

# KASHMIRI OVERSEAS ASSOCIATION



## FOUR YEAR REPORT Jan 2021 – Dec 2024

We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But that ocean would be less because of that missing drop.

Mother Teresa

Dr. Archana Kokroo,  
President, CEO & Chairperson  
Kashmiri Overseas Association

# KASHMIRI OVERSEAS ASSOCIATION

## FOUR YEAR REPORT (Jan 2021-Dec 2024)

- Dr. Archana Kokroo, President KOA.

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It has been a distinct honor and privilege for my administration to serve our vibrant community since January 2021. For the past 4 years, the Executive Team and the Board have worked tirelessly to uphold KOA's vision and further its mission of supporting, nurturing, and fostering the spirit and values of KOA. We are deeply grateful for the trust and the opportunities provided to us by the community. The past four years have been a period of growth, expansion and collaboration. Due to our unwavering commitment to preserve our cultural heritage, fostering unity, and helping the community in times of need, KOA has become a global force that people look up to. We have achieved significant milestones that will continue to benefit the Kashmiri community here and in India for many years.

We started the tenure with a Global Healthcare Crisis- COVID 19 in India, which tested our resolve and resilience. KOA became a beacon of hope for the community globally and we rose to the occasion through our exceptional work, bringing aid and assistance to our community in India in record time. It was a fulfilling and humbling experience and our best achievement of the past 4 years!

I thank my exceptional Executive Team: Secretary Neeta Bhat, Ex-Secretary Anil Ganju, Treasurer Rakesh Thaploo, V.P. Ashwani Kaul, and Webmaster Nimit Kaul. Their hard work and perseverance have been nothing short of inspiring. I thank the KOA Board, the Youth Directors and Program Directors for their outstanding work and dedication.

As we wrap up the work that we started 4 years back, we would like to share some of our proud accomplishments.

### **Some of the Proud Achievements of the past 4 years:**

- KOA's Emergency Response to the **Covid Pandemic in India**.
- Record Fundraising and donations surpass all records and create a Robust Financial Foundation for KOA.
- Record breaking Donation sent to India based Programs
- Increase in the scholarship amount to SAC and EAP students.
- Exponential growth of KOA Youth Program.
- Cultural Preservation through new programs and projects in the USA.
- Strengthening the core of our Signature Programs - SAC, EAP, Medical Funds program.
- Creating New Humanitarian/Welfare Programs to help Financially strapped families in India-Family Sustenance Program in 2021.
- KOA's footprint in Kashmir Valley through various programs.
- Catastrophic Funds Program started in USA.
- Enhancing KOA IT and communication platforms and adding a KOA App,
- Fostering new alliances and partnerships with other likeminded Organizations to amplify KOA's impact and outreach outside of USA.

**Sharing a detailed activities report of the past 4 years. Many activities could not be listed.**

## **A. NEW COMMUNITY PROGRAMS CREATED IN USA SINCE 2021**

This administration came with a promise of increasing community involvement, fostering strong connections and active participation across all age groups, and in 2021 we started programs that did just that.

### **1. VIRTUAL EVENTS:**

**ASUN te' GINDUN-** Program created to engage children ages 8–12 in a cultural, fun-filled storytelling format. Total episodes completed in 2 years -24. Themes of various activities were chosen to represent our religion, culture and heritage.

**BOD DOH SERIES** - Children engaged in activities related to Shivratri, Navreh, Gan-Chodah, Rakhi, PANN, Diwali, etc. This program for two years included activities such as Vedic Math, Puppet and Fashion shows, Roth Making, a Kids' Fashion Show, and other craft-related activities. The programs are available on YouTube.

**SAAZ te AWAZ - Cultural and Performing Art Program.** The program created a platform for our community where artists, poets, singers, dancers, and all the performers would thrive.

Artists like world-renowned singer Mr. Kailash Kher, Padma Shree Bhajan Sopori Ji, Kailash Mehra, and Arti Kaul, Neerja Pandit, Archana Jalali, Dhananjay Kaul, Anurag Harsh, Abhay Sopori, Sapna Kachroo, and Sunaina Kachru all have performed in this program. Through this program many poets, dancers, artists of our community got a chance to perform and show their incredible talent to the community.

**ZOOM DUB - A Community Discourse and Discussion Program-** Platform for discussion and discourse on CURRENT AFFAIRS relevant to our community- with over 22 sessions so far. Discussion topics included COVID-19 discourses and updates, Exodus Day, Minority killings in Kashmir, Shivaratri Vatak Pooza, Balidan Day Diwas, and topics of interest and relevance to our community.

