



Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USA Inc.

An IRS Section 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Charitable Organization

HSS honors teachers in 113 school districts nationwide

Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USA (HSS) held events nationwide in 73 Cities from 24 States and 113 school districts, felicitating over 1,700 teachers and educators.

To honor the teaching community for their exemplary service in educating the students, the first week in May is considered “Teacher Appreciation Week” in the United States. The first Tuesday of the same week is “National Teacher Day.” To celebrate the special occasion, HSS chapters organize an annual event called “Guru Vandana.” Guru, in Sanskrit, means Teacher, Spiritual Master, and Mentor. Vandana means salutations. Guru Vandana means greetings to the teacher. That is to say, it is an expression of love, gratitude, and reverence towards the teacher. During this event, children pay respect to their teachers in a traditional Hindu cultural manner.

Guru Vandana events are typically held from May to June during weekends. This year, to follow CDC and local health department guidelines, most chapters organized events in a virtual setting. However, to give a personal touch, children made a gift box for teachers containing sweets, masks, and personalized handmade greeting cards. Teachers received these boxes in advance of the event. During the event, teachers were introduced to the Hindu cultural significance of Guru and Guru Vandana, followed by cultural events and speeches. Later, teachers had an opportunity to comment about the event. Following are some of the comments teachers made during these virtual events:

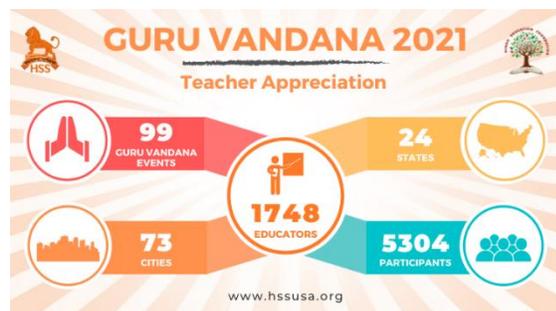
“I was impressed by the presentations from the students. I learned about the Hindu culture and was also entertained by the performances.”

“I love that the event was primarily presented by the kids! It was great to hear about different aspects of their culture directly from them. It was very organized and well done.”

“I learned about cultural traditions and a deep sense of respect and gratitude for teachers.”

“It was wonderful to see our local students showcase their talents and highlight aspects of their culture and history. I learned a great deal.”

Teachers and school administrators appreciated the events as they helped them understand the significance of diversity and inclusiveness. Many teachers sent notes to students thanking them for their appreciation and said they hope to be part of in-person Guru Vananda next year.



HSS, the nation’s largest Hindu-American organization, conducts a values education program for Hindu-Americans of all ages through its 260 branches nationwide. For more information, visit www.hssus.org

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