

The background of the cover is a photograph of the interior of a Jain temple. It features a series of ornate, multi-tiered arches supported by intricately carved pillars. The ceiling is high and decorated with patterns and hanging glass lamps. The floor is made of light-colored stone tiles with a geometric pattern. The overall atmosphere is one of grandeur and historical significance.

JAIN DIGEST

Community Celebration

**A publication by the Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA)
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JAIN DIGEST

A publication of the
Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA)
Email: jaindigest.info@gmail.com



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From the President

JAINA: Strength through Partnerships



Dr. Sushil Jain, Anju Bhargava, D. Paul Monteiro, & Dr. Shiv Subramanian at White House Conference on Dharmic Seva
(Read the article on page 8 for more details).

Jai Jinendra:

Welcome to the second Jain Digest newsletter this year. In this issue we provide the updates on building strong relationships with our partners. I am pleased to announce now, more than ever, that the success of JAINA can be attributed to its flexibility in partnering with other NGO's, sister organizations and humanitarian agencies across the globe. This year, so far, JAINA has continued to prove its mettle both at home (in USA) and abroad, leading multiple partnerships and establishing itself as a global organization for good cause.

This important milestone is the result of hard work on the part of our volunteers in Haiti, Africa, Central America, India and at home in the US. Our volunteers made the difference

by engaging themselves in multiple joint projects and working towards building long lasting and precious partnerships. We often forget to realize the big role these partnerships play in influencing our actions while helping us grow and mature.

Our Mission to collaborate and support not only strengthens our relationship, but also helps train these volunteers. The mission to promote Jain way of life sends a strong message about JAINA's commitment and partnership with NGO's around the globe. There can be little doubt that alliance with our partner organizations are considerably stronger today because of our willingness to join hands with them and deliver humanitarian projects anywhere and at any time.

Volunteers make a tremendous impact on our progress. We want to give volunteers every resource possible to be successful contributors to our mission. Hence, an understanding of our culture of selfless service becomes necessary. Our collective mission is to nurture current relationships and set a precedent by creating new partnerships. These partnerships should serve as a model to grow and sustain in both capacities: as individual and as member organization in future.

Our duty is unique for we must both lead and be led. We should strive to spread love, practice compassion, tolerance, and charity. I trust we will continue to exercise the same valor, steadfastness, and compassion for many years to come.

Thank you for everything you do and your service. It is my honor and privilege to represent you as your President.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sushil Jain

Partner organizations:

Ratanidhi Charitable trust, JP/HRO – Haiti, Rotary International, PCRM (physicians committee for responsible medicine), Kanchan Foundations, Bidada International, American Jewish Committee, Hindu American Foundation, Dharmic Seva group, BAPS (Bochaswami), International School of Jain Studies, Chinmaya Mission, Habitat for Humanity, Clairmont Lincoln University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Florida State University.

Community Celebration

Jai Jinendra - Time to bring some community news!

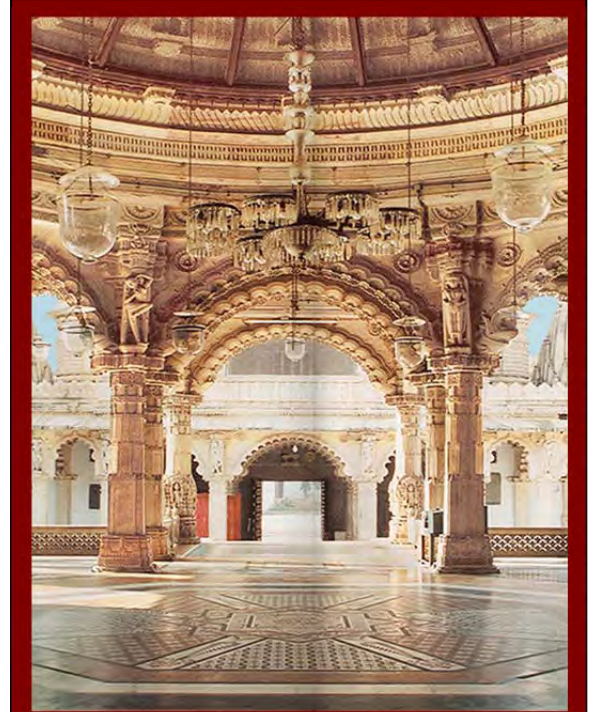
Jai Jinendra! Time to bring some community news!

There is little doubt that the North American Jain community is a vibrant one. With increased partnership with other like-minded organizations, Jains are making their presence known in social, academic, art, cultural, political, and above all spiritual front. By joining hands with other Eastern faith organizations and Obama administration, we are highlighting the value of Eastern heritage not only to the American society but to countries across the globe. By producing professional quality drama and other media programs, we are using art as a vehicle to spread our message. On the academic front, we are proactively involved in various ongoing activities and programs. Various departments of religious studies at top-tier universities are showing keen interest in Jain philosophy. Research is being conducted on various aspects of the religion. At the spiritual level, we continue to maintain our closeness to our roots and different traditions. Recently, a US resident took diksha. The Pathshala programs are growing with creative changes to motivate our youth into the Jain way of Life. Lastly, the community spirit is demonstrated at the Pratishtha events that elicited excitement among many thousands of members across the nation.

We express our sincere apologies to the community for a slight delay in bringing out this issue of Jain Digest. It was once again a team effort and an endeavor to bring the news and reach out to you in the best possible manner.

Finally, Jain Digest is your vehicle to communicate, so please do send us your comments (at news@jaina.org). We are also looking for volunteers to join our Jain Digest team.

With Warm Regards
Jain Digest Editorial Team



The front cover picture has been taken from the JAINA calendar. This is the picture of the Ahmedabad Hutteesingh Temple. We have selected this picture to felicitate the JAINA calendar committee, for performing the excellent task of bringing to the community beautifully designed calendars year after year.

Letters to the Editor

Read "From the President" page and liked very much the idea of "two way communication" that you espouse. To truly achieve that we need to have a provision for "Letters to the Editor" for the Jain Digest and perhaps a section in the Jain Digest that is devoted to "Suggestions from Readers" for JAINA.

Perhaps even a section on the JAINA website for "Readers' Blogs" that are solicited, but reviewed by the editorial team before publication.

- Bipin Shah, CA

We very much appreciate you comment. Here is a start!

Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanuji's 90th Birthday.

- Based on information provided by Pravin K Shah

Much can be said about Gurudev's contribution to Jain communities especially in North America. He distinguishes himself by his remarkable oratorical skills, compassionate leadership, inspirational teaching and his commitment to Jain dharma & Jains around the globe is second to none.

Born on July 26, 1922 in a small town of Rajasthan, India, Gurudev spent first five years of his monastic life in silence and meditation (when he was 20 years old). With this experience, he realized that the ultimate purpose of all life is to expand one's awareness and to liberate the consciousness from attachment and aversion. This enlightened spirit brought wisdom, and with lucid language and eloquent speech today, he resides in the heart of millions all over India. After powerfully addressing the Second Spiritual Summit Conference in Geneva in 1970, he was invited to address the Third Spiritual Summit Conference, arranged by the Temple of Understanding series, at Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts in October 1971. This



Chatrabhanuji's Lectures in 1970 -helped create a distinct identity of North American Jains.

was his first trip to USA. Giving lectures in many leading universities, Gurudev founded the Jain Meditation International Center in New York City and became a spiritual guide by helping bring together all the Jain Centers in North America under JAINA. In recent years, he has been an avid advocate for animal rights and mindfulness in our consumption habits. He emphasizes the need for adopting veganism a life-style free of all animal products and vegetarian (plant based) diet. He also promotes elimination of animal based products (like milk, ghee, silk etc.) from our temples and religious rituals.

