



Kashmiri Overseas Association, Inc.

www.koausa.org

time.

Annual Report 2023



Dear KOA Family,

Namaskar

As we progress into 2024, we want to thank our members for their support and generosity that has helped us run our programs and keep KOA as one of the premier social organizations serving the community globally. The year 2023 has again been a very successful year for KOA in every regard, thanks to all the volunteers and donors. For the first time we participated in two events that highlighted our culture nationally and internationally. The KOA Float in NY this year at the India Day Parade and the KOA's participation at the World Culture Festival in D.C gave us an incredible opportunity to showcase our culture and heritage to the world.

I want to thank the KOA Board for their contributions in making this a successful year. Three of our board members completed their tenure as Directors. I thank the outgoing directors Mr. Vikram Salman, Mrs. Renu Wokhlu and Mr. Akshay Kaul for their dedicated service to the community. I welcome the incoming directors Dr. Sunita Kanesa-thasan (zone 2), Mrs. Anjana Kaul (zone 5) and Mr. Ajay Garyali (zone 10) to the KOA Board 2024.

Warmly,

Archana Kokroo

Highlights of 2023

Here are some highlights/overviews of the programs and projects that were undertaken by KOA Board this year, and giving you a preview of the programs in pipeline for 2024.

- The year 2023 started with “**Remembrance of Exodus Day**” in January.

February

A Samohic Herath Pooja was conducted this year again on Shivratri by Pandit Pawan Ji from India. As you all know this is the 3rd consecutive year that the Pooja has been held across the USA and Canada with more than 300 families attending and participating virtually every year in the pooja.

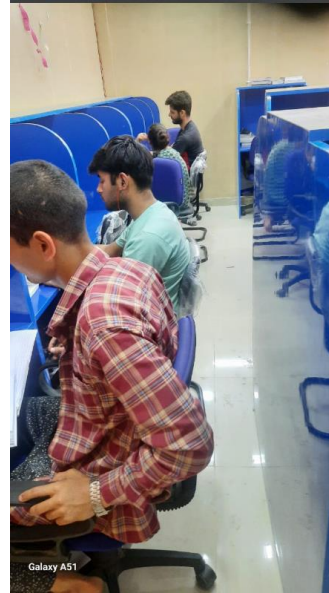
March

Distribution of KOA Calendars and Vedic Panchang. This year in addition to the Prem Nath Jotshi’s Jantri/calendar, we introduced for the first time the addition of **Vedic Panchang** prepared specifically for 4 time zones in USA. The alternative to the Jantri which most of us use was made due to an increasing demand by some zones to follow the Vedic Panchang.

Highlights of 2023

April

- **KOA sponsored E-Library at Jagati Camp was inaugurated.** The library at Jagati is run by Helpline Humanity and Mata Saraswati Pustakalya for many years. This year KOA and Avinash Raina Foundation upgraded the library. The library was digitalized, Computers were added, cubicles created, conducive environment given to students who were also given access to online courses that helped them to excel in their courses.



Highlights of 2023

April

- **Youth Trip to Chicago** in April. This year our youth had a fantastic weekend trip in Chicago. About 60 young KP Youth attended the 3-day Camp.



Highlights of 2023

July

4th of July -KOA East Coast Camp- A very successful and well attended camp was hosted by Philadelphia this year. Attended by about 350 people, this camp was remarked as one of the best camps held by KOA.

Among many community activities, the highlights of camp were:

- Musical Concert by Nirja Pandit and Arti Kaul,
- Hawan by- Sh. Kuldeep Pandita,
- Inauguration of KOA sponsored book edited by History of Kashmir and its Pandits’,
- Screening of movie- ‘Moute Rang’ directed by Mr. Ajay Raina.
- Our sincere thanks to the Camp Team led by Mr. Ishet Dhar and Mr. Rajiv Razdan for delivering fantastic camp.



Highlights of 2023

August

- **First time ever- KOA's participation in The India Day Parade in New York.**

KOA had the opportunity to show the KP Culture by presenting a KOA FLOAT which showcased our culture and way of life in Kashmir. The central theme revolved around Shaivism, a way of life of a typical KP household and the Kashmiri Music. The float was decorated with marigolds representing the sun with its positive energy.



