



AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COMMISSION NFP

PRESENTS



13TH ANNUAL AMEC CONGRESSIONAL GLOBAL

Awards Gala *2024*

IGNITING PASSION : EQUIPPING CHANGE



13th Annual
AMEC
Congressional
Global Awards
Gala 2024

Presented By

Chicago, Illinois

L.A. SEE D'ONN & DAVID

June 1, 2024

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SATURDAY - 5 PM

YELLOW BOX

1635 EMERSON LANE

NAPERVILLE, IL

Conceived, Produced & Directed By

DR VGP

Vijay G. Prabhakar

The Creative Master Strategist





**American Multi Ethnic Commission NFP.
13th Annual AMEC Congressional Global Awards Gala**



**The Honorable
Congressman Danny K. Davis
7th Congressional District, Illinois**



7TH DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

The 7th Congressional District in Illinois is one of the most exciting, interesting, diverse and dynamic places to live and work in the nation. It is a community with unlimited potential. It is also a district with great disparities and challenges.

The 7th District is wholly within Cook County and bordered on the east by Lake Michigan and extends to the western border of Cook County. The district is generally south of Armitage Avenue and has one arm which extends as far south as 57th Street. It includes much of the West Side of Chicago and parts of the suburban communities of Bellwood (all), Berkeley, Broadview, Forest Park, Hillside, Maywood, Oak Park (all), River Forest (all) and Westchester. In Chicago, the 7th District includes all or part of the community areas of Austin, China-town (Armour Square), Douglas, East Garfield Park, Englewood, Fuller Square, Bronzeville (Grand Boulevard), Humboldt Park, Kenwood, Loop, Near North Side, Near South Side, Near West Side, North Lawndale, Oakland, Washington Park, West Englewood, West Garfield Park and West Town.

The 7th District is home to a host of world class cultural, and 22 higher education institutions It is home to the Chicago Bears, Chicago Bulls, Chicago White Sox and Chicago Blackhawks. It is home to some of the best known and most colorful neighborhoods in Illinois including Chinatown and Greektown. The District's suburban communities have long, rich histories and have amassed proud traditions.

The District includes downtown Chicago, home of Chicago's financial exchanges (the Chicago Board of Trade, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, the Chicago Board of Options Exchange, the Chicago Stock Exchange and is one of the world's great international financial centers.

The District includes twenty one hospitals:

- Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital
- Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital
- Garfield Park Hospital
- Gottlieb Memorial Hospital
- Hartgrove Hospital
- Jesse Brown VA Medical Center
- John H Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County
- Lorretto Hospital
- Loyola University Medical Center- Loyola University
- MacNeal Health Care Center
- Mercy Hospital & Medical Center
- Mount Sinai Hospital
- Northwestern Memorial Hospital
- Norwegian American Hospital
- Prentice Women's Hospital
- Rml Specialty Hospital
- Rush University Medical Center
- Saint Anthony Hospital
- Saint Elizabeth Hospital
- Shriners Hospitals for Children Chicago
- Westlake Hospital
- University of Illinois Medical Center
- West Suburban Medical Center

Some of the higher educational institutions in the 7th district:

- Chicago-Kent College of Law
- Columbia College
- Concordia University
- DePaul University
- John Marshall Law School
- Loyola University
- Keller Graduate School of Management
- Rush Medical College
- University of Illinois at Chicago
- Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine
- Stritch School of Medicine (Loyola University)
- University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine

Key Cultural Institutions in the 7th district:

- Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum
- Arie Crown Theater at McCormick Place
- Art Institute of Chicago
- Auditorium Theatre
- Chicago Center for Black Music Research Library
- Chicago Children's Museum
- Navy Pier
- John G. Shedd Aquarium
- Field Museum of Art
- Grant Park Music Festivals

CONGRESSMAN DANNY K. DAVIS - BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Danny K. Davis was chosen by the people of the 7th Congressional District of Illinois as their Representative in Congress on November 5, 1996. He has been re-elected by large majorities to succeeding Congresses.



In the 116th Congress, Representative Davis serves on Oversight and Government Reform including subcommittees: Economic Growth, Job Creation and Regulatory Affairs; Energy Policy, Health Care and Entitlements; and Subcommittee on Human Resources and the Committee on Ways and Means including the Subcommittee on Oversight.

Congressman Davis is a member of several Congressional Caucuses including the Congressional Black Caucus, the Progressive Caucus, the Urban Caucus, the Community Health Center's Caucus, and the Congressional Sugar Caucus.

Congressman Davis has distinguished himself as an articulate voice for his constituents and as an effective legislator able to move major bills to passage. He has developed a unique and energetic style of communication and interaction with his constituents setting up dozens of advisory task forces to consider significant questions of public policy. He hosts several weekly television and radio shows which feature audience call in and produces regular written reports to every household in the district. In addition, he maintains weekly office hours in the district and is widely sought after as a speaker at district events.

In the 116th Congress Representative Davis is resolutely committed to preserving our democracy, protecting social security, maintaining our nation's gains in civil and human rights, women's rights, voting rights, protection of the environment, consumer and labor protections, reducing inequality, and ensuring quality, affordable health care for all, while retaining his focus on issues of job creation, poverty, health care, education, youth and criminal justice reform.

Prior to his election to the Congress he served on the Cook County Board of Commissioners having been elected in November 1990 and reelected in November 1994. Previously, he served for eleven years as a member of the Chicago City Council as Alderman of the 29th Ward.

Before seeking public office Congressman Davis had productive careers as an educator, community organizer, health planner/administrator and civil rights advocate. He has received hundreds of awards and citations for outstanding work in the areas of health, education, human relations, politics and advocacy including six honorary Doctorate Degrees from well known Colleges and Universities. He has traveled extensively throughout the United States and has spent time in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and in South and Central America.

Born in Parkdale, Arkansas, on September 6, 1941, Congressman Davis moved to the Westside of Chicago in 1961, after having earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Arkansas A.M. & N. College. He subsequently earned both Masters and Doctorate degrees respectively from Chicago State University and the Union Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio.

He is married to Vera G. Davis, has two sons, Jonathan and Stacey, and is a member and Deacon of the New Galilee M.B. Church.



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**The Honorable
Congressman Jonathan Jackson
1st Congressional District, Illinois**

CONGRESSMAN JONATHAN JACKSON - BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Congressman Jonathan L. Jackson represents Illinois' First Congressional District. Born to civil rights leaders Rev. Jesse Jackson and Jacqueline Jackson, the fight for underrepresented people runs in Congressman Jackson's blood. He has long been an advocate for marginalized communities using his platform to fight for equity and civil rights.

Congressman Jackson's commitment to social justice and equality has been the driving force behind his activism. As the national spokesman for the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, Congressman Jackson raised awareness about innocence and juvenile justice issues. He was heavily involved in the Chicago Police Department's false confessions cases, such as those of Darrell Cannon, Oscar Walden, and Johnnie Lee Savory. He played a role in several high-profile human rights and social justice cases, including negotiations with Syrian President Hafez-Al-Assad for the release of captured American Navy Lieutenant Robert Goodman and with Fidel Castro for the release of 22 Americans held in Cuba.



Congressman Jackson values public education and fervently supports expanding opportunities to families regardless of income. In Chicago, he fought against the closure of Chicago Public Schools where he led public hearings and provided civic education training to preserve community memory and prevent closures and turnarounds by private companies. His efforts helped Guggenheim Elementary School come off the closure list in 2010 and saved other schools from the same fate.

Congressman Jackson grew up in Chicago's South Shore neighborhood. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical University and a Master of Business Administration from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Business. Jackson has launched several telecom, distribution, and construction businesses. He has also taught finance and entrepreneurship at Chicago City Colleges and was a business professor at Chicago State University.

Congressman Jackson now brings his activism to Congress. He is committed to promoting policies that advance equality and justice, improving access to quality education and healthcare, and protecting the environment. He proudly serves on the House Committee on Agriculture and on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and is dedicated to working with his colleagues to pass meaningful legislation that will benefit the people of IL-01 and the nation as a whole.



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**The Honorable
Congressman Bill Foster
11th Congressional District, Illinois**

CONGRESSMAN BILL FOSTER - BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Congressman Bill Foster is a scientist and businessman representing the 11th Congressional District of Illinois, a position he's held since 2013. He also represented the 14th Congressional District of Illinois from 2008 to 2011. He is the only PhD physicist in Congress.

Bill serves on the House Financial Services Committee where he advocates for consumer protections and an economy that works for everyone. In response to the Great Recession, he helped create several important reforms in the financial services and housing markets, including the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Bill serves as chairman of the Financial Services Committee's Task Force on Artificial Intelligence.



He also serves on the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee where he has fought for evidence-based policies and forward-thinking approaches to some of our country's most pressing issues, including climate change and energy innovation. He is a champion for sustained federal funding for scientific research.

Bill serves as the chairman of the Science Committee's Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee, which is empowered to investigate and oversee federal scientific research.

In the wake of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, Bill was named to the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus. The Select Subcommittee is charged with examining the federal government's response to the COVID-19 crisis, including the use of taxpayer funds to mitigate the public health and economic consequences of the pandemic.

Bill's business career began at age 19 when he and his younger brother co-founded Electronic Theatre Controls, Inc., a company that now manufactures over half of the theater lighting equipment in the United States.

Before he became a Member of Congress, Bill worked as a high-energy physicist and particle accelerator designer at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab). He was a member of the team that discovered the top quark, the heaviest known form of matter. He also led the teams that designed and built several scientific facilities and detectors still in use today, including the Antiproton Recycler Ring, the latest of Fermilab's giant particle accelerators.

Bill lives in Naperville with his wife Aesook, who is also a physicist. Bill has two grown children, Billy and Christine. Bill's father was a civil rights lawyer who wrote much of the enforcement language behind the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

SCOTT A. WEHRLI MAYOR

With decades of experience in business, community banking, law enforcement and public service, lifelong Naperville resident Scott A. Wehrli was first elected to the office of mayor in 2023. A community volunteer since he was 12 years old, Mayor Wehrli is aware of the decisions that made Naperville one of the greatest communities in the country in which to live, work, raise a family or retire. Mayor Wehrli's top priority is to listen to all of Naperville's residents and business owners. In his role as Mayor, Wehrli is focused on supporting economic development and a thriving local economy, implementing sound fiscal policies, and keeping Naperville one of the safest communities in America.



Adopted into a family with deep roots in Naperville, Mayor Wehrli grew up in the family construction business and continued working there full-time while he pursued his education at North Central College. He and his wife, Lynda, raised their two children, Sam and Hope, in Naperville.

Mayor Wehrli feels fortunate to have learned from mentors like former Mayor A. George Pradel, who taught him about servant leadership and how to foster a sense of community and inclusiveness. Mayor Wehrli has lived out these lessons through his community service, including being appointed at age 24 by former Mayor Sam Macrane as the youngest liquor commissioner in Naperville history. Mayor Wehrli led the City's creation of proactive policies to curb liquor-related nightlife crime and continued serving on the commission for 29 years until becoming Liquor Commissioner upon his election as mayor.

Professionally, Mayor Wehrli is principal owner and secretary-treasurer of Naperville-based DuKane Precast, which employs more than 200 people and produces custom precast concrete products for building projects. He has worked as a part-time Naperville Park District Police officer for over three decades, rising to the position of Lieutenant. His dedication to the community previously led him to co-organize a group of business leaders to create community banks that specialize in local lending. The company has since gone public and merged with another banking organization, and Mayor Wehrli remains a member of the bank board.

Mayor Wehrli serves on the boards of several nonprofit, economic development and educational organizations, including two decades spent on the Naperville Development Partnership board, where he was chairman for two years; North Central College, his alma matter; and Marmion Academy. In his spare time, he enjoys photography, biking, fishing and traveling.

Mayor Wehrli's experiences serving the public have taught him the importance of building upon the past to keep Naperville one of the greatest communities in the nation. As he guides the City, Mayor Wehrli provides locally focused leadership with an emphasis on policies to enhance Naperville's exceptional quality of life.



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MULTI ETHNIC ADVISORY TASK FORCE NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S GREETINGS

Congratulations to each of you on your appointment to the 7th Congressional District's MULTI ETHNIC ADVISORY TASK FORCE (MEATF) EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL. U.S. Congressman Danny K. Davis personally conveys his best wishes to each of you as you serve on this prestigious council for 2024-2025.



2024 has been a successful year for all of us. God is good as always. I am pleased that our Executive Leadership Council for 2024-2025 is complete with passionate volunteers who share Congressman Danny Davis's dream of empowering our multi ethnic communities. We have a good mix of seasoned leaders, diehard volunteers and young spirit in our 2024-2025 Council to forge ahead.

