

# eyelights

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Sankara Nethralaya  
OM Trust, USA

9710, Traville Gateway Drive No.392,  
Rockville, MD 20850 e-mail : acharya@omtrust.org

**Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust, Inc.**  
(non-profit organization)

Presents

## SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS

Mark Your Calendars for:

**October 8, 2011, (From 4 to 7 pm)**

at the Dallas Church Auditorium

Venue: 6525, Forest Lane, Dallas TX

***A Show entirely by children  
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Visit: [www.kindact.webs.com](http://www.kindact.webs.com)  
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[www.supportsankaranethralaya.org](http://www.supportsankaranethralaya.org)



## A touching gesture

The quality of mercy the saying goes is twice blessed; it blesses the giver and the one who receives. At Sankara Nethralaya we have seen this manifest in good measure in many a patient we have treated. We take pleasure in bringing to our readers a recent instance of reciprocal kindness and gratitude that truly touched our hearts. It was during one of our routine eye screening camps that we conduct in the slums of Chennai that Senthil a fifty year old was diagnosed to be needing immediate glaucoma surgery. Senthil makes a living by selling tender coconut water from his push cart on a busy thoroughfare and his debilitating eye condition bordering on blindness had made it extremely difficult to carry on with his occupation. Back at the base hospital preoperative tests revealed that he was suffering from diabetes and hypertension which complicated the case. Making a living by selling tender coconut water on the road does not afford the luxury of a break even when one's spouse is hospitalized, so while he was being treated at the hospital it was his wife's turn to keep the wheel moving, she stood all day on the sunny road side quenching the thirst of passers by while her heart and soul were with her husband at the hospital.

Senthil in the meanwhile was put under intensive medical care to stabilize his condition after which a triple surgery was successfully performed on him and his vision totally restored. Such was their joy at his sight being restored and the prospect of going back to business as usual that the couple donated the entire earnings of Rs 5000 that she had managed to earn selling coconut water, when her husband was being treated at the hospital towards free treatment of indigent patients like them.

## Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust

Sankara Nethralaya Ophthalmic Mission Trust, Inc., a registered non-profit organization in the USA, was established in 1988 with the sole purpose of supporting Sankara Nethralaya, a charitable, not-for-profit ophthalmic hospital, in Chennai, India.

SN OM Trust consists of a group of like minded individuals who support Sankara Nethralaya's community programs. Over the years, SN OM Trust has successfully helped raise substantial funds which have provided vision to thousands of under privileged people in India. Through their fund-raising and awareness efforts, SN OM Trust has contributed significantly in making world class ophthalmic eye care available to a large number of indigent people in India.

In this edition of Eyclights America, we profile a few trustees who have lent unstinting support to Sankara Nethralaya's initiatives and are always exploring newer ways of raising funds to support Nethralaya's cause.

### **Dr. Seshu Sarma** *Trustee, SNOM Trust*

Dr Seshu Sarma is an outstanding example of a multidimensional personality. An associate professor in the Department of obstetrics and gynecology of the Morehouse School of Medicine, she is also a prolific writer and veena player of acclaim with many literary awards to her credit.



Dr Seshu Sharma has played a significant role in popularizing Indian art forms in the US and was awarded the prestigious "The most influential Asian American in Georgia award".

Committed passionately to social causes Dr Seshu Sharma has raised several thousand dollars to the Hindu temple at Atlanta, held blood donation drives for the American Red Cross and as an OM trust member helped raise thousands of dollars for Sankara Nethralaya



### **Ubrani Jayaram** *Trustee, SNOM Trust*

Ubrani Jayaram started as a volunteer for the Trust in 2001 immediately on his migration to US. He was nominated as a Trustee in 2005 and as Joint Treasurer in 2008. In this capacity, he maintains the Trust accounts, tax filings, donor correspondence and perform various financial and administrative functions on a day to day basis.

Additionally, Jayaram has been a strong supporter of number of fund raising activities during the past decade in the Capital region. He has also been elected as Trustee of Sri Siva Vishnu Temple in the metro Washington DC area in 2010.

Ubrani Jayaram works as financial executive at a civil engineering company and lives with his wife Jaisri, two children and mother in Rockville, Maryland.

