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"Sewa's purpose is not to seek comfort, but to reduce the discomfort of others through service and dedication..."

-Saumitra Gokhale

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Sewa Unveils Disaster Response Vehicle (DRV) to Provide Faster & More Effective Relief



Sewa Strengthens Its Relief Operations With First Disaster Response Vehicle (DRV)

Sewa International launched its first Disaster Response Vehicle (DRV) to strengthen emergency relief efforts during its 20th National Conference at Aum Ashram in San Antonio, TX, on May 2. The DRV is a purpose-built trailer equipped with emergency response equipment and designed to support rapid deployment during natural disasters and community emergencies.

The DRV is painted with the Sewa banner and the organization's guiding motto: "Service to Humanity is Service to Divinity". It is armed with personal protective equipment (PPE), shovels and mucking tools, safety vests, helmets, thermal insulated jackets, solar-powered generators, and other critical tools used in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.

Sewa San Antonio chapter leadership, dressed in Sewa's signature yellow safety vests and hard hats, led the formal unveiling ceremony. Members of Sewa's board and national leadership were also present.

With this launch, San Antonio becomes the first Sewa chapter in the nation to establish a dedicated Disaster Response Vehicle — creating a scalable model that can now be replicated by chapters in the Bay Area, Florida, Houston, and other regions across the country. The DRV is capable of being deployed anywhere in Texas within just a few hours, enabling faster and more effective disaster relief operations when communities need support the most.

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Sewa Milwaukee Raises Funds to Educate 300 Children Through SAC



Sewa Milwaukee, WI, Sponsor a Child (SAC) Concert, raised over \$412,000 funds

The Sewa Milwaukee, WI, Sponsor a Child (SAC) Fundraiser Concert, held on May 8, 2026, drew an overwhelming response from the community, with nearly 350 people attending. Around 150 families from Milwaukee came forward to sponsor the education of more than 300 students in India for an entire year through the Sponsor A Child initiative.

The fundraiser generated support amounting to over \$412,000 for the program in India, helping provide educational opportunities and hope to underprivileged children.

Dr. Hetal Nayak and Dr. Jayesh Shah Join Sewa's Advisory Board - New Responsibilities Announced in the National Conference



Sewa USA shared updates on new responsibilities at the National Conference in San Antonio, TX

Dr. Hetal Nayak, a renowned yoga practitioner, and Dr. Jayesh Shah from San Antonio have joined Sewa's National Advisory Board. Dr. Nayak, who led the San Antonio chapter for nearly a decade, helped build Aum Ashram into a center for yoga, early childhood education, and community service, creating an ecosystem inspired by the gurukul educational tradition.

Dr. Jayesh Shah, originally from Gujarat, runs a successful wound care medical practice in San Antonio. He is a past president of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) and currently serves as President of the Texas Medical Association. As a member of the National Advisory Board, Jayesh will help guide Sewa USA's healthcare programs across chapters, especially efforts addressing healthcare insecurity in underserved communities.

Several leadership role changes were announced at the conference: Dilip Karandikar was appointed VP – Technology, Anil Deshpande as VP – Community Engagement & Partnerships, and Nikhil Jain as VP – Marketing & Fund Development. Ramakrishna Joolukuntla, former chairman of the San Antonio Hindu temple, will be the new President of the Sewa San Antonio Chapter.