Panel discussions and debates on topics relevant to our community with prominent people like Padmashree Sh. Subhash Kak, Padmashree Sh. Kashi Nath Pandita, Sh. Sushil Pandit, Sh. Ashok Pandit, Sh. Vijay Sazawal etc. Interviews with cast and producers of MOVIES- Kashmir Files and Article-370. Some of the sessions are available on YouTube.

**KHYEN-CHEN** - The program started in 2020 during COVID-19 and has grown into a Popular Culinary Discussion Group engaging 180+ members of our community who enjoy the art of cooking and the history and evolution of Kashmiri Cuisine. We enjoy having many of the celebrated Chefs from our community in this group. We have had many **live cooking sessions** —over 40 delectable sessions, and hopefully more to come....

Please watch these sessions on KOA YouTube. The focus of this program is to revive our lost and forgotten foods of Kashmir while keeping the Traditional Kashmiri Cuisine alive in USA.

### **2. CREATING RELIGIOUS RELICS-TITHI PANCHANGS:**

**Started in 2022.** Now our community in USA has access to the Traditional Panchang as well as the Time Zone Specific Tithi Panchangs based on 4 time zones in the USA.

### **3.LIVE SAMOHIC HERATH/VATAK PUZA:**

**Started in 2021,** every year on Shivratri a virtual Live Vatak Puza has been conducted under the guidance of Guru Pawan Ji Pandita from Delhi. Hundreds of participants from USA and Canada join in this Herath pooja, some performing the pooja live under Pawan Ji's guidance.

### **4.CREATING A KOA MARKETPLACE:**

**Started in 2022,** KOA now has a Market place where items like T-shirts, masala packets, books, Athors, Achaar, are sold. **The money raised from the marketplace is used for KOA Youth activities.**

## **B. GROWTH AND EXPANSION OF EXISTING PROGRAMS OPERATING in USA**

1. **CHAPTER PRESIDENTS: Chapter Presidents** increased from 4 to 22 in the past 4 years. The Chapter Presidents are our foot soldiers, representing the entire country especially in areas that are geographically **distant from their parent Zone.**
2. **YOUTH PROGRAM: (See full report in the Youth Section).** KOA Youth Program was added to SOP 6.0 to accommodate the growth and specify roles and responsibilities of its officers.
3. **HEALTH CARE NETWORK: An exceptional contribution during COVID-19-(see covid report) and funding medical care of record number of cases in the past 4 years.**
4. **NEW- KOA PROFESSIONAL NETWORK CREATED IN 2023:** actively helps in placements/Jobs for young professionals looking to create a professional network. This network was created in 2022 when the IT Industry was going through challenges and job losses.
5. **HERITAGE PROGRAMS and REVIVAL OF HERITAGE COMMITTEE:** a plethora of programs were undertaken in the past 4 years that continue to promote our Religion and Heritage. Heritage committee was revived with Mr. Dileep Tiku as the director.
  - **Kashmiri Language Classes – Initiated in 2023,** has been started under KOA Youth Group, Zone 5 Literacy Drive, and Heritage Committee.
  - **Kashmiri Shaivism Discourses – Initiated in 2024** under the able guidance of Sh. Vijay Dhar of California.
  - **Sponsorship of History Book on Kashmir and its Pandits (Published in 2023) -** “The History of Kashmir and its Pandits” Editor Sh. Ashok Raina This book gives a snapshot of the history of Kashmir since its inception and Evolution to the current history of Kashmir.
  - **SAVING OUR HERITAGE - ‘TARANG PROJECT’ IN 2022:** The Bridal Tarang has a special and unique significance in our given culture. We wanted to revive it and gave it as a souvenir at the 2022 Annual Camp. In the summer of 2022, a project was done involving the ladies living in the Muthi Migrant Camps.
6. **SHOWCASING OUR ETHNIC CULTURE TO THE WORLD – PROGRAMS DONE IN USA cont....**
  - **PARTICIPATION IN WORLD CULTURE FEST in 2023 AT THE NATIONAL MALL D.C -** performing to ‘Pade Kamlan Taal” Dance Performance at the World Culture Festival organized by Art of Living. On Oct 1, KOA performed 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 over 180 countries. KOA was one of the performers. Ladies wore the traditional *phiran te loonge*, men wore *the saafa te phiran* and danced to *Padee Kamlan Taal....*
  - **MEETING WITH HIS HOLINESS GURU JI SRI RAVI SHANKAR INITIATED THIS PERFORMANCE -** In Oct 2023, we were invited to a private audience with Guru Ji Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. A small group of 9 people had the honor to sit with Guru ji for an hour discussing ways our community can be helped.
  - **KP HISTORY AWARENESS -** In AUGUST 2022, TRAVELLING TO VARIOUS CITIES IN THE USA WITH SH. SUSHIL PANDIT. The target audience in these community hall meetings were the broader Indian Diaspora and the Western communities. Raising awareness about our genocide and Exodus of 1990 was the mission of this project. KOA collaborated with Sh. Sushil Pandit, a well-known historian, on this mission. Cities covered were Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Long Island NY, Washington D.C and New Jersey
  - **KOA PARTICIPATION IN INDIA DAY PARADES IN MULTIPLE CITIES IN THE USA -**
    - Parades in multiple cities across USA and in the last 2 years taken out FLOATS that are specific to Kashmiri Pandit Culture.
  - **KOA RECOGNITION AT BAPS EVENT IN Shri Swaminarayan Temple in Robbinsville New Jersey -**
    - In January 2023, KOA was invited to inaugurate a Kalash Pooja at the Consecration of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. It was an event attended by thousands of devotees. KOA was recognized for its community service and preserving the Hindu Values.

