

eyelights



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**Sankara Nethralaya
OM Trust, USA**

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Indian American sibling's vocal concert takes compassion to "Lofty Heights"



Sankara Nethralaya showcased in two major US events



Young Indian American sibling's enthralling vocal concert takes compassion to “Lofty Heights”



Ms. Sriranjani and Master Nachikethan Vivek interacting with Dr.SS Badrinath

The Srinivasans namely Shri Kumar Srinivasan a senior pharma professional and Srimathi Bhuvana Srinivasan a software programmer, settled for long in the Philadelphia area are great connoisseurs of Carnatic music, another common passion that the couple share is their empathy to Sankara Nethralaya's cause and philosophy, hailing from Chennai they are well aware of Sankara Nethralaya's contribution to the cause of eradicating blindness. The noble couple are regular audience at the various Carnatic programs organized by the Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust in the USA and donate liberally at these functions. Their common passion and empathy seemed to have had a positive impact on their daughter Sriranjani and son Nachikethan Vivek and the young siblings decided that their Vocal Arangetram to be held in India would be dedicated to Sankara Nethralaya's noble cause of eradicating blindness and providing the light of life to the visually impaired.

The vocal Arangetram of Sriranjani and Nachikethan, sishyas of Smt. Kiranavali Vidyasankar the renowned vocalist and initiator of “Lofty heights” an initiative to foster awareness in Indian performing arts and culture was held under the auspices of Vidwan Srimushanam Sri Raja Rao and Cleveland Sri V.V. Sundaram at the Music Academy Mini hall, Chennai. Handbills on the programme exhibited prominently in the venue making an earnest appeal to the audience to donate towards the cause of providing cost free eye care to indigent patients by Sankara Nethralaya had a spontaneous effect and raised a handsome amount as donation.

Highly touched by the thoughtful gesture of a young girl barely in her teens and her bubbly younger brother, Dr. SS. Badrinath met the Srinivasans where a beaming and jubilant Sriranjani handed over the proceeds collected at the Arangetram directly to him. He spent quality time with the young ambassadors of his cherished cause, enquiring about their studies, their special interests and goals for the future, he expressed his high appreciation to the young performers and presented them with a copy of “Insight” the biography of the institution they had raised funds for. Speaking to the corporate communication department after the meeting, young Sriranjani expressed that incidences of glaucoma in the family and the pioneering role of Sankara Nethralaya in this field about which she learnt from her father prompted her to do something towards its cost free community care services.

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Members of SN OM Trust and participants at FeTNA

As part of its ongoing efforts towards spreading the good word about Sankara Nethralaya by gaining a larger mind space and foothold among the Indian milieu in the USA, the SN OM Trust the fund raising arm of Sankara Nethralaya participated in two immensely popular events among its target audience, the annual conference of the Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FeTNA) and the “India Abroad” “Person of the year” ceremony. Participation at the FeTNA 2014 held at the Chaifety Arena, Saint Louis, Missouri State on 20th June 2014 helped in reaching out the Sankara Nethralaya newsletter to 5000+ members of the association across the USA and the one page appeal made in the souvenir released on the occasion to 1,400 members who attended the conference. In-depth presentations of Sankara Nethralaya's history, growth, philosophy, goals, achievements in various areas and a fervent appeal to donate were made by Mr. Nahush and

Mr. Vikram good friends and well wishers of the institution and Dr Robert Churchill from the University of Missouri, Sankara Nethralaya's partner in collaborative research. SN OM Trust member Singer Prabhu's mellifluous voice and crisp appeal won many hearts from the 1,400 strong audience and assurances to organize charity shows for Sankara Nethralaya's cause from more than 10 Tamil Sangam presidents present at the venue.

Participation in the high profile “Person of the Year” award ceremony conducted by Rediff.com and “India Abroad” helped in showcasing Sankara Nethralaya to a large gathering of high profile and high net worth Indians gathered at the “The Pierre- A Taj Hotel” at New York for the high power event. While the screening of the appeal made by Shri Amitabh Bachchan' at the venue took Sankara Nethralaya's story to the large gathering at the venue, the interview of Dr SS. Badrinath published in the special issue of 'India Abroad' reached out to its large reader base.

Sankara Nethralaya family bids its tearful farewell to **Shri D.V. Ramakrishna Rao**, beloved father of Shri Suresh Dalapathy, Secretary, Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust, USA, who passed away on the 1st of July 2014 at Chennai.

The Sankara Nethralaya family expresses its condolence and prays for the Soul to Rest in Peace.

“Chief” planner and strategist in the battle against blindness inaugurates a new fortress in western India!