As we celebrate the 90th birthday of Gurudev Chitrabhanuji and honor his spiritual leadership, our heart is filled with gratitude and respect singing his immortal song "MAITRI BHAV NU PAVITRA ZARNU"

(We will try to cover more details about this celebration in our next Jain Digest Issue)

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Jain Pratishtha Mahotsav – Franklin Township, NJ.



The dream of a new temple came true for the Jains of Central New Jersey this year. Jain Center of New Jersey (JCNJ) hosted the Pratishtha Ceremony of the new Jain temple. The celebrations went on for 10 days, from June 29 to July 8, 2012, marking the beginning of a new chapter for NJ Jain community. This auspicious event elicited excitement among thousands of members of the Jain community across the nation.¹

JCNJ displayed the fruits of labor, involving, fundraising, planning, and it's execution in the well planned *mahotsav* during *Pratishtha*. The highlights of the event included, traditional rites and rituals performed by different sects (Shwetamber Sthanakvasi and Deravasi, Digamber, and Shrimad Rajachandra), free meals, and cultural items.

This exquisite marble *Shikarbhandi derasar* houses captivating *Anjanshalaka Pratimajis* of Shri Munisuvrat Swami, Shri Mahavir Swami, Shri Simandhar Swami, Shri Vasupujya Swami and Shri Shankeshwar Parshwanath. Additionally, in artistic *deris* surrounding the main deities, sculptures of *dev*, *devi*, and Guru Bhagwant will accompany the 24 Tirthankars. Unity in diversity can be observed under one roof where there is a Digamber *derasar*, Sthanakvasi hall, and Shrimad Rajchandra Bhakti hall. Spread over nine and a

View from a Visitor from India

"We were very lucky to enjoy once-in-a-life-time opportunity of Pratishtha Mahotsav in USA.

The mind was gripped with awe at this unique Shikharbandhi Jinalaya with 5 tirthankar-idols, Digamber derasar, Sthanakvasi Upashraya and Shrimad Dhyam mandir. The sight of many thousands participating in mantras, various Poojas and reverential chants of "Vande Veeram" and "Jainam Jayati Shasanam" uplifted the soul!

Especially encouraging was the genuine enthusiasm, sense of involvement and respect for the various vidhis shown by the younger generation. It makes the grand parents feel confident that the roots of Jain religion have been firmly planted in the minds of youth who call USA as their country!

But the biggest achievement treasured by this Pratishtha was the unprecedented coming together of all Sampradays/firkaas at a single sanctum-sanctorum for worshipping, as a single unified group, of Jains and just Jains!

The entire Mahotsav turned out to be a soulful and spiritually elevating experience. One had to be there to experience all this and feel overwhelmed! And those who experienced were truly blessed! "

--Satyapal Sanghvi, (Visitor from India)

¹ Community Celebration picture on Back Cover.

half acres of land, there are two floors in the

temple with around 44,000 square feet of space that includes a prayer hall, dining hall, kitchen facility, *pathshala* rooms, library, storage rooms, living quarter for the *pujari* and a 350-car parking facility.

Shwetamber: The Shwetamber sect *pratishtha mahotsav* started with *Manekstambh Ropan*, *Mangal Toran*, *Kumbh Sthapana Pujan*, lighting of the *Akhand Deepak*, and *Jawara Ropan*, followed by numerous other daily *pujans*. On July 1, *Utthapan Vidhi* of all 5 *Pratimajis* was performed at Shantinathji's *derasar* prior to the *Pratimajis' pravesh* in the Franklin Township *derasar*. Between July 5-8, devotees performed different rituals like: *pravesh* in *derasar*, *pohkana*, *pratishtha of pratima*, *pushpa vrushti* by a **helicopter** and the *dwar* opening of *derasar*. Entire sangh (many thousands) witnessed the *pratishtha* ceremony with great enthusiasm and joy.

Digamber: Digamber ceremony took place over a period of 3 days. *Dhwaja Ropan*, *Mandap Inauguration*, followed by *Vidhi Nayak*, *Nvidhi Adhyaksha Bhagwan Pravesh*, and a procession were the key rituals performed on the first day. The highlights of the second day prior to the first *darshan* and *Samosaran darshan* were *Diksha Kalyanak*, *vargodho*, and *Vedi Suddhi* of the pedestal. The ceremony concluded with another *vargodho* and *Abhishek* of all of the Bhagwans. The joy and excitement in Digamber community was palpable throughout all of these events.

Sthanakwasis: Sthanakwasis took part in a half day ceremony that commenced with *Navkar Mantra Patt pratishtha*. Everyone attended the lectures by various dignitaries speaking on the importance of Navkar Mantra. The community chanted 108 Navkar Mantras and attended *Samuh Samayik* conducted by Shrimati Tarlaben Doshi. Members pledged to meet as a community at least once a month to take part in *Samuh Samayik*.

Shrimad Rajchandra: Shrimad Rajchandra devotees celebrated the opening by chanting Mantras and offering donations. They also hosted Prayer and *Shobha Yatra* followed by their congregation in Shrimad Dhyam Mandir for the first time. Followers of Shrimad Rajchandra very excited to have an exclusive spiritual worship and prayer hall.

Cultural and other Activities: Cultural and other activities transcending religious traditional boundaries, add to the tempo of the event, and

bring the entire community together. Delicious meals in the afternoon and evening added a unique flavor to the ceremony. The cultural events of the evenings energized the members and presented an opportunity to socialize.

Pathshalas from different parts of the state had worked hard to present their own show. Edison, *Pathshala* told the love story of Nem Rajul through prose and dance. The Jersey City group performed a well-received skit about Aimutta Muni. The Caldwell team decided to step out of normal bounds and refreshed the audience with a Broadway-inspired musical. Finally, bringing back the importance of *samayik* in modern world intertwined with humor, the South Brunswick *Pathshala* performed an engaging and funny skit based on "All Izz Well". In addition other talented artists had put together a symphony of *stavans* and dances. Different *Pathshalas* also collaborated to display a *panch kalyanak* exhibition on Mahavir Swami's life.

The JAINA Jain Digest team salutes the *Pratishtha Sanghpati*, *Pratishtha* Conveners, the JCNJ Board of trustees, JCNJ Executive committee, (whose names are mentioned on the JCNJ web-site), and all other dedicated volunteers and participants whose tireless efforts made this *pratishtha* an unforgettable event. It is quite common to see some of the most dedicated volunteers, such as *Aangi* designers, *derasar* decorators, chefs and cooks, hall cleaners, and other organizers, to be hidden from the preview of the main events, yet they invariably are the source of inspiration for true *seva*.

This temple is located at 111, Cedar Grove Lane, in Somerset, NJ. Like every *derasar*, it is a source of inspiration for *seva* and spiritual development. In the words of a wise sadhu; "**The real purpose of a *derasar* is to build a *derasar* within**"



White House Conference on Dharmic Seva

On Friday, April 20, 2012, Hindu American Seva Charities (HASC) along with The White House Office of Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Agencies and the White House Office of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, jointly hosted a conference titled, "Community Building in the 21st Century with Strengthened Dharmic Faith-Based Infrastructures" for the *Dharmic* (Buddhist, Hindu, Jain and Sikh) religious leaders.

HASC under the leadership of Anju Bhargava, a member of President Obama's Inaugural Council on Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, partnered with over fifty-five Buddhist, Hindu, Jain and Sikh organizations, including, Council of Hindu Temples, Federation of Jain Associations of North America (JAINA), Soka Gakkai International - USA Buddhist Association, Sikh Organization. This conference was held to create a coalition of eastern religious non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that can reach out to their respective communities to develop and deliver collaborative solutions and services to benefit the neighbors and communities around us while promoting better understanding, mutual respect and tolerance of our beliefs, culture and values.