- **MODI AND US Event-August 2024 IN NY –**
  - KOA was invited to be a partner in welcoming PM Modi to USA in August 2024. It was an honor to be a part of the organizing team, and our community from Tristate area attended the event in large numbers.
- **MULTIPLE MEETINGS WITH INDIAN CONSULATE GENERALS AND INDIAN AMBASSADOR** -Multiple meetings were held with the Indian Consulate General and Indian Ambassador representing KOA and KOA's interests in these meetings.



### **C. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS –COVID-19 IN INDIA RESPONSE AND RELIEF**

Kashmiri Overseas Association (KOA) demonstrated its compassion by delivering a robust medical response when COVID-19 struck India. As the pandemic overwhelmed healthcare systems, KOA swiftly mobilized resources to support those in need. The organization coordinated fundraising efforts, procured critical medical supplies such as oxygen concentrators, and facilitated their delivery to affected regions. Additionally, KOA partnered with local organizations and healthcare providers to ensure timely assistance, focusing on addressing urgent medical needs in underserved communities.

A significant part of 2021 was taken up by the COVID-19 relief activities in India. The virus had a devastating impact on our community, resulting in more than 800 deaths in less than 2 months. The impact of the work done by KOA for COVID Relief has been applauded by our community here, in India, as well as globally.

**DONATIONS COLLECTED DURING COVID FUNDRAISING HAVE BEEN THE HIGHEST-EVER FUNDRAISING EFFORT IN THE HISTORY OF KOA.**

**Mr. Rattan Khosa and Mrs. Bharti Khosa were the biggest donors, donating \$200,000 towards the immediate Covid Relief. The community will forever be grateful to Khosa Family.**

KOA hosted several fundraising events and, for the first time in KOA history, raised over \$592,000 (US dollars) over a next couple of months. KOA organized a virtual concert for fund raising with Mr. Kailash Kher, a renowned Kashmiri singer, and raised \$240,000 in the few weeks following concert. Owing to our gracious donors within our community, KOA has donated close to \$ 585,565 towards Covid and related projects notably the Family Sustenance Program that continues to provide succor to families in financial distress.

The funds were transferred in 3-4 stages to India:

1. During the immediate Covid-19 Relief wave 1, wave 2.
2. Through Medical Assistance to hospitalized patients, Kitchen Sustenance to families in the Valley, and Family sustenance programs that were started after the acute wave of the Pandemic abated. FSP is an active program that so far has helped 94 families and continuing....
3. Post covid Vaccination drives and post-covid clinics that provided medical and mental health consultations by physicians in KOA's Health Care Network.

#### **EQUIPMENT SENT AND DISTRIBUTED IN INDIA**

- **290+ 45 Oxygen Concentrators, each with a transformer (an additional 45 more concentrators were bought from China and other parts of the world and sent to Jammu)**

- **1100 COVID-19 kits, each containing a Pulse Oximeter, N95 mask, face shield, sanitizer, surgical cap, thermometer, vitamins C & D, Zinc, and Dolo**
  - **Bought or rented 400+ O2 Cylinders and distributed them in Delhi NCR and Jammu regions.**
- **1500+ Pulse Oximeters**
- **5 BiPAP machines donated to hospitals and clinics in Delhi -owned by KP Doctors.**
- **Over 500 PPE gears distributed to the volunteers in India delivering health care to Covid patients.**
- **1100 Free Meals distributed through Matamaal Restaurant.**
- **Books and stationery were distributed to school-going children in Jagati and Muthi Camps.**
- **Arranging ambulance services to transport sick people to hospitals and maintaining the Ambulance service for KPJV in Jammu for 1 year.**

