

Expectations Of The Indian Parent in the “New World”

Priyadarshini Avula-Batchu

Introduction: Indians from the subcontinent of India did not start immigrating to America until the late 1950's. It was not until the 1960's-1970's that the great migration of Indians with traditional values of the old country made their cultural resurrection. Hindu temples were built, community associations formed, and even Indian cultural associations on university campuses brought the India that they remembered from back home to their new land, AMERICA. Indian cuisine has become quite popular in the western world. There are abundant cookbooks and recipes that have flourished via internet. There are several Indian restaurants in the larger cities. Americans now look at us as part of the melting pot that has transcended the American culture.

My story begins...I was born in 1961 in a small town in Andhra Pradesh in Guntur District. My father left India when I was a few months old. He went to Germany to work as a scientist for some time. My mother and I lived with my Amamma and Thatha, as well as 2 great grandmothers. There was always a lot of hustle and bustle in the household. There were a lot of relatives and family friends in and out. I was the “little princess” always decked out with bangles, chains, frilly chiffon dresses and pattaalu. I would run up and down the lane or in the courtyard and everyone knew who I was. I was always smiling and laughing and brought joy to those who knew me. I was compared to Shirley Temple as a little girl because I had curly black silky hair and was always smiling and dancing around.

The day finally came when my father decided to leave Germany and continue his graduate education in America. He wrote to my grandfather and told him that he would like my mother and me to join him. The big question was about me. My grandparents were not sure about this. However, my father had not seen me for nearly two years except in black & white pictures. Everyone pondered what to do. America was so far away. There was segregation and so many things going on, and the culture was so different. The future was uncertain, but this was a challenge. Higher education in America would be a dream come true. Then, of course, the plan would be to return to the homeland as a hero.

My mother and I arrived on April 5, 1963. In the months to come John F. Kennedy was assassinated, there were riots among the colored and white races, and Martin Luther King was fighting for colored rights. The Beatles were grooving, and the Vietnam War was covered daily in the national news. There were peace demonstrations that sometimes turned violent.

Dreams change, plans change, and people change. Destiny is not in our hands. My father finished his master's degree in 18 months at Michigan State and then moved on to Iowa State to continue with a PhD. In 1967 we moved to a small mid-western town near the Ozarks. I was a little girl and my mother was expecting my little sister. Where shall we move? That was the question. There were all these crazy things happening in the cities... the hippies, the drugs, etc.

My parents thought living in a small town would be a safe haven for raising two little girls. Dad made the decision to move to a small rural town in the Midwest where he became an engineering professor. Mind you, at this time all Indians from the motherland were engineers, scientists, or physicians. If you think about the Indians you know around you who are aged 45-75, those are their respective professions, unless they branched out of course.

My parents did not really believe that children should waste time playing. There was playtime, but most importantly, there were many hours of study time. As Indians we are bred to succeed. We are compared to each other's children. We are away from our blood relatives. However, we have a family of our heritage within each of our respective communities. In general our “Indian Heritage” friends become our substitute family.

I started first grade in this small town. The years kept passing. I went to Junior High School, and I was still a high achiever in school. I went to Senior High School where my main subjects were Math, Science and Physics. I graduated at 16 with a 3.9 GPA. My hobbies were Tennis and Writing. I had written two



novels and had an agent in New York. What shall I be? What do I Think? What shall I say? Who will I marry? These are the questions that would be the dialect between my parent's and me. I began my university life in August of 1979. I made a lot of friends, went thru sorority rush, and I was integrating into the American college life.

Ah! Maybe it is time to reestablish with the homeland, with the relatives. I was almost 17 and my parents took me to India. I was going to apply to medical school. All my cousins were studying their MBBS. I would reacquaint with the family and fall in love with a nice "suitable boy" .

I became competition for the medical seat. I, being a NRI, had to buy a seat. No thank you. That is not how it works in America. As soon as my pedananna told the school that I was an NRI, quickly there was a price tag attached to my placement in a medical college.

