



# EYELIGHTS

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# AMERICA



QUALITY ASSURED



Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust Inc.,

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*tamaṣo maa  
jyotirgamaya*

*From Darkness to Light*

From the editor's desk

Dear Friends,

As a regular recipient of *Eyelight*s, the newsletter which brings to you the latest from Sankara Nethralaya, you have shown your interest in knowing about the hospital, our activities and initiatives. *Eyelight*s has come a long way since it was first published in 1985. From publishing a mere 600 copies we now publish 51,000 copies a year.

We are grateful to all of you for your unconditional support. Every year, our friends in America, through the Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust, - a registered non-profit organization in the US which supports Sankara Nethralaya, a charitable, not-for-profit ophthalmic hospital, in Chennai, India - contribute towards Nethralaya's mission for vision in numerous ways. I'm delighted to inform you that from this edition onwards, we will bring out a special edition - *Eyelight*s America - in addition to the *Eyelight*s issue, which will cover events, people, organisations, in the US, supporting Sankara Nethralaya and its various initiatives to alleviate blindness in India.

**Dr. Rajiv Raman,**  
Editor, *Eyelight*s

## Management power lecture by Prof. CK Prahalad



Participants at the management power lecture in Dallas, US. (Inset) Sankara Nethralaya Fund-Raising Director, Dr. Tarun Sharma presents a plaque of honor to Prof. CK Prahalad;

The key strategies required to build organizational capabilities and the importance of accessing global resources to co-create unique experiences with customers formed the crux of the management power lecture by Prof. CK Prahalad in Dallas, US, on October 14, 2009.

Prof. CK Prahalad was at his eloquent best as corporate executives listened with rapt attention while the management guru delivered the "New Age of Innovation: Driving Co-Created Value Through Global Networks" lecture in benefit of Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai.

The event which saw 250 people, including senior corporate executives, management professors, and students, attending, was organized by Sankara Nethralaya, Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust, US, and the Greater Dallas Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (GDIACC).

Earlier on, Director, Fund Raising, Sankara Nethralaya, Dr. Tarun Sharma made a presentation on Sankara Nethralaya and highlighted its achievements and activities, including the community ophthalmology programs and the state-of-the-art medical research facilities.

Sankara Nethralaya Alumni Dr. Arvind Neelakantan, a practising Glaucomatologist in Dallas, while praising the institution for its Ophthalmology training and focus on Community Ophthalmology Programs, urged the gathering to donate to SN OM Trust and thereby support Sankara Nethralaya in its fight against blindness. Prof. Prahalad, too, spoke highly of Sankara Nethralaya.

On behalf of Sankara Nethralaya, Dr. Tarun Sharma presented Prof. CK Prahalad, Mr. Harry Iyer, president, Greater Dallas Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, and Ms. Shabnam Modgil, FunAsia, with a plaque of Honor for their contributions and for supporting Sankara Nethralaya's mission for vision. The programme was followed by a Q&A and a book-signing session by Prof. Prahalad.



Prof. CK Prahalad

Elected as the most influential living management thinker of our time by Thinkers 50, The Times of London and Suntop Media, Prof. CK Prahalad is more than an academician. An active and prominent business consultant with some of the world's leading companies, he has written five seminal books on strategy. His 1987 book "The multinational mission: balancing local demands and global vision," co-authored with Yves Doz, set the framework for understanding global business.

## Awareness talks

In a bid to make people aware of the various activities and initiatives undertaken by Sankara Nethralaya and to mobilize support for the hospital's community programmes, Sankara Nethralaya's Fund-raising Director, Dr. Tarun Sharma, held a series of awareness talks on Sankara Nethralaya across several cities in the US during his month-long visit to the country in October 2009.



Apart from meeting eminent people from the Indo-American community, including Dr. Sudhir Parikh and Dr. Narsing Rao, Dr. Sharma also addressed a gathering of about 250 people, at the CK Prahalad management power lecture on October 14, 2009 at Dallas, on the genesis and growth of Sankara Nethralaya. The awareness talks were held at San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington DC, Dallas, Rochester, New York. Dr. Tarun Sharma visited the reading centre at Madison, Wisconsin, where he met Dr. Ronald Danis and his team. He also participated at the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) conference where he had the opportunity to meet Ms. Jane Aguirre, VP, Global Alliances, and one of the officials of AAO to explore the ways in which Sankara Nethralaya could collaborate with the AAO.

