

Houston Chapter's Golf Event Marks Third Successful Year



Sewa volunteers at the third annual charity golf event in Pearland, TX. A special golf ball with Sewa logo (right)

Sewa's Houston Chapter organized its third annual charity golf event, commemorating 9/11, at Clear Creek Golf Course in Pearland. Madan Luthra, recipient of the Texas Governor's Volunteer Award, highlighted Sewa International's impactful service projects, emphasizing the idea of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" - the world as one family. Anup Bhasin, Joint Coordinator, greeted attendees and introduced Sewa Ambassadors for Pearland ISD. Srikanth Gundavarapu, Sewa's National VP of Fund Development, teed off the event with a special Sewa golf ball.

The tournament had 63 players from Houston and Carthage, including an all-women's team and the Pearland Police Department. There was also an exciting "Beat the Pro" challenge at hole 5, led by Abbey Daniel. Sewa volunteers, including high school students, organized the event. Anup Bhasin and Jaivijay Ramu led the team. Sewa Ambassador Sumedha Shanker expressed gratitude to sponsors -- that included the Law Office of Leena Bhasin, Dr. Vishalakshmi Batchu, MD, Best Brains -- Pearland, Maharana Association of North America, Yogi India Grocers, and Biryani Express Restaurant.

Colorado Students Raise Funds for SHE Project



Beneficiaries at the newly constructed toilet funded by the Sewa's Colorado chapter in Sankara village, Chhattisgarh, India

Students in Colorado have successfully raised over \$650, channeled into the Sanitation, Hygiene, and Empowerment Projects for the Girl Child (SHE) project, facilitating the construction of a toilet in an underprivileged government school in Sankara village, Chhattisgarh, India.

Srinidhi Gorla, a student volunteer at the Colorado chapter, collaborated with fellow volunteers under the guidance of Prasad Koranne to host the "Hike for Hygiene" fundraising event.

Choosing Lake McIntosh as the walkathon venue, over 25 individuals participated in the event.

Srinidhi worked on a social media campaign to spread the word via WhatsApp, Snapchat, and personal interactions weeks in advance. On the event day, Srinidhi's family supported her by providing refreshments and serving as mile markers. Sewa volunteers took the opportunity to inform participants about Sewa International initiatives and work during the event.



Sewa volunteers participated in the "Hike for Hygiene" event

Sewa Dancing Stars 2023: A Celebration of Indian Dance and Culture



Adult participants from the classical dance category

The Sewa Dancing Stars 2023 event took place on August 26 at the Houston Durga Bari, with over 1,100 attendees braving the heat of the summer. The competition featured more than 500 participants, ranging from 5-year-old children to adults, competing in three distinct genres: classical, folk dances, and Bollywood dancing.

Guests included the Consul General of India, D.C. Manjunath, and his wife Arpana Manjunath, Judge Christian Becerra of District Court 434th, and Bangar Reddy, the Community Outreach Coordinator for Congressman Troy Nehls.

There were 33 award winners across various age groups and genres, including four grand prize winners. Now in its seventh year, the event is one of the most prestigious dance competitions in the Houston Metropolitan area. In addition to showcasing the beauty of Indian culture through dance, Sewa Dancing Stars also supports the ASPIRE community program, which provides education to underserved and immigrant children.

Over 60 volunteers, including 20 youth volunteers, contributed more than 7,000 hours of volunteering over the past six months to make the event a success. The event was emceed by Puja Agrawal, Priyanka Jain, and Himi Haridas.



A captivating still from the Children's classical dance performance

Volunteers Unite for Teamwork at SERVE Event



Sewa volunteers working on a flower bed in a garden in Cinco Ranch, TX

Sewa volunteers gathered at the Katy Cinco Ranch YMCA on September 10, 2023 for the SERVE event led by Rajesh Patwari and Chetana Samal.