In the mean time I met the nice "suitable Indian boy" and he was going to be completing his MBBS. He did not think that I was suitable to attend a traditional medical college and that I would be ragged because I wore tight Calvin Klein jeans and LaCoste tee shirts. He felt that he was being the knight in shining armor and would save the damsel in distress from any ridicule. His goal was to transform me into the fine traditional Indian wife. I married my husband after knowing him for 2 months. My parents made several trips in a period of 6 months. I had a fabulous wedding with 1500 guests in attendance for lunch and dinner. It was like something I could not even imagine, and all the pomp and

circumstance was all so new to me. I did not really know all the friends and family that came, but they all sure knew me! I was the "American Dorasani"

At this point I had not met my parent's expectations. I did not finish college; I got pregnant... so there went my MBBS. I had a few kids. It took me 10 years to finish College. I realized that my life really went fast. I was 23, had 2 children, and still had not really achieved anything. All the goals and dreams that my parents had for me kind of went by the wayside. All my cousins were physicians, got married, and did what their parents wanted. But not me, I thought I was smarter and wiser and did what I wanted. I chose the long and winding road to who knows where.

The moral to my story is that our parents love us unconditionally and wish us to be the brightest star. We become their greatest joy and accomplishment. They left everything behind. They left their parents, their joint families, and their known culture from the motherland. And now there are many of us brought up in America. We have our own children and realize that the tasks that our own parents had to face was not so easy, but actually quite difficult. We now share the experiences of raising our own children in this cross-cultural world, but we have an advantage. Our children have grandparents to love them and relatives and family friends like back home. Our Mother India! Our greatest achievement should be that we can share our experience and expectations that our culture has given us with the future generations of our "American Indians."



Priyadarshini Avula-Batchu received a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Missouri-Rolla. Attended graduate school at the University of MO- Columbia. Worked for Square D Corporation and SEMCO Inc., as a design engineer, as well as a project engineer for an engineering consulting firm. Priya presently runs her own business, INNOVATIVE DESIGNS and serves on The Board of Trustees of Stephens College in Columbia, MO. She is also involved in various community organizations such as Assistance League of Mid- Missouri, American Heart Association, Boys & Girls Town, and The Boone Co Medical Alliance. She has 2 daughters, aged 22 and 24. Her husband is a practicing neurologist in Columbia Missouri where they have lived for 23 years.

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TRAINS

Abhilash Reddy

Trains have always held a special place in my heart. The sound of the steam spouting from the front stack, the rumble and chug of the wheels as they plod down the metal rails and the small bumps along the way that cause the train to twitch slightly, that gentle and rough lists as the train makes turns and traces the imperfections of the land underneath it. We no longer rely on the rail system in America. The tracks have been replaced by paved roads, passenger cars have given way to automobiles and the job of long distance hauling is now primarily the responsibility of the trucking industry. The mythopoetic age of trains that helped shape and unite this nation has slowly faded into history books and these days we view the train with a certain amount of curiosity, a novelty that causes us to stop and watch when we see one go by. In India, trains still exist and are extensive throughout the countryside. As a young child, the thrill of the train ride was something that excited me to no end. The train station, dirty and unsafe, a playground filled with adventure and danger: tracks deep set near the loading area with trains whizzing by in a blur of burnt amber color. Spread out on the floor of the station, families sitting down, eating together from various tins that had been laid out on the mat, tins holding rice and curd and various curries. The noises, that discombobulated din of movement, urgency, laughter and conversation.

Getting on the train was always fun also. The slight gap between the rail car and the tracks below were imagined to be a great gulf that needed jumping by a young child. The seats are single benched and we cram into them, fighting for the window with its barred outlook on the country side. The train moves out with a hiss and the rumbling from the wheels echoes off of the carriage underneath and reverberate throughout the car and there small, rolling concussions and the slow climb to full speed leaving the station behind, slowly diminishing on the horizon of the curved world. The country side moves along in various shades of green speckled with red clay and mud. The Indian country side is a plethora of color and sights, an awkward and beautiful blend of ancient and modern. Fields being plowed by tractors with workers in bright garb, electric lines next to the

sandstone ruins of old castles and fortresses and cars being driven on roads next to wooden carts pulled by bullocks and asses. The depot stops are particularly fun. Boys and girls no older than me at the time selling Chai by the cupful to passengers through the window, an Indianized simulacra of a McDonald's drive through window.

