



HINDU SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH USA

# ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2024 - SEPTEMBER 2025



33  
States



186  
Cities



267  
Centers  
(Shakhas)



85  
Hindu YUVA  
(University Chapters)

Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USA (HSS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the cultural and spiritual development of the Hindu community in the United States. Through various programs and activities, HSS aims to promote values of respect, inclusivity, community service, and interfaith dialogue.

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## President's Message

Namaste and warm greetings on the auspicious festival of *Vijayadashami*!

*Vijayadashami* reminds us of the triumph of *Dharma* (righteousness) over *Adharma* (non-righteousness) and inspires us to recommit ourselves to service, unity, and selfless action. Published on the occasion, this annual report of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USA can help us find our own spark for advancing our organization's noble mission.

Over the past year, our centers/*shakhas* have continued to expand, nurturing confidence, character, and leadership in our children, youth, and families. Recently, we have also gained momentum in our activities for seniors. We are truly an organization for all ages. Many volunteers have undertaken training and organizational responsibilities, ensuring that our work strengthens its organizational roots while adapting to new opportunities.

Our volunteers have been active in a wide range of community and outreach initiatives — from *SewaDiwali* food drives and *Vidyadaan* school supply donations, to interfaith and intercultural events celebrating Hindu, Sikh, Jewish, Black American, and Women's heritage. Exhibitions such as *Darshana* continue to introduce broader society to the richness of Hindu *Dharma*, while participation in parades and civic programs highlights our spirit of service and belonging. These efforts have earned recognition and appreciation at local, state, and national levels.

As we go through this report, let's reflect on the vision of Dr. Hedgewar, who hundred years ago sowed the seeds of the movement we now know as Sangh. The occasion reminds us of the tireless dedication and unwavering commitment of countless *karyakartas* (volunteers), who transformed Doctor *ji's* vision of volunteerism into a living reality. Their efforts have helped the Sangh remain steadfast in its mission to organize society and embody timeless Hindu civilizational values of fostering peace, prosperity, and equality wherever we may be. Seeking inspiration from these, may we raise generations of confident, compassionate, and service-oriented Americans who work for peace and the welfare of all.

**Dr. Vinod Ambastha**

President, Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USA



# Vijaya Dashami

Established in 1989 on the auspicious day of Vijaya Dashami, HSS USA annually celebrates this important Hindu festival with great enthusiasm. Vijaya Dashmi showcases our collective strength and reflects the discipline and physical development of volunteers. These activities include yoga postures, the melodious “Ghosh” band, singing, harmonious choruses, and engaging games. The Vijaya Dashami celebrations are a grand event, with over 10,000 participants across 49 locations in all regional HSS centers. Prominent community leaders, including interfaith groups, are often invited as chief guests. HSS volunteers demonstrate their training in Ghosh, yoga, and other activities, showcasing their commitment and dedication. Additionally, these gatherings frequently feature delightful performances by talented children, enhancing the joy and festivity of the occasion.



## Health for Humanity Yogathon

# Surya Namaskar Yajna

The Surya Namaskar Yogathon (SNY) 2025, organized by Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USA (HSS) from January 18 to February 2, saw enthusiastic participation across 370 cities in 32 states, with over 753,000 Surya Namaskars performed. The event promoted health and mindfulness through yoga and included 31 schools, 10 temples, universities, and interfaith and community organizations. A standout initiative, Sevika Leher, had women volunteers perform continuously across time zones for six hours.

The Yogathon was a powerful demonstration of unity and wellness through cultural tradition

32

Number of  
States

753,000

Surya Namaskars  
collectively performed





# Guru Vandana

150

Events

20

States

2,200

Academicians

10,000

Attendees

To celebrate “Teacher Appreciation Week” and “National Teachers Day” in early May, Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USA (HSS), through its Hindu Education Foundation (HEF), organized Guru Vandana events across over 150 centers in 20 states. These events honored around 2,200 educators—including teachers, principals, and superintendents—with participation from more than 10,000 attendees.

Rooted in the Hindu tradition of revering teachers as Gurus, the events featured cultural programs by children with Sanskrit shlokas, speeches, and performances. Teachers were honored through traditional Hindu rituals like aarti, kumkum application, and offerings of flowers and sweets. An educational exhibit on Hindu civilization, Darshana, was also showcased.

The ceremonies received strong appreciation from educators for the respect shown and the cultural exposure. Many noted the sincerity and effort of the students and families involved in organizing these events, often in collaboration with local school districts and townships.