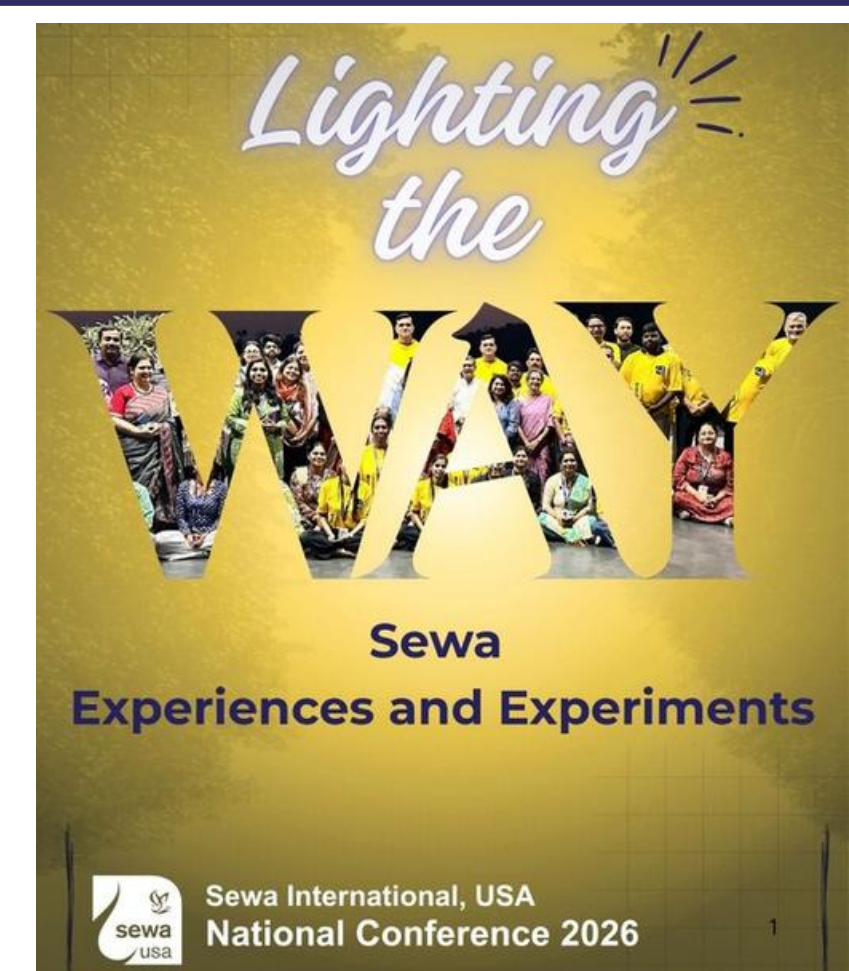
Welcoming the new leadership team in an email to volunteers, Srikanth Gundavarapu, Sewa's president, said, "Please join me in welcoming these volunteers into their new responsibilities at both the national and local chapter levels. We wish them the very best and pray that they help take our organization to newer heights in the spirit of Sewa."

Sewa Releases "Lighting the Way" eBook in the National Conference 2026

Sewa released the eBook *Lighting the Way: Sewa Experiences and Experiments* during the National Conference 2026, bringing together inspiring stories from volunteers across Sewa USA.

More than projects and initiatives, the pages capture the journeys of discovering purpose, building communities, learning through action, and experiencing the deep impact of service—both on society and on individuals. The collection includes heartfelt contributions from more than 30 volunteers.

Nikhil Jain, Vice President, Marketing, said, "As readers go through these stories, we hope they feel the same inspiration, warmth, and sense of belonging that shaped this collection. The Marketing and IT teams worked very hard to create this eBook, with the sincere hope that many will feel inspired to do more."



Inspiring volunteer stories highlight service, learning, and community impact

Nalanda VC Highlights Ethical Growth, Sustainability, and Institutional Reform in Sewa Conference



Prof. Chaturvedi, Vice Chancellor of Nalanda University, delivered key note address at the Sewa conference in San Antonio

Prof. Chaturvedi, Vice Chancellor of Nalanda University and a noted economist and policy thinker, delivered the keynote address at the Sewa conference in San Antonio on May 2. He described Nalanda University as a historical model of integrated learning and sustainability. Rather than functioning only as a center for degrees, Nalanda served as a hub for knowledge exchange, governance, and civilizational dialogue. It brought together diverse traditions inspired by leaders such as Gautama Buddha, Mahavira, and Guru Nanak.

Prof. Chaturvedi also highlighted Nalanda's interdisciplinary approach, where natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities were studied together rather than in isolation. Economics, he noted, was taught alongside ethics, ensuring technical knowledge remained connected to moral responsibility.

He said Nalanda was deeply connected to local communities and supported by surrounding villages. Scholars regularly engaged with communities, creating a model that combined intellectual, social, and spiritual development.

