OCTOBER MONTHLY MEETING RECAP

By Gitanjali Senapati

On October 16, 2013, the Indo-US Chamber of Commerce hosted attorney Dilip Patel at its monthly business and networking meeting. Mr. Patel, a partner at Shutts & Bowen's Corporate Immigration Group in Tampa, spoke regarding the passage of the Immigration Reform Bill and its future impact.

Attorney Dilip Patel

The "Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act," or Senate Bill 744, is a broad-based proposal for reforming the U.S. immigration system. With an estimated 11 million unauthorized immigrants presently living in the United States, it is clear some form of reform was needed. Furthermore, it is undisputed that immigrants are an integral part of America's small business environment, bringing ideas, connections, and a spirit of entrepreneurship to the country. In acknowledgment of these outstanding needs, Bill 744 passed the Senate on June 27, 2013, and is pending consideration by the House of Representatives.

Bill 744 encompasses all aspects of the immigration process, from border and enforcement issues to legal immigration reforms. Specifically, the bill has five sections: Border Security (Title I), Immigrant Visas (Title II), Interior Enforcement (Title III), Reforms to Nonimmigrant Visa Programs (Title IV), and Jobs for Youth (Title V). Title I, Border Security, provides a structure for various border plans and the oversight guidelines for the Department of Homeland Security. Title II, Immigrant Visas, refers to the legalization of the current undocumented population, the regulation of future legal immigration, and the integration of newcomers. More significantly, it provides a sufficient amount of visas to eradicate the current backlog of family and employment-based visa applicants over a seven year period. A new merit system based upon points accrued through education, employment, and family ties will also be implemented.

Title III, Interior Enforcement, relates to the Department of Homeland Security's ability to enforce immigration laws and clarifies procedural steps. Integral to this title is a mandatory E-Verify employment eligibility program. E-Verify allows businesses to determine the eligibility of their employees to work in the United States. Those businesses which fail to enroll in E-Verify will be subjected to civil or criminal penalties.

Title IV changes the nonimmigrant visa programs for skilled workers and creates new programs for less-skilled workers. The visa cap on the skilled-worker program is raised and creates a new nonimmigrant visa for less-skilled workers. In doing so, the reform aims to ensure the United States has access to necessary labor and investment necessary to drive growth and innovation.

Finally, Title V, Jobs for Youth, creates a fund that is purely dedicated to creating employment opportunities for low-income youth. The bill allocates $1.5 billion to provide jobs for low-income youths ages 15-25. In order to raise the allocated funds, a $10 surcharge will be added to employment-based immigrant and nonimmigrant visas.

As summarized, the bill represents the largest attempt to overhaul the immigration system in the United States in more than 25 years. It is an effort to both secure the border and modernize an antiquated immigration system. As noted above, despite successful passage by the Senate, it requires consideration by the House of Representatives before enactment. Nonetheless, passage by the Senate indicates a nationwide recognition of the need for legal immigration reform, a triumph in its own right.

The Indo-US Chamber would like to extend a special thanks to Westshore Liquors and Mayuri Indian Restaurant for catering our event.

ON THE MOVE . . .

Each month, the Indo-US Chamber highlights members making strides in their professional lives. To be featured in this section, please attend our monthly networking meetings or email submissions directly to onthemove@indo-us.org.

Tricia Patel, previous Chair of Community Communications for the Indo-US Chamber of Commerce, recently accepted a position with the law firm of Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP (BAL) in Dallas, Texas. Ms. Patel earned her Juris Doctorate from Florida State University College of Law in 2011, with a certificate in International Law. Ms. Patel learned of this job opportunity when Chamber Board Member Dilip Patel passed on her information to a colleague at BAL. BAL is a widely respected global law firm specializing in corporate immigration across a diverse spectrum of industries, including science, technology, manufacturing, engineering, telecommunications, energy, financial services, sports, and entertainment. While Ms. Patel will miss the Chamber community she has left behind, she looks forward to this new opportunity in Dallas.