2024 marks the 16th Year of our Task force having been founded in 2009. I would like to salute our previous Chairpersons 2009, Dr. Vijay Prabhakar (Indian American); Dr. Muhammad Zahid (Pakistani American), 2013-2015 : Dr. Tapas Dasgupta (Indian American), and 2020-2023: Martino Tangkar (Indian Asian American): Kishor Mehta (Indian American). In late 2023, I a Chinese American took pride to take over as the Sixth Chairman of this vibrant empowerment and advocacy organization which has significantly impacted the social, economic and political landscape of our State of Illinois.

The growth of this organization from strength to strength can be singularly credited to the passionate dedication, creative mindset, sustained hard work, and inspiring leadership of Dr. VGP, the Founder. Dr. VGP's inclusive leadership style to unite 38 different ethnic communities, is today a national model and has given birth to American Multi Ethnic Coalition, Inc. AMEC.

Our priorities for 2024 -2025 continued to be as follows 1. Health Care 2. International Education Connect 3. International Women's Day Gala - Women's Empowerment 4. Global Community Oscars -Ethnic Empowerment 5. Citizen's Action Alliance For Behavioral Health - Mental Health and Non-violence 6. Homelessness Collaborative.

MEATF is a think tank and an advocacy group that also addresses the issues that affect the different ethnic communities including but not limited to Voter Registration, Immigration, Racial Profiling-Asian American Violence and Employment opportunities.

We welcome each of you and trust that all of us together will forge ahead to empower the different ethnic communities.

Sam Ma

Chairman

Multi Ethnic Advisory Task Force U.S. Congressman Danny K Davis 7th Congressional District Chicago, Illinois

AMEC NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S GREETINGS



American Multi Ethnic Coalition Inc. (AMEC) is a bipartisan Community grassroots Level Organization to empower multi ethnic communities through social, cultural, educational, health, economic & developmental initiatives. AMEC has established an inimitable and robust way of communication and interaction to consider significant options of public policy.

American Multi Ethnic Coalition Inc. (AMEC) was established in 2016 under the vibrant leadership of Dr. Vijay Prabhakar along with Multi Ethnic Task Force (MEATF) with the blessing of Congressman Danny Davis.

AMEC plays an active role in encouraging and protecting minorities. It is a think tank, and Advisory Group that also addresses the issues that affect all ethnic communities including but not limited to Voter Registration, Immigration, Healthcare, Racial Profiling and Employment Opportunities.

Our discussions and actions over the past several years have covered a wide spectrum of issues and concerns in professional and business arena. AMEC strongly believes that our development efforts must deal with the challenges of economic hardship.

I am confident that our deliberations and engagements have been very successful: a key indication of our success is our organization membership is growing under our leadership Council. Kudos to our AMEC & MEATF Gala Chair Naveen Karna.

Thank you, Dr. Prabhakar for your excellent leadership. To our valued members, I would like to seize this opportunity to publicly acknowledge your interest, support, and long hours of hard work as I have no doubt that you will continue to stand by us. Thank you for your dedication and commitment in furthering our vision.

My plea at this juncture is to request your support to make sure that American Multi Ethnic Coalition along with Multi Ethnic Task Force can demonstrate, implement, and achieve its goal to assist our community.

Cheers,
Neal Patel
American Multi Ethnic Coalition Inc. USA
National Chairman

AMEC GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE



Greetings and Welcome.

June is a historical month; particularly June 19...

June 19, 1865, came to be known as Juneteenth, the date that enslaved people of Galveston TX finally received the news that they were free by Executive order. Juneteenth celebrations spread quickly to the rest of the country and the date continues to be the oldest known tradition honoring the end of slavery in the United States.

Freedom is a Means, not an end in itself. We often take our freedom for granted, but freedom is to be cherished, appreciated and held close. We see Freedom being threatened at home and abroad and the effects are painful and devastating.

May God continue to Bless us, Unite us, and grant us His Peace.

Thank you Congressman Danny Davis for your leadership, guidance and all you do to empower our communities. Thank you Dr. Vijay G. Prabhakar for your vibrant leadership and vision and for propelling AMEC to the stellar organization it is today. May we continue to grow and change the world for good.

Thanks and appreciation to all of our members and volunteers for your time, support, energy and ideas and dedication.

Congratulations to all of the 2024 Congressional Awardees.

My prayer is that we continue to work together, grow together and assist and impact our communities, which will in turn impact and change the world for good!

Dr. Zenobia Sowell
Governor
American Multi Ethnic Commission- AMEC USA

AMEC LT. GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE



I have faith that sees the invisible, expects the incredible, receives the impossible. Faith that can conquer anything. These are prophetic and powerful words during the lifetime. The Coronavirus, the pandemic at beyond. It was the prayer, mantra, and constant vigil that drove my belief that this too shall pass, and we would pass, and we would come out of the unknown at the inception of this crisis on the other side. Wise and steadfast. Because of our tenacity and resilience, it was manifested in our drive to survive.

Faith is believing in things we cannot always see, not understand. From the inception of the lockdown and the pervasive spread of the coronavirus. We strongly believe that God gives us strength and hope that was path out country had not travel before overcame.

Our founder Dr. VGP was the conduit to reach out to members and went into action in support of all the members, the fragile, vulnerable, and disconnected to ensure that their families were okay that someone was there for them in this time of uncertainty.

Dr. VGP maintained lines of communication, offering hope and reminding us to keep our heads up, reaching out to others through email, texts, or other forms of social media. This was the thread to pray, support, and help in any way possible.

AMEC leadership participated in the after-party hosted by Syed Mukkaram to collaborate during the month of Ramadan on April 7, 2024. AMEC leadership also joined Dev Darshan Senior Center's first-anniversary celebrations in March 2024. Additionally, AMEC Leadership attended a Meet and Greet for U.S. Senator Mike Braun, who was elected as the next governor for the state of Indiana in January 2024.

AMEC leadership further participated in the 20th International Veena Festival and Conference in Chicago in May 2024. AMEC is proud to announce that we are organizing a youth career day during the summer of 2024 in three locations: Englewood, Chicago; Hillside; and Naperville, Illinois.

AMEC is forging ahead with a vibrant commission and active leadership council members.

Join AMEC!!! Victory is Yours!!!

Martino Tangkar
Lieutenant Governor
American Multi Ethnic Commission NFP

AMEC FOUNDER PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS



2023 has been an exciting year for our American Multi Ethnic Coalition U.S.A. Our 12th Annual AMEC Congressional Global Awards Gala held on June 17, 2023 in Naperville was a runaway success. We had 5 U.S. Congressmen including Danny K. Davis, Bill Foster, Raja Krishnamoorthi, Jonathan Jackson from state of Illinois and Sri Thanedar from the State of Michigan in full attendance and participation. A record number of over 1,200 guests added the special Sparkle to the Spectacular Gala. That set the stage for rest of year activities and raised the bar for Award Galas across America.

Significantly, AMEC had an important role in hosting the first ever Round Table of Managed Care Organizations and Behavioral Health Providers in March 2023. The C.E.O's of 42 Behavioral Health Organizations in Chicagoland participated in the round table dialogue along with C.E.O of six major MCO's including Blue Cross/ Blue Shield, Aetna, Meridian, County Care, Molina and Humana. State Rep La Shawn Ford served as the Moderator while Congressman Danny Davis delivered the Keynote. Citizen's Action Alliance for Behavioral Health's Global Ambassador Dr. Twin Green and Chicago Medical Society President Dr Tariq Butt along with Medstar's CEO Neal Patel played great hosts for the roundtable.

AMEC leadership team visited India in May 2023, September 2023, January 2024 and again in March 2024. In March 2024 AMEC leadership team visited Dubai, UAE and held meaningful discussions on establishing an AMEC Chapter in UAE.

AMEC celebrated the Chinese Lantern Festival in February 2024 and India's Diwali Festival in November 2023. AMEC assisted the Gandhi King Center for Non Violence located in Englewood, Chicago by conducting weekly meditation classes for 6 months. AMEC also facilitated the donation of a 20 feet Mobile food Pantry trail for use by GKCNV to distribute food to the community.

On March 6, 2024 AMEC Celebrated its 12th Annual International Women's Day on U.S. Capitol Hill, Washington D.C. by honoring the Global Top 20 Women of Excellence and on March 9, 2024 Co-hosted the America's Top 20 Women of Excellence in Hillside, Illinois.

This year our 13th Annual Gala has a Celebrity Anchor, flying in all the way from Mumbai, India exclusively to host the June 1st Gala. Ms. Simran Ahuja is Asia's most popular celebrity anchor, yoga & fitness guru, cultural Ambassador and a former Miss India. Ms. Simran Ahuja has her Doctorate in Naturopathy and Yogic-Science and is an entrepreneur in Aviation. Ms. Ahuja is a passionate dancer and has authored a book titled "Nine Nights Navaratri". Widely traveled all over the world, Simran Ahuja's mission is to equip and motivate young people into taking care of the environment and practice yoga to achieve greater success.



American Multi Ethnic Commission NFP. 13th Annual AMEC Congressional Global Awards Gala



The 60 member volunteer AMEC leadership team has worked hard to bring another Spectacular event which includes a Banquet Dinner program from 4.30pm -5.30pm for the Awardees, Presenters and Special Guests. This is followed by a Musical prelude from 5.30pm-6pm. The much awaited non-stop Around the World in 60 minutes featuring dances from various countries is performed from 6pm to 7pm. Following the Awards Ceremony is a specially curated Grand Finale, “East West Fusion extravaganza of music and dance “ performed by a 14 member Orchestra of Indian, Middle Eastern, Spanish Flamenco, Mongolian, American and Mexican Melodies, rhythms and movements. This has been curated by Dr. Sarada Sonty, a renowned Veena player and Co-founder of SAPNA USA and powered by Saraswathi Ranganathan’s Ensemble of Ragas.

We are grateful to our Sponsors and those who have generously contributed in cash and in kind to make this our annual flagship event free to hundreds of our multi ethnic communities to celebrate life and share the pride.

AMEC’s progress through participation and partnership is continuing to spread throughout the country. We are truly blessed with a great dynamic team of committed individuals who believes in empowering our communities by engaging them in our innovative initiatives.

We invite you to join us in our journey, as we partner together to empower our ethnic communities and transform lives.

Dr. VGP
Vijay G. Prabhakar
Founder President, AMEC- USA.
Wellcare_us@yahoo.com

GLOBAL IMPACT OF AMEC

The multicultural essence is the heart of America, and this tapestry of diverse colors and cultures enriches the American landscape. As an immigrant from Bharat (India), I arrived in this new land 36 years ago, striving to adapt and find familiarity in my surroundings. Adjusting to the lifestyle here not only made life easier but also allowed me to discover the similarities between India and the USA, enhancing my experience in this new homeland. Throughout this journey, I've come to appreciate the shared values and democratic principles that both nations uphold, along with their celebration of diversity amidst unity.



While India exemplifies unity in diversity, the USA is renowned as a melting pot, welcoming migrants from various nations and backgrounds, creating a vibrant mosaic of cultures that fills my heart with harmony. Naturally drawn to initiatives promoting inclusivity and diversity, I've found recent years particularly impactful. Dr. VGP, our visionary and inclusive leader and founder-president of AMEC (American Multi Ethnic Commission), has spearheaded numerous initiatives aimed at uniting people from diverse backgrounds to foster learning, economic development, agriculture, and next-generation leadership.

During a trip to India to produce unique Dr. VGP talk shows, we had the privilege of meeting remarkable leaders dedicated to making a difference in their communities. For instance, IPS officer Vikas Kumar Vikas in Belgaum, Karnataka, emphasized the transformative power of education for underserved and underprivileged children and youth. Additionally, a special event at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in Coimbatore provided a platform for discussing solutions to global hunger and promoting smarter farming practices like millet cultivation, even in the USA.

Another memorable visit to Gujarat University, where we engaged with hundreds of African students, resulted in a successful collaboration with leaders like Vice Chancellor Dr. Neerja A Gupta to facilitate future events. Illinois State Representative La Shawn Ford delivered a keynote speech on African American history, warmly received by attendees, while Neil Patel, CEO of MedStar Labs, contributed to fostering educational connections in healthcare. Similar visits to educational institutions, businesses, and events have been instrumental in promoting cross-cultural understanding and collaboration.

I am optimistic about AMEC's initiatives and their role in navigating our ever-changing world of globalization. Witnessing the organization's growth and now representing 38 multiethnic communities fills me with pride. In a society as diverse as America's, I firmly believe that embracing multiculturalism exposes us to diverse perspectives, fostering tolerance and enriching our lives culturally, socially, and artistically. Multicultural societies offer access to a wider range of international experiences, contributing to a more vibrant and interconnected world.