Much of our initial distribution was focused on Delhi/NCR and Jammu where the community was most devastated. It was a herculean effort to build an infrastructure and support system to procure the O2 concentrators, Oxygen cylinders, PPE, COVID kits, Bi-pap machines, and oximeters, and arrange transportation and human resources to distribute the supplies safely to their destination in 37 locations in India. The coordinated effort in the USA was led by the President Dr. Archana Kokroo, Mr. Rakesh Thaploo (treasurer), Dr. Rajiv Pandit (Medical Director), Anil Ganju (secretary), Board member Mr. Ashish Kachroo, Mr. Uphaar Kotru, KOA Youth Team, Dr. Nirmal Mattoo, Mr. Rakesh Kaul, Dr. Surinder Kaul of GKPD and hundreds of volunteers from the community. The equipment was obtained and distributed in India with the help of **Commander Sanjay Kaul of Kakni Foundation and volunteers of GKPD in India.**

The assistance and equipment were distributed to many community groups and organizations in INDIA.

- Kashmiri Medical Emergency Charitable Trust (KMECT) • Vitasta Hospital Care Trust, Jammu
- Global KP Diaspora • Jagati camp, Pintoo ji Pandita, Jammu • K P Volunteers (KPV) / Dr. Vikram Kaul, Jammu
- KP Sabha, Ghaziabad • KP Welfare Society, Ghaziabad • Kashmiri Seva Samaj (KSS), Faridabad
- KP COVID Response Team, Col. Rajiv Raina, Delhi/NCR • Delhi/NCR Hospitals (Nana Lal, SGM, Medi check )
- Kheer Bhawani Peeth, Jammu • Gopinath Ashram Vasundhara, Delhi • KS-Shalimar Garden, Ghaziabad
- Shriya Bhat Foundation • KP Helping Hand, Anantnag • Kashmiri Hindu Sabha, Telangana
- Kashmiri Visthapit Hindu Samiti (KVHS), Jaipur • Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram, Bangalore
- and many other KP organizations in Mumbai, Pune, Chandigarh and Ahmedabad.

**KOA also sent supplies and extra equipment to India during the second COVID Wave, Omicron Wave that occurred in Dec 2021-March 2022.**

**Rehabilitation of families that lost their breadwinners due to the pandemic was continued under the two Programs: Family Sustenance Program and Kitchen Sustenance Programs.**

### **ROLE OF KOA HEALTH CARE NETWORK DURING COVID and after....**

In addition to the massive equipment and meal distribution, **KOA Medical Health Care Network (HCN), led by Dr. Rajiv Pandit, worked tirelessly with the COVID-19 response teams in Delhi and Jammu. Close to 50 physicians worked closely with the local teams and coordinators on the ground in India, around the clock, 40 of them are taking hundreds of calls each day from patients and family members, providing consultations to COVID patients on the ground in India via video and phone calls. The HCN, along with KOA Youth built a tracking system that managed to expedite hospital admissions, Plasma donations, and food supplies as well as ensure the distribution of the equipment and other supplies to the neediest and most affected patients. The physicians created excellent instructional videos, COVID-19 treatment Guidelines, pamphlets for instructions, and other resources for the patients and their families, also instructing how to make COVID kits for their counterparts in India. As we mourned the loss of over 800 lives within our community, multiple COVID-Relief projects were planned and executed**

- **Vaccination drives in Sharika Bhawan, Faridabad.**
- **Telehealth Consultations and Mental Health Counseling post-COVID, undertaken by KOA's Health care Network Physicians for over 2-3 months post-COVID**
- **Health care educational material was distributed through pamphlets, videos, and other media.**

Financials of COVID Aid and Assistance in India.

**Total COVID funds COLLECTION in USA- \$ 592,000** (Five hundred and ninety-two thousand dollars)

**Total COVID funds SPENDING in INDIA - \$ 585,500** (Five Hundred eighty-five thousand, eighth hundred and fifteen dollars) in the past 4 years.

COVID 19- APRIL 2021 EQUIPMENT SENT: O2 CONCENTRATOR, PPE KITS, O2 CYLINDERS, <b>BIPAP MACHINES</b> , COVID KITS, MEDICATION KITS, MEALS, Books and other school supplies to children of affected families.	SPENT \$ 392,000	Funds spent in procurement, freight and transportation, customs, storage in warehouses and Distribution to 40 locations throughout India.
COVID 2 <sup>ND</sup> WAVE-OMICRON WAVE.DEC 2021-MARCH 2022.	\$ 23,500	More equipment was sent during the second wave which was less intense.
ACUTE COVID MEDICAL CASES IN 2021	\$ 37,750	Medical cases who were in the hospitals (ICU) on Ventilators, Treatment of complicated cases during Covid
KPV AMBULANCE AND DRIVER FOR 1 YEAR	\$ 1500	Payment for maintaining the ambulance fr emergency services for the patient transport
KITCHEN SUSTENANCE IN KASHMIR VALLEY	\$11,500	45 families received Ration Kits for 6 months during and after covid. This program was run only in the Valley.
CREATING FAMILY SUSTENANCE PROGRAM WHICH HAS HELPED 92 FAMILIES SO FAR and continuing.....	\$119,565 IN 4 YEARS	The family sustenance program is a continuation of the Covid relief program. It is an ongoing program.