# HEF Organizes Workshops for Educators in New Jersey

The Hindu Education Foundation (HEF), an HSS project, conducted a Hindu Culture Workshop for 80 teachers, Principals, and the Superintendent of Watchung Borough School District, NJ. Volunteers also set up the Darshana - Hindu Poster Exhibition in schools. Around 600 students reviewed the posters, asked questions, and made notes. Both teachers and students had extremely positive feedback about this educational venture. The Superintendent shared about these activities by HEF in her Board of Education meeting.





# Raksha Bandhan

HSS celebrates the festival of Raksha Bandhan as Universal Oneness Day. This festival, which usually takes place in August or early September, symbolizes the bond and shared responsibility of protecting one another. The celebration involves exchanging a sacred thread called a Rakhi.

To commemorate this day, HSS volunteers visit first responders, civic authorities, and elected officials in communities across the country. They thank these officials for their public service by tying a Rakhi on their wrists.



# HSS Chapters Organize Children's Activities

In 2025, children engaged in a rich array of programs designed to nurture cultural understanding and dharmic values. The Know My Hindu Values series introduced them to Bharat Darshan, Mahabharata Mahatvam, Gita Saram, Aathi Choodi, and Swaadhyaya in Balagokulam. Initiatives such as Krishna My Sarathi inspired inner reflection, while Ekatmata Stotram deepened awareness of nature, rivers, mountains, great leaders, and the spirit of Bharat. Bala Geet Mala offered a unique opportunity to learn values through songs in various Bharatiya languages. Storytelling and creativity were fostered through the Telekatha series "The Legacy That Lives On," Dharma Quest, and drawing competitions. In addition, summer programs brought children together to celebrate Ramayana, Krishna Katha, Khel Divas, Gosh Varg, and Bala Divas, further enriching their learning and strengthening participation across shakas





# Women's Day Celebration

Across the nation, several chapters of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), USA, came together to celebrate Women's Day through special women-only gatherings known as Sakhi Sammelans. These events served as vibrant platforms for women of all ages to engage in meaningful activities, thought-provoking discussions, and inspiring talks. The focus was on highlighting and honoring the vital role of modern women in shaping society—at home, in the workplace, and within the community. Participants celebrated sisterhood, cultural values, and empowerment, reinforcing the strength and resilience of women in today's world.



# Building a Shared Vision for Kishore(Youth) Development

National Kishor Shikshak Prashikshan Varg 2025 or National Training Camp for Kishor Mentors was held from April 11–13 at Pine Lake Retreat, Florida, with 35 participants from across all the regional HSS branches. The varg focused on building a unified understanding of Kishor Vishay and advancing initiatives such as Dharma Internship Program (DIP) and High School Hindu YUVA. Key sessions addressed Kishors' emotional well-being, samskar and leadership development, building Atmiyata with Kishors and parents, and navigating teen challenges.

# Hindu YUVA



### **“Understanding HinduPhobia” Conference**

The leading student organization on American college campuses, Hindu YUVA, organized the “Understanding Hinduphobia 2025: Hinduphobia Through Erasure” conference, held virtually. It brought together around 500 participants to explore the systematic erasure of Hindu history, culture, and contributions in academia, media, and public discourse. Co-hosted by the University of Texas, Dallas chapter of Hindu YUVA, the event featured thought-provoking discussions on media bias, sacred geography, and educational frameworks that may foster hostility. Prominent speakers highlighted shared struggles of cultural erasure through perspectives from Jewish, Native American, and Alevi communities, promoting cross-community solidarity. Reflecting on the conference’s impact, director Dr. Indu Viswanathan underscored its importance in building a committed community to combat Hinduphobia. Many attendees praised the event’s inspiring call to action.

## First National Jyeshth (Seniors’) Shibir of HSS was a big success

In April, 52 volunteers who have college-aged children or above, gathered at the Texas Hindu Campsite to explore different models and avenues for contributing to society in this life stage. Sessions focused on balancing family responsibilities, nurturing the next generation, and taking on greater leadership in community work. It reinforced that this stage of life is not a slowing down, but rather a time to expand one’s contribution to society with experience and wisdom.