Highlights of 2023

August

- **Meeting with His Holiness Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.** In August this year a KOA delegation met with his Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and spent a few hours talking about ways in which our community can benefit from the teachings of Guruji. We also discussed the ways in which our cultural heritage can be preserved particularly Kashmiri Shaivism.



Highlights of 2023

- **September-Labor Day weekend West Coast KOA Camp** in Cupertino CA was held. The highlight of the camp was :
- a discourse on Kashmiri Shaivism Sh. Virender Qazi
- outdoor activities (River rafting)
- cultural programs (Kashmiri skits, Antakshari, chakri)



Highlights of 2023

October - December

- **KOA Performance at the World Culture Festival:**

On Oct 1st 50+ volunteers performed on stage at the National Mall in Washington D.C. It was an awe inspiring, memorable event attended by 1.1 million people and 17,000 performers from 180 countries. **KOA was one of the performers.**

This was a once in a lifetime event where we got the opportunity to perform in front of world dignitaries. We had carefully selected the song we performed to “Paade Kamlan Tal” a popular Kashmiri Bhajan dedicated to Goddess Saraswati.



Highlights of 2023

October – December

In Dec, the President, Dr. Archana Kokroo and youth representative, Ms. Shruti Jalali visited Jammu to meet with our volunteers who help us run KOA Programs and to thank them for their dedicated service to the community. They visited Jagati Migrant Camp, Muthi Migrant Camp, Sharika Foundation and Helpline Humanity Office in Jagati. A report by our Youth Representative, Shruti Jalali, from zone 5 was shared with the membership in December.

During this visit, EAP checks were distributed to the students.



PROJECTS IN PIPELINE

Sharing some projects that are in the pipeline for 2024:

1. Kashmiri Language Classes*: Tentative date to start January 2024.
2. Working on a Kashmiri Audio Book to further preserve and promote our language.
3. Rolling out KOA Youth Friendship and Dating App- “ZUV”
4. Muthi Library Project (like one sponsored by KOA in Jagti)
5. Starting a KOA Heritage Committee* that will identify projects of importance that preserve and promote our heritage and culture.

*Note: These projects have already started in 2024



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PROGRAM REPORTS 2023

- SAC (SUPPORT A CHILD)
- FSP (FAMILY SUSTENANCE PROGRAM)



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SUPPORT A CHILD 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

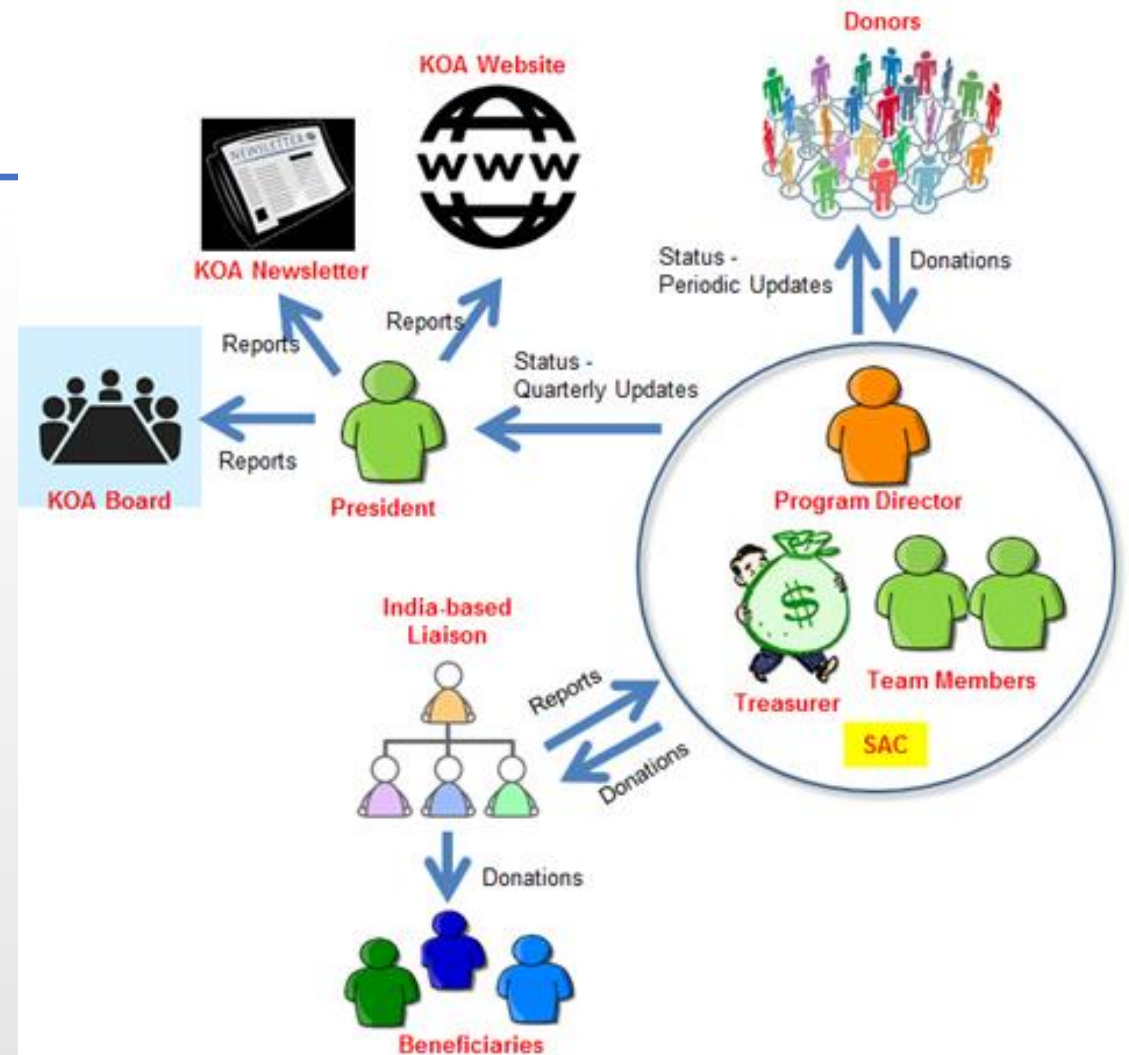
KOA's Educational Program for KG to High-School Students in
Jammu and the Kashmir Valley

