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From the community: A dazzling 36th Diwali Gala Banquet and Annual Meeting of Indian American Medical Association of Illinois

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Chicago IL: Indian American Medical Association of Illinois (IAMA-IL) celebrated a very special 36th Annual Meeting and Gala Banquet on October 15th, 2016 at the Meadows Club Grand Ball Room at the [Rolling Meadows](#). Despite number of other events of Diwali Festivities in Chicago, the event was well attended by many members and guests.



Dr. R. Vasa, Dr. U. Patel, Dr. A. John, Dr. Samir Shah, Dr. Deepak Mital, Dr. M. Hanumadass, Dr. Aruna Vade, Dr. A. Singh, Dr. G. Lalmalani, Dr. V. Murthy.

2015 & 2016 have been a very successful years for IAMA under the leadership of Dr. Samir Shah, the president of IAMA. Dr. Dr. Gopal Lalmalani, the past president of IAMA-IL and the Mayor of Oak Brook presented a special Presidential Award to Dr. Shah with ten other past presidents and said, "As we celebrate 36th

years of service to our physician community, allow me to thank Dr. Shah for his gallant services to our membership as President for last two years, a rare distinction in last 35 years in the history of IAMA, as most of us served for one year. His effective leadership and sheer passion to the service of our members, is so obvious that he has raised the bar significantly this past years and for that we feel most grateful to him."

Dignitaries present were Dr. Clarence Brown President of CMS, Dr. Gautam Samadder, President -elect of AAPI, Dr. Gopal Lalmalani, Past President of IAMA and Mayor of **Oak Brook**, Mr. Mickey Straub, Mayor of Burr Ridge and Mr. Raja Krishnamurthy , running for Congress, 8th District, Illinois and Dr. Arvind Goyal, Medical Director of Illinois Dept. of Public Aide.

The crowning glory of the event was the spectacular video presentation of the IAMA (IL), 36 Years of achievements and progress as well as community and organizational activities, created by Mr. Biju Zakaria, of Desi world TV, USA. This nostalgic journey of 36 years brought back the sweet memories of good old days for many past presidents present. The history covered many Community and Health services provided by IAMA (IL) from 1981 to 2016, exploring achievements of IAMA-IL in last 35 years. Cocktail Reception started at 5:30 pm till 7:00 pm. Members enjoyed sumptuous appetizers and booths presented by various sponsors. The Grand sponsors for the event were the Goldstone Financial Group (Anthony Pellegrino, President) & Advocate Christ Hospital, Oak Lawn (President, Kenneth Lukhard). IAMA greatly appreciates all the booth sponsors and the advertisers for the Souvenir.

Master of Ceremonies were Dr. Dr. Radhika Chimata & Dr. Amit Chakrabarty, pleasing the crowd with excellent and efficient job as MC's. The Indian National Anthem was recited by Dr. Piyush Buch and the American National Anthem by Dr. Radhika Chimata in her sweet voice.

Dr. Samir Shah, the President of IAMA (IL) opened the evening gala, thanking members, executive committee members, board of directors and the sponsors. He stressed the importance of leadership, hard work and commitment to excellence. His Vision, Implementation and Action plan unveiled in February-2015 was the strongest force behind many of the new initiatives. 2015-2016 were exciting and action packed with 16 Community Health and Education events working with Religious and Spiritual Organizations like Chinmaya Mission- Chicago, The Shreejidwar Temple in Addison, The Jain Temple of Chicago and many more. IAMA provided more than 29 Educational events to members and provided information on more than 50 Hours of free CME in Chicago area.

Important new initiatives include beginning of IAMA Office with a part time secretary, new improved IAMA website, Karaoke Club, progress towards having our own CME programs and IAMA's Global Health Project in India "Hands-Only CPR" in Hyderabad. The IAMA overseas trips to South Africa & Spain/Morocco, Golf Outing Events, Golden Stethoscope Event and IAMA's Charity Foundation Semiannual Event in April, raising more than \$ 125,000, were all very successful and well appreciated by members.

The theme of the Gala Banquet was "Gift of Life"-Organ donation. What a noble theme dedicated to all transplant doctors & hospitals in Chicago, the organ recipients and the Gift of Life organization, making this possible! The Keynote speaker was Dr. Pat Pappas, a leading cardiac Surgeon from Advocate Christ Hospital. His presentation started with video of the heart transplant history, progress and actual procedure. Members enjoyed his fantastic presentation and appreciated his service and dedication to this profession for years.

The Guest of Honor was Mr. Kevin Cmunt, President & CEO of the "Gift of Life" organization. He addressed the members acknowledging the challenges and progress of the transplant activity in Chicago & Illinois. He thanked IAMA leadership and members for serving community and providing excellent medical services. First Lady Mrs. Prerana (Bella) Shah presented handcrafted wool shawls to these two special guests as a small token of appreciation on behalf of IAMA.

The Lifetime Achievements Awards for 2016 were given to Dr. Vemuri Murthy IAMA's past president, recognizing his years of services to CMS, AHA and as the pioneer of many CPR projects in Chicago like "SMILE" as well as overseas, receiving many prestigious awards in USA and internationally. The Distinguished Physician award recipient was Dr. Deepak Mital, a leading Kidney Transplant Surgeon at the Advocate Christ Hospital. He is also the past president of IAMA. The award signifies his continued Leadership, Teaching, Service to Community and Medical Organizations.

Dr. Shah presented IAMA Community Service Award to Dr. Umang Patel, our past president & Paragi Patel for their dedicated services to the Shreenathji Temple in Addison and to the community for several years.

The IAMA Leadership Award was given Dr. Rohitkumar Vasa, also our past president for his dedication and selfless Services, leadership and continued support of IAMA in various activities.

The Presidents Appreciation Awards were given to Dr. Arvind Goyal, Medical director of Ill. Dept. of Public Aid. Dr. Jay Joshi & Dr. Radhika Chimata were awarded with this year's Young Physician awards.

As a part of Annual Meeting, Dr. Sukanya Reddy, the secretary of IAMA, conducted the business meeting and presented the slate of officers and chairs of the standing committees to the General Body. The slate of candidates was unanimously approved and voted by IAMA members present.

Vote of Thanks was given by Dr. Sreenivas Reddy, our upcoming young leader and president-elect of IAMA for 2017..Flower bouquet were presented to Dr. Usha Vasa and Darshana Brahmhatt, Co- Chairs of the Auxiliary Committee, Bella Shah, Paragi Patel & Dr. Kiran Bias. IAMA sincerely thanks Mr. Suresh Bodiwala, Chairman of Asian Media, Mrs. Vandana Jhingan from TV Asia and Mr. Prashant Shah, Publisher and owner of India Tribune and Mr. Biju Zakaria from Desi word TV for their support of IAMA activities and services to community.

Members enjoyed the delicious dinner prepared by the Meadows Club Chef. The Grand Ballroom was spectacularly decorated in vibrant colors and Diwali decorations by Mrs Bella Shah and the auxiliary committee. The evening ended with two hours of the most spectacular Entertainment Program by The Geetanjali Group, led by Dr. Amit Chakrabarty, "Kaal..Aaj..Aur..Kaal" a splendid display of memorable nostalgic songs of "Kaal" and vibrant new songs of "Aaj". The Geetanjali Group with four artists was outstanding and captivating, keeping the audience mesmerized by the popular songs and music till 11:00 pm.

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