



RAYS OF OUR LIVES

[Oct 2014]



Letter from Exec

What a weekend IMRC was! From insightful and fun breakout sessions to

incredible dance performances it was a true showcase of the immense talent we have within the RAYS organization. We wanted to take a quick second to thank all of you who came to the IMRC in Grand Rapids and hopefully make those of you who didn't jealous :). We truly hope that you all had as much fun attending the events as we did organizing them. Even though some of them happened fairly early in the morning after some late nights, attendance and engagement for the most part was fantastic. That being said, as we continue to grow RAYS, we want to make sure each event is better

more seva, tweaks to speed dating and professional networking formats, and more organized night time activities. While we hope you understand that we're under some constraints during IMRCs as we work around the fantastic programming MMNA has put together, know that we take these suggestions to heart, and we will absolutely be incorporating them and much, much more into the Marwari Youth Reunion (MYR) 2015! As we start planning the next MYR, we need some more feedback from you! Please help us in selecting the date for our reunion by [filling out this brief survey](#).

In the meantime, what else can you expect from us? First off, we took your suggestions and created this newsletter to keep you updated on RAYS more frequently. Additionally, you'll be seeing some regional RAYS events pop up. The Midwest Chapter recently completed one, and word on the street says that the West Coast is headed to Tahoe and the Northeast is going skiing! Facilitating professional networking has always been a goal of ours, and we're working on revamping it to make it more effective than it's been in the past.

**“More regional
RAYS events”**

**“Keep on RAYS-in
that Roof!”**

We'll also be updating the website to make it more of a central hub of information regarding local events and seva opportunities.

So thanks again to all of you for getting excited about our events. We really can feel the momentum building! We doubled our numbers from MYR 2011 in Austin to MYR 2013 in Chicago (with some RAYS regional events sprinkled in between) - we can't wait to see what the next year has in store! Happy Diwali to you all, and keep on RAYS-in that Roof!

RAYS Exec
rays@mmna.org

Welcome a New
Exec Member

**We're excited to
welcome Ankit Saraf
to Exec!**



Ankit has done a stellar job on the IMRC 2014 planning committee, and we're thrilled that he's stepping up to be part of the Board. Ankit is an Associate at ICF International in the Washington, DC, metro area. He is notorious for his selfie-taking skills and boy band voice. Get ready to break it down with Ankit at the next MYR!

Seva Spotlight

In keeping with the theme of Seva, or service,

from this year's convention, we'd like to use this space to highlight some of the awesome ways that the Marwaris are giving back to the community. We hope you'll get inspired by the innovative things that are happening around the community, and find your own personal way to give back. Today we're shining the spotlight on an exciting initiative by MMNA and a stellar RAYS member who's found her way to make an impact. Sarika Malani is a senior at the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign, majoring in Nuclear Engineering. Sarika was President of her university's chapter of Asha for Education last year and is currently Event Coordinator. Asha

raised \$40,000 under her leadership and used all of that money to help underprivileged children in India get an education.

Sarika is also National Fundraising Director for Delta Kappa Delta, through which she hopes to raise \$10,000 for an NGO in Nepal that works on improving child literacy and prevention of child abuse. "I grew up in a typical Marwari house, where my parents always insisted on giving dan, or donations, to the mandir and all, but it wasn't till I got to college that I realized how important it is to give back. Whether it's to your local community or to one on the other side of the planet, it's so important to find a way to give back, and I'm really happy that I got the opportunities I did through Asha and DKD," said Sarika. We're so proud of all the work that she's doing to make the world a happier, healthier,



and safer place. If you'd like to hear more about what Asha or Delta Kappa Delta do, feel free to contact Sarika at sarikamalani713@gmail.com!

Additionally, RAYS and MMNA want to encourage everyone to participate in a food donation drive (Anna Daan) this Diwali. One in six people in the US struggle with hunger, and it's important for us to do our part for the needy in our local community. We encourage you to donate to your local foodbank. Many MMNA chapters are also collecting food at their respective Diwali events, which you can find more information on at <http://community.mmna.org/>.

If you'd like to share your service project or nominate someone else who is doing great things, please send us an e-mail! Don't be shy, we just want to create awareness about the plethora of ways there are to get involved in giving back!

**“it is important for
us to do our part”**

Convention

Recap

Over Labor Day weekend close to 100 RAYS members

attended the International Maheshwari Rajasthani Convention hosted by MMNA in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Through a variety of informal and formal programming, our attendees were able to explore Rajasthani culture, make friends with youth of similar backgrounds, and network professionally among peers and established industry veterans.

We kicked off the weekend with ice breakers to allow first time attendees and regular convention-goers to interact and meet on an informal basis. Games such as train wreck, charades, and scar wars set the tone of a friendly (yet competitive!) atmosphere for the rest of the weekend. Speed-dating the next day gave participants the opportunity to meet 20-25 people of the opposite gender on a more personal level.

In addition to networking among ourselves, we wanted to capitalize on the fact that the entire community was gathered in one place this weekend and also interact with those outside the RAYS demographic. Branch Out, a professional networking event, brought RAYS members and established professionals from related fields together. Discussions at each table were moderated by one or more industry veterans, giving RAYS members the opportunity to learn from leaders in our community. RAYS members gave back by serving as the mentors for RAY Jays, a newly formed group for those aged 14-20. A panel of RAYS members answered their questions on topics ranging from the college application process to college internships and interview skills.

RAYS and RAY Jays members collaborated to learn Rajasthani history while practicing their acting skills at the Rajasthani theater event. Participants were divided into groups and tasked with acting out an assigned part of Rajasthani history. Each 5-10 minute skit was both educational and entertaining, as some groups stuck to traditional story lines and others incorporated a modern twist!

A major goal of
RAYS is to make a
positive impact

in our local communities and help however we can. As part of the seva project, several members helped pack 500 lunch bags for a local shelter. Ankit and Yash Bhutada also lead a live social justice simulation for RAYS and RAY Jays. Groups were given disparate resources to build a community, and eventually the group with the least resources and support actually ended up rioting! The session ended in a fantastic discussion about our role in the world and how we can contribute to making it a

Of course, no RAYS reunion weekend would be complete without dancing and IMRC 2014 did not disappoint! For the first time ever we had a RAYS dance performance with members from across the country coming together to perform 'Pallo Latke'. Many of our members also participated in the inter-chapter dance competition. The weekend ended with our very own post-party DJ'ed by Abhinav Somani. Thank you to all those who attended IMRC 2014 for making the weekend a blast!





Share pictures of your Mini-Marwari Reunions with us at:
rays@mmna.org or on the official RAYS GroupMe!



RAJASTHANIS ABROAD
YOUTH SAMAJ

हम राजस्थान के भविष्य हैं

We are the future of Rajasthan