

eyelights

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Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust Inc.,

**Sankara Nethralaya
OM Trust, USA**

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Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust Inc

*Small Acts
of
Kindness*



Billy Cardine goes to India!

When words failed, it was tears that spoke eloquently!



It had rained heavily all night but the depression in the bay had not apparently weakened and the rains were lashing out with unabated vigour much after sunrise.

The scene inside the Jaslok Community Ophthalmic Centre the community services wing of Sankara Nethralaya offering free treatment to indigent patients however painted a very different picture. The clock at the front office showed 8:00 am and inhospitable weather notwithstanding poor and needy patients had assembled in good numbers.

Among the patients assembled at the waiting lounge was little Krishnamurthy a nervous little lad of about 7 years standing with his hand firmly clasping his father's hand, he seemed to be in a state of shock and fear, unsure of his movements without help from his father. The front office executive at JCOC took a quick look at the letter from the government hospital; it described the case as Traumatic Cataract Left eye with doubtful Post Capsule.

After several levels of in-depth evaluation the team of doctors examining him concluded that it was a case of Cataract requiring Anterior Vitrectomy and implanting of Foldable intraocular lens under local anaesthesia. Surgery was successfully carried out by a senior surgeon and vision in his left eye fully restored. To Anand, the boy's father it was a moment of ecstasy and joy.

His attempts to express his gratitude to the doctors and staff at JCOC failed. His voice was choked and the tears ran down his cheek just as it did a fortnight back, it was just that this time around they were tears of joy!

Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust

Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust, Inc., a registered non-profit organization in the USA, was established in 1988 with the sole purpose of supporting Sankara Nethralaya, a charitable, not-for-profit ophthalmic hospital, in Chennai, India.

SN OM Trust consists of a group of like minded individuals who support Sankara Nethralaya's community programs. Over the years, SN OM Trust has successfully helped raise substantial funds which have provided vision to thousands of under privileged people in India. Through their fund-raising and awareness efforts, SN OM Trust has contributed significantly in making world class ophthalmic eye care available to a large number of indigent people in India.

In this edition of Eyelights America, we profile a few trustees who have lent unstinting support to Sankara Nethralaya's initiatives and are always exploring newer ways of raising funds to support Nethralaya's cause.

Mr. S.V. Acharya *Founder Trustee & Treasurer, SNOM Trust*



Mr. S.V. Acharya met Dr. S S Badrinath, for the first time when he took his ailing father for treatment in 1987 to Nethralaya. At Dr. Badri's initiative, he started Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust in US in mid 1988, with an exclusive objective of raising US contributions for treating indigent patients in the Indian sub continent. Being the Founder Trustee and Treasurer, he participated in numerous fund raising programs over the years and has taken care of financial and administrative functions for over twenty years. In recognition of his outstanding work, Nethralaya awarded him the prestigious 'Sankara Rathna' award in 2006.

Mr. Acharya works for the US federal government as budgetary chief and lives with his wife Nirmala in Rockville, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, DC.

Dr. Rajendra Modi *Trustee, SNOM Trust*

Dr. Rajendra Modi is an ophthalmologist practicing in Queens New York since 1987. He graduated from SMS Medical College Jaipur. Dr. Modi has been serving as Trustee of SN OM Trust since 2008. In this capacity, he has organized several fund raising events in the New York area and motivated number of people to support the cause of Nethralaya. Dr. Modi lives with his family in Searingtown, New York.



Mr. Nagesh Gadamsetty *Trustee, SNOM Trust*



Nagesh Gadamsetty hails from Hyderabad, and has made Fairfax (suburbs of Washington DC) his home since 1997. Nagesh was exposed to Sankara Nethralaya in 1979 when he was a teenager as a patient. He is an engineer by education and an IT professional by experience. Nagesh, along with his family are actively involved in other social service organizations such as Chinmaya Mission and Hope for Humanity. Nagesh has lived in San Antonio TX where he was involved with the Sai Spiritual Center and Hindu Temple of San Antonio.

Nagesh supports the fund raising activities of Sankara Nethralaya in Washington DC metro area. He has sponsored an operation theater at Sankara Nethralaya in his father's memory and would like to continue supporting Sankara Nethralaya's activities in the future. He has been serving SN OM Trust as a Trustee for the past three years.

Small Act of Kindness... Children show the way!



On October 8, 2011 Dallas Metroplex was treated to a multicultural event by a group of seventy-two children performing Light music, Indian classical music, folk dances to an audience of over four hundred.

This program was created and coordinated for Sankara Nethralaya by Shruthi Prabhu, a fifteen-year-old high school student. Shruthi had approached Sankara Nethralaya to help her launch this program to raise funds. Shruthi's grandmother had Glaucoma and that made Shruthi determined to do some charity work for the needy in the vision area. Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust the US entity of Sankara Nethralaya was happy to support this program.

After three months of rehearsals, on October 8th, 2011, Small Acts of Kindness took place. It was a multicultural program including the participation of several dance and music schools throughout the Metroplex. Sruthilaya, Pranavam Music School, Nruthya Sakthi Dance School, Divya Dhvani, and many other schools participated in the performance.