The covid funds have been the main source of funding for the Family Sustenance program.



**D. KOA'S FOOTPRINT IN KASHMIR VALLEY (2019-2024)**

Since the Exodus, KOA has tried in various ways to reestablish connection with the families who chose to stay back through various channels. Although there are many constraints, KOA has managed to do its part, although more needs to be done. Since 2021 we have continued to engage with our brethren in the valley through various programs.

- **SAC Program** was extended to the children in the valley in 2019 during ex-President, Dr. Shakun Malik's tenure. In 2019 - 4 children were given scholarships through SAC. **In the past 4 years this number has grown to 35 children.** The scholarship for 2024 was just distributed to the children in the valley a few weeks back. This program is being coordinated through Sharika Foundation.

- **Repair of Shivalun Temple in Sathu**, Srinagar. KOA sent 4 Lakh through Ramakrisna Mission to help repair an iconic heritage site of Pandits.
- **Sending financial help to the families of Kashmiri Pandit Martyrs who have been killed since 2021.**
- **Kitchen Sustenance program** launched during Covid helped 45 families during the pandemic. We sent ration kits to these families for 6 months in 2021.
- Helped many patients pay their medical bills through our **Medical Funds Program** coordinated by KMECT.
- Continue to help financially strapped families through **KOA's Family Sustenance program.**

With improvement of the political landscape in Kashmir valley, KOA can play a very positive role and find ways to connect back to our roots. This year KOA Board discussed partnering with local organizations to help reconstruct Temples in Kashmir. I hope the next administration will take steps in this direction.



## **E. SHORT TERM PROJECTS COMPLETED IN INDIA DURING 2021-2024(Board Approved)**

During the past 4 years, many projects have been undertaken in India. After the acute Covid wave, many short-term projects were undertaken in India. **KOA has spent approx. \$ 56,231.000 USD on the Projects** completed in India during 2021-2024.

1. 2021- **Kitchen Sustenance Program** in Kashmir Valley Program run through Sharika Foundation, and volunteers in Kashmir Valley.
2. 2022 - **Muthi camp Fresh Water Pipe project** with Hands for Humanity Muthi.
3. 2022 - **Muthi Camp Tarang Project** - with ladies of Muthi Camp. As a thank-you gift, KOA donated a Water Cooler for the community center for Muthi Camp residents.
4. 2022 - **Sponsorship of a Sports Camp** by Orzu in Jagati - KOA partly sponsored it.
5. 2022 - **My Pitch Entrepreneurship Program** for Youth with IQWAT INDIA IN 2022
6. 2022 - KOA **Communications and English-Speaking Skill Camp** held in Jagati Camp with the help of Kakni Foundation, Sharika Foundation in 2022. This camp was held for 3 weeks and attended by close to 100 children. A video is attached at the end of the report.
7. 2022 - **Wedding assistance for our young brides.** This project was undertaken with the help of Mr. Pran Kaul of CA.
8. 2023 - **Jagati E-Library Project** 2023 and 2024 with Helpline Humanity Jagati. This project was financed by Dr. Surrender and Girja Raina of CA and KOA.
9. 2023 - **Shivalun Temple Reconstruction** in Srinagar.
10. 2024 - **HESK Auditorium Project** with the donation by Dr. Ashok Raina.
11. 2024 - **Purkhoo Fire Victim Assistance** in November 2024 with Helping Hands Organization.
12. 2021...Family Sustenance Project to help economically challenged families. It is an ongoing program created by KOA after COVID-19 in 2021...





## **F. GROWTH OF KOA'S SIGNATURE PROGRAMS - SAC, EAP, MEDICAL FUNDS, FSP.**

KOA runs 4 dedicated programs in India. Three of these programs, started in 1994, have benefitted thousands of families. We covered a record number of students because of a record high fundraising. Please see the chart of FUNDS SPENT ON THE SIGNATURE PROGRAMS: SAC, EAP, MEDICAL AND SHORT-TERM PROJECTS.

### **Sponsor a Child (SAC)**

This program was started in 1994 and coordinated by Sharika Foundation Jammu since 2017. This program caters to grades Nursery to grade 12th. In the past 4 years, a record number of 1828 students have been covered under this program.