The event drew strong representation and participation from a dozen JAINA attendees from Executive Committee, Inter-Governmental Relations, International Service and Interfaith Sub-Committees, including President Dr. Sushil Jain, First Vice-President Prem Jain, Regional VPs Deepika Dalal and Dr. Manish Mehta, Treasurer Dipak Doshi, Dr. Tansukh Salgia, Dr. Manoj Dharamsi, Prakash Mehta, Naresh Jain, Jainesh Mehta and others. They had the opportunity to interact with senior White House and federal agency policy advisors as well as share core Jain

beliefs such as non-violence, respect for all life, tolerance for multiple viewpoints and compassion. JAINA and other delegates went back with the



JAINA team at the White House Dharmic Seva conference

conviction that there were many agency programs, opportunities and funding available for Jain centers which would enable them to get involved in community service, philanthropy and humanitarian causes - both locally and globally. JAINA wants to be proactive in this approach and is available to guide local Jain centers and our youth groups

to conceive and deliver needed service projects to benefit our adopted homeland.

In his opening remarks, D. Paul Monteiro, Deputy Associate Director, White House Office of Public Engagement, observed that the *Dharmic*-American community is interested in tackling the same issues that America is facing. Everyone in other religious traditions and government agencies are also facing some of the same issues like: healthcare, security, education, sustainability, etc. He encouraged more than sixty participants to follow up on this premier conference with concerted action and new public-private partnerships stating, "The real measure of this conference's success will be in how much more engaged in service and how effective the *Dharmic* communities become in the months ahead."

Anju Bhargava of HASC, lead organizer of the event stated, "In America, our collective faith infrastructures (such as temples, *ashrams*, and meditation and yoga studios) are still in early stages of establishment. As we see it, the *seva* (meaning compassionate service in Sanskrit) movement is a tool for ensuring social justice, and a way to deal with myriad community and social issues. The eastern *Dharmic* traditions share many commonalities of belief. We are trying to understand how we can engage with each other



collectively, and how more of us can engage with the administration in solving common pervasive problems of society.”

Former US Senator, civil rights champion and presidential advisor, Harris Wofford, spoke of the profound contribution, Asian spirituality made to the US Civil Rights movement, recounting that it was a workshop on Gandhi’s philosophy of non-violence that deeply inspired the actions of civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks on the day she refused to move to the back of the bus. On a personal level, it was his encounter with the followers of Gandhi in the late 1940’s that inspired his unwavering dedication to the US Civil Rights movement.

During a session with Rev. Suzan Johnson Cook, United States Ambassador for International Religious Freedom, concerns were raised about the condition of religious minorities in Pakistan and Bangladesh, as well as the plight of Buddhists in South-east Asia and Tibet. Dr. Siva Subramanian, HASC Board Member called on the US *Dharmic* community to work more closely with her in addressing their concerns. Ambassador Cook emphasized the importance of engagement with religious groups, because “religious freedom is closely associated with higher economic progress.”

Dr. Sushil Jain, President of JAINA and a retired US Navy veteran stated, “This first Dharma Conference at the White House helped JAINA

delegates understand the level of attention and priority President Obama has given to reaching out to minority faith groups in America.” The *Dharmic* community leaders were delighted to hear from federal officials about the current programs undertaken for community service and quality of life, as well as addressing community needs.

Other areas of concern expressed by the participants included: the challenges of integration faced by recent Burmese and Bhutanese refugees in America; the effective leverage of *Dharmic* community resources and networks for worldwide disaster response, support of information-sharing in anti-terrorism efforts, religious literacy programs in the public schools, providing much-needed support for *Dharmic*-based members serving in the US Armed Forces and expanded spiritual support services for veterans as well as prisoners in their respective faiths to hasten rehabilitation.

This conference marked an expansion and deepening of dialogue between the Obama Administration and the Buddhist, Hindu and Jain communities. It also helped recognize the contribution these faiths are making to the American society,” Bill Aiken, Public Affairs Director, Soka Gakkai Buddhist Association said, “And I think it got a number of faith representatives thinking about how they can expand, broaden and deepen their contribution.”

Pratishtha Mahotsav of JCOCO Temple



The JCOCO’s new Temple *pratishtha mahotsav* activities were performed and celebrated for the first Jain temple in Columbus metropolitan area, in Ohio on July 20, 21,22, 23 2012 with great enthusiasm and success. We will cover this event in detail in the next issue of Jain Digest.

A Path to Sadhutva

(Based on an interview with Sadhavi Sanghamitra - the first US resident to take Diksha)

“The inauguration day of Shri Gurudevji’s (Upadhyaya Shri Amar Muniji Maharaj) memorial *Saptarni*, will be the day of your *diksha*.” Little did anyone know that these words of Acharya Chandanaji spoken in some random context would miraculously come true 20 years later.

Is a human being free and master of his/her fate? Or is a human, slave of time (*kaal*), nature or disposition (*swabhav*), destiny (*niyati*), or past deeds (past *karma*)? Does an outside supreme force (God) have the ultimate power to erase the past and redefine the future? The life of Sadhavi Sanghamitra is a classic example of four *samvays* that throws light on this deep philosophical quandary.

Sadhavi Sanghamitra was born as *Mangalam* in a scenic and historic coastal town of Murud, located in Raigad district of Maharashtra. Baby Mangalam was her father’s pet who grew up listening to lullabies in her father’s rich voice. Her father was a great singer, a *tabla* player and a very kind and generous person. But this affection between father and daughter did not last long; her father passed away when she was just 5. This was the saddest day of life for a 5 year old child. Her father left a lasting impression on her mind. Many years later she would reminisce about her past and visualize a life in her father’s presence. It would have been a lot different. Can one change one’s destiny?

Can a two year old have a higher level of affinity towards a *sadhavi* whom she had barely met, compared to her parents and other relatives? During a full family pilgrimage to Sammet-Śikhar, which included all the uncles (*mama*) and aunts (*maushi*), the two year old baby Mangalam insisted that she would only sit in the lap of Sadhavi Chandanaji², instead of any *doli* (chair carried by porters) or carried by any other relatives. Sadhavi Chandanaji (the title of Acharya had not yet

been conferred on Chandanaji then) had accompanied her *sansaric* family during Sammet-Śikhar hill climb. One would wonder if the relationship between a *guru* and *cheli* was predestined.

Mangalamji’s association with Veerayatan started from its very inception. At the age of five she accompanied her grandmother (*nani*) to Rajgiri and stayed with Chandanaji for about a year. This is around the same time when Chandanaji had met *Upadhyaya* Shri Amar Muniji and the idea of Veerayatan was conceived. Staying with other *sadhavis*, young Mangalam felt a part of the new movement that was about to begin. Imitating her *nani*, who loved to serve people, the five year old took pride in doing little chores for other *sadhavis*, a nature that would later become more pronounced to encompass the larger



movement of Veerayatan of empowering humanity. Was there something inherent in her nature that drove her to serve others?

Sadhavi Sanghamitraji spent her childhood with her uncle (*mama*) and aunt (*maushi*), and did most of her schooling living with her mother in Roha, another coastal town in Maharashtra. However, while she was with her family, heart and mind would yearn to return to Chandanaji and Guru Amar Muni Maharaj. She wrote frequent letters expressing her desire to join them. Finally, her wish was granted when Chandanaji asked her to join her at the age of 12. It was time to begin the next phase of her life. Why was this great desire to live with Chandanaji?