ARUN MOZA SUNITA KANESA-THASAN SUSHMABHAN

SAC Process

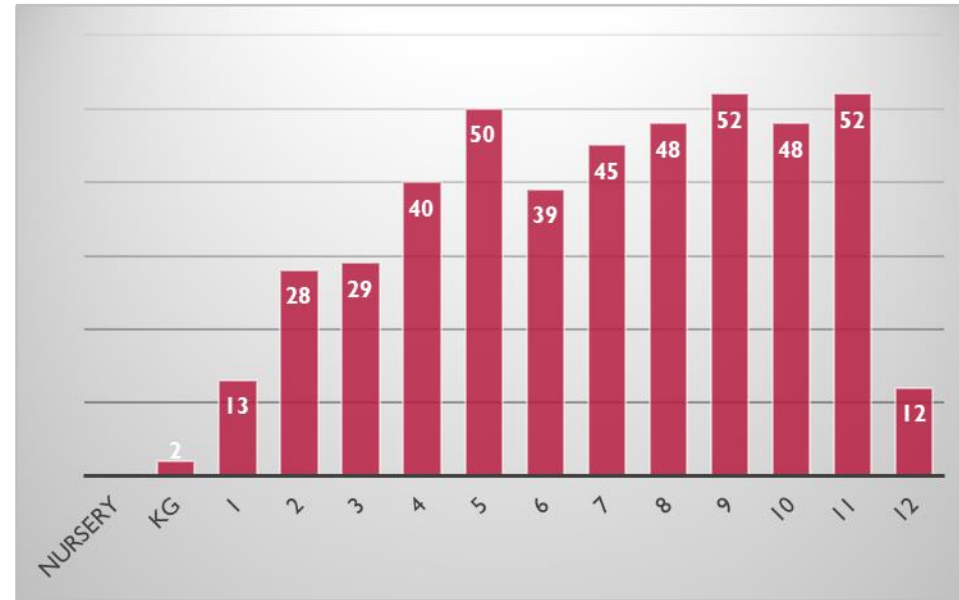
Standardized & Simpler

- Transparent selection criterion used for applicants
- Team effort with local Sharika and US KOA SAC volunteers
- Donor matching \$325 per student.
- Lower donations difficult to reconcile
- Emergency/critical student cases dealt on need basis by KOA President and SAC teams