### **Santhanam Mullur** *Trustee, SNOM Trust*

Santhanam Mullur lives in Dallas, Texas and got involved in Sankara Nethralaya fund raising activities in 2007. Since then he has been part of the Dallas volunteer team and was appointed trustee of the SN OM Trust in 2009.



He is a telecom professional and serves as Executive Adviser to start up companies.

## Home coming of a different kind!



As an eye care centre driven by the spirit of service to humanity, especially to the underprivileged sections of society, we at Sankara Nethralaya greatly value the 'human' element in all our relationships, be it with our patients or within the Sankara Nethralaya family. A relieved and happy patient sending a note of thanks or making a small donation as a token of his gratitude for the personal care he received at one of our eye care centers or eye camps fills us with the same pride and satisfaction that an award or certification we receive for our research findings or performing a complex surgery.

We have a strong emotional bonding with our patients, doctors, well-wishers, staff and all those who strive with us to realize our dream of serving society by eliminating blindness and vision impairments. The recent visit of a young lady from the US to Sankara Nethralaya and her moving encounter with a cross section of people here would give our readers a good understand of this 'bonding' we are referring to.

To Sarah Kini from Boston a visit to Sankara Nethralaya on the 15th of July 2011 was so much like a home coming. Sarah is the daughter of Dr MM Kini, a world renowned Vitreo retinal Surgeon from Boston, who had visited Sankara Nethralaya back in the 80's. Dr MM Kini is held in high esteem as a surgeon who performed some highly complex Vitreoretinal surgeries during the time he spent at Sankara Nethralaya and for his expert training of fellow surgeons in this area of specialization. It was Sarah's first visit and she was all excited to be in the place her father served and trained other doctors, to quote her own words "the place he had dedicated his time and skills".

Going around the place young Sarah was highly moved by the regard and respect her father's name evoked to this day with all those who knew him and the indelible mark he had left in the place he visited more than two decades ago. A beaming Sarah had herself photographed with the two wooden plaques at the hospital bearing his name, a living testimony to the respect and gratitude the Sankara Nethralaya family has for him. The pride and joy in her face indicated loud and clear that this is a picture she would cherish forever. The time to her flight back home was nearing and an overwhelmed Sarah took leave with the words, 'this visit helped me discover what an amazing man my father was'.

## Real time lessons in patient care

If Sarah's was here to discover her loving father's place of work in India, we had bubbly young Tanya from Atlanta doing her premedicine at the Emory University, Atlanta visiting Sankara Nethralaya for a different purpose. As a doctor in the making her mission to Sankara Nethralaya was to learn the practical lessons and finer elements of Medicare by observing and assisting doctors, paramedics and other hospital staff at various stages of patient interaction. A proactive and purposeful young lady, she could be spotted in the wards accompanying and observing doctors on their morning rounds, using her multilingual skills to act as an interpreter for a patient from rural Andhra Pradesh, sitting attentively at the seminar on nanobiotechnology taking place at the center's auditorium to learn the latest advancements in this field or lending a helping hand at the rural eye camps conducted by the various mobile eye care units. As one aspiring to be a pediatrician the specialized pediatric ophthalmology wing at Sankara Nethralaya was of particular academic interest to her while it was the service to the underprivileged sections by the Jaslok Community services wing which touched her heart. If Tanya was highly impressed with the significant advancements Sankara Nethralaya had made in the various branches of ophthalmology, she was equally impressed by the effort it made to make the same available to the poor and needy patients and the personal touch that the doctors showed for their patients. As someone who lived in the West she was overwhelmed by the sheer number of patients that walked in and out of the centre on any given day and the huge knowledge data that this made available to any doctor or student of ophthalmology. Summing up her learning experience Tanya expressed that the most important aspect of it was imbibing the spirit of service and personal touch and added that it was after all good 'care' of the patient that led to his "cure"



## EXTERNSHIPS at Sankara Nethralaya



If you are preparing yourself to do your medicine in the US, come get your first steps right by doing an Externship at Sankara Nethralaya. Mail your interest and CV or any questions you may have to Dr. S. Meenakshi, Director, Academics, Sankara Nethralaya at [drms@snmail.org](mailto:drms@snmail.org)