Life in Veerayatan was different, she had to spend many hours studying languages like *Sanskrit* and *Prakrit*, and performing other services in Veerayatan. Acharya Chandanaji was a strict teacher, and many a times Mangalamji would feel that the task assigned to her was laborious and served no purpose. However, with the passage of time she realized the value of the training provided to her. While Chandanaji was the strict teacher, Guruji (*Upadhaya* Amar Muni Maharaj) was the gentle mentor. Learning Jain scriptures from

² Acharya Chandanaji is Sadhavi Sangamitraji’s mother’s sister (*mausi* in *sansaric* life)

Guruji was enjoyable and enlightening. Guruji in some way filled up the emptiness in her life which was created after she lost her father at a young age. Time does not stop, and this phase of Mangalamji's life also came to an end with Guruji's passing away (*devlok*), creating a huge vacuum in her life. Why do we crave for permanence when the only thing guaranteed with time is change?

Trained along with other student *sadhavis*, Mangalamji was no longer keen to become a *sadhavi*. She instead continued as the manager of Veerayatan. Call it karmic bondage or destiny; a young physician's assistant came to Veerayatan from USA to do some social work. Charmed by each other the friendship between the couple grew. Communicating by letters for over two years the couple finally decided to marry. At age 26 Mangalamji left Veerayatan for USA. Happily ever after – or did the journey just begin?

Mangalamji felt very blessed after marrying a medical practitioner and becoming a part of a very generous, helping and understanding Hindu Punjabi family. Participating in *sat-sang* every Sunday, singing Kabir and Mira songs Mangalamji was now a part of a different world. Every day was beautiful, but none was as joyous as the day when her daughter was born. With the motherly love for a new-born came more responsibility and attachment. Does one enter the cyclic karmic state or does an inner power rise to free oneself from karmic bondage?

Life went on and things got set in a routine – but something was missing. As Mangalamji sometimes drove alone through scenic terrains of North Carolina, a faint voice was trying to tell her something. The voice got louder with time and Mangalamji expressed the feeling of restlessness to her husband. The call drove her towards meditation, and excessive hours of solitude. She would spend hours sitting on the backyard porch sipping her tea, reading books, watching and feeding the birds. The considerate family had accepted this personality change that lasted for over two and a half years. With her growing spirituality, the thought of *diksha* finally crept in. What about the loving husband and the beautiful daughter?



Badi Diksha ceremony at Jain Center of Northern California

When Mangalamji first proposed the idea of *diksha* to her husband, he did not take her seriously. But as she persisted, the husband left the decision to her by being non-committal. While one may be able to convince the husband, what about the 11 year old daughter? Is it not a mother's responsibility to be there when the daughter needs her the most? On one end was a growing feeling to move towards the path of *diksha* on the other end was the sense of responsibility towards her daughter. This predicament was resolved by her daughter. Her daughter had been to Veerayatan multiple times and had a fair idea of a *sadhavi's* life. When Mangalamji broached the topic of *diksha* with her daughter, she expressed that while she would be sad to see her mother go away from her, she would be equally proud to see her mother as a *sadhavi*. When we (interviewer) argued that even Bhagwan Mahavir delayed his *Diksha* on his parents' request, Mangalamji pointed out that even *Bhagwan* Mahavir finally had to leave his wife and daughter behind and reiterated that her daughter was strong willed who would grow to be a good humane person. The question remains: what are our real duties and responsibilities?

The path to *diksha* still had a few hurdles left to cross. She had to pass the test of Acharya Chandanaji. When Chandanaji came to USA for the JAINA convention, Mangalamji arranged for an apartment from them to stay together. Acharyaji tested and questioned Mangalamji from many different angles. Could Mangalamji let go all the attachments and enter in the realm of *diksha*? Finally after three days Chandanaji granted her the permission to take *diksha*. About 20

years back two friends lived together like twins sharing every moment, they studied under the same *guru*, shared their intimate feelings, and both were involved in the nascent stages of Veerayatan. Bhavikaji took *diksha* at a young age to become *Sadhavi Sampragyaji*. Mangalamji took a very different path to *Sadhutva*. This story so far leads us to believe that human life is

driven by destiny, nature of things, time, or past deeds. Is there something that defines human life differently?

The *Diksha* ceremony and the inauguration of Sri Gurudevji memorial *Saptarni* were jointly celebrated

in this ancient Jain bastion Rajgiri in Bihar. The melodious hymns by Mangalamji (still dressed like a *sansaric* bride) not only mesmerized the attendees but made many in the audience realize the purpose of *sadhutava*. With the blessings of Acharya Shri Chandanaji, Mangalamji took *diksha* on December 20, 2011 at Veerayatan, Rajgiri. Thus Mangalamji entered the next phase of her spiritual quest as Sadhvi Sanghamitra. Is there something in this spiritual quest that defines humans a different way?

Jain Center of Northern California was privileged to host the first ever *Badi Diksha* ceremony outside of India. Over 2000 enthusiastic community members with many travelling from different parts of the US and Canada, came together for this unique three day celebration at the JCNC *Bhavan*. The celebration included *bhajans* and musical programs lead by the melodious voice of Sadhvi Sanghamitraji, *raas garba* by community members, *Bhaktamar Paath* lead by Acharya Chandanaji, sermons by Chandanaji and Sanghamitraji, a colorful *diksha vargodha* (including children parade), and various other events. The most

important of all was the historic *Badi Diksha* ceremony of Sadhvi Sanghamitraji by Acharya Chandanaji. Will more members of North American Jain community take up the path of *sadhutva* or stay in the illusionary pleasures of material world?

In the words of Acharya Chandanaji, *diksha* in Jain tradition involves taking the vows of *sadhutva*, and *Badi Diksha*, is a ceremony to validate or confirm the vows. In essence these vows represent a journey to detach from “me” and “mine”, and realize the real “me”. Sadhvi Sanghamitraji in her lecture appositely described “Sadhutva is not about being perfect, but a way to perfection”. Sanghamitraji described her *Purusharth* (human exertion or self-effort) by trying to live



With Guru Acharya Chandanaji

always in the present. Jain thinkers consider the five *Samvays* (destiny, nature of things, time, past deeds – past karmas, and self-effort) that make up the world phenomena surrounding an individual. However, *Purusharth* is the first amongst the five equals and the only one where we have control. And it is this effort of striving to reach perfection that defines the life of Sadhvi Sanghamitra.

Talk by Arvind Vora on Nelson Mandela international Day

Arvind Vora, of JAINA interfaith committee, was one of the five invited to speak on Nelson Mandela international Day - July 18, 2012 at the UN Church Center. Covering the topic “Hope and Promise of Leadership”, Arvindbhai spoke on how Jain values inculcated at early age in Gandhiji bore tremendous fruits for humanity. In his speech he elaborated on different Jain Values and how each of them provided a great impetus for Gandhiji to be a great leader.

For example talking about *Anekantvada*, Arvindbhai said “Grasping the truth or reality, knowing very well the diversity in India, multitude of complexity, Gandhiji displayed calmness and coolness, befitting stoicism of Jain priestly class. He knew the difficulties faced by Britain because of wars in Europe leading into World War II as well

as public sentiments in free world about Imperialism and Colonialism. He won the hearts of intellectuals, rich and powerful by bringing awareness about truth and reality from a different angle that was invisible to them.”

Correlating the concepts of *Ahimsa*, *Aparigraha*, and *Anekantvada* and its direct application in the life and various movements of Gandhiji, he encouraged his audience to study more about Gandhi and understand the true meaning of a leader and leadership qualities.