Kamlesh Darji, a former Executive Committee Member for the Indo-US chamber of Commerce, recently joined as Vice President of Business Development for Synergy Hub. Synergy Hub comprises a team of experienced entrepreneurs referred to as business agents dedicated to providing small businesses with less than 10 employees the personal advice, connections, & resources they need to start and to get to the next level. He believes that brilliance is the fusion of experience, collaboration, and epic creation which is what Synergy Hub provides to its members. Kamlesh brings to Synergy Hub many years of diverse experience in business ownership, consultancy, management, and Government work. He is also a coach, host, and founder of the winning karma show on blogtalkradio.com and highly recommends the Indo-US Chamber for making great connections. His latest venture is millionerrands.com, a virtual assistant and errand running service for the time-starved, which will be launching soon. **For more information visit Synergyhub.com and Blogtalkradio.com/winningkarma or contact Kamlesh Darji at 813-841-9216 or kamlesh@synergyhub.com.**

Dr. Grace Pampo, is a nationally board certified Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. She is also a Certified Natural Health Practitioner and Interpersonal Development & Transformative Communication Coach who has been healing patients since 1999. Dr. Grace was born in the Philippines Islands and gradually followed her parents' footsteps in perfecting survival skills, inner peace, communication, and healing. She trained at one of the finest US schools in Holistic & Natural Medicine, Samra University of Oriental Medicine, located in Los Angeles, California. Dr. Grace founded HEALINGUTRUST Acupuncture & Wellness Center-a place that provides a comprehensive holistic, natural, and compassionate aging-well services, empowering workshops, and natural noninvasive alternatives to surgery. At the center, individuals are treated as a whole person and balance in the mind, body, and spirit is re-established, reducing as much as possible the risk of pain, stress and complex symptoms. Dr. Grace is a passionate healer and believes that every moment is an opportunity to choose our own path. **For more information visit www.healingutrust.com or contact Dr. Grace Pampo at 727-331-0086 or healingutrust@gmail.com.**

OUR SPONSORS

HILL WARD HENDERSON ATTORNEYS AT LAW
BRIGHT HOUSE NETWORKS business solutions Where business gets personal.
HCI HOMEOWNERS CHOICE
PLATINUM Bank
PREMIER EYE CARE
FOLEY FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
The Bank of Tampa BANKING • INVESTMENTS • TRUST
SUNTRUST

SPONSORSHIP INQUIRIES: AAKASH PATEL 813.364.4769 • SPONSORSHIP@INDO-US.ORG

NOVEMBER MEETING FOCUS:
QUARTERLY SOCIAL EVENT

On Wednesday, November 20th, 2013 the Indo-US Chamber of Commerce will host its Thanksgiving Social event at the Tampa Museum of Art providing our members the unique opportunity to network while experiencing on an exclusive basis one of Tampa's finest art museums. This event is proudly co-sponsored by the Tampa Museum of Art and BNY Mellon.

The Tampa Museum of Art balances a growing collection of antiquities and modern and contemporary art with a dynamic schedule of special exhibitions. It is the region's largest museum devoted to art of our time and its award-winning home features Leo Villareal's digital installation Sky (Tampa) on its façade. Since its founding in 1979, the Museum has been dedicated to providing quality education to students and adults, with more than half of its programs offered free of charge. Currently on view are *Arp, Calder, Miro: Modern Masters from the Albright-Knox Art Gallery; Fragile Waters,* photography by Ansel Adams, Ernest H. Brooks II, and Dorothy Kerper Monnelly; and *Sea of Tranquillity,* a medium-length film by Hans Op de Beeck. The Museum's galleries will be available for our members after-hours for private viewing.

In the spirit of giving thanks, the Chamber asks all members to consider a donation to support the Museum's Museum Gives Back program. Museum Gives Back funds bus grants for Title 1 schools, free access for all Hillsborough County schoolchildren, and weekly Art Spot, a free Saturday drop-in family art program. Donations can be made at the Thanksgiving Social or at anytime directly to the Museum.

In addition to gathering in the spirit of giving thanks, the Thanksgiving Social offers a great opportunity to meet other business owners, professionals, and entrepreneurs that contribute to shaping and growing the economy in the Tampa Bay area. As is tradition with all our monthly events, there is no cost to attend and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

The Chamber would like to sincerely thank the Tampa Museum of Art and BNY Mellon for co-sponsoring our Thanksgiving Social!