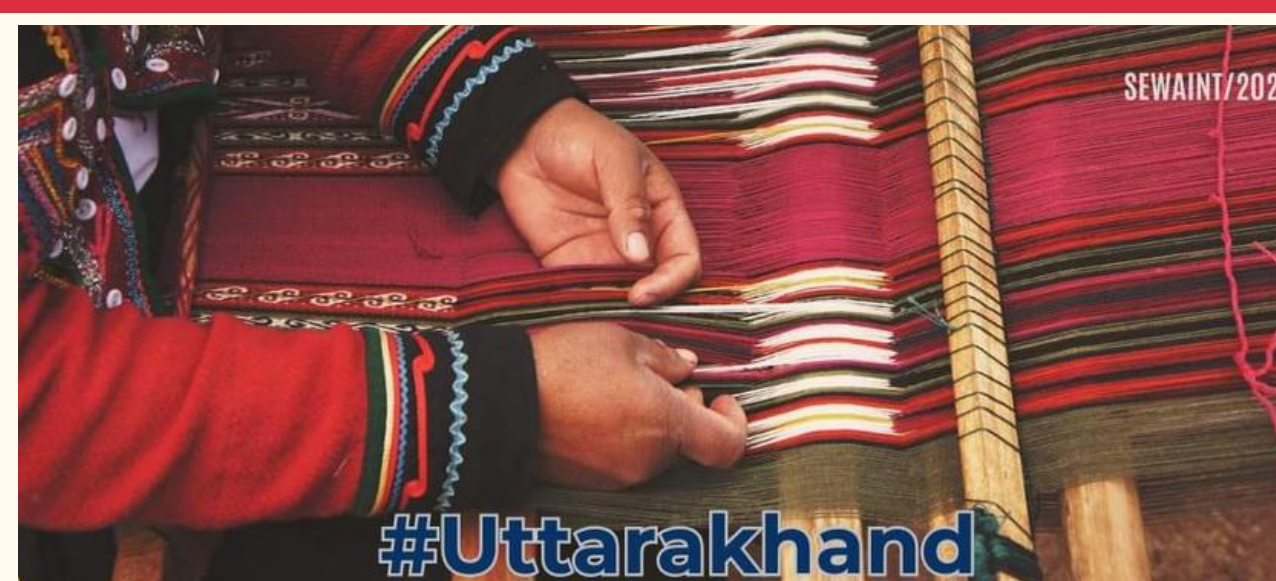
The event, which aimed to transform a neglected grassland into a flourishing garden, demonstrated the power of teamwork.

The task was to load ten cubic yards of soil into four expansive flower beds. What seemed like a nearly impossible feat became a success due to the dedication of volunteers. Participants, including children and parents worked together showcasing the power of intergenerational collaboration.

The SERVE event marks the beginning of what promises to be a flourishing garden and a thriving community, according to the team leaders.

Sewa Needs Fashion Technology Graduates to Train Rural Artisans

Sewa International is offering an opportunity for fashion technology graduates with a passion to serve those in need to help empower rural women and artisans in Tapovan and Joshimath, nestled in the Himalayas.



**Serve a Community
Be a Volunteer**

- Position: Trainer for Wool craft Weaving
- Duration: 45 days (September to November)
- Location: Tapovan & Joshimath
- Qualification: Fashion Technology Graduate

Contact us at Ukd@sewainternational.org

Sewa's goal is to establish sustainable sources of income and employment through non-farm-based handicraft activities, focusing on weaving.

Volunteer trainers play a pivotal role in imparting their expertise and skills to the local community.

This opportunity offers the chance to make a real impact while living in the breathtaking surroundings of the Himalayas.

Volunteers can find the necessary information here: Ukd@sewainternational.org.

Schools, Yoga, and Wellbeing: Model Village Comes up in Chhattisgarh, India



Women beneficiaries of the model village in Durg District, Chhattisgarh

Sewa International has established a model village in Chhattisgarh, India. Currently focused on eight villages in Durg District, Sewa has built twelve school toilets, benefiting over 1,000 students. It has also conducted menstrual awareness sessions for girls and offered yoga and self-defense workshops to enhance their well-being and safety. In rural and tribal regions, Sewa has been running skill development programs, and teaching tribal art, wrought iron work, painting, Tumi art, and jewelry making to women. Sewa also provides training, facilitates market linkages, and helps the women sell their products, boosting their economic prospects. A short video of the model village is available at - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hx6fud9Cbyg>

SHE-CAF Team Celebrates Ganesh Chaturthi across India

The Sewa SHE-CAF team organized Ganesh Chaturthi puja celebrations from September 18 to 22 at several centers in India, including those for *Sanitation, Hygiene, and Empowerment Projects for the Girl Child (SHE)*, and *Covid Affected Families (CAF)*. The festivities, organized in the states of Jharkhand, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu, united people from various backgrounds.

Around 200 women and student beneficiaries participated in these celebrations.



Sewa SHE-CAF team celebrating Ganesh Chaturthi

Sewa Houston Celebrates Thirtieth 5K Walk/Run



Houston SELF team performing Yoga at Tom Bass Regional Park in Pearland, TX

Sewa International's Houston SELF team celebrated a milestone by organizing their thirtieth annual 5K walk/run event in Pearland on September 2, uniting the community in a day of fitness and companionship. Partnering with Sri Meenakshi Temple Society, Love to Share Foundation America, Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USA, and Manabadi, the event attracted over 120 participants.

