

India House of Worship celebrates 30 years

A CORRESPONDENT

The India House of Worship honored six women and two women's groups, describing them as 'unsung heroes' at its 30th anniversary of working for the community in metropolitan Washington DC.

The award citations were presented at a Surilu Sugam Sangeet and dinner program organized as part of the celebration that drew 500 people. Deeti and Krushanu Majumdar also performed at the event.

Those recognized 'in appreciation for sustaining the Samooh Priti Bhojan segment of the organization's programs year after year were Sushma Jani, Bhavana Desai, Damini Jain, Daksha Shah, Nita Desai, Yellari Thakore, the Silver Spring Bhajan group and the Jhaveri/Zaveri families group. They were each presented with a book, *Principles of Higher Living*, by Swami Sai Premanand of Toronto.

The program included a garba and a folk dance by Priti Vasavada's 16-girl group. The event concluded with an *aarti* offered to Amba Mataji.

The India House of Worship, located in Silver Spring, Maryland, provides a place of worship for the Indian-American community in and around Washington, DC.

At the event, B P Shah, IHOW secretary since its inception, announced his intention not to seek nor to accept nomination for a position on the IHOW board of trustees in the upcoming election.

He said although he was not completely disassociating from IHOW, it was time to delegate the day-to-day responsibilities to someone young and energetic.

A 100-page souvenir was released to mark the event. Louis Borunda, Maryland deputy secretary of state, brought and presented a message from Governor Robert Ehrlich.

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Community endorses election favorites

A CORRESPONDENT

The Indian Americans in the Bay Area organized a reception to the public officials and other leaders contesting in the elections pledging the community's support.

Congressman Pete Stark, state senate candidate Ellen Corbett, Mayor of Hayward Mike Sweeney, council members Anu Natarajan and Steve Cho of Fremont, Union City council member Jim Navarro, Hayward council member Bill Quirk, and Ohlone College trustees John Weed and Bill McMillin, were among about 80 public officials and leaders at the event.

A special guest was Steven M Kamp, author of the California Democratic Party's election law manual in every campaign since 1988.

The event, organized by Indo-American Community Federation, was held at the Fremont home of Usha and Jeevan Zutshi.

"The event was to show our support as well as to project the unity of the Indian community," said Zutshi, IACF's founder. "Currently people think that there is no unity among Indians. We may have problems as groups. But if we do not stand united and bring the politics of India here, we will not be taken very seriously by any one," said Zutshi, who is also a leader of the American Kashmiri community.

Given that politicians will always use differences in the community to their advantage, the IACF was trying to ensure more unity within the community," he said, adding that this event hoped to show evidence of such unity and to express the community's gratitude to these leaders, he said.

Leaders from several organizations, including the Federation of Indo-American Associations of Northern California, attended the event. Annu Navani of the Association of Physicians of Indian Origin; Om Choudhary from the Indo-American Chamber and Commerce; Naren Bakshi from the India Community Center, Sanjay Bhandari, CEO of Steemer Corp; real estate investor Dharam Salwan; attorney Mukesh Advani; and Sarbjit Hundal also attended the event.

Congressman Pete Stark, who is expected to serve on the powerful Ways and Means Committee in the next Congress, expressed his appreciation for the support from the Indian community. He praised the involvement of Indo-Americans in positive activities and their efforts to join the mainstream while still promoting an Indian culture and way of life.

Subroto Kundu introduced Ellen Corbett. Kundu was involved in her successful campaign for assembly and in her current campaign for state senate. She faces virtually no challenge from her Republican opponent. But she faces the wrath of the insurance industry, which she had publicly attacked for its many malpractices.

Kundu complimented her on her principled stand against managed medical care agencies and the health insurance industry, which he blamed for much of the ills of the health care scene in the country today. He gave her credit for running a clean and effective campaign.

The evening concluded with vote of thanks by Ashok Kumar, vice-president of the IACF and musical entertainment.

The IACF aims to showcase Indian culture to mainstream America also strives to serve the entire community by promoting Unity in Diversity.

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