



# The Optimist

Newsletter  
Indian American Cancer Network (IACAN)

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IACAN thanks all the supporters whose selfless efforts help to make it a successful organization in Houston. IACAN is happy to share some of the activities that it has undertaken this year.

In June, we had a survivor activity at "painting with a twist, Sugar land." IACAN strives to have beneficial therapeutic activities for survivors that enables them to relieve stress and have a sense of peace.

The painting activity brought a sense of belonging and it enables the survivors to share their journey with others who are in the same path as themselves. This painting activity was well attended and the participants get to take their master pieces home. At the end, everyone enjoyed a healthy lunch.



On June 24, 2018, IACAN had an outreach program, "Melanoma Skin Cancer: Review of Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment." Thanks to Arya Semaj for hosting this important educational program.

Dr. Kelly Nelson from Department of Dermatology and Dr. Hussein Tawbi of Melanoma medical Oncology, both from MD Anderson presented a very informative lecture on the symptoms, diagnosis and the recent advancements in the treatments of Melanoma. Their presentation was followed by many thought provoking questions from the audience. Dr. Nelson and Dr. Tawbi answered the questions in such simple terms, the participants understood complex concepts and were happy to participate in this Q & A session. Heartfelt thanks to both Dr. Nelson and DR. Tawbi.



IACAN plays an integral role and participates in activities of other volunteer organizations. One such activity was held on July, 6, 2018. Dr. Mukherjee presented a talk on "The Health of South Asians in the U.S.: A Model of Minority Underrepresentation". He discussed about the health needs of our community and what kind of studies will be undertaken to address this important issue. Previously, IACAN did an elaborate study, SAHNA on the health needs of American Indian and is very much interested in these kind of studies which shed lights and awareness of the health needs of our community.



On July 8, 2018, IACAN in collaboration with SOS had a very successful outreach program on "life after the loss of a spouse." Last October, IACAN had similar outreach program about the loss of spouse. There was an overwhelming positive response

from the community about this topic. So IACAN along with SOS presented the same topic in July of 2018 as well. The halls were overflowing with people and the topics discussed included what are the immediate preparations, how to be financially ready in the case of this tragedy, whom to contact for help, what are the documents that needs to be available, how to take care of the social security etc. The audience had so many questions that the presenters had to stay much longer to address all the relevant questions. A comprehensive to do list was distributed to all the attendees. Thanks to India House for all the wonderful accommodations.

In August, IACAN board members along with the Advisory board, met several times and made preparations for the upcoming gala.

The biennial gala was on September 8, 2018 at the Red Oak Ballroom-City Centre, was a wonderful experience and the guests had a fantastic time enjoying the social hour, the balloon pop and meeting friends. Thanks to all supporters IACAN continue to flourish and serve our community.

IACAN participates in some of the activities sponsored by the Rose. One of our board members, Ashma Moosa, hosted one such activity, "Hats and Henna High Tea." On September 30th. This is the third Annual High Tea benefiting The Rose and Celebrating Survivors, Caregivers and community. Other board members supported Ashma and had a great time at this special Tea Party. This event raised funds to support Rose so they can provide various health related services for women who are financially disadvantaged.



IACAN collaborates with Komen in many different ways. In the past, Komen has given us grants so we can provide free mammograms for uninsured and under insured women. On October 6, 2018 IACAN supported Komen by taking part in the Komen Walkathon. More than 12 members registered for the walkathon and successfully completed the 5K race.



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One of IACAN board member, Monalisa, has spear headed the PCORI project and had 50 people complete the survey on time. Way to go Monalisa!

One of the main goals of IACAN is to connect and support the cancer patients, cancer survivors and their care givers. To carry out this goal, IACAN organizes periodic social activities that include jewelry making, fun filled evenings with music, the art of painting, yoga, and gardening. These activities are geared to offer physical, emotional and religious support. Furthermore, these activities assist in building a sense of community with opportunities to socialize and engage in sharing experiences among the peer groups. IACAN takes every step to make the survivors feel at home, to know that they are not alone in their journey, and that they have a friend to lend a helping hand in their time of needs

On Saturday, October 13, 2018, we had a survivor activity “Tips to a successful Gardening.” The Master Gardener, Mrs. Kumari Susarla led a beautiful, informative lecture for the audience. Kumari is an avid gardener and has a vast knowledge of plants that are well suited to grow in Texas. The participants got plants to take home and they shared a healthy lunch together

Volunteers are the lifeline of IACAN. It is their dedication, endless hours of service, enthusiasm and guidance that enables IACAN to carry out all the programs. These programs are geared towards educating the community about cancer prevention, the recent advances in the treatments and all the resources that are available in the community for them. In collaboration with other community based organizations IACAN serves our community in the most needed



aspect of health care. So, on December, 8, 2018 IACAN hosted a luncheon to say thanks to our volunteers. The luncheon was held at Udipi Restaurant, Sugar land. It was a great opportunity to extend our thanks to all our volunteers and to plan for our future endeavors. It was a nice way to end 2018. IACAN is looking forward for many more years of service to our community.

**Please mark your calendars for these upcoming activities:**

1. Outreach on Cervical cancer on Sunday, Feb. 10, 2019
2. Music concert- A survivor activity on Saturday, March, 9, 2019