The reason I think about those trains isn't just the sights, but the meaning of those sights and the journey itself. The United States didn't quite become united until that moment ago when the golden spike connected the country at Promontory Summit, Utah in 1869. Since then, the U.S.A. has fought two world wars, survived a depression and outlasted its chief rival in a war fought in the cold. Historians attribute no small part of the success of this nation to that moment when a country became one united nation. India, much like America years ago, seems to be on the verge of such a leap. The economy has exploded in the last few years and its power, influence and prestige has grown exponentially in a very short time. However, the railroads of India, in addition to connecting a country for economical reasons, must always remain connected beyond the socio-economics that currently drive it. The bombings at Lumbini Park, past religious strife and other fissures that seem to divide a nation must never over whelm that which keeps it together. The blame game that so often precedes and proceeds such acts are sad and shallow. The truth is that all are to blame and none are to blame. It seems that too often that the Indian community in America and elsewhere defines themselves in such narrow terms that it creates walls that need not exist. Telugu, Punjabi, Gujarati and others are still part of one country and when walking down a street anywhere in the world, people don't ask what state in India do you come from, they ask what country are you from. The railways should be a constant reminder of that singular fact, the promise of a nation connected by those steel ties and wooden planks.

Abhilash is a graduate from Purdue University. He is known for his creative writings in Indianapolis Star newspaper.



SiliconAndhra

The Spirit of Telugu Literature, Culture and Tradition

Jawaharlal Nehru once said, "Culture is the widening of the mind and of the spirit" – what a brilliant definition! We Telugu people have a rich culture that is hundreds of years old. We are fortunate to have a language sweeter than honey as our mother tongue and we inherited many traditions that are revered by people around the globe. It is our duty to preserve, promote and hand over these priceless assets to our children and future generations in order to perpetuate them. SiliconAndhra is a vehicle built to carry on this noble task in USA. But the reality is that it has not only achieved pinnacle of success in USA but has also gone above and beyond by extending its influence, activities and festivities all the way to our Motherland by organizing mega events simultaneously in India and USA – an incredible feat indeed! On behalf of ATA and America Bharathi I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the devoted SiliconAndhra *sainikulu* for the exemplary work being carried out by them! - Editor

SiliconAndhra is a nonprofit, non-political, non-religious, cultural and community organization with the spirit of Telugu Literature, Culture and Tradition. The purpose of the organization is to serve the Telugu people through cultural and community programs. The organization strives to promote, preserve and perpetuate the unique Telugu culture ("samskriti"), literature ("saahityam") and traditions ("sampradayam") of the Andhra Pradesh region of India and strives to instill the Indian values system in the community. Telugu language has a rich history of about 2500 years and its culture, traditions and literature have been dated back to early 700 BC. SiliconAndhra represents the aspirations of Telugu speaking people around the world. Education, Cultural and Literary programs, Community camps, Vernacular magazine and Charity work are some of the tools that the organization adopts to achieve its objectives.

Beginnings:

SiliconAndhra was established in July 2001, by a few like minded individuals with the ideology to create better awareness about the rich cultural heritage of Andhra Pradesh, India and its language Telugu. SiliconAndhra was formed to promote and instill the Indian value system among the Telugu families with no geographical boundaries.

On August 4, 2001, SiliconAndhra organized its first ever unique literary event, "Ashtavadhanam," that is exclusive to Telugu language. Since the staging of first program, SiliconAndhra grew in popularity and organized about 30 cultural and community events to date, along with multiple charity programs in the community. Since its inception, SiliconAndhra has become the hallmark of innovation and experimentation. Most programs feature Telugu music, dance, and poetry

presented by experienced teachers and/or their students in a professional fashion. In the past six years, more than 100,000 persons have attended cumulatively one or more of these programs here in USA and in India.

Yearly Events conducted by SiliconAndhra:

January: 'Annamaacharya Sankeerthanotsavam' in USA

April: 'Ugaadi Kavisammelanam'

May: 'Andhra Kutumba Sibiram'

May: Annamacharya Jayanthi across world

August: 'SiliconAndhra Anniversary Celebration'

October: 'Andhra Cultural Festival'

Telugu Literature (Telugu Sahityam):

SiliconAndhra organizes several literary events that are big crowd pullers. Kavi Sammelanam, Bhuvana Vijayam, Avadhanam, Indrasabha are some of the presentations that were lauded by one and all. Literary stalwarts like Sri Prasadarayana Kulapati, Sri Garikipati Narasimha Rao, Sri Elurupati Anantramayya, Sri Rallabandi Kavita Prasad, Sri Jandhyala Bapuji, Sri Medasani Mohan and several others graced SiliconAndhra programs. Avadhanam deserves a special emphasis here. Avadhanam is a unique literary feat limited to Telugu language. No other spoken or written language in the world has anything even remotely similar to this unique and complex literary feat. In this the Avadhani (Scholar) is challenged by scholars to come up with Telugu poems set to a particular meter instantaneously. To date, 'Avadhanam' featured thrice in the SiliconAndhra events and made thousands of Telugu people in US delighted. Recently on the occasion of SiliconAndhra Sixth Anniversary, SiliconAndhra conducted the FIRST ever 'Sataka Padya Dhara Sammohanam' by 'Sahasravadhani' Dr. Medasani Mohan in the historic Palo Alto city, home of Stanford University. On the occasion, Sri Medasani



was welcomed to the event with a 'Poornakumbham' and what followed next was a historic time for SiliconAndhra people. Sri Medasani created 'Pravasandhra Satakam' by answering the questions posed by 63 'Pruchhakas' on the stage. In a six hour marathon session, a total of 108 Telugu padyamulu flew freely creating the First impromptu satakam in a Sabha by an Avadhani. More than 800 people witnessed this history in making by Dr. Medasani Mohan. Some times he just took less than ten seconds to come up with the response in 'Saardoolam' metered poetry. During this feat



*Historic Sataka Padya Dhara Sammohanam
by Sri Medasani Mohan*

he has completed nine 'Parvamulu' depicting the lives of non resident Telugu people with single 'makutam' 'SiliconAndhraAkriti Bharathi'. Dr. Medasani said that it was a great literary feat that has never been done or attempted before in this fashion.

SiliconAndhra brings to life the various aspects of Telugu literature. Every year on Telugu New Year Day, several Telugu poets across the country come and present their own literary works to the amazement of hundreds of Telugu people. SiliconAndhra pioneered in bringing the voices of reputed poets from India through teleconferences. SiliconAndhra also presented classic literary dramas like Indra Sabha and Bhuvana Vijayam. These programs highlighted the literary works of Telugu stalwarts in the courts of various kingdoms.

Kuchipudi Dance:

Kuchipudi is a centuries old classical dance form that originated in a small village, Kuchipudi, in Andhra Pradesh. Every year SiliconAndhra presents an original Kuchipudi ballet choreographed by an accomplished Kuchipudi dance teacher. "Rutu Sambhavam", "Siva Ganga", "Gautama Buddha", "Telugu Tejam", "Bhakta Dhruva", "Usha Parinayam" are some of the grand Kuchipudi ballets that have been staged so far.

Telugu Drama (Telugu Natakam):

In every culture, dramas epitomize the greatest art form where different human emotions are best displayed. Among various forms of drama, "Padya Naatakam" (Play with verses) is a special drama, which is unique to Telugu speaking people. SiliconAndhra presented three masterpieces in this category - "SreeNadhudu", "Sri Krishna Raayabaram" and "Maya Bazaar" to the delight of thousands of people. SiliconAndhra roped in the services of two-time Nandi award winner and a state award recipient, Sri. Gummadi Gopalakrishna. He

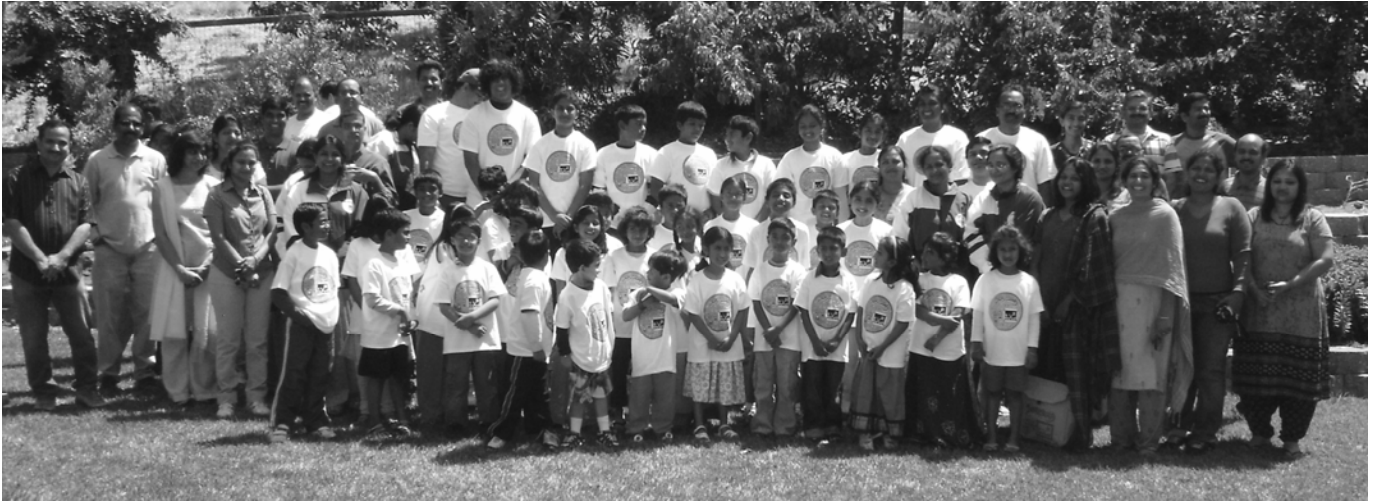
trained thirty local professionals to enact a full length (three hour) musical drama with live orchestra. Now these individuals perform on par with any professional artists and are training other enthusiasts in musical dramas.

In the category of social dramas, SiliconAndhra presented excellent dramas with high production values such as Kanya Sulkam, Baboi Bamma!, Bethala Kathalu, Bala Nagamma and Bhagamathi.

Annamacharya Sankeertana Utsavam:

In just three years, the Annamacharya Sankeertana Utsavam reached huge proportions. In 2007, 318 singers/dancers/instrumentalists rendered 116 Annamayya Sankeertanalu of which 111 are unique keertanas . More than 1500 people graced this 14 hour marathon – a tribute to Annamayya. Sumptuous Telugu Bhojanam was served with affection by SiliconAndhra family members. Sri K. V. Ramanachary, IAS, from AP attended as Chief Guest and addressed the gathering in his inimitable style. Dr. Medasani Mohan from TTD conveyed his blessings through phone and announced that SiliconAndhra would be given a golden opportunity of composing music to 150 Annamacharya Keertanalu. This is the 'first of its kind' project given to any 'Pravasaandhra Samstha'. More than 200 'Saamskrutika Sainikulu' worked literally day and night to bring this event to fruition.

Another feather in the crown of SiliconAndhra was the celebration of 598th Annamacharya Jayanthi Utsavam in May 2006 across the state of Andhra Pradesh. It was a huge success. With that inspiration, SiliconAndhra created yet again a new chapter in the history of Telugu culture. Akhila Bharatha Annamacharya Jayanthi



Mana Badi Initiative of SiliconAndhra

Utsavam was celebrated in 108 cities on the same day in the same format across India. This is an unprecedented event. Thousands of people participated in this event across the country. In Hyderabad, classical music stalwarts like Sri Nookala, Hyderabad Brothers, Hyderabad Sisters, Sri Yella, Mohana Krishna and many other luminaries participated in the Goshti Ganam, again another 'first of its kind' event. SiliconAndhra received glowing reviews in the media. Some interesting facts of the program are:

- 25000 singers rendered Annamayya keertanalu across India
- 80% of the singers were youngsters below the age of 21 years
- More than 40,000 people participated in Nagara Sankeertana
- Hundreds of keertanas were sung during day long programs
- Program was conducted in the similar format in 108 cities and towns of India
- Extensive press and TV coverage
- Live telecast of Hyderabad program by DD and AIR
- Lalitha Kala thoranam was packed with 5000 people for the Grand Finale

“Mana Badi” – Telugu Teaching Initiative:

SiliconAndhra started the largest ever Telugu teaching initiative in the USA, 'Mana Badi'. SiliconAndhra team prepared Telugu language learning material in an unprecedented way with the support and guidance from highly reputed Telugu linguists, professors, teachers and institutes like Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore and Telugu University, Hyderabad. Several proven and advanced learning tools would be used in teaching Telugu in the 'Mana Badi' in an interactive and interesting way to all kids. 'Mana Badi' will be offering classes in several neighborhoods.

SiliconAndhra Mana Badi would be using the language drills and exercises developed after 35 years of research by CIIL linguists and academicians. For example, 'Language Lab' would be used to help the children with proper Telugu pronunciation to overcome their accent. We believe that this kind of extensive effort based on proper methodology would immensely help children learn Telugu with interest and excitement. Mana Badi offers four levels of course work (Duration of one year for each level) - Level 1: Pravesam; Level 2: Prakasam; Level 3: Prabhasam and Level 4: Pramodam. The program starts with Pravesam during 2007-2008 Mana Badi academic year.

At the successful completion of each year's course, Potti Sriramulu Telugu Viswavidyalayam would be awarding a Certificate to all the students. SiliconAndhra is also working with the Department of Education to get foreign language credit for each student that completes the four year course.

Mana Badi classes were already a great success where the classes were held. There was an overwhelming positive feedback from kids and their parents as well. Many parents called, expressing their happiness and joy about their kid's learning in the class. Mana Badi classes are being conducted simultaneously in about 20 centers with about 300 students and 26 teachers in several states across USA. SiliconAndhra plans to take the same initiative more wide spread across USA in the near future.

“SujanaRanjani” Magazine and Webzine:

SiliconAndhra publishes a special mega issue of the “Sujanaranjani” magazine, on the eve of every Andhra Cultural Festival in October and Ugaadi festival in

April. SiliconAndhra has released 6 special issues with 250 pages of content, 3 poetic anthologies and 1 collection of cartoons, in the last 6 years. More than a 1000 copies were circulated each year. The special issue presents nonfiction, fiction, and poetry written by community members and professional writers. Sujanaranjani magazine also features advertisements from various sponsors of SiliconAndhra events. SiliconAndhra is the only NRI Telugu organization that has published 12 mega literary issues within a span of 6 years apart from the monthly webzine.

SiliconAndhra also publishes a multi-media webzine, SujanaRanjani, every month. Thousands of people from more than 25 countries read the articles, stories and listen to the audio recordings and watch the videos.

Future Generations:

One of the key objectives of SiliconAndhra is to educate the kids born and raised in US and the youth migrated to US, about the rich cultural heritage of Andhra Pradesh, India. Art, music, dance, language, poetry, traditions, family values are the heritage of Andhra Pradesh.

SiliconAndhra is committed to raise the awareness of the Telugu culture among the denizens of US and integrate it seamlessly with the mainstream US culture. As part of its commitment, SiliconAndhra invited two renowned folk dance tutors from India to educate and train 250 individuals of all age groups in folk dance. The students gave a rousing performance in Andhra Cultural Festivals, in front of about 2200 spectators each year. SiliconAndhra also invited Sri Rallabandi Kavitha Prasad, a well-known poet and linguist in India to train the local talent to act in a poetic play, Indra Sabha.

SiliconAndhra intends to encourage and educate the next-generation kids and youth in US in organizing and managing events of great magnitude. SiliconAndhra organized Ugadi program entirely led by the youth and attended by about 1200 people. In order to groom and encourage future leaders to run the organization, SiliconAndhra organized a leadership boot camp for its volunteers. Redefined vision and mission statements emerged out of the boot camp, in agreement with the core-values of the organization, by the future leaders of the organization.

Most SiliconAndhra events provide an opportunity for aspiring artists to present their artistic skills to the community. Professionals in dance, music and literature



Lambadi Dance featured in a SiliconAndhra event

lead and guide these artists in honing up their skills. As part of its mission, SiliconAndhra also performs charitable work as appropriate for a cultural and community-oriented organization. The organization recently raised about 12,000 USD, with the help of its volunteer base, members and patrons and is building a community center and cyclone shelter in China Kara Agraharam in Krishna district. SiliconAndhra recently participated actively in the community service for the disabled, organized by the Shared Adventures Community and Charity organization.

"Language is the dress of thought," is the famous statement of Samuel Johnson, 18th century lexicographer, poet and essayist. The language mankind uses to communicate is intricately intertwined with culture and traditions. In fact, the language, culture, literature and traditions nurtured by people represent the *signature* that is unique to them. It takes passion, dedication, enthusiasm and hard work to preserve and propagate this *signature* to posterity. SiliconAndhra is a passionate venture initiated by *pravasandhrulu* in Silicon Valley to accomplish this task by reaching out to many Telugu people in the USA and in our Homeland.



America Bharathi acknowledges and appreciates Mr. Anand Kuchibhotla for providing the content and photographs for this article. Mr. Kuchibhotla is the Founder and Chairman of SiliconAndhra. He lives with his family in Cupertino, CA.

Readers are encouraged to visit SiliconAndhra website www.siliconandhra.org and enjoy the photos, audios and videos of SiliconAndhra events. They are simply a treat for the senses! - Editor



ATA VEDUKALU

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Spotlight

Monika Palabindela & Poojitha Karumanchi

Winners of Destination ImagiNation Global Challenge in California

Reported by Venugopala Udumula

Destination ImagiNation is the world's largest creative problem solving program for kids. Over 200,000 students in over 40 countries and most of the United States participate in Destination ImagiNation global. This popular process-based program helps young people build lifelong skills in creative and critical thinking, teamwork, time management and problem solving.

The purpose of challenge is to put team's creative problem solving abilities, creativity, and teamwork to the test in a short, time-driven Challenge. Up to seven participants work together as a team for eight to twelve weeks to create



their unique solution to a Team Challenge, which can have a focus that is theatrical, structural, improvisational, scientific or technical - or a blend of several disciplines. Teams also learn and practice creative quick-thinking skills for the Instant Challenge portion of the program where problems need to be solved in a very short period of time at the tournament without knowing about the challenge ahead of time. Destination ImagiNation helps young people learn in a fun and supportive environment, and the valuable skills they have acquired will be with them for a lifetime. Participants learn unique and critical life skills including teamwork, critical and creative thinking, project management, resource management, mutual respect, research and presentation skills. All challenges must be strictly solved in teams. The skills acquired make Destination ImagiNation participants more valuable to their communities and as future employees. Educational Focus of Instant Challenge: The team's use of creative problem solving strategies, assessment and use of available materials, and teamwork under tight time constraints. It encourages teams to develop creative problem solving and time management strategies, performance and improvisational techniques. It also develops the ability to quickly assess the properties of provided materials, and learn how to creatively manipulate materials for a unique solution.

The Destination ImagiNation team comprising of Monika Palabindela, Poojitha Karumanchi, Vishali Amin, William Yeh, Kristin Anderson, Catherina Xao, and Hana Chuang from "Louis E. Stocklmeir Elementary school" in Sunnyvale, CA has won second prize at state level. The team won first prize at regional level and then went on to win second prize at state level. The team members have practiced for six months every single day by working really hard. Daksha, who was the project manager for this team, has worked hard with the kids in making a skit, sceneries, gadget (light-o-matic), maracas, and rehearsing their skit every day.

Monika is the daughter of Anitha and Biksham Palabindela and Poojitha is the daughter of Chandra and Raghava Karumanchi.

Congratulations Monika and Poojitha! We are proud of you!

Contribute to "Spotlight!"

Showcase the achievements of Telugu kids

Did your child or a child you know win a significant award, top prize or recognition in academics, cultural or social service oriented programs? Then, this is the place to highlight their achievements to serve as inspiration to fellow Telugu children. Article should include a mini-bio, a photo and a description of achievement(s).

America Bharathi appreciates Mr. Venugopala Udumula (udumula123@yahoo.com) for contributing this item.

Mouli Gandhi:

“The SON who made his parents (and school) proud by capturing The SUN!”



Recent years have seen renewed interest in the exploration and harnessing of solar energy due to unpredictable availability of conventional fuels and unexpected energy price hikes. Residents and businesses alike are looking for ways to cut down their heating bills and solar power, they think, can help them to achieve this goal - and they would be happy to know that two creative brains from Gibbons Middle School in Massachusetts may have the solution for efficient capture of solar energy.

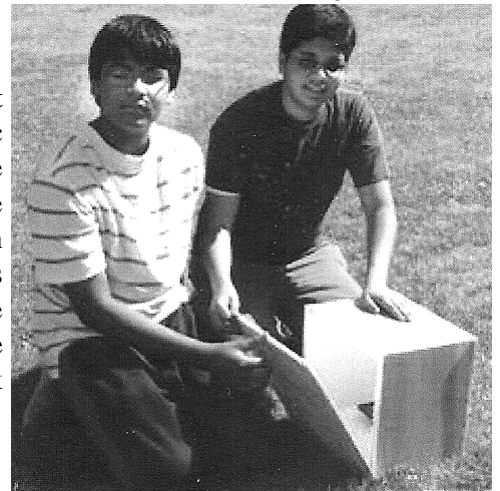
Mouli Gandhi and Kedar Mahagaokar of Westborough Public Schools explored ways to improve the efficiency of capturing solar energy for their creative science fair project entitled “Suncharge” that earned them the well deserved First Place at the Massachusetts

State Science and Engineering Fair. Using a small wooden box and a solar powered charger they experimented with different linings for the wooden box and by holding the lid to the open box at different angles for four hours. At first they thought that aluminum foil lining would absorb most energy but soon they discovered, to their surprise, that Styrofoam was the best. When interviewed, Mouli Gandhi said, “We have concluded that Styrofoam lining of the box, putting the solar powered battery charger inside the box and holding the lid at 70 degrees angle to the open box resulted in maximum possible harvesting of solar energy”. Well, can you guess how Mouli and his partner tested the efficiency of their system? Simple, very simple – by placing the charged batteries from their “Suncharge” box in a flashlight!

Mouli worked with his partner Kedar for many long hours on this project that was chosen based on their passion, interest and sincere zeal for scientific exploration. Well, it paid off! In addition to winning the top prize at the science fair, they were also awarded “Thermo-Fisher Award” from the Genzyme Corp. for the best project on alternate energy as well as an undisclosed cash prize. When asked about their key learning from this project, Mouli and Kedar said, with sincere and shiny eyes – “Expect the unexpected!” Indeed, serendipity in science is alive and kicking and creative young minds like that of Mouli experience it with their passion, hard work and genuine interest to do something for the mankind.

Mouli is the son of Satya and Satyavathi Gandhi of Westborough, Massachusetts.

Bravo Mouli Gandhi! Congratulations on this exceptional recognition!!



Contribute to “Spotlight!”

Showcase the achievements of Telugu kids

Did your child or a child you know win a significant award, top prize or recognition in academics, cultural or social service oriented programs? Then, this is the place to highlight their achievements to serve as inspiration to fellow Telugu children. Article should include a mini-bio, a photo and a description of achievement(s).

America Bharathi appreciates Mr. Satya Gandhi for contributing this spotlight item.

New Members of ATA

We are very pleased to introduce the following Telugu friends who became ATA members during Jan – Sept, 2007

Welcome to ATA family!

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Patrons

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Nareddy, Venkat	-	CT	Peddireddy, Pavan	Aurora	IL
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Thokala, Rajasekhar	West Haven	CT	Ambaty, Nalini Mohan	Westfield	IN
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New Members of ATA

Life Members

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New Members of ATA

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You can now become ATA member through Cyberspace!! Membership Registration now available Online!

Not a member of ATA yet? You have two easy options to quickly become a member of ATA. Go to ATA website www.ataworld.org and either (1) Complete online Membership form and submit it OR (2) Download the form, fill it out and mail it with your payment. Please consider becoming a member of growing ATA family and get your share of these exciting times. Life membership of ATA is just \$100 and the benefits are multiple. To name a few, you will get discount to ATA conference registration, America Bharathi will be mailed to you every quarter, and it is a great way to network with fellow Telugus across US and beyond.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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- Grand Patron \$5,000 Patron \$1,000 Life \$100

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Definition: Grand Patrons, Patrons and Life Members are entitled to family membership.

Qualifications: Any person becoming a member of ATA shall:

- A. Fill out this membership application form.
- B. Pay the appropriate membership dues in one installment.
- C. Abide by the objectives and purposes of ATA as defined in ATA constitution.
- D. Be at least 18 years of age.

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Please visit our website: www.ataworld.org



10th ATA Conference & Youth Convention

Fund Raising held on September 23, 2007



We would like to thank the following “Donors” who enthusiastically and generously contributed funds towards upcoming 10th ATA Conference and Youth Convention



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*Donations from many more committed donors from ATA leadership and committees as well as from donors across the country have also started flowing in by the time the content of this issue was finalized. We are extremely pleased with the enthusiastic outpour of these donations and support to OUR upcoming ATA conference and youth convention – this is a great start and certainly is an indication of a great conference! This is OUR conference, OUR celebration and it is all about OUR Telugu spirit and culture – together let us make it BIG and make OUR Telugu Talli proud of US!!!

Remembering “Vemana” – The Telugu poet who conveyed words of wisdom through simple poetry

Vemana was a poet who wrote poems in pure Telugu in a simple metre called Aata Veladhi. He composed the famous Vemana Satakam (a *Satakam* is a collection of 100 poems) which dealt with social problems and words of wisdom. Each poem consists of four lines where the fourth line is the refrain or chorus “*Viswadabhirama Vinura Vema*” (Beloved of the Bounteous, Vema, listen!). Following is a poem from Vemana Satakam presented in Telugu and Tenglish (Telugu written in English) followed by the meaning.

ఆ.వె. అనగ ననగ రాగ మతిశయిల్లుచునుండు

తినగ దినగ వేము తియ్యనుండు

సాధనమున పనులు సమకూరు ధరలోన

విశ్వదాభిరామ వినర వేమ!

Anagananaga raga matisayilluchunundu

thinaga thinaga vemu tiyyanundu

sadhanamuna panulu samakuru dharalona

Viswadhaabhiraama, Vinura Vema

Meaning & Message: As you sing (more), the melody (raga) excels, as you keep on eating neem, bitterness becomes sweeter to the taste and “with practice, things become perfect!”