

## LEAD Celebrates Successful Fourth National Convention



Over 750 LEAD (Leadership, Education, and Development) volunteers from 29 chapters across the US participated in Sewa's fourth National Youth Convention held virtually on July 27. The four-hour conference featured panel discussions on climate change, academic pressure on students, social media, cultural heritage, AI and its Impact, Youth and Civic Engagement, and Balanced Living.



**Sandesh Shinde**

Sandesh Shinde, design leader at SAP, and co-founder of Green Cell, Inc., an environmental organization in Atlanta, GA, led a discussion on climate change.

Shinde highlighted rising carbon (CO2) levels across the globe and urged participants to spread awareness about combating climate change through steps like reducing electricity use and adopting a sustainable lifestyle.

The chief guest at the summit, Suhag Shukla, Executive Director of the Hindu American Foundation, encouraged participants to continue selfless service. She introduced the concept of dharma, punya, and sukham (DPS), which translates to duty, good deeds, and happiness as the path to lead a meaningful life. Reflecting on a year of sewa by 1,500 volunteers who contributed over 150,000 hours, Shukla highlighted the impact of selfless service on the community.



**Ami Ganatra**

Guest of honor and the founder of Indus American Bank, Anil Bansal, emphasized the importance of community service. Sewa showcased the 9/11 Sewa Day of Service Project at the conference. The 9/11 Sewa Day of Service is a year-long environmental campaign with 3,100 volunteers contributing 7,600+ hours across 75 cities, featuring more than 100 events.

The keynote speaker, Ami Ganatra, a well-known author, discussed Indic wisdom and environmental interconnectedness.



**Suhag Shukla**



**Anil Bansal**

LEAD delegates emphasized the importance of everyone's role in environmental protection by passing a resolution, "Environmental Protection – Everyone's Responsibility," at the conference.

## Response to the Escalating Crisis in Bangladesh



**Sewa volunteers provided essential supplies, including food, medical kits, and water bottles to the riot victims in Bangladesh**

What began as a student protest in early August tragically escalated into a full-scale attack on minority communities in Bangladesh. Sewa International allocated \$10,000 from its emergency fund for immediate relief and launched a fundraising campaign to support the victims. Volunteers provided essential supplies, including food, medical kits, and water bottles.

Recent violence has affected 58 out of 64 districts in the country, impacting over nine million Hindus. The situation is dire, with women and girls living in constant fear. Hindu temples have been vandalized, homes and businesses looted, and many people have suffered severe violence, including rape and murder.

The Human Rights Congress for Bangladesh Minorities (HRCBM) has been addressing these genocidal crimes, providing aid, legal support, and long-term advocacy to the victims, since 2003.

In these dark times, Sewa stands with Bangladesh's Hindus and other minority communities, supporting the Indian Government's efforts to protect lives, heritage, and monuments. We urge the interim Bangladeshi government to take strict measures to ensure the safety and security of minorities," Sewa International President Arun Kankani said.

## Healthy Living through the "Healthy SELF" Program

The documentary, 'Eating for Tomorrow,' a special extended version of the popular film 'Eating Our Way to Extinction,' is receiving rave reviews. It spreads awareness about the steps we can take to combat climate change.

In an email to the volunteers, Sewa International President Arun Kankani said he watched the movie and highlighted its research-based findings on how switching to a plant-based diet can save humans from self-created extinction. He recommended watching the documentary to all, urging Sewa volunteers to lead by example by committing to healthy habits. He requested all to share success stories in meetings and team up with peers for mutual support.

In his message, he mentioned Sewa's "Healthy SELF" program, which aims to create awareness about healthy lifestyle.



Focusing on Sleep, Exercise, Living in Presence, and Food, the SELF initiative encourages community members to prioritize their health for overall well-being.

Arun Kankani said by promoting healthy living, Sewa International strives to have a positive impact across communities.

## Intern Graduation and Awards Ceremony



**Chapter Coordinator Nikhil Jain addressed the gathering**

On August 18, the Sewa Houston chapter concluded its internship program with a graduation and award ceremony for the Get Inspired Houston (GIH) and Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD) interns.

Fort Bend County Judge Juli Mathew attended the event as the chief guest. Cardiologist and Chapter President Dr. Pranav Loyalka from HCA Houston Healthcare Medical Center, and the coordinator Nikhil Jain attended the event.