2013 JAINA Convention Planning Begins at Detroit

Get ready for four days of JAINA Convention packed with diverse programs to engage and excite all ages. Plan to attend JAINA's premier event of 2013 with your entire family to celebrate the past, present and future of Jainism through social and cultural events; reconnect and recharge your spirit from interactions with gurus, acharyas, scholars and friends; and enlighten yourself with inspiring faith-, leadership- and service- focused discussions with business, civic and community leaders and philanthropists who exemplify Jain values.

To create a memorable convention, a 12 member team has been constituted consisting of experienced leaders and enthusiastic volunteers from JAINA and Jain Society of Greater Detroit (JSGD). The JAINA 1st VP, Prem Jain (prejain1@gmail.com) is the Chairman of the board and convener for the 2013 convention. Co-Convener working with Prem Jain is Vastupal B. Shah (vshah44@yahoo.com). Vastupalbhai has been the past President of the JSGD, and Jainesh Mehta of Houston.

A logo design competition was launched in June to solicit logo ideas from the 13,000 Jain families across North America. The attendees of the 2012 YJA Convention were specifically asked to participate in this competition. There has been an amazing response to this competition and the winner's logo will be announced soon. You can see the logo that won on the JAINA.org website or Facebook page JAINA Convention 2013.

There is great enthusiasm in the Jain community of Greater Detroit to participate and make the JAINA Convention 2013 a big success. The huge volunteer pool drawn from the 500 member families of JSGD has already begun work to make 2013 Convention an efficacious and wonderful

experience. To ensure this success they are also collaborating with the Jain Society of Houston volunteers to draw from the successful experience of JAINA Convention in 2011.

The JAINA Convention Board invites Jain Centers in the Midwest and across North America to contact the Co-Conveners to offer ideas, assistance and expertise in planning this mega event. Your ideas are being requested for programming ideas, discussion panels and entertainment in order to help create a convention you want to experience. The Convention is being designed to encourage

attendance by Jains and non-Jains who are interested in the Jain Way of Life.

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for further updates and Convention-related mailings. Early-bird registration will open in November 2012 during Diwali week. For more information about Convention-related developments, visit www.JAINA.org.



The chosen JAINA Convention facility (SCS) in Metro Detroit.



2013 JAINA Convention Board with EC members.

JAINA International Teachers' Conference 2012

-Coordinators: Rajul Vasa, Sailes Jain, & Pravin Shah

Jain Center of Southern California in Los Angeles organized the fourth JAINA International Teachers' Conference on May 26 and May 27, 2012 under the leadership of Sailes Jain and Rajul Vasa. Eighty Pathshala teachers from fifteen centers of United States, Canada and Singapore participated in the conference. All out station participating guests were hosted by teachers and volunteers of Jain Center of Southern California. **The goal of the conference was to design and build a systematic instruction plan which could be used as a guide line to teach Jain religion in the class rooms.**

During the conference, some of the teachers provided a write up on the methods and structure they use for class lessons, while others made presentations on the special teaching methods and techniques they use in their classrooms. It was revealed that the teachers used a variety of teaching aids, like: written material, handouts, power point presentations, internet, and illustrations on white boards and cut outs from various publications to teach their students. Every presentation was unique and came across as an effective tool for teaching religion.

Study material on Religion was reviewed and considered for two basic groups: Group 1 (Level 1 and Level 2) that included children 9-yrs old and younger & Group 2 (level 3 and level 4) that included children 10-yrs and older. The decision, for each group to finish about one hundred lessons of sixty minutes each when the project is completed, was taken. Each lesson would contain teaching material, method, time management,

brief quiz and home work. One entire session was devoted to updating the existing JAINA publications. The Group reviewed publications JES 302 (Principles of Jainism Level 3) and JES 103 (Alphabet book) and will continue to update these two publications, post conference and submit a revised version for the next printing within two months. Jain *Stotra* and *Sutra* group members compiled material that included different sects of Jain religion. This group agreed to collect missing material before finalizing a book/ books for study. A request to all the Jain Centers and individuals of different sects is made to send related material to Sailes Jain at sailesjain@aol.com to enhance the quality of the content of the book.

The language (Hindi and Gujarati) teaching group had the largest attendance and they came up with a format for revised books. They compiled enough material for level 1 (the plan is to have total of four levels) which includes graphics and letters and agreed to continue their work, post conference, to submit the first draft within two months. It was also decided that JAINA Education Director Pravin Shah would bring the book to publication level.

Q&A session was the most popular session in the Conference. Participants freely exchanged ideas and learned from each other. One very important issue that came up during this session was to introduce a special curriculum to teach children with disabilities. Three of the participating teachers shared their experience with their own disabled child. Many teachers came forward to develop special material and program to teach Jain religion





to our children with disabilities.

The conference concluded with a feeling of accomplishment and its success was attributed to teacher participation. This Conference brought together teachers from different centers,

contributing to the implementation and teaching methods. This conference not only resulted in exchange of ideas but also in formation of an active group working together for a common goal.

JAINA Candidates for Legislative Internship and Dharmic Seva Survey Project

JAINA announced the selection of Ambika Pandya and Monika Kothari as members of its inaugural class of summer interns – one intern will undergo training on important legislative functions on Capitol Hill, and the other will lead a special project to study and document the *dharmic seva* contributions of North American Jains to their respective local and global communities. The internships provide a competitive cash stipend, and JAINA's Executive Committee will closely monitor the outcomes. JAINA hereby appeals to the leadership of each Center to cooperate and support this important study with their timely and detailed responses when they are contacted.

Dr. Sushil Jain, President of JAINA stated, "From the early Jain professional migrants in the 1960s, our community now has grown, prospered and matured with the third generation Jains taking center stage. To assure the sustainability of Jain Way of Life in North America we must nurture our youth to become more involved and engaged in the community and legislative landscapes and promote awareness of our core values, such as non-violence, compassion, tolerance of multiple viewpoints, vegetarianism and ecological balance".

Based on their strong credentials and their aspirations to make a difference in society, two impressive young adults were selected from a highly competitive pool of applicants. Ambika Pandya, 20, of Staten Island, New York is a rising junior at New York University, studying Economics

with a minor in Business and an interest in business law. She has been active at the Jain Center of America in New York for several years as a volunteer, translator, and participant in religious classes and cultural programs. This summer, Ambika, will spend six weeks in Washington D.C., rotating under the mentorship of experienced officials at the American Jewish Committee (AJC), which has entered into a unique partnership with JAINA to offer this specialized training. The AJC is the Jewish community's global advocacy organization and has previously co-organized two Legislative conferences with JAINA on Peace, Harmony and Non-Violence (October 2009 and March



Ambika Pandya

2012). These conferences attracted many leading legislators and federal agency officials who are now more aware of Jain beliefs and Jain Way of Life. Ambika told that she accepted the JAINA internship offer because it would allow her to use her education and her Jain ideals and principles with her interest in international relations and public outreach. She hopes to gain experience in these fields through managing, assisting, and coordinating events and programs with her supervisors.

Monika Kothari, 21, of Canton, Michigan began studying at *Pathshala* at the Jain Center of Detroit at 8 years of age. At present she is a senior at Michigan State University (awarded the university's Alumni Distinguished Scholarship),



Monika Kothari

pursuing a dual major in Anthropology and Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy. Last summer she interned with State Voices, a national organization that promotes civic



engagement and policy research. This summer she is interning with APIA Vote-Michigan, a nonprofit organization that advocates for the rights and interests of Asian Americans. She plans to apply to law school in Fall. Monika will serve as a part-time Special Projects Intern under the mentorship of Dr. Manish Mehta (JAINA Midwest Regional Vice-President) to help document the community involvement and *dharmic seva*-based service, charitable and outreach activities of Jain societies and youth groups across the United States and Canada. She will specifically conduct an online and telephonic survey by contacting all local Jain center leaders and JAINA Directors, to gather information about their local Jain centers' service projects which could benefit both domestic and international population (e.g., *Jivedaya*, disaster relief, volunteering at shelters and nursing homes, etc.). The results of the survey will be

compiled and published this Fall in a compendium that will be shared with all the Jain centers, and forwarded to senior federal officials, elected representatives, the White House and United Nations. Jain centers are encouraged to prepare posters and presentations at the next JAINA Convention to be held in Detroit, July 4-7, 2013. Monika hopes that her contribution to this publication will not only give her greater appreciation for Jain involvement in public life, but also introduce non-Jains to Jain values and activism.