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Senior Group Supports Free Health Screenings in Rosharon, TX



Seniors toured the greenhouses and discussed ways to support local families in Rosharon, TX

Senior Sewa Sugar Land Group organized a field visit to a Sewa service project in Rosharon, TX, on May 16. Community member Phani explained how hurricanes damaged local homes and greenhouses and shared an overview of Sewa's rebuilding efforts in the last ten years in collaboration with the American Red Cross. Seniors toured the greenhouses, learned about fresh vegetable cultivation, and discussed ways to support local families.

Sewa also partnered with Dr. Lekshmi Nair to provide free medical lab checkups for Rosharon residents and Senior Sewa participants. The screenings included A1C, cholesterol, HDL, LDL, and triglyceride tests. Dr. Nair and her staff conducted the health screenings and assisted participants throughout the program. The group later visited a Buddhist temple in Rosharon, where seniors viewed displays of ancient stories and learned about the temple's cultural and spiritual significance.

Bay Area Builds 1,500 Naloxone Rescue Kits to Prevent Overdose Prevention



Volunteers prepared Naloxone Kits to prevent medicine overdose

On May 17, Sewa Bay Area, CA, volunteers came together for a Naloxone (a medication used to reverse opioid overdoses) Kit Building event focused on overdose prevention and community awareness. Through teamwork and service, volunteers assembled more than 1,500 naloxone rescue kits, each capable of helping save lives.

The event reflected the strength of community service and collective action in addressing important public health challenges. Sewa thanked all the volunteers who contributed their time and effort to support this impactful initiative and help build safer communities.

Burritos Prepared for Unhoused Residents in Milpitas, CA



Sewa volunteers prepared and distributed burritos in Milpitas, CA

Sewa Bay Area volunteers prepared 300 burritos for unhoused residents at the food service activity in Milpitas, CA, on May 9. Volunteers encouraged participants and supporters to sponsor future service activities to support individuals facing food insecurity. People can schedule service activities to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, memorials, and other occasions

Sewa highlighted that sponsorships provide an opportunity to celebrate personal milestones while supporting service initiatives that benefit those in need. Volunteers emphasized that such efforts help expand outreach activities and strengthen continued support for unhoused individuals across the Bay Area. As the activity took place during Mother's Day weekend, volunteers also shared heartfelt wishes with mothers for a joyful and love-filled celebration.

Sewa Supports Families in New Jersey through Food Bags Distribution Drive



Sewa volunteers distributed food bags across Chesterfield Township, New Jersey

Sewa South Jersey volunteers organized a large-scale food distribution effort at multiple service locations in New Jersey on April 29. Supported by donations collected during the Diwali food drive last fall, Sewa youth and family volunteers distributed nearly 420 bags of shelf-stable food and 400 pounds of non-perishable pantry items across the region. Volunteers delivered 270 bags of food to Westminster Presbyterian Church through two major drop-offs on April 5 and April 14. The food bags included pantry staples such as macaroni and cheese, pancake mixes, noodles, and soup packets.

On April 11, Sewa volunteers provided 50 meals to residents at Riverside Rehabilitation Center to support individuals receiving rehabilitation care. Later in the month, volunteers delivered 100 bags of shelf-stable food to the Allentown Food Pantry to help address end-of-the-month food shortages for local families. Sewa volunteers also donated 400 pounds of non-perishable food items to Trinity United Methodist Church in Bordentown, helping strengthen local food assistance efforts across the area.

Reducing Discomfort of Others - Sewa's Vision for a Harmonious World



Sewa advisor Saumitra Gokhale Addressed (far left) Attendees During the Concluding Session at the 20th National Conference. Chairman of the Sewa's Board Dr. Suresh Jain and National President Srikanth Gundavarapu were also on stage (middle and right in the second photo)

"Sewa's purpose is not to seek comfort, but to reduce the discomfort of others through service and dedication", Saumitra Gokhale, Sewa's Advisor, defined Sewa's mission in a single sentence at the 20th National Conference in San Antonio, TX, on May 3. While speaking at the concluding session of the conference, he reflected on leadership, service, and Sewa's organizational growth.