## Martin Luther King Jr. Day

The Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) recently held several outreach events to honor important cultural and historical figures. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, volunteers across the country participated in various community events, including an interfaith service panel in Kansas City and a celebration in Sacramento where they connected Dr. King's philosophy of non-violence to that of Mahatma Gandhi. Additionally, in Aurora, Illinois, SewaDiwali volunteers received an award for their community service, while HSS volunteers in New Jersey presented their annual report to local and state leaders during a celebration.

## Black History Month



In February, HSS chapters commemorated Black History Month by hosting events with African American guest speakers to foster cultural understanding and community engagement. For example, in Folsom, California, an Air Force veteran and school district president shared his family's experiences and stressed the importance of community involvement. Similarly, in Peoria, Arizona, HSS volunteers honored African American community leaders. Furthermore, in collaboration with the UN's Society for Enlightenment and Transformation (SEAT), HSS organized a month-long exhibition at the United Nations to celebrate the life and legacy of Swami Vivekananda and his contributions to global spirituality, unity, and service.



# International Yoga Day celebrations

HSS volunteers joined International Yoga Day celebrations nationwide, with a major event in Greater Houston drawing over 250 participants. Organized with Hindu YUVA under the theme “Yoga for One Earth, One Health,” the session featured community members, dignitaries, and over 100 youth volunteers. Certified instructors led mindful asanas, emphasizing purpose and unity through yoga.





# Interfaith and community-building initiatives

Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) volunteers across the United States have been actively involved in a variety of interfaith and community-building initiatives. These events focused on bridging cultural divides and highlighting shared values. In the Portland area, HSS youth collaborated with Jewish and Latter-day Saint groups for Global Youth Service Day, where they prepared meals, made greeting cards, and knitted blankets for local shelters. This hands-on service not only helped the community but also forged cross-cultural friendships. Additionally, in Indianapolis, an HSS volunteer joined a panel to discuss the role of women in Hinduism and Judaism, while in North Phoenix, HSS families visited a Jewish center for an educational dialogue on Jewish history and traditions.

These efforts extended to several joint cultural and religious celebrations as well. In Carmel, HSS participated in an interfaith series, facilitating a dialogue on Hindu philosophy and values. A similar event celebrating shared values between the Hindu and Jewish communities took place at the Hindu Jain Temple of Pittsburgh, featuring a panel discussion with speakers from



# Interfaith and community-building initiatives

both HSS and the Tree of Life Synagogue. Furthermore, HSS volunteers and community members participated in joint Holi-Purim celebrations with Jewish communities in the Bay Area, Pittsburgh, Oregon, and Chicago, demonstrating a spirit of mutual respect and shared festivity.

The Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) marked Holocaust Remembrance Day with events fostering interfaith understanding. In Dallas, 44 volunteers visited the Holocaust and Human Rights Museum, reflecting on parallels with the Kashmiri Pandit Exodus. In Portland, Hindu and Jewish teens shared prayers, discussions, and activities to build mutual respect. These initiatives highlight HSS's focus on education, dialogue, and unity against hatred.





# Sewa Activities

HSS volunteers embodied the Hindu value of selfless service across the U.S. through diverse initiatives. Key highlights include: In Los Angeles, they supported wildfire relief with evacuation zones, donation drives, shelters, and helplines. In Peoria, IL, they organized a discounted book fair for 375 underserved students to encourage reading. In North Billerica, MA, volunteers assisted with logistics and hospitality at the OM Hindu Community Center's Pran Pratishtha. In Cincinnati, OH, over 65 volunteers served 12,000 cups to runners at the Flying Pig Marathon. In Buffalo Grove, IL, 19 volunteers conducted a highway cleanup on a 1.5-mile stretch they have maintained for over a decade.





# Sewa Diwali

The 2024 Sewa Diwali Food Drive, a collaborative effort among Dharmic communities in the United States, collected and distributed over 717,000 pounds of non-perishable food. This was the seventh consecutive year for the event, which involved 247 organizations, including Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, and Sikh temples, schools, and community groups. These groups provided food to more than 266 food pantries, shelters, and community centers. The initiative, coordinated by Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USA, saw about 3,000 volunteers, including children and youth, participate in the drive.

**SEWA DIWALI 2024**  
SERVICE TO HUMANITY IS SERVICE TO DIVINITY  
Celebrating the festival of Diwali through community food drives since 2018!  
www.sewadiwali.org

38 STATES	3000+ VOLUNTEERS
200+ CITIES	720,000+ DONATED
247+ ORGANIZATIONS	597,500+ MEALS
266+ BENEFICIARY ORGS	