
Former President of India