## CFC recognition



Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust (SN OMT) Inc, a fund raising organization in the US that supports Sankara Nethralaya, has been recognized, yet again, as an eligible organisation to receive contributions under the

Combined Federal Campaign or CFC.

### What is CFC?

CFC is a program under which US federal government employees are encouraged to donate through payroll deduction a certain portion of their salary for a designated non profit organization. Millions of dollars are collected and distributed for worthy causes around the world every year.

### How you can help?

If you are a US federal government employee please designate Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust (No. 68803) as your chosen charity organization for your contributions. If you are not an employee, but know of one, kindly motivate them to designate SN OMT as their chosen charity organization.

For further information on the CFC program, please contact

### Mr. SV Acharya

e-mail: [acharya@omtrust.org](mailto:acharya@omtrust.org)

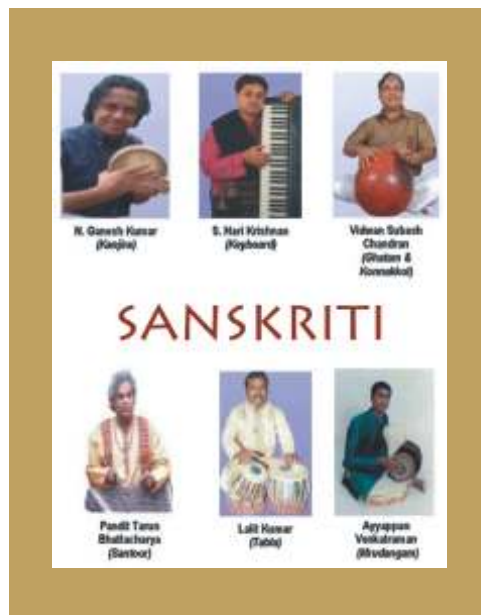
Ph: (301) 529-7377

### The Sankara Nethralaya Academy

In its continued efforts to ensure quality ophthalmic services, Sankara Nethralaya is setting up a one-of-its-kind academy. The Sankara Nethralaya Academy which will offer wide-ranging certificate and fellowship programmes to train ophthalmologist, optometrists, nurses and administration personnel. The programmes will commence from April 2010.

## Benefit concerts

**SANSKRITI:** In its continued efforts to raise donations for Sankara Nethralaya, SN OM Trust organised a benefit concert on October 17, 2009 at Lanham, US. Sanskriti, a confluence of north and south Indian classical music, saw master musicians like Vidwan Subash Chandran (Ghatam & Konnakol), Pandit Tarun Bhattacharya (Santoor), Lalit Kumar (Tabla), S. Hari Krishnan (Keyboard), N. Ganesh Kumar (Kanjira) and Ayyappan Venkatraman (Mrudangam) entertain the audience to a musical evening.



**Natyalaya School of Dance:** The Seonee hills came alive at the Georgetown Center Auditorium, Austin, Texas, US, as Mowgli and his friends from the animal kingdom recounted one of the most loved tales of the century in a brilliantly-choreographed dance drama by the Natyalaya School of Dance on December 20, 2009.

Children were at their artistic best, as they took the audience in an enchanting journey of Rudyard Kipling's famed 'Jungle Book.'



The performance, a benefit concert for Sankara Nethralaya, was attended by around 300 people. The remarkable efforts by Ms. Vinitha Subramanian & the 24 children from the Natyalaya School of Dance were showcased in every act.

For their incredible enthusiasm in participating in the benefit concert and supporting Nethralaya's cause, the children were presented with plaques of honor by Sankara Nethralaya and Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust.

## Better electronic protocol needed: Dr. Badrinath



Chairman Emeritus, Dr. SS Badrinath, who attended the first-ever Alumni Day held at Indian Institute of Technology Madras on December 26, 2009, shared with the gathering the phenomenal growth Nethralaya has experienced since its inception in 1978.

Dr. Badrinath also spoke on the IT initiatives undertaken by the institute and its impact on health care. "Many medical practitioners may not find it feasible to invest in software to maintain e-records and by accessing our National Knowledge Network, doctors nationwide can switch to the technology," he said. Medical practitioners across the country, he added, could maintain electronic records of every patient for as less as Rs. 5.

Sankara Nethralaya, in collaboration with IIT Madras, has completed two projects and has several more which are being undertaken including one on teleophthalmology via 3G spectrum instead of the existing satellite-based service, for faster connectivity. Dr. Badrinath called for better electronic protocol that can be achieved by offering enhanced training. "We are thinking of starting a school of scientific dispensing of glasses. Uncorrected refraction can cause blindness in 6% of the population and precision prescription is the key."

