



# ICRCC

India Community Religious & Cultural Center Inc.

Summer 2013

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*Founded in 1984 to unite  
and serve the Indian  
community of Central  
New York*

## Greetings from the Board President

**H**ello Everyone: Hope everyone is having a great summer! On June 1<sup>st</sup>, we celebrated the Spring Festival at Lincoln Middle school. It was truly a blast this year — a combination of great performances by the youth of our own Indian community and great food.

On behalf of ICRCC, I would like to thank Anju and Sunil Gupta for their tremendous support. Anju coordinated and organized the food court. It was a feast of a variety of ethnic foods from the north, south, east and west of India. Sunil did an amazing job in making the signs and displays.

A large number of families donated the food and helped in serving at the food court. ICRCC would like to thank all of them and recognize their contribution. The persons who donated the foods are: Bhagi Adavikolanu, Jayshree Prasad, Sabita Ashutosh, Aparna Varakanta, Sonal Pulikal, Kanika Mami, Vidya Goel, Mala Pal, Rachna

Zirath, Poonam Zirath, Monika Zirath, Aruna Kode, Falguni Vora, Saritha Sandiri, Veena Kapoor, Beena & Joseph Kappil, and Kavita Navati & family. ICRCC would like to thank Taj Palace Restaurant for donating the samosas. Thanks to Neerja Gajra and Charu Saini for their financial support and helping out at the food court. Thanks to Ramana for coordinating the performances and managing the stage. Special thanks to Ashvin Shah for taking care of the logistic at the school, Hemant Kale, Kishor Kanabar and Ramesh Gaonkar for their tremendous support.

We have already started preparing for Rasse Garba and Diwali. Diwali, the festival of lights, will be celebrated on Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at the The OnCenter. Please mark your calendars accordingly. The program's details will follow soon.

Additionally, we are working very hard on the new directory which we hope to release at the Diwali function. Please help us support this effort. If you have already provided the information, thank you. If you have not yet filled out the form for the new directory, please go to <http://www.icrcc.org/newdirectory.html>. This takes you directly to the form, please fill in all the required information as you would like to be displayed in the directory and click send. Please remind others who you know of and aren't ICRCC members so that we can include everyone and have a complete directory. I'm delighted to see the whole community work together this hard to pull off an event like this.

Enjoy the rest of your summer and hope to see you all soon.

## Fayetteville Woman Crowned Miss New York

**N**ina Davuluri, a 24-year-old woman from Fayetteville, was crowned 2013 Miss New York on July 13 during the annual pageant held in Staten Island. She reached the state-level competition by earning the title of Miss Syracuse earlier in the year. She is the daughter of Dr. Chaudhury and Sheela Davuluri. Her mother and sister, Meena, traveled to Staten Island to see the competition.

During the competition, all contestants had to participate in an interview, evening gown, swimsuit, talent and stage question categories. Nina was trained in classical Indian dance and performed a Bollywood fusion dance called "Mere Dholna (My Love)" with Romeo and Juliet themes. Each winner has a theme they plan to carry out during their term. Nina's is "Celebrating Diversity Through Cultural Competence." She has launched a project with the YMCA.

Learn more about the competition and Nina, in this Post-Standard article. You can also see more photos at <http://www.facebook.com/MissNewYorkMAO>.



Photo credit: The Staten Island Advance

## Last Call For Directory Information

ICRCC is in the final stages of publishing a community directory of members and area residents. This directory will help improve communication between the community members and help them connect with others that have common interests. If you have not yet completed submitted your information to be included, please visit <http://www.icrcc.org/newdirectory.html> for the online form.

### Congratulations, Graduates!

Julie Kappil, daughter of Beena and Joseph Kappil, is a 2013 graduate of Cicero-North Syracuse High School, having earned an Advanced Regents Diploma with Honors. At CNS, she was part of the National Honor Society, the UMOJA multicultural club, Star Leadership Program and the Optimist Club. She also received the NYS Comptroller's Award for Academic Excellence and Leadership and the Syracuse Chamber of Commerce Award for Community Service, among others. She plans to attend SUNY Albany and major in biology.

Rachna Raina, daughter of Ramesh and Surabhi Raina, is a 2013 graduate with honors of Harvard University with a degree in economics and computer science. At Harvard, Rachna served as the Model U.N. Director and conference executive in the U.S., Canada, Australia and Singapore; a case team leader of Harvard Consulting Group; an executive board member of the South Asian Association; and director of the Indian Dance Organization. She is now employed as an associate consultant for Bain & Co. in San Francisco.

Alexis Narsipur, daughter of Dr. Sriram Narsipur and Dr. Sonia Kragh, and granddaughter of Mrs. Pramila and Dr. N.V. Suryanarayana, graduated from Jamesville-DeWitt High School in 2013, one year ahead of schedule. She will be continuing her studies at the University of Connecticut with an Honors Scholarship.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

ICRCC will be holding its annual

### Diwali Celebration

on **November 9**

at the OnCenter in Syracuse!

More details to follow, but save the date and be sure to join us!

