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# eyelights



AMERICA



Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust Inc.,

**Sankara Nethralaya  
OM Trust, USA**

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“ I appeal to the  
doctor community  
to provide world class  
healthcare right here  
in India, cost free  
and with a  
personal touch to  
the poor and needy ”

- Periyavaa

Sankara Nethralaya lays the foundation to a sprawling, state of the art, centrally located facility, dedicated exclusively to dispensing cost free eye care, on 23rd April, 2018.

## The 'Temple of the eye' takes a giant step in its journey of 'Service to Mankind'



*The visionary humanitarian envisions his institution's most ambitious cost free community service initiative.*

The 23rd of April 2018 was a 'Red Letter Day' for an institution that came into existence with one simple objective, 'Serving mankind and alleviating the suffering of the masses through quality eye care'. It was the day the institution made an auspicious and blessed step towards fulfilling a long time dream, a most cherished dream and also a very ambitious dream of building and operating a large, well equipped and easily accessible community hospital, dedicated exclusively to cost free treatment of indigent patients.

The biggest and first challenge in starting a large facility, the availability of a large tract of land, in an accessible part of the city was solved when in a most generous and thoughtful gesture Mrs Kausalya Appukutty, Volunteer - Sankara Nethralaya Auxiliary Services (SWAN) made available the same totally cost free, at the Dr VG. Appukutty Campus, named in honour of her late husband and generous supporter of Sankara Nethralaya, located at St. Thomas mount, Chennai. Srimathi Anuradha Narayanan, lecturer at the Elite School of Optometry extended a warm welcome to the attendees and expressed the institution's deep gratitude to Ms Voltas, Ms Infosys, Ms Trent Ltd, the Rahm Sitaraman family, USA and long time friend and supporter Shri Iravatham Mahadevan for their generous donation which would serve as the critical 'Seed' capital for the new initiative.

In a moment that captured the spirit of the day, special guest of the event Shri Iravatham Mahadevan expressed that if only he had been 10 years younger he would have visited every home in the locality to mobilize funds for the noble endeavour, the fact that the octogenarian had already made an appeal to the families in his apartment complex became apparent when a co-resident from the complex expressed that every family in the complex would donate towards this noble cause. Dr SS.Badrinath had a special word of thanks for Srimathi Kausalya Appukutty, member SWAN for making available the land, without which the project could not have been envisaged.

### An emphatic appeal to our US friends

The 'Community Hospital' when operational will function as an exclusive cost free eye care initiative dispensing world class eye care to a large number of patients from the entire nation, bringing back their lost vision, joy and smile. Revived vision will enable them to get back to their profession/occupation rudely interrupted by blindness and make them self reliant and independent. Indians living in the USA have been consistent and generous supporters of the institution's community eye care initiatives and the Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust the awareness creating and fund raising arm of SN appeals to each one of you to support this landmark service initiative with your kind donations. The total project is estimated to cost INR 52 crores and every \$ donated will go as a vital brick laid towards the creation of this massive centre dedicated to free service to the indigent visually impaired.

Kindly make your Tax exempt donation checks in favour of the **SN OM Trust** and mail the same to 9710 Traville Gateway Drive, No-392, Rockville, MD 20850 or donate online by logging on to [www.snomtrustusa.org](http://www.snomtrustusa.org)



*His partner in life and service lays the first brick towards fulfilling the noble initiative*

## A blend of traditional and contemporary music creates awareness for social causes



Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust presented a captivating and outstanding performance by Carnatic music maestro Shri T.M. Krishna (TMK) on Sunday, April 9th, 2017 at the Shri Bhakta Anjaneya Temple, Ijamsville in the Greater Washington DC Metro area. TMK was accompanied by two local young music talents, Chi.Kamalakaran on the violin and Kum. Rajna Swaminathan on the mridangam. Supporters of SN and Carnatic music lovers and fans of TMK not only from the Washington DC Metro area but also from nearby States spanning over 200 miles showed up in large numbers and completely filled the auditorium. The program started with an invocation by Smt. Geetha Bhat. SNOM Trust Treasurer Shri SV Acharya gave the welcome address where he spoke about Sankara Nethralaya's activities and fundraising efforts. This was followed by introduction of artists by SN OM trustee Shri Ramarao Mysore. Krishna did not disappoint his fans and enthralled them with his zestful and eclectic music. The veteran singer moved the heart and soul of the large audience with a repertoire of ragas delivered in his inimitable style. He deviated from the traditional to give a lively folk song with strong messages in protection of the environment and a united society not divided by caste or creed. This was followed by an eight minute video on Sankara Nethralaya's service to society. The program concluded with SN OM Trustee Shri Krishna Raj Bhat proposing the vote of thanks followed by a sumptuous dinner. Overall it was a great concert and Sankara Nethralaya was also able to reach its message across to a wide array of people and the SN OM Trust received a major boost in its fund raising initiatives, thanks to the efforts of all the trustees, volunteers and well-wishers.

