

# Capacity Crowd Celebrates Community Service at Unity Dinner

By Staff Reporter  
India- West

Under the theme of a celebration of community service, the **Indo-American Community Federation's** "Unity Dinner 2006" united various ethnic communities in California, at a sold out gathering at the Newark-Fremont Hilton Hotel March 24.

Scores of public officials attended, including Congressman Mike Honda, California Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi, State Assembly members Alberto Torrico and Johan Klehs, and Alameda county supervisors, Mayors, Council members and elected and appointed board members.

“After the 9/11 (terrorist attacks), I saw a need for an event like this, which can bring public officials together with the diverse community leadership,” said IACF Founder Jeevan Zutshi, who stressed the need for Indian Americans to be more involved in issues like homelessness, hospitals and schools.

Garamendi said that the unity dinner “was a demonstration of unity of the human spirit in coming together and sharing histories and experiences.”

Honda, a third-generation Japanese American, in his keynote address, spoke for more than 10 minutes on the need for the diverse cultures to understand one another.

A cultural program featured Chinese and Japanese youth dancers, Hispanic folklore performances and Bangra by Matters of Community.

Music provided by Toofan Sounds “really made waves and will be always remembered for their excellent performance”, said IACF's new director, Suchitra Kumar.

Indian American Friendship Council founder, Dr. Krishna Reddy and Jeevan Zutshi, IACF Founder jointly honored Honda for his tireless support of cultural diversity.

The other two honorees were the Celebrate Fremont Committee for their successful celebration of the 50th anniversary of the city of Fremont, and the Fremont Chamber of Commerce for its progress in promoting ethnic harmony and cultural awareness.

The dinner was originally set for January to coincide with the birthday celebration of civil rights leader Martin Luther King. However, since Fremont was celebrating its 50th anniversary, the event was re-scheduled for March 24. It will return to a January date in 2007.