JAINA expects to continue this program and collaboration annually with the AJC, and encourages interested college students and recent graduates to apply next year.

JAINA Extends Its International Outreach

The Executive members of JAINA decided to expand its reach and services globally in its convention held in Houston. So a series of summits termed as **Jain Leadership Summits** with the title "Empowering the Underprivileged" were planned in USA, Europe and India. A large number of influential Jains attended the first two summits organized in Mumbai and Delhi in the month of January. 60 influential philanthropists attended Mumbai Summit. The Delhi summit was a two day affair: 150 influential Jains across India attended the first day and 70 participated in the technical sessions the following day.

Activities initiated after summits in Mumbai and Delhi

- 1) Appointment of a full time executive in India. Mr. Sahil Narang, young MBA, was appointed on Feb 13 to work full time for JAINA projects in India.
- 2) Work related to preparing DATABASE of prominent Jains and Jain institutions involved in social service like healthcare, education, employment generation and philanthropic

activities associated with these areas has been developed. Around 100 Jain NGO's, 200 other NGO's and 500 Funding agencies over the globe have also been listed in the database.

- 3) Setting up an Indian organization dedicated to JAINA activities is being incorporated as a non-profit society in New Delhi. Shri P.S. Surana,

eminent corporate lawyer from Chennai, will be soon getting this society incorporated with headquarters in New Delhi.

- 4) Pilot projects:
 - a) Upgrade H L Jain Senior Secondary School in Delhi, a 120 years old school with list of prestigious alumni is being assisted to upgrade its

education delivery system. The number of steps initiated includes upgrading physical facilities, training and motivating the teachers and orienting management. Dr. Shugan Jain is leading this initiative on behalf of JAINA. Since the inception of JAINA in the school, it has seen major changes ranging from changes in infrastructure to the teaching skills of teachers.

- b) Employment generation in Bundelkhand: JAINA is working with Shri Vijay Jain and Shri Nirnajan Juva of Ahmedabad to enrich the





education standards of Jain children in villages of Bundelkhand and to also organize camps to attract and train Jain youth so that they can be gainfully employed. A series of camps have been organized and several Associate village teachers have been appointed to guide the Jain children and youth in the area.

- c) Supporting foreign students with logistical matters during their visit to International Summer School for Jain Studies.
- 5) Updating JAINA website and information dissemination activities are being coordinated from India office.
- 6) Activities in USA to support India operations –
 - a) Delegates from Jain NGO's in India attended Legislative conference at U.S. Capitol. Congressmen and their executive staff members attended this conference.
 - b) JAINA as UN consultant and affiliated NGO's were invited by U.S. State department to attend G8 summit for discussion on

eradication of poverty and strengthening primary education in developing nations.

- c) JAINA Scholarship program for the needy students in USA is in full swing. JAINA Scholarship committee is in final selection of needy and deserving students.
- 7) JAINA leaders are in the process of interviewing professional grant writers for joint projects between USA and India.

Planned Activities

1. Holding summits in Chennai (Aug 12th) and Bengaluru (August 13th). You are requested to send suggestions and mark these dates for joining us.
2. JAINA is in the process of incorporating project office in India and initiate fund raising and some projects. You are requested to send your suggestions and ways you wish to get associated with its operations in expanding the operations throughout India.

JAINA Academic Scholarship Program (JASP) Awards

The Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA) is pleased to announce the selection of five recipients of the JAINA Academic Scholarship Award for the 2012-2013 academic year. This is JAINA's first batch of scholarship recipients, and the organization was very impressed with the high academic caliber of the candidates who expressed interest in the award.

The selected candidates for this year's JASP awards are; Mitali Shah of Schaumburg, IL to attend Loyola University, Naisargi Shah of North York, Ontario to attend Ryerson University, Neha Jain, of Westborough, MA to attend Rochester Institute of Technology, Raj Shah of Commerce, GA to attend University of Georgia and Tirth Shah of Commerce, GA to attend University of Georgia.

The mission of JASP program is to motivate, identify, and provide financial aid to practicing Jain students who will pursue bachelor's degrees at accredited universities across North America, and who have a demonstrated financial need. This

program is conducted under the guidance of JASP committee members Udai Jain, Dr. Tansukh Salgia, Yogendra Jain, and Mehool Kakabalia. The program was launched in April of 2012 and has received substantial support from directors at various Jain Centers throughout North America. A variety of young people with diverse background and interest submitted their scholarship applications both online and by mail.

A panel of four members, comprising of Mehool Kakabalia, Himanshu Ajmera, Amar Salgia, and Tanvi Daga, evaluated each application based on predetermined selection criteria. The five scholarship recipients were selected from a wide and talented pool of applicants after undergoing a rigorous review process. JAINA is proud to recognize and reward these hardworking young people in the Jain community. We will continue and expand this scholarship program on an annual basis for accepted university students with financial need, and strongly encourage eligible candidates to apply in the future.

Draupadi - An Awe-inspiring and Impassioned Play

Human societies have always used Drama as an important media for entertainment, storytelling, but above all for delivering important messages.



Studies have shown that a live drama with a stirring script, powerful but realistic acting, proper set-up, and great direction can leave a lasting impression on a human brain. Pondering over many ideas to deliver a message on "Empowerment of Women", Samani Sanmati Pragya at JVBNA laid down the plan of conveying the message through a Draupadi play. However, for this impression, to be pronounced, the drama needs a soul of its own. The drama should move audience into the *time-space* of the act performed on the stage. For a drama to depict the multifaceted characteristics of the feminine spirit was not an easy task.

Seeking assistance of Mr. Ashwini Sakhamitra of Studio ABCD, Samani Sanmati Pragya, and Samani Jayant Pragya undertook a plan of putting together this historic play. Guided by Samanijis and under the direction of Aswaniji a combined team of more than 125 volunteers from both US and India worked tirelessly for several months to prepare and present this grand show. The lead character of princess Draupadi was played by popular TV, film and theatre artist Upasana Singh from India and a team of more than forty local cast members



Draupadi – The Feminine Spirit

Draupadi the princess, the sensuous unparalleled beauty, the graceful queen, dutiful wife, resolute in her beliefs, icon of human spirit, embodiment of female virtue, the iron willed, the valorous - second to none, is the unforgettable heroine and a **mahasati** in Jain Mythology. Her fiery personality sometimes revealed her anger and vengeance on those who intended any harm to her. However, it is her ultimate commitment to her feminine self, not deviating from human values in the most compelling circumstances, introspecting and realizing one's own folly, and finally selecting the path of renunciation that defined her unique female character.

and volunteers from JVBNA. . The audio and music track was created and produced by Studio ABCD, India involving professional artists and composers from the industry. The historical ambience was created by periodic costumes and meticulously designed backdrops all designed specifically for this show under the guidance of Studio ABCD.