Tampa Museum of Art BNY MELLON

FROM THE HEART...

by Reshma Patel

With the Thanksgiving holidays approaching, the virtue of gratitude comes to mind. Gratitude is the quality of being thankful for what you have in this very moment: not longing for more, but being present to all that is available to appreciate in the here and the now. The practice of gratitude helps us to see our situations and experiences through a more focused and appreciative lens. Use this holiday season to cultivate your own practice of gratitude, acknowledging all that is good and recounting all the many blessings that you have, often those that others have not been as fortunate to receive. A simple way to begin is to spend 5 minutes each day thinking of what you are truly grateful for. Perhaps it is a relationship that brings you knowledge or a lesson learned from a mentor. Or perhaps it is a missed opportunity that led to something greater. Research shows it takes on average 21 days to develop a new habit. Commit to the practice of gratitude for 3 weeks and watch your life transform.

The Chamber is truly grateful for its team of Executive Committee members who volunteer during their "free" time to serve this community. Specifically, the Chamber would like to take this opportunity to introduce and thank the following people who serve this community via their roles on the Executive Committee:

- Saloni Amin is a Bank of America Merrill Lynch Client Manager and leads a team of financial specialists who work with business owners to understand their business.
- Jigish Desai owns a computer consulting company, Intelitech Computer Solutions, that provides IT and computer consulting to small businesses.
- Ronak Ganatra is the Director of Marketing for a hotel management group, Inspire Hotels LLC.
- Jal Irani is the owner of Excel Building Services, a commercial cleaning and building maintenance company.
- Anitha Kancharla is an experienced IT Functional Consultant with strategic vision and pragmatic execution.
- Aakash Patel is the Founder & President of Elevate, Inc., a strategic business consulting firm providing a variety of services, based on recognizing, forming & leveraging strategic relationships.
- Amit Patel is a Financial Representative with Northwestern Mutual and provides comprehensive financial security planning for individuals and businesses through risk management, wealth accumulation, and distribution strategies.
- Reshma Patel, MD is a physician practicing Integrative & Functional Medicine at SevaMed Institute.
- Lakshmi Sastry is the Director of Ritti Couture Living Style, Inc. of Tampa, a company specializing in interior design and professional event planning.
- Gitanjali Senapati is an Associate with the law firm of Groelle & Salmon, P.A., practicing primarily in the areas of first party property loss and property coverage matters.
- Nancy Soifer is a banking management professional well versed in business development, lending, leadership, and team building.
- Srinivas Vadlamani has many years of experience in IT services industry in various leadership roles both in IT Talent acquisition and Sales and Marketing.
- Francis Vayalumkal is a principal at Candor Resources, LLC a Technology and Business process solutions company helping businesses increase profitability through cutting edge technology.
- And, finally, our president, Darshna Patel, is a well-respected lawyer in the Tampa Bay area and a true leader that both inspires and promotes the leader within others.

INDO US Chamber of Commerce "Together, the future is ours."

Upcoming Indo-US Chamber Event:

Business &Networking Event: Quarterly Social

Date: Wednesday November 20, 2013

Time: 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

Location: Tampa Museum of Art (120 W. Gasparilla Plaza Tampa, FL 33602)

Parking is available at the William F Poe Parking Garage on 800 N. Ashley Drive for $1.20 an hour

This is a FREE event. Hors d'oeuvres will be served. No RSVP required.

INDO-US CHAMBER MISSION

"To provide an active forum in which Asian American professionals and business owners, through an exchange of ideas, with a unified voice, can communicate, interact, and secure a position within the business industry and become a source of inspiration by promoting professionalism and excellence through education and community involvement."

INDO-US CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Darshna Patel - President

Saloni Amin
Jigish Desai
Ronak Ganatra
Jal Irani
Anitha Kancharla
Aakash Patel
Amit Patel
Reshma Patel
Lakshmi Sastry
Gitanjali Senapati
Nancy Soifer
Srinivas Vadlamani
Francis Vayalumkal

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."
– John F. Kennedy

INDO US Chamber of Commerce "Together, the future is ours."

P.O. Box 20232, Tampa, FL 33622
Phone: (813) 358-8384
Email: info@indo-us.org

WWW.INDO-US.ORG