GRADE distribution

Grade	#beneficiaries
KG	2
1	13
2	28
3	29
4	40
5	50
6	39
7	45
8	48
9	52
10	48
11	52
12	12



9th and 11th graders = 52 is maximum, followed by 5th graders = 50

Thank you

for Making A
Difference

DONATIONS

- In 2023, the SAC Team raised **\$149,825** with your generous help. We are grateful to community members who have sponsored these needy children.
- Only \$325 supports one child for a full year of school.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- We were able to provide education for **461** students including **261 girls and 200 boys** enrolled in KG to 12th grade



In 2021 under the leadership of Archana Ji – KOA took up the noble mission of helping our brethren in distress and suffering from COVID pandemic. The program was approved by the board. The fundraising was done under this program banner and distributed to verified needy brethren in various parts of India. The program was divided into two parts:

KOA Family Sustenance Program.

The **program objective** is to serve our community members in critical need for survival and sustenance. Our community members who are very significantly impacted by COVID Pandemic. Lend a helping hand to KP Community in India suffering from COVID related hardships

- The program was advertised by word of mouth and via the coordinators in Jammu

- Received 65+ Applications for support
- As on Date **60+ family's** were verified approved and **\$65,000** funds were distributed.
- One family recently supported in Valley for hardship due to deaths in the family from shootings

KOA – Kitchen Sustenance Program

The **program objective** is to support the KP families in Kashmir valley and help them make their ends meet during the hard times. 44 families in Kashmir valley are suffering from COVID related hardships and have requested assistance of about Rs 2000/- per month per family

- The program was advertised by word of mouth and via the coordinators Valley
- Program is active and supporting 44 family's on monthly basis

- List of **55 families** received from our associates in valley
- The support packages were developed with necessary food supplies
- Distribution of the packages done on monthly / bi-monthly basis depending on the feasibility and situation on ground.

Program Directors: Praduman Tickoo & Vinod Moza

FAMILY SUSTENANCE PROGRAMS

Program Highlights

- Our Brethren in J&K continue to face hardships due to one or the other unfortunate reasons
- KOA's commitment to support the impacted families is much appreciated
- Resolved issues with newly implemented govt. regulations in international fund transfers.
- The delay in sending funds to the impacted families is now significantly reduced

To
The President -
KOA USA

Subject :- Acknowledgement

Namaste Kar,

I [REDACTED] further acknowledge that I received Rs 80200/- transferred by your goodself into my account.

I am suffering from cancer since 4 years and I spend huge amount on my treatment we are having belief of Rs 9750/- total. It becomes very difficult for to arrange my medicines and other related expenditure of my treatment. Your help at this stage was much need to meet with expenses to some extent.

Thanks a lot to your entire team and donor for your kind support at this stage of life.

Also thanks to Mr. Purooj for forwarding my case to your goodself for help.

Yours faithfully
[REDACTED] Kumar Luthsi
Talak Telo Jammu.

FAMILY SUSTENANCE PROGRAMS

2023 Year End Report Support Provided

KOA Family Sustenance Program.

FUNDS DISBURSED - \$33,000

Case#	Name	Description	Paid
KOAFSP52		Single moms supporting her daughter college expenses, no income other than relief	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP53		Divorced , Single suffering from medical issues - fatal	\$ 1,000
KOAFSP55		Retired from Govt. Service suffering from severe medical conditions	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP56		Referred by Kamal Hak Ji; Patient suffering from cancer and lost job during covid	\$ 2,470
KOAFSP58		Suffering from throat cancer for the last years, significant medical expenses	\$ 1,000
KOAFSP59		Ashok Kumar suffering from cancer. Only means of income is relief	\$ 1,500
KOAFSP60		Suffering from intestinal cancer. Only means of income is relief	\$ 1,000
KOAFSP61		Suffering from Liver Cirrocies. Taken loan from bank for treatment; only relief	\$ 1,000
KOAFSP62		Financial troubles, unable to meet medical and educational expenses	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP63		Financial troubles, unable to meet medical and educational expenses: AC085604010001163	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP64		Financial troubles, lost inlaws to covid and incurred significant expenses	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP65		Severe diabates, and rest of the family also suffering from medical issues	\$ 1,000
KOAFSP66		Anju suffering from Liver Cirrocies, lost husband to the same disease, only relief	\$ 1,500
KOAFSP67		Mental issues/ has two sons, only surviving on relief	\$ 2,000
KOAFSP68		Lost husband to Liver Cirrocies, Two kids Only relief and increasing medical expenses	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP69		Deserted by husband with two kids, no source of income	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP70		Wife suffering from multiple ailments, no source of income. has two kids	\$ 2,000
KOAFSP71		Family suffering from mental disorder, Wife and son.	\$ 2,000
KOAFSP72		Deserted by husband with two kids, no source of income	\$ 1,000
KOAFSP73		Suffering from liver Cirrocies. No major source of income	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP74		Don't even have relief. Case pending with relief commissioner. Private job with little salary	\$ 1,000
KOAFSP75		Mother and daughter suffering from medical issues	\$ 1,000
KOAFSP76		Four unmarried daughters in a family of six with little source of income	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP77		Ailing Mother and several self medical conditions. Failed business due to COVID. Two young kids	\$ 1,235
KOAFSP78		Lost her husband who was ailing and left with two children, no source of income	\$ 1,235
		Total distribution of Funds	\$ 33,055