Naperville stands as a shining example of nurturing the spirit of multiculturalism. Hosting the 13th Annual AMEC Congressional Global Awards Gala, and for the fourth time in the Yellow Box is a testament to our commitment to this tradition. On behalf of the AMEC Commission, I extend a warm invitation to all to join us for this spectacular evening of entertainment and acknowledgment of our community leaders' great service. I hope you all enjoy this flagship event and look forward to seeing you there.

With humble salutations to our visionary leader and mentor, Dr. Vijay G Prabhakar, and congratulations to the entire AMEC team for yet another successful evening to cherish.

Dr Vasavi Chakka
Gala Reception Chair

AMEC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREETINGS



MEATF- Multi Ethnic Advisory Task Force is a think tank and advocacy group established by Congressman Danny K .Davis in 2009 to empower the different ethnic communities of Chicago by integrating them with the African American Community to share and serve the residents of City of Chicago. Today. We have **American Multi-Ethnic Commission (NFP)** which is our non-for-profit 501-c charter.

AMEC - American Multi Ethnic Coalition Inc. is a bipartisan state wide grassroots level organization representing 38 different ethnic communities.

Multi Ethnic people from all walks of life have been the foundation of the City of Chicago and this great country, the United States of America. The **13th Annual MEATF & AMEC Congressional** Global Awards Gala recognizes individuals who have excelled in serving us by leveraging their leadership to enlighten and empower us.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Awards Jury headed by Kristina King and the members of the jury for their efforts to select our 2024 Community & International Heroes. This is the largest Multi-Ethnic Festival in Chicagoland. Our media Partner is The Global Eye - World-Wide Digital Monthly that reaches 42 million households.

16 years is a milestone for an organization like MEATF where 38 different ethnic communities come together. Two years ago, the COVID pandemic tested our resilience as a coalition and also channelized our resources to reach out to those who were in need. All worked in unison and rose together on the occasion.

MEATF and AMEC is a movement under the leadership of Congressman Danny K. Davis, founded by Dr. Vijay G Prabhakar that works for our ethnic communities and for our overall development. Our visionary Congressman Danny K. Davis fights for transparency in government, strong economic structure and integrated development at all levels in his 7th Congressional district-IL and beyond.

Let me take this opportunity to Congratulate all the Awardees and the Presenters for their outstanding work. My Prayer to all of you is to continue to do your best and together all of us can forge ahead.

We must all stay united now and always to succeed.

Naveen Karna
AMEC Executive Director
Naperville, IL



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AMEC SECRETARY GENERAL'S GREETINGS ! BY SEETA BALA



Greetings & Welcome!

This past year has been one of great challenges, change, successes and great victories, loss & uncertainty. It has also been a year of reflection, blessings, opportunity and hope. The fact that we are still here in the land of the living should give each one of us a true sense of gratefulness for life, family, loved ones and friendships.

American Multi Ethnic Community Coalition(AMEC) is in the forefront of several community initiatives. AMEC has evolved into a national organization under the robust guidance of U.S. Congressman Danny K Davis and our multi-faceted leader Dr Vijay G Prabhakar. AMEC now has chapters in New York, New Jersey, Georgia, California, Massachusetts, Texas, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Virginia Washington D.C..

Our activities over the past several years have covered a wide spectrum of issues and concerns in the professional and business arena. It is indeed gratifying that during all of our activities, U.S. Congressman Danny K Davis is in the forefront of reminding us that we need to constantly understand how our development efforts would deal with the challenges of economic hardship and changing political landscape.

I am confident that our deliberations and engagements have been very successful: a key indication of our success is that our AMEC membership is growing. Thank You, Congressman Davis and Dr Prabhakar for your excellent leadership. To our valued members, I would like to seize this opportunity to publicly acknowledge your interest, support and long hours of hard work as I have no doubt that you will continue to stand by us.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment in furthering Congressman Danny Davis's vision. My plea at this time is to request your support to make sure that our American Multi Ethnic Commission can continue to demonstrate, implement and achieve its goals to assist our communities.

Seeta Bala
Secretary General
American Multi Ethnic Commission NFP

AMEC MARCHES ON

An acclaimed motivational speaker Sally Coach once said, “Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day.” I was able to relate to this saying quite frequently when I became a part of the American Multi Ethnic Coalition (AMEC) and actively participated in the multi-faceted activities that embody the organizational mission. Just a couple of years ago, I started as a volunteer helping backstage with the entertainment part of programs and operations. The experience, comradery, and leadership skills I gained during this time were extremely valuable and this inspired and motivated me to become a bigger part of AMEC.



I am grateful to the Founder and President, Dr. Vijay Prabhakar for inviting me play a leadership role in this growing organization. I am glad that I am able to lend my creativity in areas ranging from concept to implementation involving nitty gritty details of engaging people from all walks of life, planning and staging events, recognize special talent, dedication, and even promise and potential. I was happy to be part of AMECs second annual top 18 under 18 event, which honored and embraced high achievers throughout America.

In February 2024, the Global Eye International Institute of Leadership hosted the first Primer on African-American history which enlightened our ethnic communities on the challenges faced by the African-Americans. In March 2024, we also hosted two events to celebrate International Women’s Day, one held in Chicago recognizing the top 20 Chicagoland women of excellence and another recognizing the top 20 global women of excellence held in Washington D.C. A couple of other notable initiatives were the unveiling of the American Multi-Ethnic Commission’s logo and followed by the historic celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islanders Heritage Month on May 17th, 2024 in Washington D.C.

The creative vision and positive leadership of Dr. Vijay G. Prabhakar (VGP) continues to inspire us to believe in our vision and mission. His innovative ideas in developing partnerships, collaborations and focus on people and causes that unite us globally are both challenging and exciting. Several individuals have been vocal in praising AMEC initiatives as they believe that they were motivated to become positive contributors under helpful friendly guidance to foster community in our shared world. AMEC membership continues to grow rapidly as more people find joy and fulfillment in serving their communities. Engaging and challenging our young talent in the Americas, Asia and other parts of the world is just one great example.

I thank all the members of the AMEC executive and working teams for stretching themselves through hard work to help accomplish our organizational goals. Their dedication and unwavering support are growing rapidly, and I am thrilled that many are starting to experience the same fulfillment as I do. Being a part of AMEC started as volunteer work and it has now matured into being an integral part of my life. Let us bring more friendships, partnerships and togetherness as we journey through our lives and focus on working to make this world a better and happier place.

Yuqin Wang aka Arista Leong
Vice President, AMEC USA

GALA CHAIR ACKNOWLEDGES



It has been a wonderful experience working and organizing the 12th U.S. Congressional Global Community Oscars Gala. I would like to express my appreciation to the Gala Co-Chairs, Sam Ma and Naveen Karna and to the whole team for working together to make this a mega success. Our inspirational and visionary leader Dr. Vijay Prabhakar with his relentless energy and creative ideas kept us on our toes. I would like to thank our living legend U.S. Congressman Danny K. Davis, our Poster boy U.S. Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, the young turk in the U.S. Rep. Congressman Jonathan Jackson and my very own Congressman Bill Foster from the eleventh district of Illinois for anchoring this 13th U.S. Congressional Awards Gala.

Our Appreciation goes out to: Ann Smith and Mike Tjaarda of Naperville Yellow Box Christian Community Church for their unstinted cooperation, tireless work and enlightening spirit which took the Global Community Oscars to another level. To our AMEC dynamic leadership Governor Dr. Zenobia Sowell, MEATF Chairman Martino Thangkar and all our Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs, For the Wonderful work in unison which empowered us to make this a night to remember. We would like to thank the different entertainment groups who mesmerized us during the “Around the world in 60 minutes”. We salute the Banquet co-chairs Jerome Athistham, Aneta Kolcun, and Sandeep George and the host of volunteers for the extraordinary arrangements for the dinner at the banquet. We would like to thank Arlington Rentals for their support. We would like to thank “Endpoint Graphics”, Mr. Nagendar Sripada, our printing partner. We would like to record our appreciation from our back office for the countless hours of extraordinary excellent work, Mr. Anil Pulla and his team at Design Qubes, Hyderabad.

We would like to thank our celebrity anchor Ms. Simran Ahuja, who flew all the way from Mumbai, India to join us tonight. Bollywood diva, Simran Ahuja is India’s most popular anchor for all high profile events that has a global following of more than 2 million. We are honored to have this dazzling diva. We would like to thank our sponsors from Global Eye Magazine, Fusion Systems and Services Inc. Oakbrook, Armani Holmes Dallas, Medstar and its CEO Neal Patel and Woolbright Real Estate, Florida. Investment. Congratulations to all the award winners and wishing you all every success as you continue to climb the ladder of success. We also would like to appreciate our distinguished presenters for taking the time to be with us and adding the extra sparkle to our global awards gala. A special word of gratitude to Mr. Kadar Sodagar of Dunkin Donuts, Chicago, Jigar Parekh of Jigar Kitchens, Schaumburg, James Denman CEO of Harold’s Chicken and Sneakerville 88 Hyde Park, Vijay Muralidharan & Kamlesh Kapoor of Shree Restaurant, Westmont and Janab Syed Mukarrum of Addison, IL for their kind contributions for the complimentary refreshments served in the lobby.



American Multi Ethnic Commission NFP. 13th Annual AMEC Congressional Global Awards Gala



The various dance groups from different nationalities that excelled in our around the world in 60 Minutes.

Congratulations to the showstopper dancers who performed a fusion dance this evening including Anne Tong, Huimin Tao, R.V. Reddy and Vijay Muralidharan.

A salute to the Grand Finale Ensemble led by Dr Sarada Sonty and directed by Saraswathi Ranganathan , Chinese Singer Cindy Yu, and Sherie Yvette for the Whitney Houston Experience.

Our Mayor Scott Wehrli for being the Gala Czar and issuing the Special proclamation from the City of Naperville honoring the 13th Annual AMEC Congressional Global Awards Gala. We thank the media for the wide coverage including NBC 5 Chicago, the Chicago Crusader, The Global Eye Magazine, Asianet TV, GSA Vision Asia TV, Desitalk, Hi India, India Post, Flowers TV, and Chinatown News.

Thanks to Megha Bala for being creative in writing the Emcee scripts and the Presenter Scripts
A Big thank you to the on-Stage team led by Artista Leong & Jonathan Brown and Back stage team led by Dr Chezalyn Grant, Dr Eric Dupaya,& Swapnil Sahu .

Last but not the least, Thanks to our Emcees Pam Morris Walton, Vincent Gray, Mohita Sukumar and Dr.Twin Green.

YES TOGETHER WE SHINE BETTER!!!

**Kathy Thorat
Gala Chair
13th AMEC Congressional Global Awards Gala**



AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COMMISSION USA
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13th Annual U.S. Congressional Awards Gala

SPECTACULAR GLOBAL COMMUNITY SALUTE



A CONGRESSIONAL SALUTE TO GLOBAL COMMUNITY HEROES

HONORING OUR COMMUNITY & INTERNATIONAL HEROES

6 pm: Around the World In 60 Minutes
 RED CARPET.. SPECTACULAR ACTION PACKED PROGRAM
 RESERVE YOUR SPACE/BOOTH AT THE GLOBAL DISCOVERY EXPO
 RELEASE YOUR BUSINESS AD IN GALA SHOW BOOK
 WITNESS CHICAGOLAND'S LARGEST MULTI ETHNIC FESTIVAL

8.30 PM GRAND FINALE :
FUSION EXTRAVAGANZA OF
MUSIC, SONG & DANCE

@THE YELLOW BOX 1635 Emerson Lane, Naperville, IL, 5:30 PM SAT | JUNE 1 2024

For Invitation Passes: Email: amec.2022@yahoo.com

RSVP: <https://bit.ly/AMEC24>

This year beneficiary is Gandhi King Center For Non Violence located in England

AMEC LEADERSHIP TEAM



Allen George



Chenna Kesavulu



Pinaki Basu



Vijay Muralidaran



Nag Sripada



Hema Shastri



Swapnil Sahu



Smitha Pillai



Chris Loo



Fatima Traore



Vinita Gulabani



Thomas Abraham



Begum Chand Naseem



Archana Agarwal



Gulshan Baksh



Girish Kapur



Ejire Dollars



Ricky Gandhi



Shaunta Gray



Deulce Castillo

AMEC LEADERSHIP TEAM



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Gulshan Baksh



Girish Kapur



Ejire Dollars



Ricky Gandhi



Shaunta Gray



Deulce Castillo

AMEC LEADERSHIP TEAM



Tom Banks



Ajay Shah



Aneta Kolcun



Hina Trivedi



Mazher Khan



Robert Whitley



Falguni Sukhadia



Neal Sukhadia



AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COMMISSION
PRESENTS

13TH AMEC CONGRESSIONAL GLOBAL AWARDS GALA 2024

*Welcome Our
Celebrity Anchor*

SIMRAN AKUJA

*Grand
Finale*

Sat
JUNE
01

VENUE
**YELLOW BOX, 1635 EMERSON LANE
NAPERVILLE, IL**

ENTRY
@5.30PM

CALL 630- 608-7264 / EMAIL: AMEC.COMMISSION@YAHOO.COM

BY INVITATION ONLY RSVP : [HTTPS://BIT.LY/AMEC24](https://bit.ly/amec24)

