



World Hindu Council of America (VHPA) – New Jersey

HINDU HERITAGE DAY

October 28, 2023, Saturday, 12PM noon – 4PM

Shree Swaminarayan Mandir Vadtaldham NJ
1667 Amwell Road, Somerset, NJ 08873

All school age children are invited to participate in the

Poster Competition

Theme: Contribution of Hindus to America

There are roughly 4 million Hindus in America, or about 1% of the total population. Majority of them came here in the last 50 years or so. In this short period of time, they have made major contributions to America. We would like to tell the story of their success and contributions through this poster competition.

Competition Rules

Eligibility – Competition is open to all school going children

Registration – All participants are required to register at rb.gy/qb6ip

There is no fee for registration. However, there are only a limited number of slots. Once they are taken up, the registration will be closed.

Awards: Posters will be judged on content as well as oral presentation. Prizes will be awarded as follows:

12 years and under group: First prize: \$200 Second prize: \$100 Third prize: \$50

Over 12 years group: First prize: \$200 Second prize: \$100 Third prize: \$50

Decision of the judges will be final

Poster Format: Trifold 36" wide X 48" high. Must be capable of standing on table top without external support. Nonconforming entries will not be allowed to participate in the competition.

Content: Please refer to the next page for the section titled "Examples of Hindu Contributions to America." For your poster, you may pick any one of the 8 fields of contribution given in that section. You can do your poster on the entire field or you can pick one or two specific examples from your selected field for your poster. Your task is show how Hindus in your chosen field have contributed to America with specific examples.

Poster content should clearly show evidence of extensive research on the chosen topic. You should use your imagination and creativity in presenting information to make the experience enjoyable and educational for the audience.

Venue/Date/Time: Given at the top of this page.

Drop-Off Deadline: Drop-off locations will be communicated at a later date to all the registered competitors. All posters must be delivered to one of the specified drop-off locations by **Thursday, October 26, 2023**. The posters will be set up at the venue on October 27th (Friday) and a part of the judging will take place the same day.

Oral Presentation: All participants must be present at the venue for the entire duration of the program on October 28th. They will be instructed to go their poster locations just before the judging will commence. Participants should be able to explain the poster to exhibition attendees and answer any questions. Judges will come around to score each participant on the quality of the oral presentation.

Any question? Call Jai Bansal at 908-803-3523

Examples of Hindu contributions to America

Science and Technology

Examples - Har Gobind Khorana received 1968 Nobel Prize in Medicine, Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar received Nobel Prize in Physics in 1983; Manjul Bhargava and Akshaya Venkatesh are both Field Prize winners in mathematics; Sundar Pichai, Satya Nadella and Rajeev Suri are CEOs of Google, Microsoft, and Nokia respectively. In addition, Hindus have created fast-growing startup companies leading to economic growth, employment, and innovation. About 25% of technology and engineering companies started in the United States from 1995 to 2005 involved at least one key founder who was a Hindu.

Industry and Commerce

Indian immigrants have played an expanding role in business and commerce such as accounting, medicine, and law, managing hotels/motels, operating local convenience and grocery stores, starting popular restaurants, beauty-related ventures, and many other kinds of businesses. Asian American Hotel Owners Association (A.A.H.O.A.) states that more than 50% of all motels in the United States are owned by people of Indian origin.

Social Services and Philanthropy

Giving (danam) and service (sewa) are integral parts of the Hindu dharma (religious duty). Our *mandirs* (temples), *ashrams*, and service organizations perform *Sewa* (service) and community outreach. *Sewa International*, *Sewa In America* and *Indian Circle of Caring* are examples of Hindu organizations that have gained national prominence for their significant contributions in major national calamities and by helping individuals in distress. However, Hindu philanthropy has not received as much press as it deserves. Similarly, the presence of the Hindu community in the national defense is under-reported and not fully appreciated.

Public Policy and Advocacy

As Hindu population grows in America, it is heartening to see a growing presence of Indians in politics and public administration. Hindus are getting active at the national level and the number of office holders is increasing at local, state and municipal levels. Hindu advocacy organization such as HAF and USINPAC are educating leaders in public policy about issues affecting the Hindu American community.

Education

From the Grade schools to High schools to Colleges, Hindus have set high standards as educators, researchers and administrators. Examples: Sunil Kumar became the first Hindu American provost of the Johns Hopkins University in 2016. Similarly, Nitin Nohria at Harvard, Dipak Jain at Northwestern, Rangarajan Sundaram at NYU, Paul Almedia at Georgetown, and Madhav Rajan at Booth, have given leadership to nation's most selective business schools. Jagdish Bhagwati (Economist at Columbia), Gita Gopinath (IMF financial chief), Neel Kashkari (Minnesota Fed Reserve chairman), and Neel Katayl (former US solicitor general) are leaders in their respective fields. The younger generation of Hindus American has dominated the national spelling and geography contests for many years. Their sustained achievements are a testament to hard work and excellence.

Medicine

In the 1960s & 70s, the US government invited foreign physicians, particularly from India, to address the acute shortage of doctors in rural and medically underserved urban areas. That became a trend as US medical schools still do not produce enough physicians to match the increasing American population. While Hindus represent only 1% of the American population today, they account for over 5% of the physicians in America. In addition to the many practicing physicians, Hindu Americans are also well-represented in medical research (NIH, CDC), medical journalism (Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN), public service (Dr. Vivek Murthy- ex Surgeon General), and business leaders in healthcare & pharma industries.

Holistic Health and Living

Hindu ancient books have always taught holistic living consisting of healthy, natural and sustainable lifestyle, based on preventive health care and the use of such practices as *Yoga, pranayama*, relaxation, and meditation. Examples - The Beatles put the spotlight on Indian holistic living in 1968, with the visit to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi who pioneered the transcendental meditation. Tirumalai Krishnamacharya, the 'Father of Modern Yoga' is widely known for being the architect of *vinyasa* and credited with the revival of *Hatha Yoga*. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the founder of the Art of Living Foundation has popularized *Sudarshan Kriya*. Recently, on a proposal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the UN adopted June 21 as '*International Day of Yoga*'. *Yoga* is known to help in auto-immune deficiencies and obesity, stress management, and handling aging gracefully.

Arts and Literature Session

For Hindus, arts and literature are deeply connected with religion and culture. Critically acclaimed authors like Amitav Ghosh, Rajesh Parameswaran, Hari Kunzru, Jhumpa Lahiri and others have contributed heavily to the American literature. Classical Indian dance and music of different genres -- South Indian, North Indian, classical, Hindustani, Carnatic -- are taught in schools and academies across the US. Thousands of Dance teachers offer training in Carnatic, Hindustani, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathak, filmi fusion, bhangra, bhajans, devotional & semi-classical songs and many other forms. Indians are getting involved in the entertainment industry as well. M. Night Shyamalan is firmly entrenched as a Hollywood director and Mira Nair has directed award-winning documentaries. Many actors of Hindu background such as Dev Patel, Parminder Nagra, Priyanka Chopra, Kunal Nayyar, Mindy Kaling have made a prominent place for themselves in the film and television industry.