Sewa presented awards to recognize the achievements of the 48 interns, who came from diverse backgrounds and countries of origin, reflecting the program's theme of "International Awareness". The 10-week summer internship program provided valuable experience through community engagements and disaster preparedness training, which the interns successfully applied during Hurricane Beryl.

Arushi Suji, the Internship Coordinator, Chapter's Chief of Programs, Kavita Tewary, and the Chapter's Executive Member Alpana Loyalka collaborated to ensure the internship's and the event's success.

## Support for Govinda Go-Shala in Belfast, NY

Sewa is raising funds for the Govinda Go-Shala (a cow shelter) in Belfast, NY. The shelter is seeking to raise \$4,000 for winter hay and \$6,000 to upgrade the shelter's water system. Steve and Linda Voith, the husband-wife team, have been caring for cows for over 40 years. As Steve approaches his 70th year and Linda's 60th, they need help with barn chores and seek volunteers to stay and assist them.

They recently rescued two injured cows, from a Vermont dairy farm. These cows never had names, only numbers 73 and 27, and the couple named them Mangala and Kunti.



**Labangalatika, the newborn calf, with her mother Mangala**



They chose them due to their injured udders, which made them unusable as milch cows. Steve asked the Vermont dairy farmer to save Kunti's calf and send him to the shelter along with his mother.

The three of them settled have settled in well with the herd, and after waiting since June, Mangala has given birth to a calf, Labangalatika (a Bengali sweet dish). The Voiths have nine cows with one more arriving soon, and Sewa is raising this money to help them.

Donation Link:

<https://sewausa.org/SevaforCowsattheGovindaGoshala>

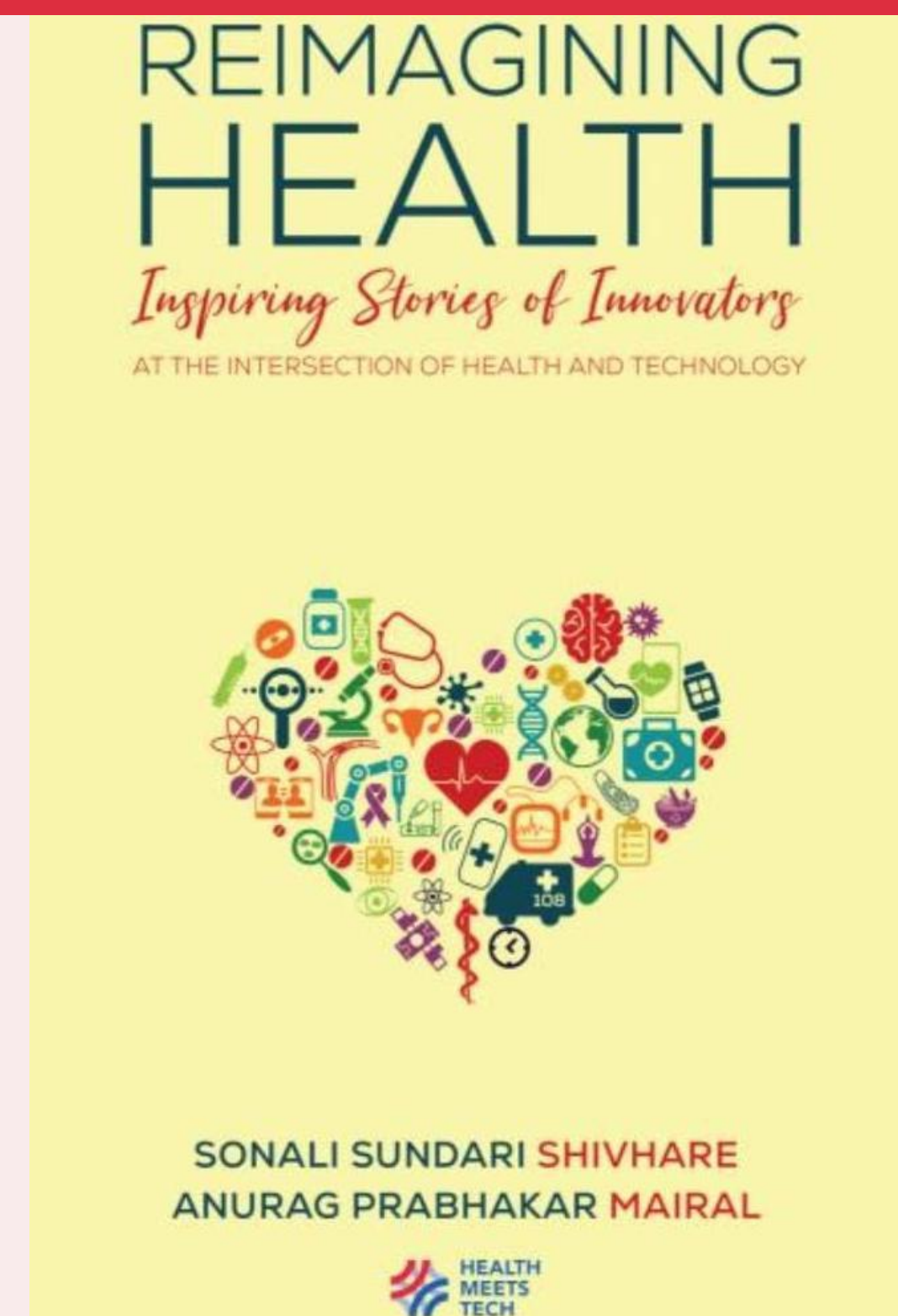
## "Reimagining Health" -- A Book Authored by Dr. Anurag Mairal