AROUND THE WORLD IN 60 MIN

MESMERIZING ENTERTAINMENT
SPECTACULAR ACTION PACKED PROGRAM
WITNESS CHICAGOLAND'S LARGEST
MULTI ETHNIC FESTIVAL





American Multi Ethnic Commission NFP.
13th Annual AMEC Congressional Global Awards Gala

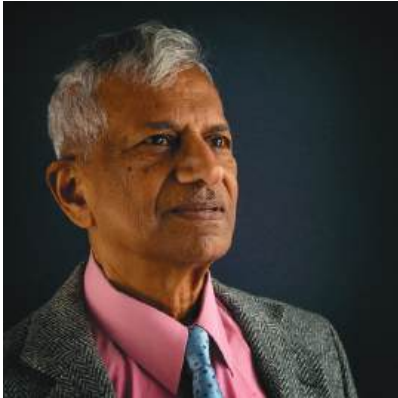


13th ANNUAL AMEC CONGRESSIONAL GLOBAL AWARDS GALA

BANQUET PROGRAM

Emcee : Mohita Sukumar, AMEC Membership Chair

4:30 P.M.	Welcome	Naveenchandra Karna , Executive Director, AMEC
4:33 P.M.	Opening Remarks	Dr. Vasavi Chakka , Reception Chair
4:38 P.M.	Special Remarks	Harish Kolasani , Founder, India National Hub, Schaumburg Pastor Naves Samuel , Hyderabad, India
4:45 P.M.	Musical Section-1	Dr. Eric Dupaya , Health Correspondent, Global Eye Magazine, Chicago
4:49 P.M.	Special Celebration	Birthday Cake Cutting Ceremony for State Senator Mattie Hunter , 3rd District of IL Ms. Anetta Kolcun , Polish American AMEC Commissioner will assist
4:54 P.M.	Musical Section-2	Zain Baig , Pakistani Singer
5:00 P.M.	Award Presentation	Awardee: Padma Sri Dr. S.V. Rama Rao Presenter Michael Xia , Freshman, Naperville Central High School, Naperville
5:03 P.M.	Awardee Remarks	Dr. S.V. Rama Rao
5:06 P.M.	Closing Remarks	Seeta Bala , AMEC Secretary General



**TELUGU THESPIAN
C.S. RAO AWARD**



PADMA SHRI S.V. RAMA RAO

Artist

Padma shri S.V. Rama Rao's work, which has been compared to Picasso, Klee and Dali may be hard to grasp but one falls in love with the colors, lines and the seductive curves that reveal hidden landscapes, animals and people shaping up stealthily, surprising one with their complete whole experience. Most of his works are marked by a deeply poetic feel — not many of us know Ramo Rao is equally at ease with verses as he has numerous poetry books to his name. Born in 1936 in Andhra Pradesh, Dr. S.V. Rama Rao is an eminent artist and educationist, a poet and a writer. He is a leading exponent of the contemporary global artistic tradition and has been acclaimed for providing a bridge between the art of the East and of the West. The Times, London, in a review said of his works, "Though modern art tends to obliterate or obscure the differences between nationalities, so distinct a culture as that of India does not really yield its powerful influence, and Rao's work gives an instance."

At the age of 28, all of the major papers in London hailed him as a genius. The most outstanding artist in the Commonwealth awards also known as Lord Croft Award was given for the first time to an Indian artist in a juried art exhibition in London.

Dr. Rao's work has received wide acclaim for his ability to blend the three oriental traditions, namely the wash technique of China, the Japanese emphasis on line and the Indian style of miniature paintings and developed his own distinct style. As a tribute to his new style and technique, the western art critics deemed it fit to exhibit his works along with the great masters — Picasso, Braque, Dali, Miro, Matisse and many others at the International Alphabet of Modern Art Exhibition at New Vision Centre Gallery, London.

Dr. Rao holds a MFA in painting, a BA in Accounting and Banking, and a BA in Economics. He earned a Fine Arts degree in painting (India), and a Government diploma in Fine Arts (India). The Association of Universities of Great Britain announced a Fellowship in Painting to be awarded to only one artist living in the Commonwealth Countries, and in 1962, it was awarded to Rao. With that Fellowship he went to London and joined the Slade School of Fine Arts, University of London, to pursue research in painting where he created his unique style in abstract expressionism. Dr. Rao paints exclusively in oils.

S.V. Rama Rao is also a serious poet, writer and a published author. He lives in Chicago with his wife.



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WITNESS CHICAGOLAND'S LARGEST MULTI ETHNIC FESTIVAL

Conceived, Scripted & Directed By
Dr VGP
Vijay G. Prabhakar
The Creative Master Strategist

@THE YELLOW BOX 1635 Emerson Lane, Naperville, IL,
5 PM | SAT | JUNE 1 2024

For Invitation Passes : Email : amec.2022@yahoo.com

RSVP: <https://bit.ly/AMEC24>



SCAN QR CODE
FOR RSVP

This year beneficiary is Gandhi King Center For Non Violence located in Englewood, Chicago



AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COMMISSION
PRESENTS



13TH AMEC CONGRESSIONAL GLOBAL

Awards Gala 2024

IGNITING PASSION : EQUIPPING CHANGE

MESMERIZING ENTERTAINMENT

RED CARPET...

SPECTACULAR ACTION PACKED PROGRAM

WITNESS CHICAGOLAND'S

LARGEST MULTI ETHNIC FESTIVAL

5.55PM : AROUND THE WORLD IN 60 MIN

7.08PM: AWARDS CEREMONY

SPARKS CURIOSITY - INSPIRES CHOICES

9.05PM : GRAND FINALE : DREAMS TO DESTINIES



WELCOME

DOORS OPEN: 5:30PM

YELLOW BOX, 1635 EMERSON LANE

NAPERVILLE, IL

Sat
JUNE
01



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FOR RSVP

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BY INVITATION ONLY



WATCH LIVE

<https://www.youtube.com/live/ZLu2nolfzuY>



**CHILD PRODIGY
OF THE YEAR**



BURHANUDDIN PRESSWALA

5th grader, Butler Elementary School, Boston, MA

Burhanuddin Presswala, a rising 5th grader at Butler Elementary School in Boston, MA, is a remarkable all-rounder excelling in academics, arts, and sports. Burhanuddin's passion for music shines as he plays the piano and recently began taking violin lessons. His athletic talents are evident in his enthusiasm for soccer, tennis, and baseball, although swimming is not his favorite.

A dedicated leader, Burhanuddin has been nominated twice to the Student Leadership Council. His responsibilities included distributing "paw prints" to commendable students and managing the collection of these paw prints to trade for school rewards. Additionally, he played a significant role in selecting rewards that would be enjoyed by all students.

In the classroom, Burhanuddin is a problem solver and a helpful peer, often assisting students struggling with math and aiding friends in finding lost items. His literary skills are exceptional, demonstrated by his numerous essays and stories. Burhanuddin's love for reading is profound; he completed the entire Harry Potter series at the age of eight. He also enjoys video editing and creating Scratch games and presentations, often celebrating his parents through these creative endeavors.

Burhanuddin's talents extend to the performing arts, where he has received Drama Llama awards for his outstanding drama and theater performances. He notably acted in the play "Green Eggs and Ham." His creativity and technical skills are further highlighted by his interest in building and programming Lego robots. When he's not reading, he loves playing with Legos and cars.

Aspiring to become a hybrid of an engineer, game creator, and physicist, Burhanuddin dreams of a future where he can contribute significantly to his community. He is committed to increasing safety and security and ensuring that all civilians, including differently-abled individuals, have equal rights.

Burhanuddin Presswala is an exceptional young individual whose diverse talents and dedication to both personal growth and community service make him a standout student at Butler Elementary School. His journey so far promises a bright future filled with innovation, creativity, and compassionate leadership.



**OUTSTANDING
STUDENT OF THE YEAR**



ZACHARY E. WONG

Sophomore at Walter Payton Prep college, Chicago

Zachary, a rising sophomore at Walter Payton College Prep, exemplifies excellence in both academics and community service. As a key member of his school's math team, he has led them to consecutive victories in prestigious competitions such as the City of Chicago Math League and the Illinois Council of Teachers of Math. His individual accomplishments are equally impressive, including top honors in the Math Kangaroo competition and a semifinalist position in the Wharton Investment Global Competition. Maintaining a stellar 5.05 weighted GPA, Zachary excels in two Advanced Placement courses.

Beyond academics, Zachary is deeply committed to community service. He actively volunteers with The Honeycomb Leadership Corp., where he addresses various societal challenges in Chicago. His initiatives have included organizing food drives, advocating for affordable housing, leading conservation efforts, and raising \$500 for 'By the Hand' by running the Chicago half marathon. Zachary's dedication to service and academic success not only sets a high standard but also inspires those around him.

Zachary's ability to balance rigorous academic pursuits with meaningful community service highlights his exceptional character and leadership. His efforts promise a future filled with impactful contributions, making him a standout student at Walter Payton College Prep.



**OUTSTANDING
YOUTH OF THE YEAR**



RAJ GANDHI

Student, Wayne State Uni, Detroit, MI

Raj Gandhi is an exemplary healthcare professional committed to clinical practice and research. He is currently enrolled in the prestigious Wayne Med-Direct BS/MD program at Wayne State University, maintaining a perfect GPA of 4.0. His certifications include Certified Nursing Assistant, Stop The Bleed Trauma Certified, and American Heart Association Basic Life Support Certified. Raj is also an Illinois State Scholar.

His research at Henry Ford Health System under Dr. Mendez focuses on diabetes' impact on kidneys, involving microscopy, renal tissue quantification, and reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction. He enhances his skills through weekly seminars.

In his clinical roles, Raj works as a Patient Care Tech in the Cardiac/Telemetry Unit at DMC-Harper Hospital, performing electrocardiograms, setting up telemetry, and monitoring patient conditions. At Pearl of Rolling Meadows, he serves as a Certified Nursing Assistant, assisting with daily living activities and monitoring patient well-being.

Raj's experience extends to working as a Diet Aide at Lutheran Home, ensuring patient dietary needs are met. His administrative skills were honed at Neurohealth, managing patient records and adhering to HIPAA guidelines.

He volunteers as a Listener with 7 Cups and tutors students through Learn To Be, including those with medical conditions like epilepsy and ADHD. Additional training through Science Saturdays at Rosalind Franklin School of Medicine and an externship with AT&T has equipped him with team management and customer service skills.



REV AL SAMPSON

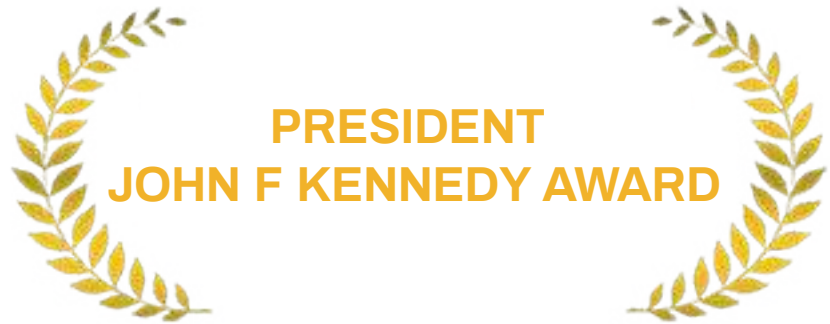
Founder Pastor, Fernwood United Methodist Church, Chicago

Born in Everett, Massachusetts, Reverend Sampson's journey to becoming a prominent spiritual leader began at Perlin Elementary School and Everett High School, where he won the Senior Oratorical Contest. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Religion and Social Science from Shaw University in 1961, followed by a Master's Degree in Cultural Studies from Governors State University in 1973 and a Master of Divinity Degree from McCormick Theological Seminary in 1977. In 2000, he received an Honorary Doctorate in Divinity from Union Baptist Theological Seminary in Toledo, Ohio.

Licensed to preach in 1956 by Reverend Earl W. Lawson of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Reverend Sampson's ministry reached a significant milestone in 1966 when he was ordained by Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. This made him the only staff member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to be ordained by Dr. King.