## The SN OM Trust takes great pleasure in introducing the following Trustees to our readers



**J a w a h a r Malhotra** has been a Houston resident since 1969. He grew up in London, UK; Karachi, West Pakistan; Teheran, Iran, B e r n e ,

Switzerland and Bucharest, Romania. He has lived in Paris, France and Singapore, visited over 40 countries and speaks 8 languages. Malhotra received his Bachelors and Masters in Electrical Engineering from the University of Houston and has worked as a Consulting Engineer. He is also a founding partner and publisher of Indo-American News weekly, the oldest in the South servicing the South Asian community for 36 years.



**Krishna Raj Bhat** hails from Udupi, Karnataka and is a long-term resident of Washington DC. He works as a IT specialist in

Washington DC area in Energy industry and also in Federal government projects. He obtained his Computer Science and Engineering degree from Mysore University. His wife Geetha, son Pavan and daughter Divya are interested in music, arts and dance. Krishna is volunteering with Sankara Nethralaya OM trust since 2013. In his spare time he is interested in reading, travelling and coaching youngsters for science and technology competitions.



**Dr. Siddarth Rathi** is currently completing his glaucoma fellowship at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. He completed his

Ophthalmology training at the New York University. He completed his undergraduate and medical school studies at Boston University and MBA studies at Harvard Business School. Dr Rathi was introduced to Sankara Nethralaya by his mother Dr Seema Rathi who trained at Sankara Nethralaya under the guidance of Dr Badri. Dr Rathi has research interests in telemedicine in Ophthalmology and new surgical modalities for minimally invasive glaucoma management.

## Bubbly youngster from Maryland exhibits amazing compassion and concern to Sankara Nethralaya's cause!



Age 12 is a phase in life when music and music instruments simply mean good fun and entertainment to most, little Jay Kannan proved that he was a little different, in a rare exhibition of maturity and understanding the little boy showcased that music can be the language of the soul. A video on Sankara Nethralaya's cost free community service to the poor and needy and the change it brought in their lives, that he happened to watch at the university of Maryland, had a deep impact on him, it triggered a deep resolve that he should do something for them. Shri Amudhan Kannan and Srimathi Vidya Thirumalai the noble parents of a worthy son put their energies together to fulfil their son's dream, their request to families in the neighbourhood evoked a spontaneous response and soon their home in North Potomac became the venue for a wonderful musical fund raiser for the cause of the poor visually impaired in India, with budding musicians playing instruments of every kind, for a noble cause. The event helped in creating awareness on Sankara Nethralaya and its services in the minds of the little musicians, their parents and the audience and raised a significant donation towards the cause that moved little Jay Kannan's heart.

## Sankara Nethralaya's overseas Ambassadors pay a courtesy visit to their cherished institution

Nothing gives more pleasure and pride to members of the Sankara Nethralaya family and its head than to receive the institution's overseas ambassadors, the members of the Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust, engaged in spreading awareness and raising funds for its cause in the USA. It was a moment to cherish for members of the institution, when long time friend, supporter and former member of the SN OM Trust Shri KG.Venkataraman and Srimathi Banumati Ramakrishnan, Treasurer, SN OM Trust accompanied by her husband Shri Ramakrishnan visited the institution recently and spent some quality time with them.



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## A passionate account of SN by Keshav Parthasarathy from Palatine, Illinois

My name is Keshav Parthasarathy and I am currently studying to be a doctor in the United States. This summer, I was given the opportunity to work as a volunteer for Sankara Nethralaya. During this period, I chose to spend much of my time at the Jaslok Community Ophthalmic Clinic (JCOC) the free clinic that SN provides the impoverished. At the free clinic, I would work closely with the secretaries in helping direct the patients to where they needed to go to get the procedure they needed done. I would also observe in the slit lamp room, and the presiding doctors would explain how the instruments and procedures were performed. I really appreciated the time the doctors and staff gave me throughout my time at SN as well. Although they were almost always busy due to high influx of patients coming into the clinic, they all made time to answer my questions and teach me as much as they possibly could. This was incredibly beneficial to me because there are a lot of intricacies to the system employed at the free clinic. With the secretaries' help, I learned how best to answer patients' questions and how to log certain procedures in the computer. With the doctors' help, I learned how to syringe patients and observe the eye using the slit lamp. This willingness to help no matter the situation was a characteristic that I found abundant in both SN's employees as well as SN as an organization. Every person that I interacted with during my time at SN was extremely humble and respectful of me.



## The Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust pays homage to a departed member



Members of the SN OM Trust and Sankara Nethralaya express their homage and respect to late Ramarao Mysore, Former Member SN OM Trust on his first death anniversary. Cherished and fond memories of a simple, down to earth, friendly man, a musical genius who groomed several sishyas, a patron of the local temple and a socially conscious man who strived hard for the SN OM Trust and the irresistible 'Hayagriva' he served with love would continue to fill many hearts in Washington DC for many more years to come.