

INDO-AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Winter 2021/2022 Edition



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SAVE THE DATE

IAPA Annual Meeting on May 22nd 2022

will take place along with the APA annual meeting in New Orleans featuring a daytime scientific session and evening banquet

Scientific session includes a poster competition, Academic Awardee's presentation, and other mind stimulating presentations

Evening banquet will feature traditional Indian dinner and entertainment.

Time and Place: check myiapa.org for updates

THANK YOU!

IAPA thanks our newsletter editor, Dr. Rahul Malhotra, who is stepping down as editor of the IAPA newsletter.

A big thank you and best wishes to Rahul!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear IAPA members and friends,

It is my honor and pleasure to serve as President of our Indo-American Psychiatric Association (IAPA) for the term October 2021-2023.

As you may know, IAPA was established in 1979 by six psychiatrists of Indian origin and has now grown to a membership of over one thousand. Today, psychiatrists of Indian origin comprise almost twenty percent of close to thirty thousand psychiatrists in the United States, and we continue to make remarkable contributions to the behavioral health field. It is my privilege to be part of such an outstanding group and to serve as President of IAPA.

With your ongoing support, I intend to continue working towards ensuring that IAPA's mission and goals are maintained and accomplished. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected communities and individuals in unimaginable ways, and many chapters have become dormant. I will work to revitalize chapters, support the creation of new IAPA chapters, expand IAPA membership, and increase member involvement in the organization. I hope to initiate dialogue about disparities in behavioral health care and to raise awareness of the inequalities that many racial and ethnic groups face. Through our mentorship program, IAPA will strive to support our younger colleagues towards accomplishing their goals. As one of the largest affinity groups, IAPA will continue to maintain and strengthen our alliances with the American Psychiatric Association (APA), Indian Psychiatric Society (IPS), and other professional groups.

With the help of our highly accomplished team of leaders and with the guidance of our Board of Trustees, I am confident that we can accomplish a great deal. I also look forward to hearing about any suggestions, concerns, and new ideas that can make our organization stronger and greater. It has been a long time since we have been able to meet in person, and I hope to see you all at our annual meeting in New Orleans in May 2022!

Sincerely,

Bhagi Sahasranaman, MD, DLFAPA, DFAACAP

President, IAPA

2021 IAPA Award Recipients



2021 IAPA Outstanding Academician Award

**Niranjan S Karnik,
MD, PhD**

Dr. Karnik is the Cynthia Oudejans Harris, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences and Associate Dean for Community Behavioral Health at Rush Medical College with conjoint faculty appointments in the Graduate College and the Department of Community, Systems and Mental Health Nursing at the Rush College of Nursing. He also serves as Director of the Great Lakes Node of the National Drug Abuse Treatment Clinical Trials Network and is the Co-Director of the Rush-University of Chicago Institute for Translational Medicine KL2 Career Development Award Program. His research focuses on data science, technology and community-based interventions for vulnerable populations with psychiatric and substance use disorders. In the past, he has worked with refugee children on the Pakistan-Afghan border, street children in India, foster youth in Central Illinois, and incarcerated youth in California. He worked at a youth homeless shelter in San Francisco and is continuing this work with homeless youth in Chicago.

He is presently a PI or Co-PI on grants from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, and Illinois Department of Human Services. He is a Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and Distinguished Fellow of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry.



2021 IAPA Outstanding Service Award

**Rama Rao Gogineni,
MD**

Dr. Gogineni is a board-certified child and adolescent psychiatrist who received his MD from Osmania University, trained in adult psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, and completed fellowship in child and adolescent psychiatry at Medical College of Pennsylvania. He trained in family therapy at the Family Institute of Philadelphia and in psychoanalysis at the Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia.

He is well known, well loved, and active in Philadelphia and New Jersey. Academically, he is active in academic activities of the Indo-American Psychiatric Association, American Psychiatric Association, AACAP, Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, and the American Psychoanalytic Association. He is a professor of psychiatry and the head of child and adolescent psychiatry at Cooper University. He has published and presented widely on culture, neurodevelopmental disorders, fatherhood, trauma, immigration and related issues.

It is legend how many meetings Dr. Gogineni has hosted. He has been key to keeping the Philadelphia chapter of IAPA alive and very active. He is a tireless advocate locally and nationally for psychiatry, child psychiatry, and for international medical graduates.



**2021 IAPA
Outstanding Resident
Award**

**Zeeshan Mansuri,
MD, MPH**

Dr. Mansuri is currently a Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellow at Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School, where he also serves as the Chief Fellow for Education and Research. He completed his medical school in India followed by a Master's in Public Health specializing in Epidemiology and Biostatistics from Drexel University. He followed this with a General Psychiatry Residency at Texas Tech University.

He is passionate about mentoring medical students and residents using social media and has mentored more than 100 students through a Facebook group he created, that now has more than 125,000 students all over the world. He also created a website called humansofusmle.org to bring out inspiring stories and life lessons about physicians who go through the journey of USMLE.

He has also created collaborative research groups where medical students and International Medical Graduates can work directly with faculty and Program Directors. He is currently researching the impact of psychiatric diseases on hospital outcomes for medical diseases by using nationally representative large datasets. He is deeply interested in Interventional Psychiatry, specifically Ketamine, Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation, and Electroconvulsive Therapy.



