



CITY NEWS

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Atlanta Fundraiser For Sankara Nethralya OM Trust



BY JYOTHSNA HEGDE

In an attempt to raise funds for Sankara Nethralaya of Chennai, the Sankara Nethralya OM Trust (Ophthalmic Mission Trust) based in Rockville, Maryland organized a concert by P.Unnikrishnan on May 23rd at The Hindu Temple of Atlanta. Unnikrishnan was accompanied by Embar Kannan playing the violin and Arjun Kumar on the mridangam.

The concert began with a varnam in Abhogi; followed by Deva Deva in Maya Malava Gowla, a composition of Swathi Tirunal Maharaj. Unnikrishnan wowed his audience with Bantu Reethi in Hamsanadu; Ramachandra in Vasantha; Purushottamudaveevu in Revagupti; Ragam, Tanam, Pallavi in Shanmukha Priya and Ragamalika, Rama Rama in Thillang, Krishna Nee beganE Baro in Yaman, PivarE Rama Rasam in Ahiri Bhairavi , Brahma mokkatE in Bhowli and a few more after thaniyavarthanam on mridangam.

The event in Atlanta was organized by a group of volunteers headed by Dr. Seshu Sarma, a trustee of SN OM Trust. The core group of volunteers include: Ashok Kumar, Sundar Sundararaghavan, Uma Narayan, Ram Mallappa, Bob Nayar and Madhu Iyer. With around 350 attendees, the concert raised over \$ 18,000. Mrs. Bhavini and Rajan, Mr. Sankar Subramanian, Prasad Tata, and the Sarma family fund were major donors for this event. Anyone willing to help with Atlanta fundraisers may contact Dr. Seshu Sarma at seshusarma@yahoo.com

Sankara Nethralaya(SN), a not-for-profit charitable hospital provides world-class tertiary eye care in India equipped with over 80 eye care professionals examining around 1,500 patients and performing approximately 125 surgeries a day. The community service initiatives include conducting eye-camps in rural areas, conducting free surgeries to those with an income of less than Rs. 3,500 per month, through the Jaslok Community Ophthalmic Centre and taking mobile tele-ophthalmology benefits to the door steps of the poor in rural India.

The SN website says that about 50 % of the Out-Patient Department and 35 % of the surgeries are done free of cost to the underprivileged and donations received have helped cater to the medical and post-operative needs of indigent patients. SN also offers an Annual Complimentary Courtesy Master Eye Check-up aimed for Indians abroad, who are concerned about the visual health of their old parents and dear ones living in India.