NOVEMBER MONTHLY NETWORKING EVENT RECAP

By Francis Vayalumkal

On Wednesday, November 20th 2013, the Indo-US Chamber welcomed members to its quarterly networking social at the Tampa Museum of Art. The museum located in downtown Tampa, along the Hillsborough river provided a great venue and the weather was just perfect for the evening. Guests enjoyed the panoramic view of beautifully lit downtown Tampa while listening to live sitar music performed by Mrs. Shaila Cuddapah.

Ray Ifert of BNY Mellon Wealth Management, a leading wealth management firm that combines the resources of a global financial leader with the care and commitment of a small firm, sponsored this event along with The Tampa Museum of Art. Leslie Langford, Director of External Affairs at the museum welcomed all guests to take the opportunity to view the exhibits inside, as many of the members had never been to this great museum located at the heart of Tampa.

Darshna Patel, President of the Chamber, introduced the networking game for the members that facilitated active networking. Quarterly Socials have been a favorite of members and people who attend get an opportunity to meet and greet new people as well as building relationships with people they have met before. The Chamber provides an open forum for people to come together, network and build lasting relationships and do business together. It is common to meet people at these events, who have done business with each other or have started a business together after meeting at one of the events put together by the Indo-US Chamber. As always, the delicious food and cocktails were complimentary to members.

The Indo-US Chamber would like to extend a special thanks to the sponsors of the event, Tampa Museum of Art and BNY Mellon

Tampa Museum of Art

BNY MELLON

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 info@indo-us.org.

Shaun Amarnani, an Indo-US Chamber of Commerce Member, recently accepted a position with the City of Tampa City Attorney's Office where he will be practicing land use and real estate law. This is the first land use related attorney position filled by City of Tampa in 8 years. Amarnani received his Juris Doctorate in 2008 from the Florida State University College of Law and his Bachelor of Science in Real Estate and Finance in 2004 from Florida State University. Amarnani is heavily involved in the Tampa Bay community. He is the Program Chair of PetNet, a younger professional membership group Amarnani and his wife recently founded to raise money for the Humane Society of Tampa Bay. Amarnani is also the Membership Vice-Chair of the Tampa Urban Land Institute (ULI) Young Leaders Group, a Statewide Appointee to The Florida Bar Eminent Domain Standing Committee, a member of the Hillsborough County Bar Association, and a member of Emerge Tampa of the Greater Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce. **If there are any members of the Chamber who are looking for more ways to get involved in the Tampa Bay community, please feel free to contact Shaun Amarnani at shaunamarnani1@gmail.com.**

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SOUNDS OF THE SITAR...

by Lakshmi Sastry

At last month's quarterly social at the Tampa Museum of Art, we were fortunate to have the beautiful sounds of the sitar as the back drop for the event performed by Shaila Cuddapah. Shaila generously shared her talent, time, and love of the sitar for the evening.

Shaila Cuddapah hails from Andhra Pradesh, India. She resides in St. Petersbug with her husband, Dr. Sam Cuddapah, a plastic surgeon. As a child she was introduced to the "veena", (a string instrument) by her mother. Ever since that time, her love for classical music which was kindled then has evolved to her playing the sitar today. She moved to the Tampa Bay area nearly seven years ago, and is a disciple of the famed Pandit K.V Mahabala and Pandit Abhik Mukherjee. Shaila feels very blessed and fortunate to be under the tutelage of these accomplished artists. She would like to be known as someone "who loves music", finds music to be meditative, and considers it as a medium to give joy to herself and to others.

The Indo-US of Chamber would like to extend a special thanks to Shaila Cuddapah for kindly donating her time and talent for our event.

Appreciating Diversity During the Holidays

By Simma Lieberman

Many Americans don't celebrate Christmas religiously, either as followers of non-Christian religions (Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Jews) or as individuals with no religious affiliation. It is easy to overlook the depth of diversity present in America during the Christmas season. In reality, many different events, both spiritual, religious, and tradition based, are being celebrated in many different ways during these times. In order to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all employees, regardless of their religious or cultural beliefs, a few simple guidelines can keep the fun in holiday celebrations.

Three Ways to Build Your Awareness of Diversity and Create an Inclusive Holiday Environment

1. Learn about other religious or holiday celebrations. Carve out some time from online shopping or a holiday TV show to learn about another culture's celebrations during this time. Watch a TV special about other celebrations, do a Google search on a holiday, or check out books at your local bookstore while gift shopping. Share your learning with others, and use it as a chance to expand the conversation at parties and at the dinner table.
2. Make no expectations about other religious or holiday celebrations. Realize that people celebrate a variety of holidays during this time of year, and some people choose to celebrate none. Be respectful of these differences by taking interest in other people's traditions and making them feel welcome. Don't be afraid to ask people what holidays they celebrate. Find out what they do during this time of the year that is special. Let it be an opportunity to learn about different cultures and religions and the traditions that accompany them.
3. Mark your calendar and your address book with other scheduled religious or holiday celebrations. If the calendar you use does not list holidays like Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Ramadan, and Diwali, find out the dates and record them as reminders. Many programs like Microsoft Outlook allow users to add calendar dates for celebrations from different parts of the world automatically, making this task quick and effortless. Take a few minutes to mark your address book with the holidays that people celebrate. When writing holiday cards, recognize their holiday, and include a little hand-written note acknowledging their celebration.

To view this article in its unedited entirety:

Lieberman, Simma. "Appreciating Diversity During the Holidays." <http://humanresources.about.com/od/diversity/a/holiday_diverse.htm>.

Save the Date for the
INDO US CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S
12 ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT
on Friday March 7, 2014.
Stay tuned for details.

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

History of The Chamber

The Indo-US Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1999 in Tampa by Indian American business owners and professionals in the Tampa Bay community. Our goal is to create an organization that affords like-minded individuals with opportunities to work together, grow together, and learn from one another. The programs and services offered by the Chamber are designed to provide the professional community with the tools necessary to continuously evolve and expand their businesses. More importantly, the Chamber cultivates opportunities to network, where business relationships can be established and friendships can blossom.

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."

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"Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value."
–Albert Einstein

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