A newly released book, "Reimagining Health: Inspiring Stories of Innovators," has a Sewa connection. Dr. Anurag Prabhakar Mairal, Bay Area Chapter President, is one of its authors. Sonali Sundari Shivhare, a Sewa volunteer and donor, co-authored the book. The 259-page paperback has been on bookshelves since July and has received a 5.0 out of 5-star rating from the reviewers.

"Reimagining Health" offers insightful stories beyond traditional case studies, providing a human perspective on health technology innovation. Through authentic and real-life narratives, the book provides an in-depth look at ideas utilizing technology to improve healthcare. It views innovators' experiences, creations, and the people who benefit from them through a human lens. The triumphs innovators achieve, and the challenges they face make a fascinating read, helping readers get a glimpse of the personal journeys of innovators.

The book's over twenty stories showcase the dynamism of medical and health technology innovation worldwide. Each narrative offers a portrayal of the dedication and perseverance required to achieve breakthroughs in this industry.

The book also offers a forward-looking perspective on the future of health technology, highlighting emerging trends and possibilities that could reshape healthcare. Additionally, it empowers readers to become knowledgeable consumers of health technology, helping them understand the development and application of these innovations. This knowledge enables readers to engage actively and confidently in their healthcare decisions and discussions with healthcare providers.



I encourage you to read "Reimagining Health" and share it with people in your networks, especially aspiring innovators in medicine, engineering, business, bio-design, and education. The book will inspire and empower the next generation to make a difference in healthcare.

The book is available at Amazon -- <https://a.co/d/04OecxPT> - and elsewhere.

### About the authors:

Dr. Anurag Mairal, a Stanford Adjunct Professor, co-founded Orbees Medical and leads health tech innovation. He is President of Sewa International, Bay Area, and holds a PhD in chemical engineering and an MBA. Dr. Mairal has published over 30 works and holds seven patents.

Sonali Sundari Shivhare, the co-founder of Health Meets Tech, has over 17 years in clinical research and health tech. She has led UCLA's Women's Health Clinical Research Unit and is pursuing a PhD in Regulatory Science. She also founded, The Peace Warrior, a nonprofit, focused on humanitarian work and youth leadership.

## Across India: Some Success Stories



**With support from LEAD interns, girl students now have access to proper sanitation facilities**

Nirmala Vishwakarma, from Bastar, Chhattisgarh, a beneficiary of Sewa's SHE-CAF program, has achieved financial independence through her newfound skill in wrought iron handicrafts. Her success, which has allowed her to educate her children, has inspired other women in her village to pursue this traditionally male-dominated craft. Her story can be accessed here: <https://youtu.be/ITfvjEUuERC>

Dr. Kamal Gupta contributed to the construction of 20 toilets in rural Jharkhand schools, supported menstrual awareness camps, and funded yoga and self-defense workshops for over 500 girls. Dr Kamal Gupta's testimonial can be accessed here: [https://youtu.be/97\\_QJml&yvc](https://youtu.be/97_QJml&yvc)

The Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD) students helped build over 50 toilets in rural schools across Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Karnataka. They also helped organize menstrual awareness sessions benefiting over 8,000 girls.