*Dr.Vasanthi Badrinath, Director Clinical Services,
Dr.SS Badrinath, Chairman Emeritus, Sankara Nethralaya
along with Dr. Prashant Bawankule, Nagpur
at the inaugural of 'Sarakshi Netralaya'*

Nothing gives more joy to the man to whom eradication of blindness is the dream, vision and purpose of life than the opening of a new vision care facility and the joy becomes boundless when the new initiative is by an old student and friend of Sankara Nethralaya.

Dr S.S. Badrinath, Founder & Chairman Emeritus, Sankara Nethralaya, inaugurated and blessed the “Sarakshi Netralaya” a State of the Art ophthalmic facility at Nagpur being started by a member of the extended Sankara Nethralaya family, a favourite student and former Consultant at Sankara Nethralaya, Dr. Prashant Bawankule.

We take great pleasure in sharing below a most touching coverage and key observations made by 'Chief' to the local press.

Talking to Dr S.S. Badrinath, a global guru of Ophthalmology is an experience that will remain etched in my memory forever. His simplicity and modesty defy his fame and deny people a realization of his worth. Ever since he became a student of Ophthalmology more than 50 years ago, Dr. Badrinath has made the eyeball his lifetime mission. What triggered the quest for excellence in this man of world repute? Dr. Badrinath was blessed with an awareness right from Day One that excellence is a never-ending journey, without destination and without culmination.

Talking to 'The Hitavada' on the sidelines of the inaugural of a state-of-the-art eye clinic by one of his favourite student Dr Prashant Bawankule, Dr Badrinath highlighted the fundamentals of ophthalmology in terms so simple that even a five-year-old can understand.

Still, Dr Badrinath lamented, many people did not care about their eyes properly. When in US, he read a book 'Archives of Ophthalmology' that mentioned that only 7 per cent ophthalmologists knew about Diabetic Retinopathy. “It shows how ignorant we are about the eye”. Dr Badrinath is a legendary figure in Ophthalmology and a Guru to many ophthalmologists in the country. The man's life is an inspiring tale. In 1974, Dr Badrinath had the opportunity to serve his spiritual guru Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekerendra Saraswathi Swamigal of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam. During the same period once Sri Jayendra Saraswathi, the Sankaracharya of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam, had called a group of doctors and appealed them to set up a hospital fully dedicated to eye-care. A determined Dr Badrinath left his private practice and dedicated himself to the cause of a charitable not-for-profit eye hospital in Chennai. Today, it is the world-reputed name Sankara Nethralaya.

Sankara Nethralaya has come out with the Mobile Eye Surgical Unit (MESU). There are two ambulances with MESU that have everything including Operation Theatre. These mobile units visit villages, conduct eye check-up camps, and perform safe surgeries, if needed. The latest challenge, is Retinitis Pigmentosa or RP. It is a hereditary condition, which reduces vision. A person suffering from RP develops night-blindness and gradually becomes blind. The kind of equipment needed for this therapy are so costly that it is impossible for India to conduct this therapy at this stage, says Dr. Badrinath. But, he is not to be deterred by difficulties. Sankara Nethralaya is doing research on RP and has developed a gene 'RPE-65', which helps in knowing if stem cell transplant is useful for a patient suffering from RP.



Jubilant Dr.Badrinaths at the inaugural of Sarakshi Netralaya

'Pesticide, insecticide are retinotoxic'

With advancing age, human beings tend to develop problems related to vision, medically known as Age-Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD). How should this be tackled? Dr S S Badrinath answers, “When I returned from USA, ARMD was still unknown. With enhanced life expectancy, population of old persons too is increasing in India. This increases risk of ARMD. Pesticide and insecticide are retinotoxic, and they contribute to degeneration of vision in old age.”

No exercise for eyes please...

Some people say there are exercises for eyes that reduce the number of lenses and strengthen eyes. Do these 'exercises' really help? 'NO', is Dr Badrinath's answer. “There is no exercise as such for eyes. Even cleaning eyes with tap water is very bad and can harm eyes. The PH value of tap water and that of eye-fluid is not the same,” he advises.

Courtesy: The Indian Express

Visitors' Gallery



Ms. Mandy Engelsma,
Proof reader,
Handfast Point,
Netherlands



Dr. Warren E. Hill,
Medical Director of
East Valley
Ophthalmology
in Mesa, Arizona



Prof. Susana Marcos,
Professor of Research,
Instituto de Optica,
Madrid (Spain),

**Bring the
Light of Vision,
the Cheer and
the Smile back on the face of
the visually impaired!**

Help Sankara Nethralaya take the
“**Light of Vision**”
to the darkest corners of India!

All Contributions to OM Trust enjoy 100% IRS Tax
Exemption under section 501 (c) (3) in the USA.

For more details on Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust and how you can play a role in their noble mission

Please Contact

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



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www.supportsankaranethralaya.org

Tax Exempt ID No. 52-1611548

For additional details, feel free to contact S. V. Acharya at (301) 251-0378



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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