Reverend Sampson served as pastor of Fernwood United Methodist Church in Chicago for over 35 years. His leadership fostered a community grounded in compassion and social responsibility. He was also a respected biblical scholar, contributing to the Original African Heritage Bible, and held roles such as NAACP Religious Affairs Chairman for Illinois.

Reverend Dr. Sampson's life exemplifies faith, education, and activism. His dedication to service and social change has profoundly impacted many, embodying the true essence of leadership and humanity.



**PRESIDENT
JOHN F KENNEDY AWARD**

ROSELAND HOSPITAL, CHICAGO, IL

Mr. Tim Egan, CEO & Dr. Khurram Khan, MD, President

Roseland Hospital is a renowned medical institution in Chicago serving thousands of people and has been growing these last few years.

Mr. Tim Egan has been the CEO and President of Roseland Hospital for over a decade and sparked a great deal of innovation especially during the peak of COVID-19.



**OUTSTANDING CHILD
OF THE YEAR**

ARIAN ARZOUMANIAN YOUSEFZAI

Second Grade, Highland Elementary Skokie, IL

High academic performer at his young age and exceeds teacher expectations. Engaged and involved in anything he sets his mind to with a positive attitude Excels beyond the classroom in extracurricular activities and shows great dedication and passion.



VI NGUYEN
Anchor-NBC5

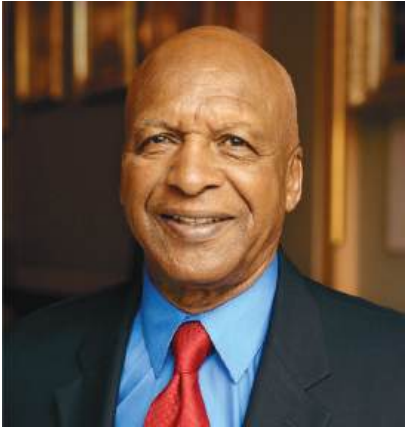
Vi Nguyen joined NBC 5 Chicago as a general assignment reporter in October 2020. She previously worked at CBS Chicago where she covered stories for the morning show.

Prior to moving back to Chicago, she reported for the nightly newscasts at WISH-TV in Indianapolis, Indiana. During her time in the Hoosier state, she covered a wide range of stories from human interest to crime, including the high profile disappearance and murders of Delphi teens Abby Williams and Libby German.

Her reporting career began at WTVO/ WQRF in Rockford, Illinois, where she learned how to shoot, write and edit. She also reported at stations in Kansas and Oklahoma.

Originally from California, Nguyen's family moved to the southwest suburbs when she was in middle school. She graduated from DePaul University with a degree in communications and a minor in biological science. She's a proud board member of the Vietnamese Association of Illinois.

In her spare time she likes to read, watch reality shows and cheer on the Green Bay Packers



MAN OF THE YEAR



JESSE WHITE

Politician and Educator

Jesse Clark White, born on June 23, 1934, in Alton, Illinois, is an American educator, politician, and former athlete. A member of the Democratic Party, he served as the 37th Secretary of State of Illinois from 1999 to 2023, becoming the longest-serving individual in this position. Raised in Chicago, White excelled in sports at Waller High School and attended Alabama State University on a sports scholarship, where he played baseball and basketball, graduating in 1957. He briefly played minor league baseball with the Chicago Cubs organization and served in the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division from 1957 to 1959.

White's career in public service began in the Illinois House of Representatives, where he served from 1975 to 1993. He then served as the Cook County Recorder of Deeds from 1993 to 1999. As Secretary of State, White implemented numerous safety measures, including a top-ranked graduated driver licensing program and key DUI legislation. His efforts in organ and tissue donation led to the creation of the First Person Consent Organ/Tissue Donor Registry.

In 1959, White founded the Jesse White Tumbling Team, a youth program providing positive alternatives for Chicago-area children, which has impacted over 18,500 young people. His tenure was marked by significant improvements in traffic safety, CDL licensing processes, and customer service efficiency in state facilities. He also took a firm stand against corruption, reforming the Secretary of State's office after inheriting it under a cloud of scandal.

White gained national attention in 2009 for refusing to certify Roland Burris's Senate appointment following then-Governor Rod Blagojevich's corruption charges. White's career reflects a dedication to public service, youth development, and integrity in government.



DR. LEENA GUPTA

Internist, San Jose, CA

Dr Leena, Gupta hails from a city of world fame, after the devastating Bhopal Gas tragedy, where she embarked her career in medical school. She then immigrated to the US to start her flourishing career in medicine In CookCounty Hospital, Chicago. She completed her internal medicine residency from Norts-hore university hospital Long Island, Jewish Medical Center in New York. She currently practices as a hospitalist and critical care physician specializing in neuro crtical care in the state of California.

Through her busy life, she has actively pursued her passion for arts and science and in fact, very effec-tively used the right and left sides of her brain. She has written poetry books during the Covid times to destress herself from a busy hospital practice in California. Her second book -Colors of Love is due to be released soon. Thisbook is a versatile collection of 201 poems on different aspects of love-very creatively written and artistically presented. Amazingly, with all the above she has kept herself busy with paintings, which has exhibited and sold in Basel Art Festival in Switzerland.

She also keeps herself actively involved with the AAPI the national organization of more than 10,000 physicians and has contributed immensely to the growth of the organization and led the organization as a chair of the publication committee, as the Regional Director for the Western zone,, and led the global health summit in India, conducting ENLS courses and medical jeopardy for Med students and other physicians in the Indian medical diaspora.

She has done many volunteering projects, and activities including blanket drives for homeless shelter, Toy drives for the underprivileged , blood donation camps for the hospital and the Red Cross. She currently works as a physician Director for nonprofit SEWA organization in Northern California.

She also is the president of AAPIWEST organization and has educational, cultural and social events for the local physician community in Northern California every month which are indeed very well orga-nized, and well attended.



MS. GRACE CHAN MCKIBBEN

Director, CBCAC

Grace Chan McKibben is Executive Director of Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC), a policy advocacy and community planning organization based in Chicago's Chinatown. Grace has held senior leadership positions in multiple industries, including higher education, government, financial services, social service, and policy advocacy. In these roles, she led numerous programs that brought communities together and amplified the voices and influence of marginalized communities. Most recently, CBCAC was the lead organization that helped Chinatown become a state-designated cultural district.

Grace holds a B.A. in Linguistics and Sociology as well as an M.A. in Linguistics from The University of Chicago, an M.B.A. from Keller Graduate School of Management, and is currently a Ph.D. student in Organizational Leadership at Adler University. She serves on the City of Chicago's Community Development Commission, the State of Illinois Asian American Employment Plan Advisor Council, and the Board of the Illinois American Civil Liberties Union. A sought-after speaker, trainer, and consultant, she has won numerous awards, including the City of Chicago Mayor's Medal of Honor and the Alumni Diversity Award from The University of Chicago.



MR. ANWAR SADATULLAH, CEO

Fusion Systems & Services Inc, Oakbrook, IL

Anwar Sadatullah's journey epitomizes resilience, fortitude, and a relentless commitment to excellence. From his arrival in the United States in 1997, he navigated challenges while nurturing a deep passion for technology.

Founding Fusion Systems, he revolutionized IT test automation, earning acclaim as one of the most influential Asian American entrepreneurs. Alongside professional success, his Tech Empowerment Initiative addresses social issues by providing underprivileged youth with technology education and mentorship, embodying his commitment to societal equity.

Anwar's philanthropic efforts, including the establishment of the American Muslim Cemetery, reflect his belief in human dignity and compassion. His inspiring story continues to illuminate the transformative power of dedication and purpose, inspiring others to pursue their dreams with resilience and determination.

Fusion Systems and Services Inc. is a leader driving innovation in IT test automation.

With a focus on innovation and social impact, Sadatullah aspires to leave a lasting legacy that transcends mere professional achievements, inspiring others to effect tangible change.



MS. SUGUNA VALLABDAS

Trustee , India Mission United Telugu Methodist Church, Oak Park , IL

Sugna Valabdas, one of the earliest Indian -American immigrants who reached Chicago in 1960s, was a registered nurse who worked in Martha Thompson Hospital and other hospitals for over 35 to 40 years in the OBG section, giving birth to new babies.

Sugna Valabdas has one of the best clinicians to take care of prenatal care and postnatal care of new young bonds. With that same nurturing love that she gave to thousands of babies which she helped deliver, she nurtured the Telugu community, particularly the Telugu Christian community along with her husband Bishop Samuel Valabdas.

Living in Oak Park, Illinois, part of the 7th congressional district of Congressman Danny K. Davis, both Sugna and her husband Sam Valabdas established the India Mission Telugu United Methodist Church in Oak Park in early 1980s.

Both Rev. Sam Valabdas, who worked in the Cook County Hospital as an X -ray instructor in the radiology department and Mrs. Sugna Valabdas together in late 80s, took the resolve to purchase the church at 1049 South Euclid Avenue, York Park with their own savings.

And till today, they nurture and develop the Indian Telugu Mission Community Church as a community center, not only for the Telugu community, but for the larger community. ethnic immigrant community of Chicagoland.

Sugna Valabdas is an embodiment and an example of an outstanding senior citizen who gives care and hope for generations to come. Today, we are pleased to honor her with the Outstanding Senior Citizen of the Year Award.



**ENTREPRENEUR
OF THE YEAR**



MR. JAMES DENMAN

CEO, Harolds Chicken 88 & Sneakersville 88

James Denman is a born and raised Chicagoan with entrepreneurial roots running deep in his blood. He and his brother were fortunate enough to be raised and supported by their parents while living across the street from his paternal grandmother's home in the Englewood neighborhood. James has close family ties with his relatives as they all gathered at Grandma Denman's house regularly.

The #88 brand was born out of James' love for his high school years. He graduated from Currie High School in 1988, James later learned the significance of the number 8 as the infinity symbol and a symbol of good luck. Double the 8 to 88 and the fortune of luck. Under the #88 brand James has successfully established 2 Harold's Chicken #88 restaurants and Sneaker Ville #88, a Bronzeville sneaker boutique. Both restaurants are neighborhood staples: Harold's Chicken #88, 124 E. 35th Street, Bronzeville location and Harold's Chicken #88 Sports Bar, 1450 S. Michigan Avenue, South Loop.

James is the sole owner and operator of his 3 business. With the support of his wife, daughters, family members, employees and the community, he strives to offer quality services and to be a viable member of the community.

Owning a community based business has allowed James to hire local talent and this is an achievement that he does not take lightly. He demonstrates his deep love for the community by giving out free meals during the holidays and joining with other local organizations for the benefit of the community.

James enjoys spending time with his family. He is a member of the Major Taylor cycling group (Chicago). He very much enjoys being a business owner.



**HEALTH CARE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE YEAR**



CAPITAL HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE INC.

OAKBROOK, IL

Mr. Mehdi Ali, CEO

Capital Hospice & Palliative Care is honored to receive the Healthcare Organization of the Year award, recognizing our commitment to providing client-centered, quality, and comprehensive care for those requiring hospice services. Our mission is to address the emotional, physical, and spiritual needs of individuals with life-limiting illnesses, prioritizing comfort when curative treatments are no longer pursued.

Our services can be provided in various settings, including the home, skilled facilities, assisted living facilities, or hospitals. Our interdisciplinary team, composed of a Medical Director, nursing staff, social workers, chaplains, home health aides, volunteers, and therapists, works together to develop personalized care plans.

The Hospice Medical Director oversees these plans and conducts visits for patient re-certification. Patients may select their own attending physician or our Medical Director. Our dedicated nurses perform ongoing assessments, communicate with physicians for updates, and educate families on care and symptom management.

The Home Health Aide, a certified nurse assistant, offers personal care, including bathing, dressing, and eating assistance, while monitoring vital signs and reporting changes to the nurse. The social worker supports families by accessing community services, providing advanced directives information, and offering emotional support.

Our chaplain addresses spiritual needs, facilitating contact with personal ministers and providing prayer and scripture readings upon request. Physical, occupational, and speech therapists contribute as needed, and our music therapist offers services aimed at comfort and relaxation.

We also have a bereavement counselor who prepares families for end-of-life rituals and provides post-death support. Our dedicated volunteers assist with office duties and patient visits, offering companionship and respite care. At Capital Hospice & Palliative Care, we strive to create a compassionate environment where every patient's comfort and dignity are our top priorities.



**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
AWARD**



MS. SAICHANG XU

Solo Attorney

Ms. Xu is a solo attorney, a hardworking mom, and a passionate community volunteer. Through her real estate and estate planning practice, Ms. Xu touches the lives of hundreds of people in the Chinese American community every year, and her leadership in various nonprofit organizations inspires many to serve their communities. Ms. Xu is currently the president of the United Chinese Americans Illinois Chapter, a nationwide nonprofit and nonpartisan federation dedicated to enriching and empowering Chinese American communities through civic engagement, political participation, heritage sharing, youth development, and fostering a greater understanding between the U.S. and China for the well-being of all Americans and the world.