The effort of this hard work came to fruition on May 19th, 2012 at Union County Performing Arts Center, Rahway, NJ. Jain Vishwa Bharti of North America, JVBNA - a non-profit organization based in NJ in association with Timeless Mahatma Trust, Mumbai presented a play "DRAUPADI" in Hindi. The sold out performance was attended by an audience of over 1200 from the tri-state area. The tireless efforts of

the chairman Mr. Surendra Kankariya, the entire JVBNA BOD, the president Mr. Ramesh Parmar, the entire JVBNA EC and all the JVBNA volunteers could be seen in the production of this play. The event was covered by TV Asia and the South Asia Times, the media sponsors of this play. Many other dignitaries including leaders of



the Jain and other community organizations from the tri-state area were present at the event.

When a four year old starts questioning his parents about the intricacies of the act, a seven year old asks probing questions, and a 13 year old starts reading about Indian mythology, one knows that drama had the desired effect. The mesmerizing event was highly appreciated by the entire audience. JVBNA continues to receive call

"Now we all have a pat of success on our back, and looking retrospectively, I believe it was not only the performance of the cast that matters the most, it was the concept, script, audio, music, costume, make up and meticulously designed backdrops created the entire ambience to tell the story and mesmerize the audience. I believe we all owe this success to the vision of samanijis and our director from Studio ABCD-Ashwiniji by having faith in amateurs like us and preparing us work with professional artist, Upasna Singh."

-Sunil Mehta, (acted as Duryodhan in the Play)

or emails of praise from various members in the audience.

Such dramas are one in thousand, not because they are mesmerizing, but because it awakens that inner-self to remove some of our ingrained prejudices.

Mangalam: The Jain TV Show by JAINA

Media Production Committee was formed in 2006 with an objective to present Jain Religion in an unbiased, non-sectarian way and to showcase the unity of Jains in North America through the medium of television. Giving special attention to the community youth, "Mangalam Jain TV Show" was launched in 2007 as a weekly broadcast program. It has given the Jains of North America an important presence in the media. With its early success in US, Mangalam is now aired in Canada, UK, Ireland and Europe in both Hindi and English language. In the topics ranging from the basic Jain principles to somewhat complex Karma theory, the emphasis has always been on practical applications of Jain principles in daily life.

Besides regular lectures on Jain principles and Jain way of life, special programs on Jain Center Pratishtha Mahotsav, Ashtapad Pratishtha Mahotsav, JAINA and YJA conventions, interfaith conferences, and visit with world religious leaders like Pope and Dalai Lama have also been aired. Programs have covered a wide range of topics including Jain education, social work done by Jain organizations, multi-episode series on *Bhaktamer Stotra*, *Samavasaran*, and *Mahaveer Janma*

kalyanak celebrations, Jain Cooking, Jain news, Jain meditation and Jain yoga techniques.

Mangalam gave a good platform to the youth in Jain community. Youth perspectives on Jain religion were presented in their interviews and performances. With the youth presenting Jain art, music and musical performances, the Mangalam team has been successful in producing an Audio CD called "Mangalam".

Keep watching MANGALAM, "Be Proud of It, Be a Part of It"

Mangalam team requests community members to be a part of its endeavor by making a small contribution. For details go to www.mangalamshow.com, or mail suggestions to mangalamshow@gmail.com.

Team: Producer/Director: Dr. Mamta Shah, Art Director: Shefali Ajmera, News director: Dipti Mehta, Web Managers: Manish Shah & Rajat Jain, Technical director: Sandip Mehta, Hosts: Mamta Shah & Rushab Mehta. The National team covering all geographical area includes, Anurag Jain, Chetan Shah, Soumin Mehta, Sunil Vora, Ashish Bhandari, and Prakash Mody.

Shree Shatrunjay Mahatirth 99 Yatra 2011

The 99 Yatra 2011 was organized at one of the holiest places in Jain tradition, the Shree Shatrunjay Mahatirth in Palitana City, India. This was a historic event as this was the first time Jains from North America (as a group) visited to India to complete this auspicious activity. The yatra was attended by 12 persons from India and 60 individuals from North America.

The Shree Shatrunjay Mahatirth 99 Yatra 2011 was performed under the guidance of Acharya Shree Yashovijaysuriji Maharaj and Acharya Shree Vijay Kalaprabhasuriji Maharaj. As a support to these Acharya Bhagwants, The 99 Yatra activities were conducted under the direction of, Shree Purnachandravijayji Maharaj, Shree Purnarakshitvijaiji Maharaj and other Sadhviji Maharajs.

The day to day activities of the 99 Yatra 2011 were performed by Shree Narendrabhai Nandu and his team. The organizers worked tirelessly to ensure that each yatra attendee could take part in *Prabhu Bhakti* for the entire yatra. As per the 99 Yatra requirements, all Yatra attendees were able to perform various religious ceremonies at *Dodh Gaon, Tran Gaon, Chha Gaon Yatra, and Nav*

Tuk. The yatris were also able to visit Shri Shatrunjay Dam Temple, Shri Bhandriya Tirth, Shri Kadamgiri Tirth, Shri Hastagiri Tirth and various other religious places.

Acharya Vijay Kalaprabhasuriji mentioned in his first motivating lecture that he was very surprised by the interest that North American Jains had

taken in returning to one of the holiest places in Jain religion. He pointed out that this is a testament to how important all of the 99 Yatra attendees view Shree Shatrunjay Mahatirth and, more importantly, the Jain religion. Acharya Bhagwant concluded his first lecture by saying this truly is Bhagwan's influence

on the mindset of the yatra attendees.

A significant part of the yatri's day happened during the evening when Acharya Bhagwant would deliver an enlightening lecture. Also, during the evening program each yatri had the opportunity, through a lottery system, to perform *Aarti* and *Mangal Divo*. The 99 Yatra events reached a climax on December 24 and 25. The *Mala Ropan* and the *Yatri Bahuman* was a way to celebrate all of the yatris' accomplishments by completing a historical set of pious activities.

All 99 Yatra attendees felt that this had been the





most memorable and historic event in their lives. This Yatra couldn't have been completed without the blessings from Adeshvar Bhagwan. Each *yatri* was thankful to the Yatra Chairman Arvind R. Shah and his team members for their tireless efforts to put together such a major once-in-a-lifetime event.

Through all of the positive energy received by the Acharya Bhagwants, Narendrabhai Nandu informed all 99 Yatra attendees that 34 *yatris* were able to complete a *chhath* with seven *yatras* in two days. This truly is a proof of the strength that Adeshvar Bhagwan and the Shree Shatrunjay Mahatirth can provide followers of the Jain religion.

As news spread to all of the United States Jain centers about the unforgettable *Shree Shatrunjay Mahatirth 99 Yatra* event, many members felt they had missed out on a wonderful opportunity. But with the support of JAINA, another *Shree Shatrunjay Mahatirth 99 Yatra* Yatra has been planned for 2013. The tentative dates for this event are November 17, 2013 through January 17, 2014. Please mark your calendars and make sure you do not miss this unique opportunity.

For more information contact Arvind R. Shah (99-Yatra Chairman), Tele: (248)-828-1736, Email: ashah_1941@yahoo.com

Florida International University confers Honorary Doctorate degree on Dr. Dipak Jain

Dr. Dipak Jain, Chairman, Jain Education and Research Foundation (JERF), was honored with an Honorary Doctorate degree by the Florida International University (FIU). Dr. Jain played a significant role in the establishment of Bhagwan Mahavir Professorship of Jain Studies at the FIU. This rare honor, which had been earlier conferred on luminaries such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama and former Israeli president Yitzhak Navon, is presented to men and women who represent the ideals and purposes for which the University stands. The degree was conferred during the spring commencement of the University on April 30, 2012. Born in Tezpur, India, Dr. Jain is a well-known expert in the field of Marketing. He was Dean of the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University from 2000 to 2009 and is presently Dean at INSEAD, Paris, France.