Dwelling on the deliberations at the conference on May 2 and 3, he observed the conference moved from excitement to a deep personal and collective reflection as senior Sewa karyakartas shared their experiences and inspired participants to reflect on their own responsibilities within Sewa.

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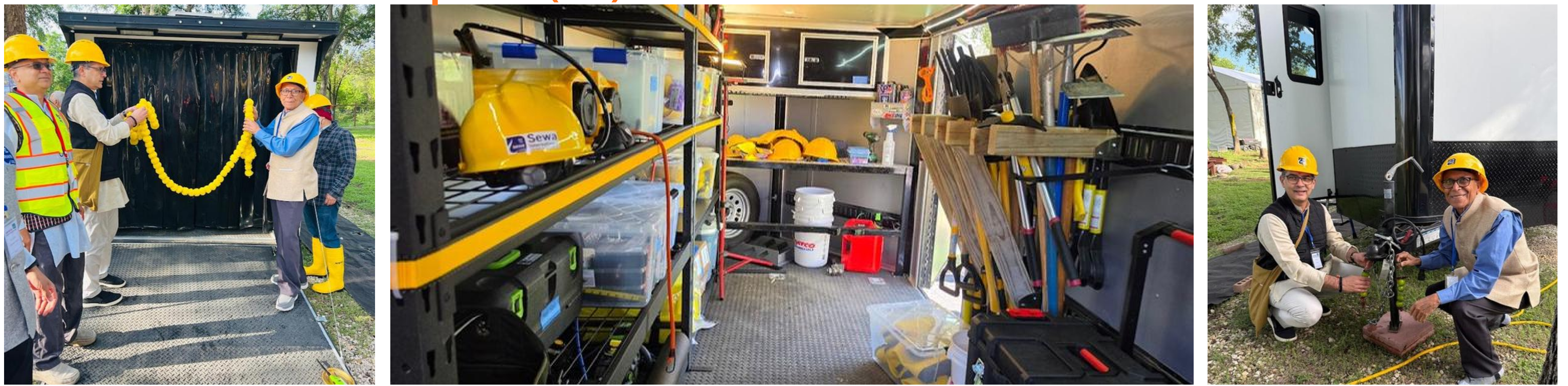
Volunteers Complete Phase Two Park Cleanup in Chesterfield, NJ



Sewa volunteers completed maintenance work at parks in Chesterfield, NJ

Sewa South Jersey and the Chesterfield Tree Tender Team completed Phase two of the park cleanup project by cleaning multiple parks in Chesterfield, NJ, on May 2. Around 25 Sewa volunteers joined the Tree Tender Team mentors to complete maintenance work at four parks that were not covered during the phase one cleanup drive on April 25. Volunteers pruned overgrown shrubs and low-hanging tree branches, removed litter, cleared winter debris, and inspected nearby stormwater basins and ponds.

Sewa's Disaster Response (DR) Vehicle Doubles as Mobile DR Control Center



Sewa's Disaster Response Vehicle (DRV) can be deployed anywhere in Texas within a few hours, enabling faster disaster relief operations

Vinayak Astekar, Associate Director – Disaster Recovery, Sewa International, said, “The first 72 hours after a disaster are critical, making advance preparedness essential for an effective volunteer response. This fully equipped, air-conditioned DRV will support volunteers by storing and dispensing essential gear while also serving as a mobile Sewa DR Control Center. While we hope it is never needed, staying prepared is vital.”

Founded in 2003, Sewa International has grown into an organization with 46 chapters across the US with over 5,000 volunteers. Until 2025, Sewa International has responded to 14 disasters in USA and another 36 disasters outside, providing Rescue, Relief, and Rehabilitation to help rebuild lives.