**Program Directors: Dr. Sunita Kanesa-Thasan, Mrs. Sushma Bhan and Mr. Arun Moza.**

**Program Directors 2021-2022 – Mr. Praveen Raina and Mr. Ishet Dhar**

- In 2022, the scholarship amount increased from \$275 to \$325 per student.
- Total number of students who have received SAC Scholarship in the past 4 years-(2021-2024) is: 1828
- Total dollar amount disbursed to students under SAC in 4 years- \$ 544,240.
- In the year 2023 a record number of 465 students were covered under this program. Thanks to the hard work put in by our SAC Team
- The SAC program for 2024 is in the last stages of completion. So far 433 students have been issued checks.

Link to see the 2023 SAC Annual report is shared:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1F6nnEYY6iDQ4B3zXQ-bPQqi0SoSbZC-K/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109133671287219933186&rtpof=true&sd=true>

### **Education Assistance Program (EAP)**

The Educational Assistance Program started in 1994, is run in coordination with the Sharika Foundation and caters to college-bound students pursuing a four-year degree. The criteria for the program are listed on our website.

**Program Directors: Dr. Tej Kaul and Mr. Shivas Dhar.**

- A record number of 880 students have been covered under this program since 2021. The year 2024 is still ongoing ...
- Total dollar amount disbursed under EAP in last 4 years is \$ 511,650 .00 so far
- In 2022, the EAP scholarship increased from \$525 to \$625 per student.
- 2023 saw the highest number of students who received EAP Scholarship.
- A total of 240 students were covered - thanks to the hard work of the Program Directors.

Link to see the 2023 EAP Annual report:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rFRnslrur9yz8Eo0baaGy5TwxEq57W8-/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rFRnslrur9yz8Eo0baaGy5TwxEq57W8-/view?usp=drive_link)

### **Family Sustenance Program: The youngest of KOA's signature programs**

Empowering Families: **The Family Sustenance Program of KOA started in 2021**. In response to the socio-economic upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in India in 2021, the KOA introduced the Family Sustenance Program. This initiative aims to provide crucial financial support to families grappling with the loss of breadwinners due to COVID-19 fatalities or job losses attributed to the pandemic's impact. The program targets vulnerable households experiencing severe financial distress, extending a lifeline to those facing economic uncertainty. By offering financial assistance, the initiative seeks to alleviate the burden on families navigating the aftermath of the pandemic, enabling them to meet their basic needs and sustain themselves during these challenging times.

**Program Directors: Mr. Praduman Tiku and Mr. Vinod Moza.**

- Since 2021, KOA has provided financial assistance to 92+ families (2021-2024)
- Total Dollar amount spent in 4 years is close to \$119,000.00
- The Kitchen Sustenance Program was started in 2021 immediately after Covid 19 in Kashmir Valley-and continued for 6 months.
- Thanks to the hard work of the Program Directors

Link to see the 2023 EAP Annual report:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/12fMg2tdfIKMA4Q18TNPwp6kspp8tYbr1/edit?usp=drive\\_link&oid=109133671287219933186&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/12fMg2tdfIKMA4Q18TNPwp6kspp8tYbr1/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=109133671287219933186&rtpof=true&sd=true)

**Medical Funds Program**

This program was Started in 1990. KOA, in collaboration with KMECT funds medical cases that require help in the treatment of serious illnesses. A record number of medical cases have been covered under the Medical Funds Program in the past 4 years, partly reflecting the effect of COVID-19 on the health of the underprivileged section of our society.

KOA is proud to report that we contribute 25% of the KMECT annual Budget. In addition, we have helped many patients through our Family Sustenance program as well.

**Program Directors: Dr. Rajiv Pandit & Dr. Sujata Ambardar**

Medical Advisory Team: Dr. Archana Kokroo, Dr. Chand Bhan, Dr. Shibhan Warikoo, Dr. Anil Mattoo, & Dr. Vimarsh Raina.

Record number of cases were covered through KMECT in the past 4 years.

- **TOTAL NUMBER CASES FUNDED THROUGH THE KOA MEDICAL FUNDS PROGRAM SINCE 2021(last 4 years): 40**
- **THE TOTAL DOLLAR AMOUNT SENT TO INDIA UNDER THE MEDICAL FUNDS PROGRAM IS \$ 188 ,600.00**

Besides helping the needy patients in India, the medical team has been involved in Medical Mentorship Program, Helping and guiding the medical graduates in finding residencies, fellowships.

Helping families coming from India with healthcare- This program has the potential to grow, providing help to those who while visiting their families in USA do not have health care.