He also touched upon the key areas e-learning, electronic medical records, teleophthalmology through which Sankara Nethralaya is striving to serve the community in the coming decades.

## Frontiers of Optic Nerve Regeneration explored



As part of his visit to the US to understand the current status of research on Optic Nerve Regeneration, Dr. Rashmin Gandhi, consultant, Sankara Nethralaya visited research laboratories in Boston, San Francisco and Madison.

Apart from attending several seminars, Dr. Gandhi also met Dr. Benowitz and visited his lab in Boston where he observed the Optic nerve crush surgery in a mice model. Dr. Benowitz is the Director, Laboratories for Neuroscience Research in Neurosurgery and an Associate Professor of Neuroscience at Harvard Medical School. He also visited Neurology clinics with Dr. Ari Green at the University of California, San Francisco. Dr. Green is a Neurologist specializing in Multiple Sclerosis.

Dr. Gandhi, along with Sankara Nethralaya Managing Director Dr. Vasana met Mr. Scott Taitel and Mr. Carlos Fernandez from the William J. Clinton Foundation, New York to discuss the latter's initiatives in Peru and the possibility of Sankara Nethralaya offering its expertise in this regard. The Clinton Giustra Sustainable Growth Initiative recently launched a cataract project in Peru, under which 50,000 cataract surgeries will be performed on the country's indigent population over the next four years.

## Supporting excellence in education



R. Kavitha receives her scholarship from Director, Fund-raising, Sankara Nethralaya, Dr. Taurm Sharma and Manager, HRD, Ms. Porchelvi.

Sankara Nethralaya believes that one of the greatest investments we make in our employees is an investment in their children. And in our efforts towards this, we have received unstinting support from our well-wishers, Shri. Ram P Dhingra being one of them.

The Dhingra Family Charitable Trust was established in 2004 by Shri. Ram P Dhingra of Yorba Linda, California, to provide scholarships for higher education to the children of employees at Sankara Nethralaya.

A magnificent and handsome sum of Rs. 10 lakhs was donated by Shri. Ram Dhingra to this trust with the provision that the interest income accrued from this sum be disbursed as scholarships. Since 2004, the Trust has every year diligently recognized and awarded scholarships to deserving students. In 2009, Ms. R. Kavitha, a B.Com student, was awarded the scholarship.

Ms. R. Kavitha is the daughter of Mr. Raman who works in the communication department at Sankara Nethralaya. Mr. Raman has been working for Sankara Nethralaya since 1985.



### Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust 2010 Trustees



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S. Kannappan	Vice-President
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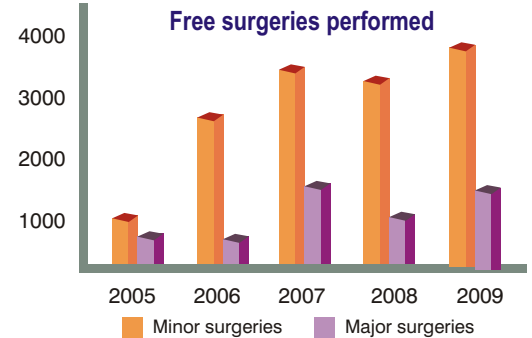
## Fund utilization from SN OM Trust, USA

Funds received from SN Om Trust are utilised in

- Dispensing free spectacles.
- Performing free surgeries like cataract surgery, glaucoma, corneal and retinal surgeries.
- Conducting camps in remote areas and screening for ophthalmic diseases using teleophthalmology.



In 2009, we performed 3458 minor surgeries like cataract surgery and 1012 major surgeries like Retinal Detachment surgery free of cost.



**SN OM TRUST is an IRS recognized 501 [c] 3 charitable organization,**



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

### Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust Inc.

9710 Traville Gateway Drive, No. 392, Rockville, MD 20850, Ph: (877) 393-7666

**Tax Exempt ID No. 52-1611548**



**Donating online at Omtrust.org** - All your donations are securely routed through [www.groundspring.org](http://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](http://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)**

**Join us in the battle against blindness. Together, we can give light!**

## 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!

- Microsoft
- Deutsche Bank
- American Express
- Merrill Lynch
- J P Morgan Chase
- GE Foundation
- The Bank of New York Mellon
- Google
- eBay Foundation
- Qualcomm
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