The activities at FIU were initiated by Samanijis under the guidance of Acharya Mahashramanji. Since 2006, Samani Charitaya Pragma and Samani Unnat

Pragma have been conducting courses on Jain philosophy and inspiring students towards Jain way of life at FIU. In 2009, Samani Charitaya Pragma approached various community members to strengthen the relationship with FIU and establish a permanent seat for Jain studies there (FIU). This active effort resulted in getting support from various community members, many of them currently continue to serve on the JERF board. A history making milestone was accomplished in 2010 by establishing a Bhagawan

Mahavir Professorship of Jain Studies at Religious Studies Department of FIU. Subsequently, JERF was launched whose Board members include; Dr. Dipak Jain - IL, Sapan Bafna - FL, Prem Jain – CA, Dr. Nirmal Baid – CA, Ramesh Parmar – NJ, Kamlesh Shah – FL, Dr. Kirti Jain - KY, Shashi Jain - FL, Bipin Shah – CA, and Jainendra Navlakha - FL. The executive committee is headed by Dr. Neptune Srimal. Currently, Samani Chaitanya Pragma and Samani

Unnat Pragma continue to conduct courses on Jain



President Mark Rosenberg with Prof Dipak Jain



Mark Rosenberg with Samani Chaitanya Pragma and Samani Unnat Pragma



philosophy, provide spiritual guidance, and conduct valuable first-of-its-kind research on Preksha Meditation.

Preksha Meditation Research Project at FIU

Pilot Research Study of Preksha Meditation was undertaken by Samaniji at FIU. The research was to analyze the impact of Preksha Meditation on the cognitive ability of Students with learning disability and those without learning disability. Students meditated for a month, three days a week and enjoyed the experience. In this feasibility research, pre and post-test were done, which showed that both groups were equally receptive to the meditation practice.

Latika & Rajiv Jain Fellowship in Religious Studies/ Jain Studies at FIU

Candidates are sought for a two-year graduate fellowship to be awarded to a highly qualified and motivated student in Religious Studies with a

concentration in Jain Studies. Candidates should have a B.A. (all fields will be considered), an undergraduate GPA higher than 3.5, and meet university requirements for admission. The fellowship will cover tuition, fees and stipend for two academic years and the intervening summer. Study or research in India is possible. It is expected that the holder of this fellowship will pursue an M.A. thesis in Jain studies.

Deadline for applications is March 1, 2013, and the fellowship will be tenable from August 2013.

Please address questions to:

Dr. Nathan Katz, Bhagwan Mahavir Professor of Jain Studies, Department of Religious Studies, Florida International University, Miami FL 33199 (U.S.A.). For information about the Master's Degree in Religious Studies, and to apply, go to <http://casgroup.fiu.edu/religion/pages.php?id=162>

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Claremont University Inaugurates Jain Studies program

-Brianna Donaldson, Coordinator, Dharma Traditions

In 2011, Claremont Lincoln University inaugurated its Jain Studies program, partnering with the International School for Jain Studies (ISJS), the Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA), and the Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC). In the first quarter, they made remarkable strides together. Seven students from Claremont went to India this summer to take part in the ISJS summer education program. Prior to their departure, these students, along with six others, visited the Jain Center of Southern California to participate in *puja* and *aarti*.

Additionally, a group of students began digital recording of existing Jain lectures to create an online resource for Jains and scholars of Jainism around the world. Over 100 books were generously donated to the university library to increase the Jain holdings. The first International Jain Conference on Bioethics will also be held at Claremont in August 24-25 2012, and the first course, "Applied Jainism: Bioethics among the Dharma Traditions," will be taught in Fall 2012. Many of these actions were made possible by a grant that was awarded by the prestigious Uberoi Foundation in order to grow the Jain Studies Dear Program and a generous gift from Gurudev and

Pramoda Chitrabahnu of Jain Meditation International Center.

Finally, Claremont Lincoln is launching a major research project into the experience of Jains during the 1947 Partition of India and Pakistan. Currently they are attempting to raise \$22,000 for the first phase of the project. To date, they have a commitment of approximately \$10,000 from individuals in India and the U.S. and are waiting to hear back from other grant sources. Please visit <http://jain.claremontlincoln.org/> to learn more about what's happening. We welcome your feedback and support.

Bioethics: Religious and Spiritual Approaches, a 2012 Claremont International Jain Conference.

August 24-25, 2012

For questions, please contact lidiya.potapenko@cst.edu

The JAINA Calendar – 1500++ Man-Hours of Commitment.

The JAINA Calendar & Mini Library Committee was formed in 1999 by Ex JAINA President, Dr. Mahendra K. Pandya and first Calendar was published in the year 2000. The Goal of this Committee is to produce an exquisitely designed Calendar, present Jain values and heritage, brand JAINA in the minds of the community members, and freely distribute the calendar to all the JAINA Members throughout North America and other parts of the world.

The first JAINA 2000 Calendar was distributed to over 8,500 families. JAINA Calendar Committee has distributed over 130,000 Calendars and received over \$710,000 in donations since the year 2000. In 2012 alone, the calendar was distributed to over 14,250 Families.

JAINA Calendar Production Process involves multiple functions and expertise. The JAINA Calendar Committee comprises of about 10 volunteers. It takes about 4 months to produce each Calendar and involves over 15 people in 5 cities and over 1,500 Man-Hours. Some of the functions involved are: Design, Layout & Production of Calendar, Temple Photography & Write-Up, Dates, Holidays & Tithis, JAINA Write-up & Committees, Printing & Packaging and Distribution, and Fund Raising & Collection of funds.

JAINA Calendar Committee is pleased to announce the upcoming launch of the JAINA Tirth Yatra Temple Book. This beautiful, extensive, hardbound, pictorial book lays out a guided tour of over forty historically and architecturally significant Jain Temples spread geographically throughout India detailing various features of each Temple via images and accompanied text. This 275+ page book provides an excellent opportunity to learn about the architectural features, historical significance and geographical locations of these important Jain Temples. This book is laid out as a convenient tour guide companion for those who want to learn about the heritage of Jain temples. This unique and informative Temple Book not only serves as a great addition to your family's living room or library book collection, but it also makes for a magnificent gift for any special occasion! The JAINA Tirth Yatra Temple Book is available for pre-ordering on www.jainatemples.org – (all information and a general overview about the book is available on this website).

To fund the free distribution of the annual JAINA Calendar, do not forget to donate (no donation fund is used to cover the donation time or travel expenses). Work on the 2013 JAINA Calendar has already started. For more information please contact Ms. Ambika Pandya at 718.816.0083 or visit www.Jainatemples.org.

Award Presented to Pravin K. Shah by JSCNC



Shri Pravin K. Shah, a renowned promoter of Jainism at national and international level, was awarded the first ever Jain Study Center of NC's **Life Time Achievement Award**, during Mahavir Jayanti, 2012. He was recognized for his dedicated service (of many decades), undertaking and finishing countless projects and initiatives focused on Jain education for the youth across many countries in the world. He is also the founding member of the Jain Study Center of NC, which started in 1979.

The award was presented by Sadhavi Shubhamji of Veerayatan in front of many local leaders including founders and current President of the Hindu Society of NC, and the Jain membership at large.

Community Celebrations



Mount Girnar - Neminath Temple - Gujarat

A picture from the JAINA Tirth Yatra Temple Book, published by the JAINA Calendar & Mini Library Committee



Pratihtha Mahotasav - Franklin Township, NJ



Badi Diksha Vargodha scene in Northern California



White House Conference on Dharmic Seva - Members of Different Asian Religious Faiths (Dharmic Faiths)