ZONAL ACTIVITY

ZONE 1

Zone 5 Diwali Event 2023

Zone 1 celebrated Diwali on December 9th at Mint. Performances were incredible. Both kids and adults performed



ZONAL ACTIVITY

ZONE 4

Zone 4 celebrated Diwali on 18th Nov 2024 in Potomac MD. The event started off with Ganesha and Lakshmi pooja, followed by Prasad, appetizers, and dinner. We had a number of great "Indian Idol" level performances from various singers and our KOA youth representative mesmerized the audience by her great Bhangra (dance) moves.

Krystle Kaul, who is running for Congress in VA District 10 attended the event as well, leveraging the occasion to reach out to the community for help and support for her campaign.



ZONAL ACTIVITY

ZONE 5

Zone 5 Diwali Event 2023

Diwali Celebrations were held in Austin Texas with our extended Kashmiri Pandit families followed by dinner. After National Anthem, kids performed a play “Ramleela” depicting the story of Ramayana. It was an immense display of talent and hard work.



Zone 5 Town Hall Event 2024

Zone 5 Held their First ever Zonal Townhall event in Austin. This was attended by community members across the zone either in person or via Zoom. KOA president Archana ji graced this occasion with her presence. Zonal Director Anjana Kaul gave a presentation of programs and initiatives for zone 5 for the upcoming year.



EAP Program has not closed yet for the year 2023. We will share it with you as the report becomes available.

GENERAL DONATIONS:

GENERAL DONATIONS
ARE USED IN
ENHANCING THE VISION
AND MISSION OF KOA

.

Please Donate.....

<https://members.koausa.org/#/donationList>

All programs in US run on general funds.

Koay programs.

Calendars.

Shivratri Samohik pooja.

Camp Havan.

East and West Coast Camp .

Artist Concerts and travel, and Appreciation tokens.

Camp Souvenirs and mementos.

IT upgrades and IT maintenance.

SAC, EAP and Medical Portal Maintenance.

Youth Appreciation Awards.

Conferences and KP awareness programs.

Publicationsand so much more!

MEMBERSHIP

- **Lifetime-Pay Onetime**
- **Annual-Pay Yearly**

For annual members membership cycle starts from Jan 1st –Dec 31st.

For becoming a member of KOA please go to:

<https://members.koausa.org/#/>

Become A Member of KOA!

Why....

- **CELEBRATE OUR CULTURE, TRADITIONS, PROUD MOMENTS AND OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER**
- **MEMBERSHIP IMPROVES ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY**
- **A WAY TO GIVE BACK**
- **INCREASES NETWORKING AMONG COMMUNITY**
- **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**
- **ACCESS TO MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS, STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS, YOUTH PROGRAMS**
- **IMPROVES FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL STABILITY OF THE ORGANIZATION**
- **RECEIVE ANNUAL CALENDAR AND OTHER PUBLICATION**
- **KOA APP FREE OF COST**
- **HELPS US BRING COMMUNITY PROGRAMS TO YOU LIKE SAMOHIC SHIVRTRI POOJA, ASUNTEGINDUN, ZOOMDUB, KHYENCHEN**



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT