

HONORING THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

By ROSHNI HANNON roshni.hannon@gmail.com

No lights. No air conditioning. No problem. A power outage could not dim the lights or the energy for the 2015 Banyan Ball. Despite sweating through tuxedos, ball gowns, suits and saris, in true Indo-US Chamber tradition the mood remained upbeat and professional. Addressing a crowd of more than 400 without a microphone is no simple task, not to mention the last minute scrambling to reorganize the lineup for the evening. You never realize how much depends on electricity until it's not available. To say that the evening's emcee, Fox 13's Jennifer Epstein, was a trooper would be putting it lightly.

This year's event was significant in that the theme was "past, present and future." More than a dozen past and present Armed Forces personnel from the United States and India were in attendance. Appropriately, the evening began with Chamber President Jal Irani introducing current Board Chairman Paresh Patel who passed the torch to the new Board Chairman Vick Seth. Seth and Jennifer Epstein handed out the 2015 Business Awards. Vik Patel was this year's Businessman of the Year. Patel owns several Dunkin Donut franchises. Badar Zaidi is the 2015 Businesswoman of the Year. Zaidi owns several eyebrow-threading boutiques. She trained many of her employees in her living room and has helped many of them earn a sustainable lifestyle here in the United States. Mit Patel received the award from Young Business Person of the year for his chain of computer stores. And outgoing Board Chairman Paresh Patel was recognized for his Outstanding Leadership.

The power decided to join the party around 9:15 p.m. Just in time for the keynote speaker to take the stage. Manisha Gandhi is the director of the Akshaya Patra Foundation, a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Bengaluru. Its mission is to fight issues like hunger and malnutrition in India. By implementing the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in the Government schools and Government aided schools, Akshaya Patra aims not only to fight hunger but also to bring children to school. Since 2000, the organization has



worked toward reaching more children with wholesome food on every single school day.

With the AC blowing and wine flowing, the audience sat back and enjoyed the entertainment. Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn got into the spirit. He walked the runway with one of Jasmine Anand's models. Anand wowed the crowd with her new wardrobe lineup. Several classical and Bollywood-style dances capped off the evening, followed by an open dance floor for everyone to cut loose.

Mayor Buckhorn and his wife Dr. Catherine Lynch, Sen. Jeff Brandes, Congressman David Jolly, Hillsborough Schools Superintendent Jeff Eakins, Tampa Police Chief Eric Ward, Congressional Candidate Mary Thomas and Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce Chairman Ron Christaldi were a few of the esteemed guests in attendance.

I am pretty confident that there are not many events, besides the Super Bowl, that can claim success in the face of a two-hour-long power loss.



Kunal Jain

MEET KUNAL JAIN

Entrepreneurship: It's all about Execution

There is something to be said not about the act of starting up a business, but how that business is founded. It's about executing your strategies properly, and ensuring your ground-up ideology is consistent and sound. Kunal Jain had a goal of revolutionizing disruption and the healthcare industry — of bridging the gap for practical mobile solutions and customization for hospitals and other physician practices. He continues to work toward this with start-ups, meeting with hospital administrators, and utilizing conferences and his TiE nonprofit organization to help entrepreneurs in their endeavors.

Jain is the Chair of local TiE chapter, which consists of 45 investors and more than 150 members who meet monthly to discuss new business opportunities. TiE is a nonprofit

organization that helps foster upcoming entrepreneurs and assists existing ones with strategies for business growth.

It is the largest entrepreneurial organization in the world. What makes TiE different is its large network of worldwide entrepreneurs that you can interact and connect with through a Global Networking platform. TiE has also implemented programs to help students and aspiring entrepreneurs to gain more presence and begin their journey.

Visit www.tampa.tie.org to learn more about joining a local TiE chapter and gain more insight into TiE's entrepreneurial culture and pillar process.

To learn more about Jain's billing service, go to www.practiceforces.com or call 866-634-6327 for a consultation.

'EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL HAS THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN SAFETY' INDIAN ENTREPRENEUR NAMED PRESIDENT OF U.S. NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR UN WOMEN



Lalita Janke, a Vero Beach entrepreneur, has been named new president of the U.S. National Committee for UN Women (USNC-UN Women), a volunteer-based non-profit that supports UN Women's global initiatives via their 15 chapters throughout the U.S.

At the organization's annual conference this year in Long Beach, California, Janke was introduced as the group's new leader. Among chapter leaders/representatives, members of the public, as well as local government officials, activists and celebrities, the group reported on work they are doing in support of gender equality issues, prevention of gender based violence and the connection of those issues to the global work being supported by the organization.

The unanimous election of Janke as president of USNC-UN Women came as no surprise to members attending the national event. Janke was the VP of Strategic Planning for the organization's national executive board. Prior to that, she represented all chapter presidents on the board and also served as president of their East Florida Chapter for three years. "Lalita's working background is extensive and diverse to say the least. She is bringing a plethora of knowledge and experience gained from a variety of industries including financial,

medical and 501(c)(3) nonprofits," said Maggie Foster Schmitz, the immediate past president of USNC-UN Women, in introducing Janke.

Janke graduated *summa cum laude* from Nova Southeastern University with a degree in communications. Before her retirement, Janke was CEO of Medical Resources Inc. and, subsequently, president of Embracing Changes, Inc., a consulting firm that works with individuals and organizations to maximize their talents, efficiencies and experiences. Janke is currently Board President and Interim Executive Director of Camp Haven, Inc., a transitional shelter for homeless men. She and her husband previously opened a similar program for women. Janke was a member of the Board of Trustees of Indian River Hospital District as well as of Florida Atlantic University where she currently sits on the Advisory Board of their College of Arts and Letters. She was selected Volunteer of the Year and awarded the Woman of the Year 2014 by the Junior League of Indian River County, where she and her husband have resided since 1998.

Janke, who was born in Goa, said, "Crimes of violence against girls and women can never be excused or tolerated. Every woman and girl has the right to live in safety and expect the opportunity to pursue an education." She concluded, "We women are conduits of change, progress, peace and prosperity in our communities."

To learn more about US National Committee for UN Women and their local chapters please visit www.unwomen-usnc.org.

Started or starting a new Business?

If you have started a new business or planning to start one, chamber events are perfect places to share experiences and learn from others. Indo-US chamber events and the relationships built there provides access to entrepreneurs, seasoned and successful business people, and an open forum for you to discuss your ideas, expand on them and to collaborate. The events are free and so is the membership. We urge you to come out and be a part of it. Together, the future is ours.



Upcoming Indo-US Chamber Event:

OCTOBER NETWORKING EVENT

Date: Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2015

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: TBD

Featured speaker will be Milind Bhavirkar, President of Priatek.

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

Jal Irani, President

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Shaun Amarnani | Aakash Patel |
| Kamlesh C. Darji | Amit Patel |
| Jigish Desai | Vatsal Patel |
| Roshni Hannon | Lakshmi Sastry |
| Anitha Kancharla | Kuleen Shah |
| Neil Khant | Srinivas Vadlamani |
| Shyam Mundra | Francis Vayalunkal |

OUR SPONSORS

SPONSORSHIP INQUIRIES: KASH DARJI 813.841.9216 • SPONSORSHIP@INDO-US.ORG



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

www.indo-us.org