### Dance Group Available for Performances

SU Zinda is Syracuse University's South Asian Bollywood Fusion Dance Troupe. Founded in 2006, it focuses around Bollywood, traditional and contemporary Indian music and dance while combining elements of other styles and genres as well.

The group is interested in performing at community events across Central New York, including private events, weddings, parties and festivals. They will be performing at the New York India Festival at the NYS Fairgrounds on September 28, and they have previously performed for the Syracuse Kerala Association's Easter/Vishnu celebration.

Learn more about the group and see videos on their Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/zindadance](http://www.facebook.com/zindadance). Contact Khamini Harinarain & Shefali Halder, the 2013 dance captains, by emailing [sunaach@gmail.com](mailto:sunaach@gmail.com).



### Become a member of ICRCC!

Membership is \$30 per person or \$50 per family.

Applications and mailing address can be found online at [www.icrcc.org](http://www.icrcc.org).



# Thanks for Supporting Our Spring Festival

**W**e held our annual Spring Festival on June 1 at Lincoln Middle School in Syracuse and about 200 people from across our community attended. It was truly a community event, and everyone enjoyed both the cultural program and the food court.

Dressed in bright Indian dresses, the performers brought fun and excitement to a large audience of children, friends and their families. The ICRCC's spring celebrations are just as vibrant as the festivals in India – they are colorful, full of life and, most of all touch, the very soul of its people.

The Spring Festival began with opening remarks from Board President Pardeep Zirath, and Board Member Ramana Adavikolanu served as the MC.

The cultural program included a wide variety of performance, including: a Vande Mataram song; Indian classical dance (Bharatanatyam) performances by students of Smt. Rekha Balaji; a funny and entertaining skit on "Tales of Birbal" by 15 members of Children's Club; several dances by children and adults to Hindi and Telugu musical film hits; and finally a Rajasthani folk dance to end the program.

In appreciation of their performances and participation, all the performers received trophies. ICRCC would like to publicly thank all the performers – as well as their parents and choreographers – for their hard

work and efforts to put on such wonderful performances for our event and the community.

The evening ended with a dinner in our Food Court, which was filled with a variety of homemade ethnic foods from all parts of India. Many community members volunteered their time, efforts and culinary skills to preparing the feast. Taj Palace Restaurant also donated 200 samosas to round out the menu.

On behalf of ICRCC, we thank all the participants and attendees for your support. We hope to see you all at other ICRCC programs.



Submitted photos

## Thanks to our performers!

Nandika Rajaram	Shivam Nanavati
Aarohi	Abby Kambhampaty
Samhitha Adavikolanu	Arathy Kartha
Kaushala Mathura-nayagam	Dhanya Panamgatti
Vaishnavi Yelamareddy	Nithya Subramanian
Soor Vora	Tia Pulical
Rishma Vora	Trisha Adavikolanu
Ishan Gajra	Parthiv Valmikum
Inika Gajra	Anagha Sampath
Rati Saini	Ashrith Sampath
Rhea Saini	Swetha Lingam
Kanishka Sandiri	Kashyap Bendepudi
Krishika Sandiri	Yaswanth Devella
Richa Zirath	Lakshmi Achutha
Shruti Zirath	Pavitra Robin
Aditi Varakantam	Anika Kaur
Aishwarya Varakantam	Hemali Kanika
Milan Gupta	Meghna Thota
Pranathi Adhikari	Dakshina Sudhakar
Harshal Nanavati	Anu Irri
Dhruv Nanavati	

## 'Dr. Jay' Passes Away

**D**r. Jayakumar Thotambilu MD, MRCP, FACC, a long-time practicing cardiologist in Fulton and Upstate Medical University passed away suddenly on July 24. He was affectionately known as 'Dr. Jay' by all who knew and loved him. He always had a smile on his face and was very kind hearted and compassionate. He was born in India and studied medicine there. His postgraduate training was done in England and at Upstate Medical University, and his fellowship was at Long Island Jewish Hospital in New York City. He is survived by his wife Vardhini and daughter Nia. He was predeceased by his son, Ashu and his parents and a brother. He has a surviving brother and three sisters in India.

## Professor Gives Community Workshops on Indian Culture



**S**anjukta Dasgupta, a professor of English and Scholar-in-Residence at SUNY Oswego, led two free workshops for the community focusing on issues of Indian culture, ethnicity and identity. Dasgupta is a former Dean of Arts at Calcutta University and has written many articles and books. The first, "Postcolonial Theory and Texts" on July 17-18, explored issues and experiences surrounding imperialism, India's colonization and the ways that has affected the identity and cultural practices of India.

The second, "Indian Women in the Media" on July 22, addressed the representation of women in the print and visual media, including films, TV, ads and newspaper reports.

## NY India Festival Coming to State Fairgrounds

**T**he New York India Festival will be held at NYS Fairgrounds on September 28 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the Horticulture Building.