## Eminent scientist from the US delivers key lecture at the Sankara Nethralaya

As part of its efforts in enriching its knowledge base and keeping pace with the latest developments in the field of ophthalmology, Sankara Nethralaya invites leading scientists and academicians specializing in different branches of medicine to share their knowledge and experience with its own researchers. An in-depth and highly informative lecture on "The role of Lipids in retinal Angionesis" was delivered at the VD Swami auditorium by Dr Undurti N. Das, President, UND Life Sciences, Ohio, USA. Dr Das is the Editor-in-chief of the Journal of Lipids in health and disease; he is a Ramalingasamy Fellow of DBT with research collaborations at JNTU, Central University, Hyderabad and the Biochemistry department at Sankara Nethralaya. Dr Das has more than 30 years of research and clinical experience in the fields of Internal medicine, Diabetology, Endocrinology, Rheumatology, and Oncology. He is credited with 4 patents, 400 research papers published in leading journals and has authored 3 books.

## What is Combined Federal Campaign?

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is a channel through which United States federal government employees direct their tax deductible contributions to eligible charities.

CFC is part of US Office of personnel management (OPM). OPM compiles a list of all eligible charities. Around October of the year, when the open season (the period when federal employees are permitted to make changes to their benefits) starts, all the employees receive CFC authorization form and a booklet with hundreds of eligible charities. Employees choose their preferred charity and authorize their contribution. Employees have the option to make a one time payment by a check or through periodic payroll deductions.

Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust has been participating in this program since 2008 and collected several thousands of dollars. Thanks to all those who have chosen SN OM Trust their chosen charity. The Office of Personnel Management has approved Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust for 2012 CFC participation and our number is 68803.

## How to donate in the United States of America...



### Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust Inc.

9710 Traville Gateway Drive, No. 392,  
Rockville, MD 20850, Phone : (301) 529 7377



### Tax Exempt ID No. 52-1611548

For additional details, feel free to contact S. V. Acharya at (301) 529-7377

**Donating online at Omtrust.org** - All your donations are securely routed through [www.groundspring.org](http://www.groundspring.org).

**United Way** - Mention the above information on your authorization form. Local chapters will remit your contributions to the SN OM Trust Inc.

**Combined Federal Campaign** - If you are a US federal employee, make your donations to Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust Inc. CFC No. 68803.

**Employer Matching Program** - A number of US employers match *dollar for dollar* to employees' contributions. You may be able to double your contributions to SN OM Trust.

**Appreciated Stocks** - You may donate appreciated stocks to SN OM Trust Inc. and avail of a tax deduction. For additional information, please contact the Trust at the aforementioned phone number.

**Contributions by check** - Simply make your check payable to SN OM Trust Inc. and mail to the above address.

**Payroll Deductions** - Please check with your HR office if they are programmed to withhold from payroll and remit to a non-profit organization. A number of organizations provide this as a public service.

**Draft from Checking Account** - Download from our website [www.omtrust.org](http://www.omtrust.org), the direct debit authorization form and forward your authorization with a 'void check' to the above address. We will draft the funds on the 15th of every month. You can stop your authorization any time by a simple notification to us.

**Donate on Special Occasions, as a tribute** Festivals, birthdays, wedding anniversaries, in memory of a loved one and provide support in the form of a bequest.

**All donations to SN OM Trust are 100% IRS Tax Exempted in US, IRS Registered 501 (c) (3)**

## How can you help us?

Sankara Nethralaya OM Trust owes its existence and success to its committed volunteers. To realize our mission of 20/20 by 2020, we need many more volunteers. You can be one of our volunteers and can help us by:

- Spreading the word about Sankara Nethralaya.
- Supporting Teleophthalmology & Glass dispensing vans.
- Conducting events for fundraising.
- Helping with accounting, web management.
- Arranging for American students to undertake summer projects at Sankara Nethralaya.
- Personally making small donations

## The following employers have supported us through GIFT MATCHING or PAYROLL DEDUCTION programs!

- Microsoft
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- J P Morgan Chase
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