**4-YEAR DONATIONS AND MONEY DISTRIBUTED UNDER VARIOUS PROGRAMS TO INDIA- YEARS 2021 to 2024**

1. Funds Donated towards Four Signature programs -SAC, EAP, MEDICAL FUNDS AND FSP
2. Funds Donated to Short-term Projects in India through India Based Association – Projects listed above
3. FSP funds are a part of covid expense and are calculated in COVID Fund

**Funds Donated towards Four Signature programs -SAC, EAP, MEDICAL FUNDS AND FSP - 4-year Report**

Year	EAP	SAC	MEDICAL	FSP+KSP	Short Projects
2021	\$ 133.000+ 1.5 lakh INR	\$125,420	\$41,950	\$15,875**	\$ 1,354
2022	\$121,800+3.5 lakh INR	\$ 137,400	\$29,103	\$ 42,250**	\$4,268
2023	\$136,200+6.5 Lakh INR	\$146,300+2.5 Lakh INR	\$36,708	\$30790**	\$ 10,975
2024	\$120,650 +8.5 Lakh INR	\$135 ,120+6.5 Lakh INR	\$80,850	\$ 30,650. **	\$ 39,634*

Total	\$ 511,650 + 20 Lakh INR	\$544,240+9 Lakh INR	\$188,611	\$119,565**	\$ 56,231
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**Total donations to India under SAC, EAP, MEDICAL AND SHORT-TERM PROJECTS DURING 2021 TO 2024**

**\$ 1,300,732.00**

\*Short Term Project 2024-HESK Auditorium donation of \$ 29,000 was made by Dr. Ashok Raina of D.C

\*\* THE TOTAL DONATIONS DO NOT INCLUDE THE FUNDS TRANSFERRED TO INDIA UNDER COVID RELIEF FUNDS and FSP AS THEY ALREADY ADDED UNDER COVID FUNDS.FSP is a part of Covid Relief Fund

## **G. GRATITUDE TO ALL OUR DONORS**

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the generous donors of KOA's programs. Your unwavering support and contributions have been the driving force behind the growth and success of these initiatives. Thanks to your generosity, we have been able to expand our reach and positively impact on the lives of thousands of community members. Your belief in our mission empowers us to create opportunities, provide critical resources, and build a stronger, more connected community. On behalf of all those who have benefited from your kindness, we thank you for your commitment and dedication to making a difference.

We are profoundly grateful to the donors who stepped up during the challenging times of COVID-19. Your generosity and compassion during a global crisis helped us save hundreds of lives, providing essential support when it was needed most. My personal thanks to Mr. Rattan and Mrs. Bharti Khosa of IL for their generosity during the Covid Pandemic by donating \$ 200,000 to the Covid Funds. I would also like to thank Mr. Ashish and Mrs. Sheenu Kachru of Virginia who was the second highest donor to the Covid Relief fund.



## **H. EXPONENTIAL GROWTH OF KOA'S YOUTH PROGRAM- PAST 4 YEARS**

**- A report by Sidhi Raina and Arushi Kotru-Youth Directors.**

In the last 4 years, KOA Youth has increased engagement and activity across the US with the youth community.

**Instagram:** The KOAY Instagram account, [@koayouth](#), has been the cornerstone of this digital presence. What started in 2021 with just 1,200 followers has grown tremendously, and as we are near the end of 2024, we are proud to be **approaching 5,000 followers**.

**Marketplace:** Launched in 2022 by President Dr. Archana Kokroo, KOA Youth raise money by selling Kashmiri-specific merchandise that is sold online and at KOA camps. KOA Youth has specifically DESIGNED the T-Shirts to include common Kashmiri household phrases like, "Myon Marun Chui" "Trath Hish" "Nalmut is Good for the Soul" and "Maej Kasheer."

**Youth Trip:** After the Covid pandemic, in 2022, KOA re-launched the annual Youth Trips. The Youth trips have brought the youth together from across the country, and even the world, frequenting New York City (2022- 50 attendees), Chicago (2023- 40 attendees), and Washington, DC (2024- 65 attendees).

**Project Champions:** Launched in 2022 by President Archana Kokroo, the Project Champions of KOA Youth are high school students who work with Zonal Representatives on ongoing KOAY projects. This was done to involve youth under the age of 18 with KOA Youth program, building a pipeline for Youth Reps in future.

**KOAY Language Series:** Launched in 2021, the Language lessons used cartoons and short videos to teach Kashmiri vocabulary and phrases. Each lesson was paired with a set of flashcards to test one's knowledge, followed by KOA Youth hosting a "Koshur Kath".

**Humans of Paradise on Earth:** Launched in 2022, HOPE is a virtual story collective that unravels the untold truths of Kashmiri Pandit's lives, one story at a time.

**Everything Koshur:** Launched in 2022, the Everything Koshur **podcast** is a platform to share Kashmiri Pandit culture.

**TikTok:** Launched in 2021, the KOAY TikTok account was created to help others explore the Kashmiri Pandit culture through videos such as "Hidden Gems of Kashmir" and "Cooking Koshur Khyon with KOA Youth".

