

Successful Health Fair, Coat and Blanket Drive organized by Federation of Indian Associations, Chicago



FIA Team, Sunil Shah [founder president and chairman], Vinita Gulabani [president], with Dr. Parag Doshi cardiologist, Dr. Alamdar Badar, Medicare, Medicaid, and Home Care Solutions team.

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On Dec 03, 2023, Federation of Indian Associations, Chicago (FIA) organized a Health Fair and Coat and Blanket donation drive at the Golf Maine Community Center in Niles. This event was attended by more than hundreds of folks from the Chicago area. The event was supposed to end at noon, yet people continued to walk-in. Excellent arrangements were made for the guests by providing them early morning breakfast, tea, and coffee as many of the people came for the testing and the blood work, fasting.

This event was based on the core values of FIA of servicing the community in which we all live. There were more than 40 volunteers from the FIA team to ensure everything went with precision. Doctors from different specialty provided their services free on a Sunday morning, and they all said "time well spent." The registration desk was taken care of by special multilingual volunteers who ensured all the details were captured, including the HIPAA release forms. This made the senior citizens who did not know English very welcome. The key question that was never ever asked during the six hours was "Do you have insurance?" as everything was free to our guests. Apart from doctors, we had people from Medicare, Medicaid, and Home Care Solutions. Dr. Raj Dhingra, renowned Chiropractic and Acupuncture consultant, brought his entire team to support the event. During the doctor speak session, Dr. Parag Doshi, a noted cardiologist, went into details about how we should take care of a diet and lifestyle to ensure we have a healthy heart for a very long time. Dr. Alamdar Badar and Ashima spoke about the care of the teeth and how it impacts the overall well-being and why it is important to have preventive care.

The highlight of the event was the use of innovative technology in detecting foot problems. Krishna Chitluri brought his entire computerized equipment, which was based on artificial intelligence to analyze and diagnose foot problems, He also provided solutions after identifying the issues in the feet. Anu Malhotra, the Vedic and Yoga Guru, conducted a session on stress relief and exercises for the seniors. We could hear from folks in the room, on how relaxed and energetic they felt, after the session. Dr. Usha Karthan conducted a session on the need for identifying psychological issues in the current population and provided an overview on the resources available to take guidance and help in resolving psychiatric problems

Phase two of the program began by the FIA Chairman and Founder Mr. Sunil Shah informing everyone that, this was the 13th event conducted by FIA, this year in the service of the community and the society. Sunil Shah also emphasized the importance of health care and how the idea came up when FIA Executive Board realized that there were many underinsured or

uninsured people in our community who could not see a doctor when required. This was followed by the President of FIA, Vinita Gulabani, talking about the different events organized over the year successfully, for the community, and how we have more events coming up in December of 2023. President-Elect, Miss Pratibha Jairath spoke about the upcoming event next week, which now focused more on the children and young adults, toy donations and coat drive. Pratibha Jairath also spoke about the close collaboration that FIA has with various government agencies, such as State reps, Mayors, City Councils of different parts, the Chicago area, and how FIA works in supporting the communities at all levels. As a part of this Health Fair, coat drive and blanket donations were included. More than 300 items were collected within six hours, which will be donated to the needy this winter and help them keep warm.

Part of Phase Three of the program was the speech by the Chief Guest of the day, Ms. Michelle Mussman, State Representative of Illinois. Congresswoman Ms. Michelle, President Vinita Gulabani, President-elect Pratibha Jairath, and Founder-Chairman, Sunil Shah, distributed awards for people who contributed to the growth of FIA under their leadership in 2023. These volunteers contributed hundreds of hours over the year to ensure the success of these events. Awards were presented to Jitendra Bulsara, Richa Chand, Jenish Bulsara, Dr. Bhupinder Beri, Kamlesh Kapoor, Anu Malhotra and Harry Sidhu. Vandana Jhingan from the Press and Media was specially called out and honored for the community service and supporting each and every event of FIA and others.

A special award was given to Jayantibhai Thakkar for his contribution to his 40th health fair in the Chicago area. Past President Neil Khot spoke about more such events in the upcoming year, which will include Visa Services, Tax services, and General Counseling for people in the Chicago region. This program was supported by the Consulate General of India Chicago. In the vote of thanks, Kamlesh Kapoor, said, everybody agreed it was a Sunday well spent and hundreds of people benefited six hours. Kamlesh Kapoor thanked FIA sponsors, FIA Leadership, and the super-busy doctors and health care givers who provided generosity, endless commitment, and invaluable services. It was inspirational to see our own FIA Executive Director Ila Patel, the super charged phlebotomist, be on her feet and actually taking the blood samples for the entire duration of the program. The required equipment and blood sampling kits were provided by Neal Patel from MedStar. The program concluded with a very healthy and balanced lunch, which was designed especially by our very own dietitian associated with FIA.