As pro bono legal counsel, she has served many community organizations, such as the Chinese American Association at Greater Chicago, The Association of Chinese-American Scientists and Engineers, Chinese schools, and Bigheart – Asian Family Volunteer Center. Her leadership extends to other organizations like the Zhejiang University Alumni Association of Greater Chicago, the American Zhu Kezhen Education Foundation, the Chinese American Alliance, and Xilin Northwest Chinese School.

With a passion for supporting and empowering the community, the underrepresented and those in need, Ms. Xu embodies dedication through her impactful actions and compassionate heart. Her tireless contributions to the community make her a standout nominee.



**MIR ALI ETHNIC
SINGER OF THE YEAR**

MARISA BUCHHEIT

Singer

Marisa Buchheit is an operatic soprano who has performed in critically acclaimed productions around the world. She sings in ten languages, including those of her own ethnic heritage: Thai, Chinese, and German. She studied vocal performance at the Cleveland Institute of Music where she graduated with Academic Honors and served as President of Mu Phi Epsilon Music Fraternity. She recently completed her Master's Degree in opera at DePaul University with Academic Distinction.

Marisa's recent performances include recitals and fully staged operas in the United States, Italy, France, Austria, and Thailand. Her performances include *The Magic Flute* (Queen of the Night), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Susanna), *Don Giovanni* (Zerlina), *Rigoletto* (A Page/Gilda understudy), *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Venus), *Romance of the Western Chamber--National Premier Tour* (Ying-ying), *Carousel* (Julie), and *Chicago* (Mary Sunshine), with companies such as Wichita Grand Opera, DePaul Opera Theater, American Chamber Opera, Carnegie Arts Center in Indiana, CIM Opera Theatre, and the Case Western Footlighters in Ohio. She was also a featured soloist the past 2 seasons with the Elgin and Peoria Symphony Orchestras. Marisa has sung the national anthem for the Chicago Cubs, Chicago Bulls, the Chicago Air & Water Show, and also for many charitable organizations.

In 2014 Marisa won the title of Miss Illinois and represented the state with a year of extensive travel, performances and presentations at major events in her native Chicago and around the state. In the Miss Illinois competition she won the Grand Talent Award and the top scholarship award before later competing in ABC's nationally televised Miss America broadcast.

Marisa is a frequent recitalist and featured soloist in the Community Chapter Concerts of the Lyric Opera of Chicago. In November 2014, she won the LiPuma Memorial Scholarship Award in the Casa Italia Annual Vocal Competition. She is also a co-founder of the Soprano Trio *Très belle*, which performs regularly with Ravinia Festival's Educational Outreach program and throughout Illinois.



**YOUNG WOMEN
OF THE YEAR**



MS UMAIMA FEROZ

Oswego, IL

Umaima Feroz, an Illinois-based Asian American leader with a Masters in Business Administration in IT, exemplifies dedication to community service and multi-ethnic unity. Born in India, raised in Saudi Arabia, and settled in the U.S. for over 15 years, Umaima's exposure to diverse cultures enriches her understanding and acceptance of different ethnicities and religions. Her passion for cultural research fosters respect and inclusivity.

As a devoted wife, mother of four, and sister of five, Umaima extends her support beyond her family to her community. In 2022-2023, she helped over 30 women from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh start their businesses, inspiring them to overcome age-related hesitations and achieve success. Her leadership empowers women to become independent and successful.

Umaima is the Director of the Foreign Student Recruitment Organization of America and CEO of Conquer Educational Consultant. She assists students from underprivileged communities in achieving their educational dreams in the U.S. Her efforts in negotiating state funds in Illinois aim to support financially distressed students across the nation. With 18 years of experience in overseas education, her organization excels in guiding students to the best institutions, ensuring their academic and career success.

Umaima promotes feminism by helping first and second-generation women in her community gain self-love, self-worth, and independence. She advocates for women's mental, social, and financial empowerment. Her involvement with teenagers focuses on promoting physical health and preventing drug misuse, while she tirelessly works to help all generations realize their potential and make significant life choices.

Umaima Feroz, a young entrepreneur, and community leader, sets a remarkable example for Indian women in today's society. Her work underscores her commitment to global community service, making her achievements in 2024 a testament to her unparalleled dedication.



DR. ANUJA GUPTA

CEO, Verandah Group

Physician, Real Estate Entrepreneur & Community Service Leader

After practicing as a Cardiologist in Chicago for over 10 years Dr Gupta switched to pursue a full-time career as a real estate entrepreneur. She has distinguished herself as a successful real estate investor & developer in a largely male-dominated field. In addition to building an extensive portfolio of existing homes, the communities she has developed include new-construction rentals, senior housing and housing for medical students & new doctors.

Dr Gupta has received widespread recognition for her work, including the Congressional Award in 2024, 2023 & 2022 by the US Congress, the Cook County Asian Leadership Award 2023-2018, Women in Commercial Real Estate 2022 by the IL Real Estate Journal, The IL State Excellence Award 2021, The Daily Herald Entrepreneurial Excellence Award 2020, and The Daily Herald Influential Women in Business Award 2018.

Dr. Gupta is passionate about serving the community thru various leadership roles. She is the co-founder of the Women's Empowerment Campaign Chicago (WE), a networking & empowerment platform for South Asian women entrepreneurs in Chicagoland. She is a board member of the ISKCON temple. Under her leadership the ISKCON Naperville temple was able to initiate a \$11M expansion & construction of a new temple. She is also the founder of the Indian American Caucus, a non-partisan civic engagement platform for the South Asian community.

Dr. Gupta is married to Dr. Gaurav Kapoor & has one daughter. She attributes her professional accomplishments to grit & tenacity that help her overcome successively bigger obstacles. Her personal motto is to keep challenging herself to be more impactful. She sees herself as a problem-solver & hopes to continue being a part of creating better solutions for the community.



**OUTSTANDING
PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR**

DR. CHANDRA PRAKASH CHATAUT
Attending Physician, Cook County Health

Dr. Chandra Prakash Chataut serves as an Attending Physician in the Department of Medicine at Cook County Health and as an Associate Professor of Medicine at Rush Medical College. A distinguished graduate of Dhaka University in Bangladesh, Dr. Chataut completed his residency in internal medicine at Cook County Hospital and earned a Master of Science from Rush University.

With a career spanning over 25 years, Dr. Chataut is a highly respected clinician educator, community leader, and mentor. He has been actively involved in the training and education of medical students and residents, shaping the careers of hundreds of students, both US and international medical graduates. His commitment to medical education and mentorship has left a lasting impact on the next generation of healthcare professionals.

Dr. Chataut is deeply dedicated to serving the American-Nepalese community, providing patient care, health education, and counseling. He collaborates actively with local community organizations to enhance health outcomes and education within this community. His efforts in community service are a testament to his dedication to improving public health and supporting underserved populations.

Throughout his illustrious career, Dr. Chataut has received numerous accolades recognizing his contributions to medicine and the community. He was awarded a gold medal by Dhaka University, reflecting his academic excellence. His teaching excellence has been recognized with outstanding teacher awards, while his humanitarian efforts have earned him the Humanitarian Award from Cook County Hospital, a Certificate of Excellence from the Cook County Treasurer, and the Humanitarian Service Award from the Illinois Secretary of State.

Dr. Chataut's extensive experience, combined with his dedication to education and community service, underscores his significant contributions to the field of medicine. His work not only exemplifies professional excellence but also highlights his commitment to mentorship and community involvement. Dr. Chataut's enduring impact on his students and the communities he serves makes him a standout figure in the medical field and a respected leader in his community.



MR. ABDUL MOHAMMED

CEO Armani Homes, Dallas, TX

Abdul Nayeem Mohammed is the founder and CEO of Amrani Homes, a premier residential development company renowned for its visionary approach to luxury living. With over 20 years of experience in the industry, Abdul has built a reputation for prioritizing quality, craftsmanship, and innovative design. His extensive expertise and commitment to excellence have positioned Amrani Homes as a leader in the competitive residential development sector.

Under Abdul's leadership, Amrani Homes guarantees unmatched customer satisfaction through projects that reflect architectural excellence and meticulous attention to detail. Each development seamlessly blends functionality with aesthetics, ensuring that every home is not only beautiful but also highly practical. Abdul's devoted commitment to client contentment means that every homeowner's vision is carefully brought to life with precision, setting a new standard in luxury living.

Abdul's dedication to quality is evident in every aspect of Amrani Homes' operations. From selecting the finest materials to employing skilled craftsmen, he ensures that each project upholds the highest standards. His innovative designs incorporate the latest trends and technologies, creating homes that are both modern and timeless. This forward-thinking approach has earned Amrani Homes numerous accolades and a loyal clientele who appreciate the company's unwavering commitment to excellence.

Abdul's leadership extends beyond the company's projects. He is passionate about fostering a positive and inclusive workplace culture, believing that a motivated and dedicated team is essential to delivering exceptional results. His vision and guidance have not only driven the success of Amrani Homes but also inspired his team to strive for greatness in every endeavor.

Abdul Nayeem Mohammed's unwavering dedication to quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction has set Amrani Homes apart in the residential development industry. His leadership continues to shape the future of luxury living, ensuring that each home is a masterpiece of design and functionality.



MS. EVELYN GREEN, MA, CLC, LSW

*Public Health Administrator, Community Health Services Division,
Syndemic Infectious Disease Bureau*

Evelyn Green, MA, CLC, LSW, has dedicated 29 years to city government, starting as a health planner with the Ryan White HIV Services Planning Council. As a project officer in the Syndemic Infectious Disease Bureau at the Chicago Department of Public Health, she oversees clinical quality management, evaluation strategies, and partnerships with sub-recipients providing HIV services.

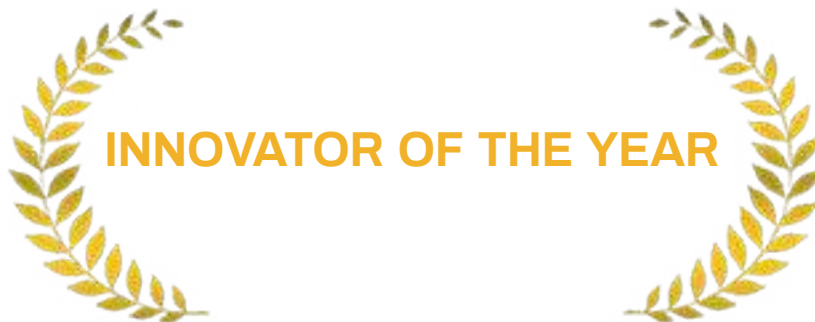
Evelyn has presented her work nationally and coordinated best practice exchanges in HIV care and prevention. Her diverse roles include directing after-school programs for youth in the Robert Taylor Homes and Grand Boulevard Community, managing quality assurance in the Vaccines for Children program, and monitoring a teen pregnancy prevention initiative in Chicago Public Schools. Her contributions span various public health crises, including domestic violence education, heat wave response, multidrug-resistant TB, meningitis, Mpox, and COVID-19.

A Loyola University Chicago graduate with a bachelor's in social work and a master's in social service administration from the University of Chicago, Evelyn has significantly impacted her field. She chairs the philanthropy and student support subcommittee of the African American Alumni Committee at the University of Chicago Crown Family School of Social Work, leading fundraising efforts and creating the first grassroots endowment for Black students.

Evelyn's dedication has earned her numerous awards, including the 2021 Volunteer Leadership Award from the Crown Family School. An advocate for health, she has completed six Chicago Marathons, numerous half marathons, and 5K runs. She facilitates a walking group at work, promoting healthy lifestyles among colleagues.

As a child protector and social justice advocate, Evelyn serves on the Statewide Committee Against Child Abuse and Neglect and is actively involved in Rotary, set to be the club president in 2024-2025. Her volunteerism extends to the Chicago Association of Black Social Workers and the National Council of Negro Women. She plans to provide postpartum doula services to underserved women and continues to advocate for health equity and justice.

Evelyn is the proud parent of one adult son, Reginald, and grandmother to his daughter, Analise. She remains committed to addressing health disparities and welcomes collaboration on future projects.



MR. MURUGANA SABESAN

CEO, Become Inc, France

As a seasoned CEO, co-founder, and CTO of several tech startups across Europe, Africa, and Asia, I have cultivated a reputation for innovation and strategic leadership. With a background in Innovation and Engineering and a diverse skill set honed in Paris and London, I have been instrumental in guiding startups from inception to becoming leaders in their domains.