Set against the scenic backdrop of the lakeside jogging trail at Tom Bass Regional Park, the event was a testament to the community's dedication to health and togetherness. Youth volunteers played an integral role in ensuring the event's success.

Sewa Volunteers Respond to Floods in Himachal Pradesh



Sewa volunteers served during Delhi & Himachal Pradesh floods

In response to the recent floods in Himachal Pradesh, India, Sewa volunteers demonstrated extraordinary courage by risking their lives to provide essential medical care to those who were stranded by flood waters and were in dire need.

Shyam Parande, head of Sewa International, India, said, "In the darkest hours of this natural disaster, the volunteers' unwavering dedication and bravery have shone as beacons of hope". Money is being raised for relief work, and donors can contribute via the following link: <https://www.sewaua.org/>



Volunteers providing essential food items to flood victims. A woman beneficiary (right) carrying the items she received

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Yash Havalimane

Yash Havalimane, a dynamic entrepreneur and investor, is the President of a diverse portfolio of companies spanning IT to Real Estate. Beyond his business ventures, he is a dedicated Sewa volunteer, passionately engaged in Social and Community Services. His focus is on Sewa projects involving spirituality, religion, culture, education, and disaster relief.



Rajesh Patwari

Rajesh Patwari has been a valued member of the Sewa International family since 2020, actively participating in the Houston, TX, and Pittsburgh, PA chapters' activities. His involvement has been instrumental in making Youth Empowerment programs, such as ASPIRE, LEAD, and Get Inspired (GI) successful. Rajesh has demonstrated his commitment by contributing his time to Family Services, SERVE, and SELF programs.

Sewa Seniors of Sugarland at 9/11 Event



Seniors of Sewa participated at 9/11 event in Sugarland, TX

The "Seniors Sewa Sugarland" group assembled for a unique event blending culture, science, music, and tradition on September 9, 2023. Srikanth Gundavarapu, Sewa Atlanta Chapter President, addressed the gathering. Participants celebrated "Rakhshabandhan" by tying threads (Rakhi) to each other's wrists, symbolizing brotherhood and family bond.

Social Media Competition for Students

Sewa International is offering the #mysewaproject competition for students who care about community service, in which students record a 1-minute video and post it on TikTok, Instagram/Facebook, or YouTube about a project that helps others. Students can enter with their current, planned, or past projects. Winners get funds for their chosen Sewa project. Videos must not exceed one minute, include the participant's voice (face shown is recommended but not required), and provide participant details (name, school, grade, and email). The submission deadline is November 11.

The competition includes three categories: National Student, College, and High School. College and high school students can win \$1,000 and an award. Middle school students can win \$500 and an award. For inquiries, contact events@sewausea.org.

Sewa Welcomes New Team Leaders

Sewa International has inducted new leaders to its executive and administrative teams. Rohit Deshpande, who works in Information Technology, has accepted his new role as the Director of the SERVE Program. Most of the Sewa chapters execute the SERVE program, which has been Sewa's main program since its inception. With a new AmeriCorps grant to promote the 9/11 Day of Service, this program will expand to reach many more cities in partnership with various organizations.

Rohit, his wife Shweta, and their two children live in Washington, DC. He was previously the chapter coordinator for the Sewa DC chapter, and currently, his wife Shweta is responsible for coordinating Sewa Yatra.

Shraddha Dayalkar, who has recently joined Sewa as a Team Assistant, brings over twelve years of HR and administrative experience from diverse industries, including Education, Distribution, and Manufacturing. She resides in Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Upcoming Events

- Oct 7, 2023: SvaraSewa 2023 | Henderson High School, West Chester, PA
- Oct 8, 2023: Sewa DC: Bharatiya Khel Diwas - Kho Kho Competition | Rossborough Ln, College Park, MD
- Oct 14, to 15, 2023: Sports4Sewa Cricket 2023 | Volunteers Park Lower Field, Parsippany, New Jersey
- Oct 14, 2023: Sewa - HCA Refugee Education Fundraising 5k walk/run | Hermann Park, Houston TX
- Oct 15, 2023: Sewa DC Youth - October Monthly in-person meeting | Westpark Dr, McLean, VA
- Oct 15, 2023: SERVE - Oct Volunteering @ Bayou City Art Festival | Bagby St, Houston, TX
- Oct 21, 2023: Sewa Dandiya LA | Gilbert Arena at California Lutheran University Olsen Rd, Oaks, CA
- Oct 29, 2023: Sewa DC 5K Run - Support Health Clinic for Refugees | Ox Road, Lorton, VA

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