Reducing Discomfort of Others - Sewa's Vision for a Harmonious World Contd... from page 4

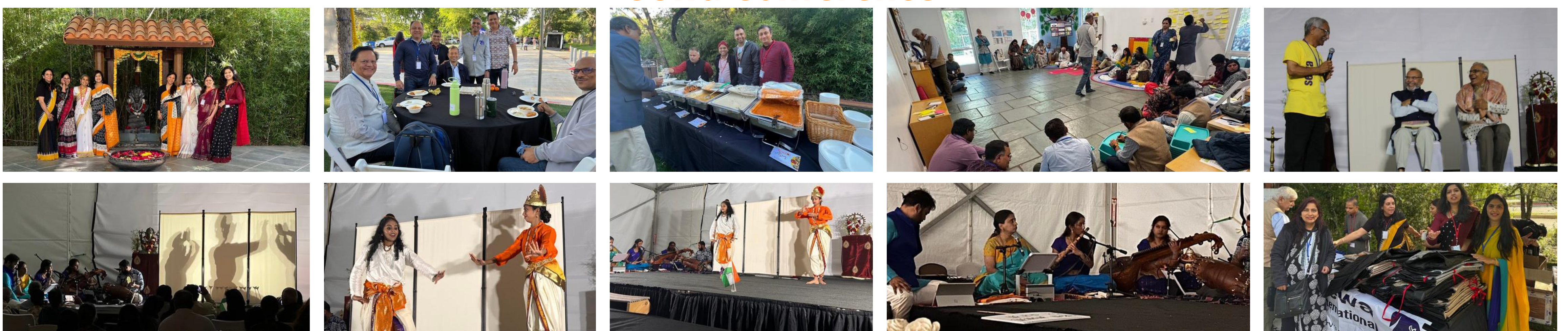


Gokhale also highlighted examples of grassroots impact. In New Jersey, he met a family that credited the LEAD (Leadership, Education, and Development) program with positively transforming their son. He said such experiences demonstrate Sewa's long-term impact on youth and families.

Speaking about international outreach, he highlighted Sewa's support for service initiatives in South Africa and Sri Lanka. He noted that Sewa South Africa acknowledged guidance from Sewa USA in strengthening its operations, while support for children in economically distressed regions of Sri Lanka continues to create meaningful change.

Gokhale emphasized that Sewa's growth must remain rooted in values such as integrity, compassion, inclusivity, and dedication. He encouraged participants to build stronger personal connections with karyakartas and continue expanding Sewa's service impact through collaboration and shared purpose.

Nalanda VC Highlights Ethical Growth, Sustainability, and Institutional Reform in Sewa Conference Contd... from page 2



Prof. Chaturvedi explained that the revived Nalanda University continues to follow these principles through a sustainable, net-zero campus powered by solar energy and water recycling systems. Students also work with nearby villages through research and development initiatives.

Addressing the future of institutional growth, he said traditional measures such as GDP (Gross Domestic Product) alone are no longer sufficient. He called for broader indicators that include mental health, environmental sustainability, social relationships, dignity, and trust within society.

He added that future institutions must function as interdisciplinary, ethical, and community-connected ecosystems. He emphasized the need to scale through collaborative networks, integrate technology with human values, and keep sustainability and social responsibility at the center of development.

Recycled Art Contest in Chesterfield, NJ, Encourages Household Items Reuse



Sewa volunteers displayed 23 recycled art entries in Chesterfield, NJ

Sewa South Jersey hosted the finale of its annual Recycled Arts & Crafts Contest at the Chesterfield Green Fun Fair in Chesterfield, NJ, on May 3. The contest encouraged local youth to create artwork and useful household items using recycled materials to promote environmental awareness. A total of 23 entries were displayed at the Sewa booth, featuring models, decorative pieces, and functional items made entirely from recycled materials.

Sewa organized an award ceremony recognizing participants for creativity, artistic design, and environmental messaging. The top three winners received cash prizes of \$100, \$75, and \$50. All participants also received \$10 Taco Bell gift cards. Jersey Meds Pennington and Taco Bell Wrightstown sponsored the event and supported the awards program.