My entrepreneurial journey began with pioneering groundbreaking telecom solutions in France, offering innovative unified communication services. I then ventured into FinTech, leading a startup that won numerous innovation awards in France and Africa, including the prestigious Microsoft Africa Digital Award. Our pioneering service enabled international money transfers and mobile purchases, marking a milestone as Europe and Africa's first virtual mobile operator.

Continuing my entrepreneurial pursuits, I co-founded a LegalTech startup specializing in financial services. Additionally, I've served as CTO for startups in FinTech, EdTech, MarTech, and HRTech, focusing on DeepTech innovations.

Beyond my business endeavors, I am committed to promoting coding and scientific education among children in Paris and its suburbs. Through my association, in collaboration with organizations like AG2R Mondiale Group and the Paris Prefecture, we conduct weekly coding workshops during school hours, nurturing the next generation of tech innovators.

I have co-founded multiple companies across Europe, Africa, and Asia, each playing a pivotal role in their respective markets. Notably, in Brussels, Belgium, I spearheaded a DeFi startup poised for European-scale transformation, converting social networks into Decentralized Autonomous Organizations. It is listed among the top six startups in Belgium in 2024.

My journey reflects a dedication to innovation, education, and global impact, continually driving social and technological transformation.



**HUMANITARIAN
OF THE YEAR**



MS. VIVIAN XU

Director of Community Engagement, Chinese American Service League

Vivian Xu is the Director of Community Engagement of Chinese American Service League, the largest nonprofit social service agency serving Asian Americans in the Midwest. Vivian has worked professionally as well as volunteered with numerous community organizations throughout the city. She began her employment in the immigration and naturalization program at the Chinese American Service League (CASL) in 2005. In 2006, she became the leader for the Pine Tree Senior Council, a self-run group that provides social and personal aid to senior citizens and expanded the program from 30 members to nearly 700. Outside of work, she is always available to these seniors and their families with passion, well beyond the call of duty. Her determination to better serve the community also galvanized her to acquire certification both as a US Department of Justice accredited Representative as well as a certified Alzheimer Disease and Dementia Care Trainer.

Vivian's dedication to the people around her extends beyond the immigrants and seniors at CASL. She founded the Asian American Culture Center (DBA Chicago Chinese School) in 2005 and has served as the principal since its establishment. The AACC works to teach and spread Asian culture to people of all backgrounds from across the city. Vivian is also the president of the Mid America Chinese Recreation Organization since 2006. She has been the Founder and Vice President of Mid-America Restaurant Association since 2017, the Founder and Board Member of Chinatown Security Foundation since 2020, the Board Member of Heritage Museum of Asian Art since 2022, and the Consultant for the American Fujian Business Association since 2015.

Vivian received the Humanitarian Service Award from Jesse White, Illinois Secretary of State in 2007, the Outstanding Staff Award from Chinese American Service League in 2007, the Outstanding Community Volunteer Award from Chinese American Association of Greater Chicago in 2013, the Outstanding Contribution Award from Chinese American Service League in 2013, the Ambassador Award from Chinese American Service League in 2014, and the Outstanding Community Volunteer Award from Chicago Hong Kong Club in 2015, the Commitment and Dedication to the Chinese American Community Award from Maria Pappas, Cook County Treasurer in 2024. Vivian is honored by Chicagoans and the Chinese American Service League as an ambassador to the people. She is highly respected by the Chinese community and is widely recognized for her significant contributions to the organizations that she serves.



**OUTSTANDING
COMMUNITY SERVICE
AWARD**



MS. MADHU UPPAL
Founder AIANA, Naperville, IL

- Served until 2010 as Director of Science and Health at Schaumburg School District 54 after 18 years in education. Holds master's degrees in Foods and Nutrition from Delhi University and educational leadership from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and a doctorate from Aurora University.
- Serves on several boards including Martin Avenue Apartments, Naperville Public Library, Apna Ghar, Club of Indian Women, Sanjeevani, Mandi Theatre, and United Punjabis of America. Involved in various religious and cultural organizations.
- Naperville resident since 1988, with three daughters. Interests include music, theater, reading, writing, traveling, and family time.

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**CIVIC LEADERSHIP
AWARD**



JUDGE JUDY RICE

Circuit Judge, Court of Cook County, IL

Judge Judith C. Rice was elected as Circuit Court Judge in the 7th Judicial Sub-Circuit of Cook County in 2014 and appointed to the bench by the Illinois Supreme Court. She began her judicial career in traffic court, then served in forcible entry and detainer court, domestic violence court, and domestic relations division. In December 2021, she was appointed Acting Presiding Judge of the Domestic Violence Division, leading efforts to expand access and services within the division, including reopening 555 W. Harrison St. and launching the After Hours Emergency Order of Protection Pilot.

Before becoming a judge, Judge Rice was Senior Vice President at BMO Harris Bank, overseeing community affairs and economic development. Her legal career began as a prosecutor with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, followed by roles in city government, including Chicago City Treasurer, and leading the Department of Water and Department of Transportation.

Judge Rice serves on several non-profit boards, including UCAN and the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center, and is active in multiple bar associations. She is the treasurer of the Alliance of Illinois Judges and a member of the Illinois Supreme Court Committees on Equality and Domestic Violence.

Born and raised in Chicago, Judge Rice earned her law degree from John Marshall Law School and graduated cum laude from Loyola University Chicago. Her numerous awards include the National Forum for Black Public Administrators Marks of Excellence Award, the Anti-Defamation League Distinguished Public Servant Award, and the Cook County State's Attorney's Office Pride Community Service Award.

Judge Rice's dedication to justice and community service continues to make a significant impact in Cook County.



BUILDER OF THE YEAR



MR. JOHNNY ZHENG

President, Mid-American Restaurant Association, Chicago, IL

Johnny is the Founder also served as the First President of Fujian Business Association in 2015, he earned the title of Lifetime Honorary Founding President in July 2021, President of Mid-America Restaurant Association since 2021, and the President of Chinatown Security Foundation since 2024. As the President of Mid-America Restaurant Association, he started a Chef Training Program which benefit new Immigrants to get jobs in various restaurants in the Greater Chicago Area. Johnny also served as the Board Member of Midwest Asian Health Association since 2015, and the Board member of the Heritage Museum of Asian Art since 2022. He currently received the Commitment and Dedication to the Chinese American Community Award from Maria Pappas, Cook County Treasurer on May 17, 2024. Johnny Zheng immigrated to the United States in 1989 and became a chef. Since 1992, he has owned and operated several carryout and various restaurants. In 1996, he started Chicagoland's first and largest seafood buffet. While his food ventures continue to grow, he also started Zheng Construction LLC in 2006.

Outside of work, Johnny is active in the Chinatown Community which he loves to "Giving Back to the Community", during the Chinese Lunar New Year, Johnny and his crew from Zheng Construction LLC decorated "Inflatable Zodiac Animals" at the Main Entrance in Chinatown along with strings of "Red Lanterns" hanging through the whole Chinatown areas that attracted many, many visitors to Chinatown. Johnny is a very quiet gentleman, always smiling, never saying "NO" to anyone and get the "WORK DONE" when people ask.



MR. HENRY L TIMOTHY

Founder, Midwest Coalition to Stop Violence, Chicago, IL

- Born on March 8, 1955, in Caruthersville, Missouri, Rahim grew up working in the fields, picking and chopping cotton, harvesting watermelons, and gathering wildberries. By age 14, he held a full-time job at the local compress, developing a strong work ethic under the guidance of his father, a preacher and mechanic.
- Rahim served as an aide to Harold Washington in 1977, gaining valuable governance experience. He pursued business management and liberal arts studies, later working five years with Dr. Slugger. His passion for humanitarian work led him to serve as Director of God's Helping Hand homeless shelter for women and children from 2000 to 2008, aiding many in achieving success.
- In 2018, Rahim found fulfillment in serving others at a local gas station, helping those in need and ensuring smooth operations. Throughout his journey, from his rural upbringing to his roles in governance and compassion, Rahim has exemplified diligence, empathy, and resilience, consistently making a positive impact on others' lives.



MR. JOHN Z HUANG

Attorney, Chicago, IL

John Z. Huang, Chief/Partner of Huang & Hu Law Offices, has over 30 years of legal practice. He holds an LL.M. and J.S.D. from Yale Law School and a J.D. from Chicago-Kent College of Law, along with a law degree from Wuhan University. Licensed in Illinois and New York, he began his career at Keck, Mahin & Cate and Piper, Rudnick & Wolfe before establishing his own firm in Chicago in 1995.

Huang has served as an adjunct professor at DePaul University College of Law and as an external supervisor at the University of Hong Kong's Faculty of Law. He is also a visiting professor at Tongji University and Wuhan University and directs the He Huahui Law Education Foundation at Wuhan University.

Recognized for his legal expertise, Huang has been listed as a Super Lawyer in Illinois from 2017 to 2024 and was named a Lawyer of Distinction in 2017. In 2019, he became a Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America and a Premier Lawyer of America.

Huang has co-translated Wittgenstein's "Culture and Value" and edited several books on overseas investment and mergers. He has published numerous legal articles in Chinese and American journals.

Dedicated to community service, Huang has provided pro bono legal assistance to Chinese American organizations and individuals. He has served as legal advisor for the United Association of Chinese Americans at Greater Chicago and the Association of Chinese American Scientists and Engineers in the U.S. He founded and led the Association of Hubei Folks of Central America, receiving multiple Lifetime Achievement Awards in 2019 for his contributions.

Huang's distinguished career reflects his commitment to both the legal profession and the Chinese American community.



**RISING STAR
OF THE YEAR**



MR. NATHANIEL BOOKER

Mayor of Maywood

Nathaniel George Booker is a distinguished leader with a diverse background in hospitality and public service. He founded Astute Culture (AC) in 2017 after a 15-year career in Executive Hotel Operations and Human Resources with Marriott International and InterContinental Hotel Group (IHG). Rising to Area Director for IHG, he oversaw multiple brands across the Mid-Atlantic.

As a dedicated community advocate, Booker has served as Maywood's Economic Development Commissioner, village council member, and Village President. He holds key roles nationally, including on the National League of Cities (NLC) Board of Directors and as 1st Vice President for the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC-LEO). In Illinois, he leads the Illinois Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (IBC-LEO) and participates in multiple state committees.

In 2022, Booker launched Healthy Maywood I Cook (HMWC) to promote community health, partnering with the White House on health initiatives. His impactful work with the NLC spans numerous initiatives, including Youth Excel and Good Jobs Great Cities.

Booker's community service extends to roles with School District 89's Education Foundation, Cook County Democratic Party, and more. He has consulted for various organizations and holds degrees from Tennessee State University and certifications from AHLEI, Franklin Covey, SIU-Edwardsville, and the University of San Francisco.



MR. SYED MUKKARAM

Addison, IL

- Syed Mukarrum is a prominent figure on Devon Avenue, Illinois, having founded several businesses such as Hyderabad House, Andhra Darbar, and Naan on Devon. His ventures have significantly contributed to establishing a vibrant Indian environment in the state, promoting cultural richness and diversity.
- Beyond his entrepreneurial achievements, Syed Mukarrum has demonstrated unwavering commitment to community support. He has provided accommodations and guidance to underprivileged students, helped individuals facing domestic violence and homelessness, and assisted with funeral arrangements for unclaimed bodies. His efforts include founding community centers like Darul Eiman and distributing relief kits during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Syed Mukarrum has also been active in the political arena, serving as AP Congress General Secretary, and has contributed to funeral arrangements through the American Muslim Cemetery team. His dedication to fostering stronger community ties is evident in his hosting of events for Indian leaders and celebrities. Additionally, Syed Mukarrum's achievements in arm wrestling and his professional roles in civil engineering and general contracting underscore his multifaceted contributions to society.



ZAKIUDDIN MOHAMMAD

Entrepreneur

Mohammad Zakiuddin, an Illinois-based Asian American leader, exemplifies dedication to community service and multi-ethnic unity. As President of the Foreign Student Recruitment Organization of America, he has enabled countless students from Asia and other underprivileged communities to pursue their dreams in the U.S. Zakiuddin is pivotal in negotiating state funds to support financially distressed students, ensuring access to quality education across all fifty states.

His firm, Conquer Educational Consultants LLC, bridges universities and students, securing admissions and visas for over 5,000 applicants worldwide. Zakiuddin's passion for service is further demonstrated as Vice Chancellor of North American College LLC, fostering multi-ethnic education and bilingual studies.

As President of Mercy Homecare Inc., Zakiuddin leads with compassion, offering exceptional healthcare services since 1994. Under his leadership, the organization has grown, ensuring patient safety and trust through evidence-based practices and continuous improvement.

Zakiuddin's humanitarian efforts extend to Exclusive Attire Inc., providing free clothing and essentials to the needy, benefiting over 300 families across various cultures. His contributions to the Chinese American community include serving as legal advisor and founding the Association of Hubei Folks of Central America.