**Virtual Social Events:** Launched in 2021, the Social Events team began hosting game nights to connect youth in a casual and fun environment.

**KOAY Talkies:** Launched in 2021, we went live on KOA Youth's Instagram to have meaningful conversations with KP musicians, singers, photographers, and medical professionals about daily life, pop culture, health and wellness, fine arts, COVID-19, and much more

**Logo:** Launched in 2021, the KOA Youth logo was re-created to represent our roots, featuring a shikara to represent the vastness of Dal Lake and the mountains around the valley.

**Participation in World Culture Festival:** In 2023, KOA was invited to perform at the 3rd World Culture Festival in Washington, DC hosted by the Art of Living Foundation. The performance featuring 50 KOA members from across various zones was **choreographed by 2024 Youth Directors Sidhi Raina and Arushi Kotru.**



## **I. STRENGTHENING THE CORE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

**Investing in KOA'S foundation and making them strong.**

### **1. FUNDRAISING**

The lifeblood of every organization is the funds. I am pleased to report that the financial health our organization is very robust. Over the past 4 years record fundraising was done by every program. Our donors were very generous, making it possible for us to run all the programs well and create new records.

- **Past 4 years have seen record Fundraising. Total funds collected - \$2.4 million**
- **Set a record in Donations to India Programs. Total funds donated under various programs and COVID to India - \$1.8 million**
- **All Programs have surpassed expectations and set a new high record.**
- **We will be leaving a surplus of MORE THAN \$ 140, 000.USD for the incoming administration.**

**The fundraising record for the past 4 years has been shared in the FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT.**

### **2. LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP INCREASE**

**Increased the Lifetime membership by 334 members in the past 4 years.**

Total LIFETIME members in 2020 ..... 718

**Total LIFETIME members in November 2024..... 1052**

Funds collected through the addition of 334 lifetime members is: \$ 82,000 approx.

### **3. IT UPGRADES AND KOA APP**

Major upgrades have been made to our IT infrastructure in the past 4 years.

**Updating the KOA website at koausa.org**

- **Creating a Progressive Web App** that can be accessed on a smart phone.
- **Membership management was moved to a new Progressive Web App.**
- **Donations, Obituaries, and Matrimony features also moved to the new web app.**
- The community members renew their membership, donate, post Ad for Matrimony or post Obituaries from their phones.
- **KOA Marketplace - website on WIX** and a marketplace to catalog and sell merchandise.
- Physical Lifetime Membership Cards changed to **Electronic Membership Cards** with new numbering.
- Templated **donation receipts are sent through a mail merge system**, where the donor will get an email receipt. The donor can also print physical receipts.

#### 4. **STRENGTHENING THE BONDS AND RELATIONSHIPS through KOA CAMPS**

**KOA ANNUAL CAMPS SINCE 2021:** KOA camps are the most important community get-togethers started in the 1980s. KOA camps over the years have played a pivotal role in nurturing a strong sense of community, pride, and camaraderie among participants. Through a variety of activities and shared experiences, these camps create a unique environment where individuals can connect deeply with one another.

- 2021- **Virtual** camp held for 3 days (due to Covid Pandemic).
- 2022- **Youth** trip to NY, **East** Coast Camp in Connecticut, **West** Coast camp in California
- 2023- **Youth** Trip to Chicago, **East** Coast Camp in Philadelphia, **West** Coast Camp in California.
- 2024- **Youth** Camp in Washington D.C, **East** Coast Camp in Colorado, **West** Coast Camp in Seattle.

#### 5. **REVISING our Organizational Documents:**

SOP REVISION TO SOP 6.0 - Our Standard Operating Procedure Book was revised after 4 years. The last update was in November 2020.

The document SOP 6.0 is available on the KOA Website.

## **A FINAL THANK YOU!**

I want to take one last opportunity to thank my team, the KOA Board and all the Program Directors, their teams, the KOA Youth Directors and many volunteers who have come forward to serve our community. In my opinion selfless service to the community is the best way to do God's work. It is a powerful expression of compassion and commitment for greater good.

I also want to sincerely thank the community for giving me and my team the incredible opportunity to serve you. This journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, filled with amazing experiences and the privilege of meeting outstanding individuals who have enriched our lives in countless ways. Serving as the President of KOA for the past four years has been both a pleasure and an honor, and I am deeply grateful for the trust and confidence you placed in me. Together, we have achieved so much, and I will forever cherish the memories and lessons from this remarkable chapter. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this community in such a meaningful way. I will continue to work for the benefit of my community as a volunteer.

Best wishes to the incoming administration for a successful tenure and look forward to supporting them in every way we can. Together we will elevate the organization to new heights.

With gratitude and great regard,

Dr. Archana Kokroo

*President, CEO and Chairperson KOA*