Sewa Delivers 12,000 Meals in Six Years in Chesterfield, NJ



Sewa volunteers delivered 150 homemade meals in Chesterfield, NJ

Sewa volunteers prepared and delivered more than 150 homemade meals at the May Sewa Meal program in Chesterfield, NJ, on May 9. The meals were delivered to Westminster Presbyterian Church in Trenton and included veggie pasta, salad, bread, chips or pretzels, and brownies or cake.

The May program marked six years of the Sewa Meal initiative. During this period, Sewa volunteers and families have prepared and delivered nearly 12,000 meals. The program is fully funded by donations from Sewa families, who sponsor meals to celebrate special occasions or to honor the memory of loved ones.

Residents Use Free Document Shred Event in Marlton, NJ



Sewa volunteers assisted nearly 300 residents to shred confidential documents in Marlton, NJ

Sewa South Jersey volunteers supported the Evesham Township Public Works Annual Free Document Shred Event in Marlton, NJ, on May 3. Volunteers directed vehicles through the Municipal Services Complex yard to maintain traffic flow and assisted residents by unloading boxes and bags of confidential documents from their vehicles. Nearly 300 residents safely disposed of sensitive materials, including bank statements and tax returns.

Township officials appreciated the volunteers for their efficient work and professional conduct during the event. Sewa volunteers also supported the township's recycling efforts by helping residents properly dispose of paper waste and confidential materials.

Participants Join Wellness Workshop in San Diego, CA



Sewa volunteers joined yoga and wellness activities in San Diego, CA

Sewa San Diego organized the 9/11 Yoga and Nutrition Workshop at the Day of Service program in San Diego, CA, on May 9. The event brought together 30 volunteers and participants for sessions focused on yoga, nutrition, and sustainable living. Participants attended a guided yoga session, learned about healthy eating practices, and created reusable paper bags as part of a sustainability activity.

Ayumi Mizumoto, multicultural integrative health nutritionist and founder of SunGreen Nutrition International, served as the guest speaker. She shared insights on culturally sustainable nutrition, healthy living, and the integration of traditional practices with modern nutrition science, drawing on her experience working with UNICEF across India, South and Central Asia, and the Middle East.

Chicago Gala Engages Attendees and Expands Volunteer Support in IL

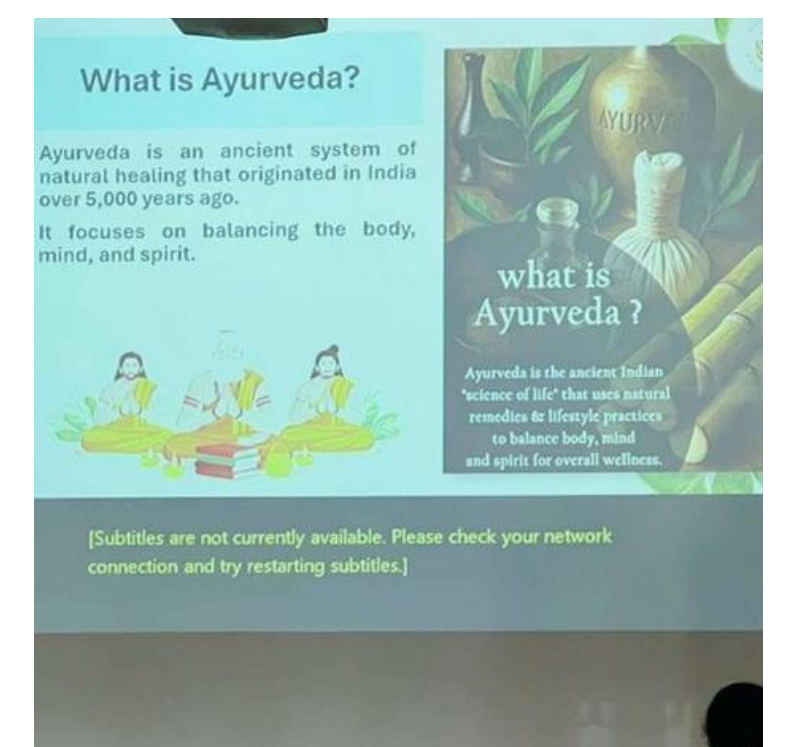


Sewa volunteers hosted the gala in Chicago, IL, to raise funds for LEAD, SAC, SHE & Other programs

Sewa International Chicago Chapter hosted its first annual gala with more than 180 attendees at the Pearl Banquet & Conference Center in Chicago, IL, on May 16. Consul (Press, Information & Culture) from the Indian consulate Sanjeev Kumar Pal attended the gala along with community leaders and supporters. Representing Sewa nationally, Anilji Deshpande introduced Sewa's mission and programs to attendees, more than half of whom were new to Sewa.

