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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



To our extended family of Mai Family Services...

Dear All,

2023 comes to an end in a few more days and the dawn of 2024 begins. And with it, I welcome Anu Gopalakrishnan, the newly elected President of MaiFS.

Anu, with all her experience, her wisdom, her passion and with all your support, is going to take this organization to a whole new level, I can vouch for that.

As I step aside from my role as the President of this organization, let me thank each and every one of you who have been together with us...holding our hands at every point and letting us know that we are not alone! Being the President has been a privilege, an honor but most importantly, a learning that I will forever cherish.

When I reflect on the journey we've taken together, I am filled with gratitude and pride. Our collective efforts have allowed us to make a real impact on the lives of those we set out to serve. Whether it was through fundraising where you generously opened your hearts and wallets, whether it was through community outreach, or the countless hours of dedicated work from our staff and volunteers, each one of you has played an indispensable role in our success.

Thank you for the incredible journey, the lessons learned, and the friendships forged.

I leave my role with a heart full of gratitude and optimism for the future of Mai Family Services. I encourage you to continue your involvement, for your contributions, no matter how small, have the power to create ripples of positive change.

Let us continue to make a difference and inspire positive change in the world.

With Warm Regards and Gratitude,

Vatsala Upadhyay

DONATE TODAY

Our survivors have faced immense challenges and their evolving needs require a sound and viable agency to support them. By donating, you become an integral part of this transformative journey. Your generosity creates tangible and sustainable outcomes for Mai Family Services.

Your mindful contribution not only ensures the longevity of our services but also generates tangible outcomes that make a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve. Through increased awareness, prevention programs, intervention processes, your donation helps us create a structured and sustainable environment where survivors can heal and thrive, some of whom need years of support.

The power of your donation enables survivors and their children to rebuild their lives with strength and resilience. The impact is palpable, real, and life-changing.

Don't miss this extraordinary opportunity to be part of something greater than yourself. Together, we will continue to make an impact through your heartfelt contributions.

Gratitude.

Tax ID: 38-2659685
www.maifs.org/donate

Check made payable to
Mai Family Services
32401 W Eight Mile Rd, Livonia, MI 48152

PayPal using the QR Code



ILLUMINATE

Creating a positive change. You made it possible

Illuminate – Mai Family Services' (MaiFS) 14th annual holiday banquet, held at the Farmington Manor on December 2nd was all about goodness and positivity.

The night began with a powerful message by one of MaiFS founding members Dr. Usha Ram about the attitude of gratitude and the strength of collective giving followed by the MaiFS 2023 Annual Report on various happenings and achievements by President Vatsala Upadhyay. Youth volunteers Rishi Rao and Soumya Yarlagadda felicitated the outgoing President Vatsala for her involved leadership. MaiFS board member Anu Gopalakrishnan spoke about sustainability and the evolving issues in the community. The true survivor story provided insight on the workings of MaiFS – holistically looking at the gravity of violence, challenges and the solutions that come with it as every survivor story is different.

The event was filled with mesmerizing vocals by two of the community's favorites, the multi-lingual and versatile Bini Panicker and the very bright and cheerful Amit Deshpande and enchanting dances by the elegant Astha Dalal of Michigan State University. An additional highlight were special performances by Kavipriya Anand from Naatiyalaya Academy for Bharatanatyam choreographed by Guru Smt. Iswarya Arun. The Veena instrumental pieces were beautifully arranged by Geeta Gayatri Vemuri and Sai Hasini Bhogi. Dhruv Rathod enchanted the audience with his multifaceted talent. Outside of the magnificent talent, the audience witnessed a delectable spread of food and homemade desserts, including paan (specially provided by Charu Shah). The event was gracefully handled by Vyas Shenoy of Ford Motor Company.

Board Member/Treasurer Mona Sashital thanked the sponsors for their generosity and kindness. The donors have always made a difference for the survivors over the years.

It was a holiday celebration of not only joy and togetherness but also a meaningful cause. All proceeds from the event will go towards ensuring the long-term sustainability of Mai Family Services, allowing the non-profit agency and its team to continue serving the mission and purpose of supporting survivors in their journey towards healing from violence and abuse.

MaiFS is overwhelmed with gratitude for the generous and committed donors who made this event possible. Their unwavering support gives the agency hope and reinforces the belief that together we can make a difference in the lives of those who need it most. The success of the Holiday Banquet is a testament to the power of unity and compassion in creating positive change. Together, we are creating a brighter future for survivors, empowering them to reclaim their lives and find hope amidst adversity. Special thanks to Srini Dhenuvakonda of JS3 Productions LLC for the subsidized DJ services, Suman Raval for photography, Keshav Raizada for the backdrop and Vijay Tailor for the videography.

Here are some pictures from the event.



[2023 Holiday Banquet Album](#)

WORKSHOP BY MAIFS

CONVERSATION ABOUT SOUTH ASIAN CULTURE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On November 8, 2023, a very rainy and soggy morning, multiple members of the greater community that help and support survivors of domestic violence gathered at the Bloomfield Township public library to listen to a presentation – A Conversation about South Asian Culture and Domestic Violence – hosted by Mai Family Services. The attendees included members of local police departments, staff from area DV agencies, students, MaiFS staff and Board members.

The goal of this presentation was to familiarize advocates and first responders in the larger community with possible cultural issues that may arise in South Asian people who are experiencing domestic violence. It was begun with community building exercises to help connect the audience with each other and the presenters. First the factors that go into identifying someone's culture were addressed then cultural sensitivity was defined. We then discussed the stages of cultural sensitivity so that we all have the same operating definitions.

The presentation began with an ice breaker followed by a description of South Asian culture. The primary focus of the presentation was on the intersection of patriarchy and gender and how these shape women's experiences, especially within marriage and familial relationships. Barriers to seeking help in South Asian communities was also addressed. Finally, we looked at Mai Family Services and provided the audience with a brief synopsis of how we got started what we do and how we can work together with outside agencies to provide comprehensive care for south Asians who are struggling with trauma and violence.

Throughout this presentation a lively discussion occurred between the presenters, the audience, and MaiFS staff and Board members. This was one of the best parts of session as it was evidence of the audience desire to understand and connect with South Asian cultural issues as well as the effectiveness of the program.

The presentation was spearheaded by Imandeep Grewal a professor of education at Eastern Michigan University; Shanti Menon an academic who runs her own business in educational consulting and Preeti Venkataraman who is in private practice in child and adolescent and adult psychiatry. They are also members of the board of directors for Mai Family Services.

CSU GRANT UPDATE

Since 1986, MaiFS has supported survivors of Domestic Violence (DV) within the South Asian community, delivering crucial intervention, prevention, and empowerment services. As part of this ongoing dedication, our CSU-Grant program, funded by the State of Michigan's Division of Victim Service (DVS), continues to provide essential empowerment support to South Asian survivors of DV in Metro Detroit.

This initiative offers crucial services, conducted remotely through Zoom by trained Advocates and Counselors in the areas of DV advocacy/counseling, practical English language communication skills, as well as in basic computer and financial literacy. In addition, the CSU Grant program offers limited tuition assistance to program participants to help improve their educational skills to make them more empowered.

MaiFS continues to seek collaborative tie-ups with local South Asian organizations in the Metro Detroit areas and their community members to expand the CSU-Grant program.

For further details, please contact Murali Nair at 248-795-4639. Additional information about the CSU-Grant program can also be found on our website: www.maifs.org.

Thank you for supporting Mai Family Services!



Our mailing address is:
MAI FAMILY SERVICES
32401 W. Eight Mile Rd
Livonia, MI 48152