The event will feature a variety of Indian crafts, music, dance, theater, art and, of course, Indian food. There will also be a Bollywood Dance Party, an ethnic parade for children and adults, a vendor showcase featuring many businesses, organizations and services, free yoga and vedic chanting classes by the Upstate Yoga Institute, and performances by Syracuse University's Zinda Dance and Orange Bhangra teams.

Organizers are looking for community members interested in volunteering, exhibiting at a booth, participating in the parade and performing. For more information, visit [nyindiafestival.wix.com](http://nyindiafestival.wix.com) or contact Prabha Agrawal at [prabha\\_sp09@yahoo.com](mailto:prabha_sp09@yahoo.com) or 860-899-6344.

## Calendar of Events

**August 10** — BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir will hold Summer Picnic for Syracuse families and friends from 1 to 6 p.m. at Lysander Park, 8439 Smokey Hollow Road, Baldwinsville. Inspiration is Pramukh Swami Maharaj.

For more information, please contact Ghanshyambhai Patel at 427-3799 or Kishorabhai Kanabar at 263-4832.

**Sept. 29** — Shashank program and fundraiser at Syracuse University. Renowned flute and tabla performance group will give a community concert to raise funds for the flood relief efforts in Uttarakhand.

**October 11** — Navratri Raas Garba from 7 to 11 p.m. at Fayetteville-Manlius High School, 8201 East Seneca Turnpike, Manlius. Join the festivities for a night of Raas Garba and Dandiya Raas dance, with Aarti and snacks afterward. \$5 entrance fee, free for students.

For Prasad, contact Umaben Patel (447-1646), Shilpaben Patel (491-8776), Dr. Geetaben (449-2098) or Harshaben (492-6372).

**November 9** — ICRCC's annual Diwali Celebration, to be held this year at The OnCenter in downtown Syracuse. Stay tuned for details.

## Community Events

**"A Cricket in the Court of Akbar,"** a documentary film about Indian music, was one of the films shown during this year's Hamilton International Film Festival on August 2.

The film is a great story about Andrew Mendelson, an American student of Indian classical music, who travels to India to compete in the largest music competition in the state of Rajasthan.

Mendelson was at the screening and, as a special treat, performed on the sitar for the audience.

**I**CRCC sponsored a community seminar on Long-Term Care on June 29. The seminar addressed many questions, including what is long-term care, who needs it, cost, family support, insurance questions and alternative options to buying it. Presenters were Narinder Bains, a chartered retirement planning counselor; Kathy Kaffenberger, a financial consultant; and Joanne Squires, a financial services professional.



## Dr. Raj's 30th Anniversary Celebration



**S**udha Raj Nrithya Kalalaya celebrated the 30th anniversary of their Bharatanatyam Dance School during a community celebration on June 22. About 22 current and former students performed eight different dances, creating a spectacular show with movement, costumes and music.

Dr. Raj joined her students in the spell binding performances and memoirs of her journey as the Guru. She was recognized by the Syracuse University South Asia Center for her contributions and involvement over the 30 years with them.

Dr. Raj is also an instructor in the Department of Public Health, Food Studies and Nutrition at Syracuse University. (Photos submitted by Dr. Chakrapani Irri.)

## Members' News & Notes

**A**shvin Shah accompanied his 14-year-old grandson Bhavik to Eindhoven, The Netherlands, for the RoboCup Junior, an international project-oriented robotics competition for youth and teens. The competition was in June. Bhavik competed in the Rescue category, which requires participants to use robots to identify victims in recreated disaster scenarios. Bhavik was part of a six-person team from New Jersey that represented the United States at the competition.

**J**ulie Kappil will be performing her Bharata Natyam Arangetram at 2 p.m. on August 17 at Wellwood Middle School, 700 S. Manlius Street, Fayetteville. Please be seated by 1:45 p.m. All are welcome. Please RSVP by August 10 to joekappil@gmail.com or call 395-6148.

Arangetram is an on-stage performance to demonstrate a dancer's many years of training in her field. Julie is the daughter of Beena and Joseph Kappil and is a student of Smt. Rekha Balaji. Visit Julie's website for more information: [www.momentville.com/JulieKappilArangetram](http://www.momentville.com/JulieKappilArangetram)

**S**halini Suryanarayana has been doing some service work with Crouse Hospital to promote women's heart health. To help increase awareness about heart health issues, Shalini was asked to deliver a seminar at Crouse Hospital alongside cardiologist Dr. Jeffrey Asenzo. About 60 people attended the 90-minute presentation, which included a question-and-answer session.

Shalini is also a part of a campaign that includes her photos with her dog, Buddy, in newspapers, on billboards, and on Centro buses. Shalini was also asked record radio ads that are running on Clear Channel stations.

**S**onia Narsipur, daughter of Dr. Sriram Narsipur and Dr. Sonia Kragh and granddaughter of Mrs. Pramila and Dr. N.V. Suryanarayana, completed her first year of college at the University of Connecticut, where she made Dean's List. She is a 2012 graduate of Jamesville-DeWitt High School.

Do you have news about the CNY Indian community? Share it in the ICRCC newsletter!

Send an email to [smkollal@hotmail.com](mailto:smkollal@hotmail.com).