The event highlighted Sewa initiatives, including Sponsor a Child (SAC), SHE, LEAD, Senior Sewa, and Serve 9/11. Performances by Vivek Aggarwal, Saloni Nahar, and DJ Bharat Oza entertained guests, while Tori Franklin delivered a motivational address.

Mental Wellness Session Explores Ayurveda and Holistic Healing in Texas



Sewa volunteers organized the "Mental Wellness - The Ayurvedic Way" session in Houston, TX, for participants

Sewa International USA, in collaboration with Jain Vishwa Bharti (JVB) and Vande Wellness, organized a session on "Mental Wellness - The Ayurvedic Way" at the wellness program in Houston, TX, on May 10. The session examined mental wellness through the perspectives of Ayurveda and modern medicine, helping participants understand the root causes of challenges such as anxiety and depression.

Speakers explained Ayurveda's personalized healing approach, which focuses on balancing the three energy elements (Tridosha—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) and addressing root causes rather than only symptoms. Participants also learned about traditional herbs and natural remedies that may support mental well-being under expert guidance. The session encouraged participants to adopt mindful and sustainable practices that support long-term mental wellness and overall well-being.

Volunteers Sort Donated Clothes for Thrift Store in Cumming, GA



Sewa volunteers sorted donated clothes at The Place in Cumming, GA

Sewa volunteers sorted donated clothes at “The Place” thrift store in Cumming on May 17. Working in partnership with The Place, volunteers inspected, categorized, and prepared donated items for reuse, display, or recycling. The team processed about two full bins of clothing donations. Their efforts helped the store to sort clothes by quality and ensure that donated items were organized efficiently for individuals and families served by The Place.

Four LEAD (Leadership, Education, and Development) and three adult volunteers participated in the project, contributing a total of 14 volunteer hours. Through this effort, Sewa supported the thrift store’s mission to serve underserved families while promoting sustainability through clothing reuse and waste reduction.

Women Participate in Mother's Day Hike in Atlanta, GA



Sewa volunteers joined 90 women hikers in Atlanta, GA

Over 90 women participated in the Mother's Day Hike under the SELF initiative in Atlanta on May 16. Dr. Smith, Associate Professor and breast cancer researcher at Emory University, shared her personal experience with breast cancer and emphasized the importance of self-care, regular health screenings, and wellness practices for mothers.

Sewa volunteers introduced participants to the organization's work in healthcare, food insecurity relief, and K-8 education programs. They also spoke about how mothers exemplify the spirit of selfless service by caring for their families.

Bay Area Volunteers Support Goshala Cleanup and Cow Care in CA



Sewa volunteers cleaned the Goshala and cared for cows in Milpitas, CA

Sewa Bay Area volunteers participated in a cleanup activity at Sri Krishna Balaram Goshala in Milpitas, CA, on May 23. Volunteers cleaned in and around the sheds, fed the cows, and helped maintain the Goshala premises.

The activity reflected Sewa’s focus on teamwork, compassion, and selfless service. Volunteers worked together to improve the cleanliness and upkeep of the space.

Upcoming Events

- June 19–21, 2026: Cricket for Sewa – U11 Draft Tournament (Charity Cricket Festival) | CCA Chat Bhavan Field, 277 Rodonovan Dr, Santa Clara, CA
- June 21, 2026: HSS, Yoga with a Doc – Sewa IDY 5K Walk/Run | George Bush Park, Katy, TX
- June 21, 2026: HSS – Sewa IDY 5K Walk/Run | George Bush Park, Katy, TX

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