More details on LEADs support to the SHE initiative are available here: [https://youtu.be/POO\\_6vj8\\_Jc](https://youtu.be/POO_6vj8_Jc)

Sewa recently completed four new toilets at the Madhyamik Vidyalaya, Kalyan Gaon, Pune, benefiting 104 students, with support from Rotary International, Pune, and Sewa's Bay Area Maharashtra Mandal donors. Sewa's Sanitation, Hygiene, Empowerment (SHE) team distributed reusable, eco-friendly sanitary napkin kits to over 150 girls and women in menstrual awareness workshops across Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

The SHE team is supporting transgender empowerment through skill development programs, including micro-enterprises for five in Nagpur, tailoring for 25 others in Raipur, and computer training for 50 transgender people in Bhubaneswar.



**Beneficiaries of Sewa's SHE-CAF program display their wrought iron handicrafts**

## Sewa Announces New Leadership and Chapter Updates

Suresh Jain, an entrepreneur from Boston, has assumed the role of Chairman of the Board of Sewa International, succeeding Ramesh Bhutada, who will continue as a board member. Raju Datla has taken on the responsibility of Associate Director of the Sponsor a Child (SAC) Program.

The Houston Chapter has new leadership: Dr. Pranav Loyalka is the new President, succeeding Gitesh Desai, who now leads the Dallas Chapter. Madan Luthra has joined as Vice President, while Rajesh Patwari and Santosh Jha are Joint Coordinators for the LEAD and SERVE Programs.

## South Jersey Commences 9/11 Memorial Construction



**Volunteers and supporters gathered at the groundbreaking ceremony in Chesterfield, NJ**

Sewa South Jersey had a ground-breaking ceremony for the 9/11 Memorial, attended by 150 community members, dignitaries, and supporters. Mayor Matthew R. Litt, Mayor Eugene M. Fuzy, Deputy Mayor Denise Cortes Dale, and representatives from local fire and police departments attended the event.

Syam Kosigi, Sewa's Vice President of Organization, and Rohit Deshpande, Director of the Serve Program, represented Sewa International. The memorial will pay tribute to the sacrifices of first responders and serve as a hub for community engagement. Construction is expected to be completed in a few weeks, with an inauguration ceremony scheduled for September 11, 2024.

## Tragedy Strikes: Young Employee Prakash Kumar Passes Away



Prakash Kumar, a 25-year-old Sewa employee in India died in an accident while working on his farm. Prakash Kumar's friends have started a fundraiser to aid his family, accepting donations in both Indian rupees and US dollars.

Donation Link: [https://milaap.org/fundraisers/support-prakash-family?utm\\_source=whatsapp&utm\\_medium=fundraisers-title&mlp\\_referrer\\_id=9752433](https://milaap.org/fundraisers/support-prakash-family?utm_source=whatsapp&utm_medium=fundraisers-title&mlp_referrer_id=9752433)

## Indianapolis Hosts 5k Run for First Responders



**The Carmel Police Department received a donation from the Indianapolis chapter during the 5K run/walk event**

On August 5, Sewa Indianapolis hosted a 5K run/walk for First Responders, bringing the community together to support local heroes. During the event, the Carmel Police Department received a generous donation for the Community Assistance Program, highlighting Sewa's dedication to supporting local law enforcement and first responders. Mayor Sue Finkam spoke at the event.

Expressing gratitude the Carmel Police Department said, "We are honored to share in the amazing work of Sewa International - Indianapolis. Their dedication to our community is truly inspiring." The 5K run featured beautiful weather, a scenic route, and enthusiastic community participation.

## Upcoming Events

- Sep 14, 2024: 4th Annual Sewa International Charity Golf Event | Fellows Rd, Houston, TX
- Sep 14, 2024: ICCL, Sewa - 5k Walk/Run | Sanatan Dham, Challenger Seven Memorial Park, Nasa Blvd, Webster, TX
- Sep 15, 2024: Sewa Musical Gala Fundraiser | Ernst Community Cultural Center | Center Drive, Suite 202, Annandale, VA
- Sep 28, 2024: Sewa NY NJ: Sports4Sewa Cricket 2024 | Lincoln Park Cricket Ground, Jersey City, New Jersey
- Oct 4, 2024: Sewa Seattle Dandiya 2024 | Microsoft Building 7, 15675 NE 36th St, Redmond, WA
- Oct 5, 2024: Sewa Bay Area: Dandiya 2024 | Lawson Middle School 10401 Vista Dr. Cupertino, CA

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