The program began promptly at 4:00 PM with a welcome note by Shri Santhanam Mullur and a piano piece composed and played by Shruthi Prabhu followed by her

talk on the genesis of the program. It also included a rendition of "We are the World" by Michael Jackson and "Firework" by Katy Perry. Hindustani and Carnatic music, as well as several dance numbers, were performed. The audience was indeed impressed at the diversity of this unique event. The theme song for this event was "Ovvoru Pookkalume" from the movie Autograph. This song was auctioned (a unique concept introduced to Dallas) off to the audience and raised about \$500 by itself. People responded with generous donations and sponsorship. All the children performed with something that could only be described as determination, happiness, and humility. Towards the end, all the teachers of the school who participated and Shruthi Prabhu were given a Sankara Nethralaya plaque and all the children were given a certificate of participation. As a note of thanks and recognition for continued help to Sankara Nethralaya, Hema Mohan (Fun Asia), Ambreen Hasnat (Fun Asia) were given SN Plaques by Shabnam Modgil of Fun Asia. The event ended with Dr. Arvind Neelakantan thanking the patrons, audience and the volunteers.

Without a doubt, this was the program of the year, and we will look forward to similar performances in the near future.



Billy Cardine goes to India!

Just as spirited young children from Indian families settled around the Texas Bay area were moving hearts and souls by straining their vocal chords and tapping their little hands and feet creatively at the Dallas Metroplex, Texas, for the cause of battling blindness back home in India, we had Billy Cardine, America's leading experimental musician, described variously as genre blurring composer, slide guitar revolutionary and multi-instrumentalist, regaling audience here in Chennai for very much the same cause. Billy was part of the music troupe presenting 'The Magic Wand' a charity, fusion music programme by Chitraveena Ravikiran in aid of Sankara Nethralaya's community services. The world renowned guitarist was in Chennai enroute to Bangalore where he was playing for a major show and readily agreed when approached by old friend Ravikiran to play for a noble cause. If the tunes from Billy's wonder guitar fused seamlessly with the violin, vocal and drums his guitar turned out to be a big show stealer with the innovator and the group leader spending a full 10 minutes explaining to an amazed audience the features of the fascinating instrument, how it evolved and the wide variety of sounds it could produce.

Indo-US research initiative in Ophthalmology

In what could be described as a significant step in Ophthalmic research the University of Missouri, among the oldest and most prestigious research universities in the USA with a high rating by the Carnegie Foundation and the Vision Research Foundation India's premium ophthalmic research institution with several accreditations and coveted patents to its credit including one for the DNA Macro chip, signed a MoU for advanced ophthalmic research in the areas of Nanobiotechnology, Stem cell research, Nano medicine, Cancer therapy etc.

The tie-up will pave the way for knowledge sharing, collaborative research and exchange of research scientists between the two institutions leading to a better understanding of vision threatening debilities and emerging ophthalmic challenges.

The MoU was signed by Dr S.Bhaskaran, Chairman, Sankara Nethralaya and Professor Robert Churchill, Dean, University of Missouri.



Dr. HN.Madhavan, President, Vision Research Foundation presenting a memento to Professor Robert Churchill, Dean, University of Missouri.

How to donate in the United States of America...



Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust Inc.

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Tax Exempt ID No. 52-1611548

For additional details, feel free to contact S. V. Acharya at (301) 529-7377

Donating online at Omtrust.org - All your donations are securely routed through www.groundspring.org.

United Way - Mention the above information on your authorization form. Local chapters will remit your contributions to the SN OM Trust Inc.

Combined Federal Campaign - If you are a US federal employee, make your donations to Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust Inc. CFC No. 68803.

Employer Matching Program - A number of US employers match *dollar for dollar* to employees' contributions. You may be able to double your contributions to SN OM Trust.

Appreciated Stocks - You may donate appreciated stocks to SN OM Trust Inc. and avail of a tax deduction. For additional information, please contact the Trust at the aforementioned phone number.

Contributions by check - Simply make your check payable to SN OM Trust Inc. and mail to the above address.

Payroll Deductions - Please check with your HR office if they are programmed to withhold from payroll and remit to a non-profit organization. A number of organizations provide this as a public service.

Draft from Checking Account - Download from our website www.omtrust.org, the direct debit authorization form and forward your authorization with a 'void check' to the above address. We will draft the funds on the 15th of every month. You can stop your authorization any time by a simple notification to us.

Donate on Special Occasions, as a tribute Festivals, birthdays, wedding anniversaries, in memory of a loved one and provide support in the form of a bequest.

All donations to SN OM Trust are 100% IRS Tax Exempted in US, IRS Registered 501 (c) (3)

How can you help us?

Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust owes its existence and success to its committed volunteers. To realize our mission of 20/20 by 2020, we need many more volunteers. You can be one of our volunteers and can help us by:

- Spreading the word about Sankara Nethralaya.
- Supporting Teleophthalmology & Glass dispensing vans.
- Conducting events for fundraising.
- Helping with accounting, web management.
- Arranging for American students to undertake summer projects at Sankara Nethralaya.
- Personally making small donations

The following employers have supported us through GIFT MATCHING or PAYROLL DEDUCTION programs!

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- American Express
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- J P Morgan Chase
- GE Foundation
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