Starting his career in Hyderabad, Zakiuddin's relentless dedication and profound advocacy have earned him a stellar reputation. His journey from humble beginnings to becoming a prominent figure in community service highlights his unwavering commitment to integrity, advocacy, and equality. As a devoted husband and proud father, Zakiuddin continues to inspire and uplift those around him, making a significant impact on the global stage.



DANNY K. DAVIS
PEACE PRIZE



PRINCE SAR AMIEL

Geopolitical Analyst, Lynwood, IL

Prince Sar Amiel is being honored with the Newton Devasahayam Centenary Award by Global Eye Weekly Magazine in recognition of his outstanding leadership during Asian American Heritage Month in Washington, D.C. Newton Devasahayam was a dedicated and valiant Indian Police Officer who served the Government of Tamil Nadu for over 30 years.

Prince Ameil's life story is a tapestry of remarkable achievements and unwavering commitment. As a Geopolitical Analyst, Community National Advocate, Music Producer, Writer, and Radio and TV Talk Show Host, Prince Ameil is a multifaceted luminary whose influence spans continents and cultures. He utilizes the arts and media to champion social causes and foster understanding across diverse communities.

A graduate of Eastern High School in Washington, D.C., and the University of the District of Columbia, Prince Ameil has been a trailblazer in the Vegan restaurant industry with establishments in L.A. and Washington, D.C. His entrepreneurial efforts have redefined plant-based dining and served as a catalyst for social change. His Soul Vegetarian Restaurants in Israel, Bermuda, Ghana, and the U.S. reflect his dedication to food sustainability and social justice.

Prince Ameil's contributions to entertainment include organizing concerts and boxing matches featuring stars like Luther Vandross and Whitney Houston. As a Recording Artist, his music blends soul, R&B, and gospel to deliver powerful messages of hope and unity. His book, [WAR, DESTINY, and FREEDOM], explores themes of identity and liberation.

A tireless advocate for political activism and community development, Prince Ameil's initiatives address food deserts, provide agricultural training, and empower underserved communities. His engagement as a youth basketball coach and mentor further evidences his dedication to future generations.

With a network of esteemed colleagues, including Dr. Terry Mason and Harry Lennox, Prince Ameil's impact is profound, leaving a legacy of innovation, advocacy, and cultural enrichment.



**ORGANIZATION
OF THE YEAR**



MINDFUL MEDITATION YOGA, NAPERVILLE, IL

Ms. Anu Malhotra

Mindful Meditation Yoga, a Non-For-Profit organization was founded 30 years ago jointly by Anu & Bharat Malhotra to teach people how to discover a joyful, purpose driven and powerful life.

From Life-Changing Sessions to Eye Opening Motivational Talks, Mindful Meditation Yoga brings Timeless wisdom of Meditation, Yoga and Ayurveda into the modern world. Anu Malhotra spreads her mission of teaching people how to live a Healthier, Happier and Stress-Free Life through her on-going Free Weekly Group & One- On -One Sessions & presentations at corporations, universities, hospitals and religious institutions, which has transformed Thousands of lives.

Anu Malhotra has been honored with several awards that include:

- "Best Yoga Teacher of Chicagoland" Award
- "Golden Peacock "Award from Congressman Danny Davis in recognition of her service in improving the lives of the people.
- "Top 20 Chicagoland's Women of Excellence" Award from Congressman Danny Davis for excelling and making a difference in people's lives.
- Proclamation from Mayor Scott Wehrli for her exemplary service to Naperville Community

13TH CONGRESSIONAL GLOBAL COMMUNITY AWARDS GALA 2024



AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COMMISSION USA
A 501-C-3 NOT FOR PROFIT ORGANIZATION



The Largest Multi Ethnic Event in America

June 1, 2024 : THE YELLOW BOX, 1635 EMERSON LANE, NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

GLIMPSES OF 12 TH CONGRESSIONAL GLOBAL COMMUNITY OSCARS - 2023



12TH CONGRESSIONAL GLOBAL COMMUNITY OSCARS GALA 2023

AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COALITION INC

Host : U.S Congressman Danny K Davis

The Largest Multi Ethnic Event in America

JUNE 17, 2023 : THE YELLOW BOX, 1635 EMERSON LANE, NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS



GLIMPSES OF 11 TH CONGRESSIONAL GLOBAL COMMUNITY OSCARS



11TH ANNUAL GLOBAL COMMUNITY OSCARS 2022

AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COALITION INC

Host : U.S Congressman Danny K Davis

U. S. Congressional MEATF Annual Awards Gala

JANUARY 8, 2022 : THE YELLOW BOX, 1635 EMERSON LANE, NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS



GLIMPSES OF 10 TH ANNUAL GLOBAL COMMUNITY OSCARS 2020



10TH ANNUAL GLOBAL COMMUNITY OSCARS 2020

AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COALITION INC

Host : U.S Congressman Danny K Davis

U. S. Congressional MEATF Annual Awards Gala

AUGUST 27, 2021 : THE YELLOW BOX, 1635 EMERSON LANE, NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS



GLIMPSES OF 9 TH ANNUAL GLOBAL COMMUNITY OSCARS 2019





THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OSCARS 2019

Annual International Awards Gala

HOST : AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COALITION INC.



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2019 - MEADOWS CONVENTION CENTER, 2950 W GOLF ROAD, ROLLING MEADOWS, IL 60008



GLIMPSES OF 8TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL AWARDS GALA 2018

**13th ANNUAL AMEC CONGRESSIONAL
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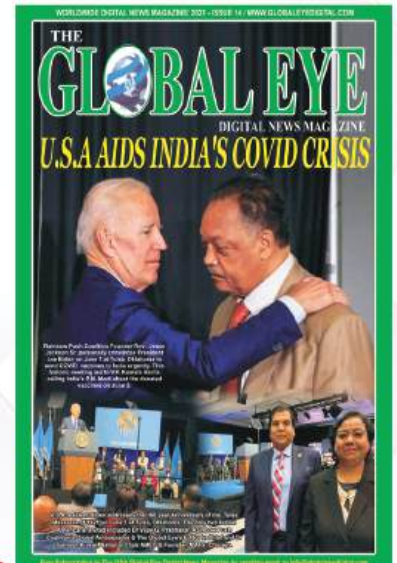
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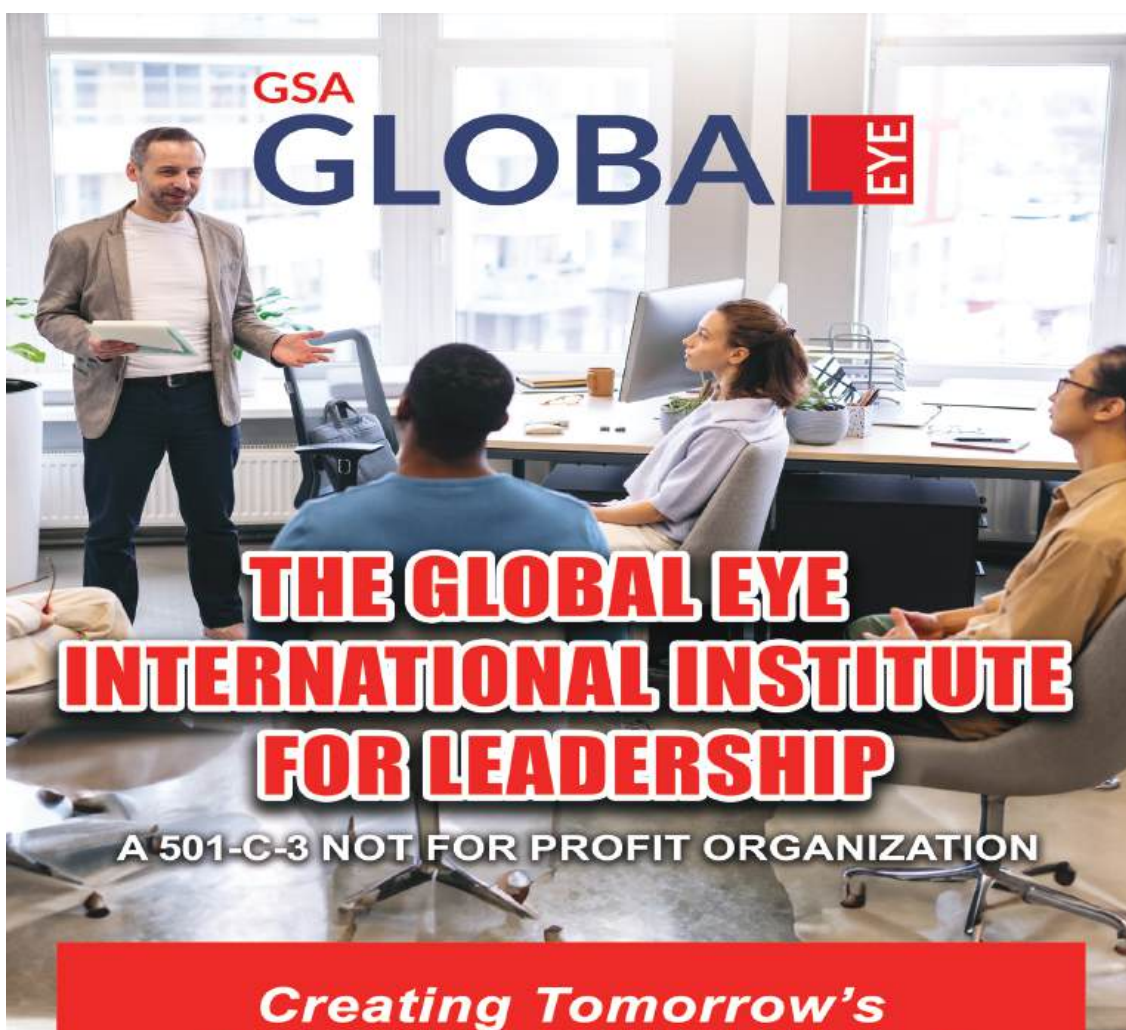
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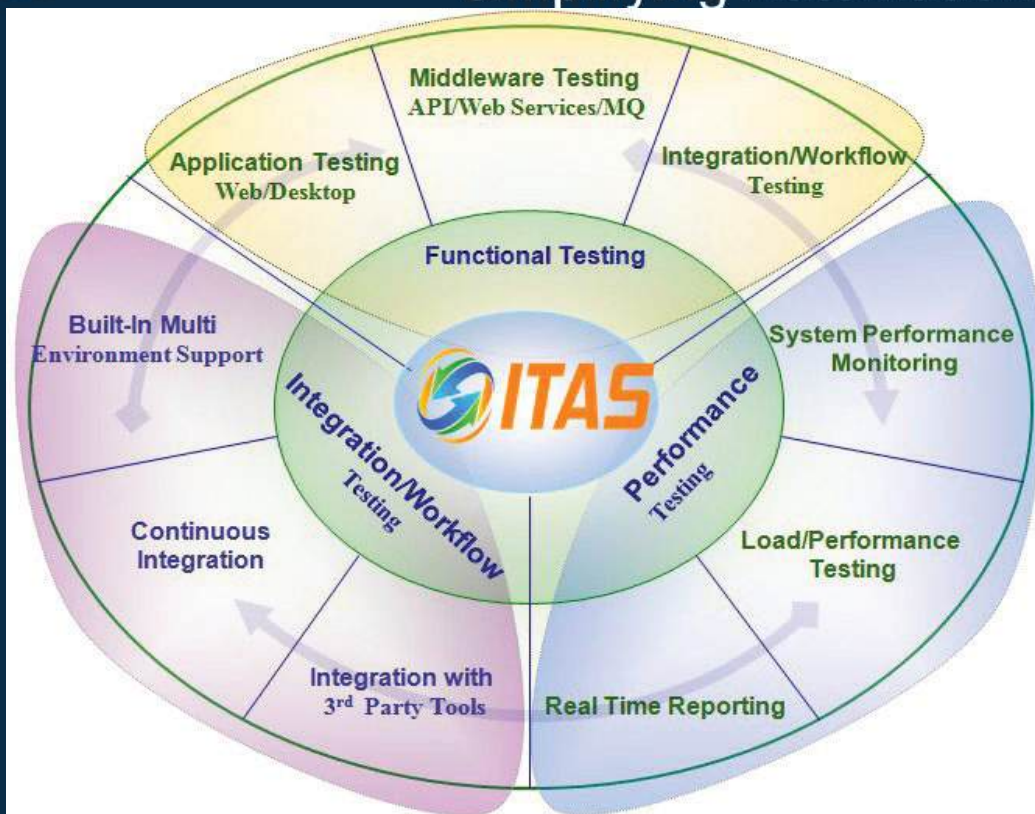
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