**2021 IAPA
Outstanding Public
Sector Psychiatry
Award**

**Vasudev N.
Makhija, MD,
DLFAPA**

Dr. Makhija is a Diplomate, American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and Distinguished Fellow, American Psychiatric Association. He has been in private practice in adult psychiatry in New Jersey for over 25 years. He is the Founder and President of SAMHIN, South Asian Mental Health Initiative and Network, a non-profit organization. In 2010 Dr. Makhija received an Exemplary Psychiatrist Award from National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

Dr. Makhija is the Past-President of New Jersey Psychiatric Association, Chair of Council on Member Services (2013-2017), and served as Chair of the Program and Awards Committee of NJPA (2006 – 2010). He is a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Seton Hall University School of Graduate Medical Education. Dr. Makhija served on the Union County Mental Health Board for six years until March 2013 (Chair 2011 – 2013). He is a recipient of Golden Merit Award for his contributions to NJPA.

Dr. Makhija serves as Clinical Supervisor of Jana Raksha Community Care Program, a volunteer-run program of Arsha Bodha Center in Somerset, NJ. Arsha Bodha Center is an ashram dedicated to the traditional teaching of Sanskrit, meditation, Vedanta, Bhagavad Gita, and spiritual practices. Jana Raksha Community Care Program is a spiritually-based free support program for the community.

NOMINATE: 2022 IAPA OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Due February 15, 2022

Seeking IAPA Award Nominations – Due February 15, 2022

Every year, the IAPA honors outstanding Indian-American psychiatrists residing and practicing in the United States for their contributions to field of mental health field. Please review the requirements and criteria to nominate someone you know:

Requirements: The nominee:

- Should be a life member of IAPA prior to deadline date of nomination (for Resident Award should be active and registered RFM **prior** to deadline date of nomination).
- Should be a physician licensed to practice medicine in the United States.
- Should be a physician in good standing.
- Should not be a previous recipient of IAPA award (**exception** being recipients of the outstanding resident award).
- Should be willing to travel at his/her expense to attend the IAPA annual meeting.
- The Outstanding Academician awardee should also be willing to present at the scientific meeting.

Exclusion Criteria:

- The nominee is a prior recipient of an IAPA award (except the outstanding resident award).
- The nominee is an IAPA officer and member of the current leadership [Executive Committee members; Board of Trustees (BOT), or Councilors. These names can be found on the website under About Us > Governance > Officers & Committees].
- Self-nomination: IAPA awards are given to members recognized as ‘outstanding’ by their peers & colleagues. Self-nomination is not allowed for individual awards. For Chapter award, the chapter members or chapter president can nominate their own chapter.

Guidelines for submitting nominations

Required Information:

- Name and Contact Information of the Nominating Person
- Name, address, and contact information of Nominee
- Type of award the nomination is for
- Brief Description of Nominee’s outstanding work can be in the body of the email
- Recent C.V. of the nominee

Description of awards

Outstanding Academician Award: Given to an IAPA life member who has made noteworthy academic contributions to the mental health field that is evident through research, teaching and administrative activities.

Outstanding Service Award: Given to an IAPA life member who has made significant contributions to the growth and development of the national organization (IAPA) or a local chapter of IAPA.

Outstanding Resident Award: Given to Registered active RFM member of IAPA who is of Indian (country) heritage. A letter from program director or a faculty member at the resident’s institution is required commenting on abilities of applicant in the following areas: Outstanding leadership skills; Professionalism; Heightened cultural awareness in mental health; Clinical/Psychiatric Knowledge; Strong role model and mentorship ability and Scholarly activity.

Outstanding Chapter Award:

Given to a chapter based on the (a) number of meetings in a given year (b) initiatives and contributions in its respective region and (c) number of new members.

Submission:

For all awards nominations, please send the nominating letter and nominee’s CV electronically by February 15, 2022 to:

Dr. Tanuja Gandhi drtanujagandhi@gmail.com, and copy IAPA president Dr. Bhagi Sahasranaman at sahasru@gmail.com

IAPA CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT: GEORGIA CHAPTER



Established in 2005, Georgia (GA) chapter has strived to be the most active and vibrant chapter of IAPA. Current Georgia chapter president Dr. Arun Munjal has taken chapter activities to a higher level despite the Covid -19 pandemic. Georgia chapter was able to restart in-person chapter meetings in April/May 2021, keeping state guidelines in mind.



The highlight of 2021 was to have the Annual/Diwali Meeting on November 20th. Planning involved many hours of preparation by Dr. Arun Munjal and his wife, Dr. Dipti Munjal; a team of past presidents of the GA chapter; and other senior chapter members. The meeting started at 4:30 PM, and included visits to exhibit booths, educational talks, and addresses by Dr. Munjal, Dr. Dilip Patel, and current IAPA President Dr. Bhagirathy Sahasranaman. Dr. Munjal recognized the contribution of life members from Georgia who have passed away in the last three years. Young and vibrant Georgia IAPA member Dr. Munjal Shroff did an excellent job as Master of Ceremonies (MC).



While enjoying a tasty dinner, the audience enjoyed the entertainment program, which included a live band performance by World Music USA Inc.; an excellent dance performance by Dr. Priyanka Patel and her young daughter; and singing by Dr. Yogesh Goswami. The night concluded with guests doing Garba and leaving with a package of delicious Diwali sweets.



Pictured left to right: Dr. Suneel Katragadda (GA chapter), Dr. Arun Munjal (GA chapter president), Dr. Bhagi Sahasranaman (IAPA president), Dr. Dilipkumar Patel (IAPA board member and past IAPA president), Dr. Mahavir Vakharia (GA chapter).

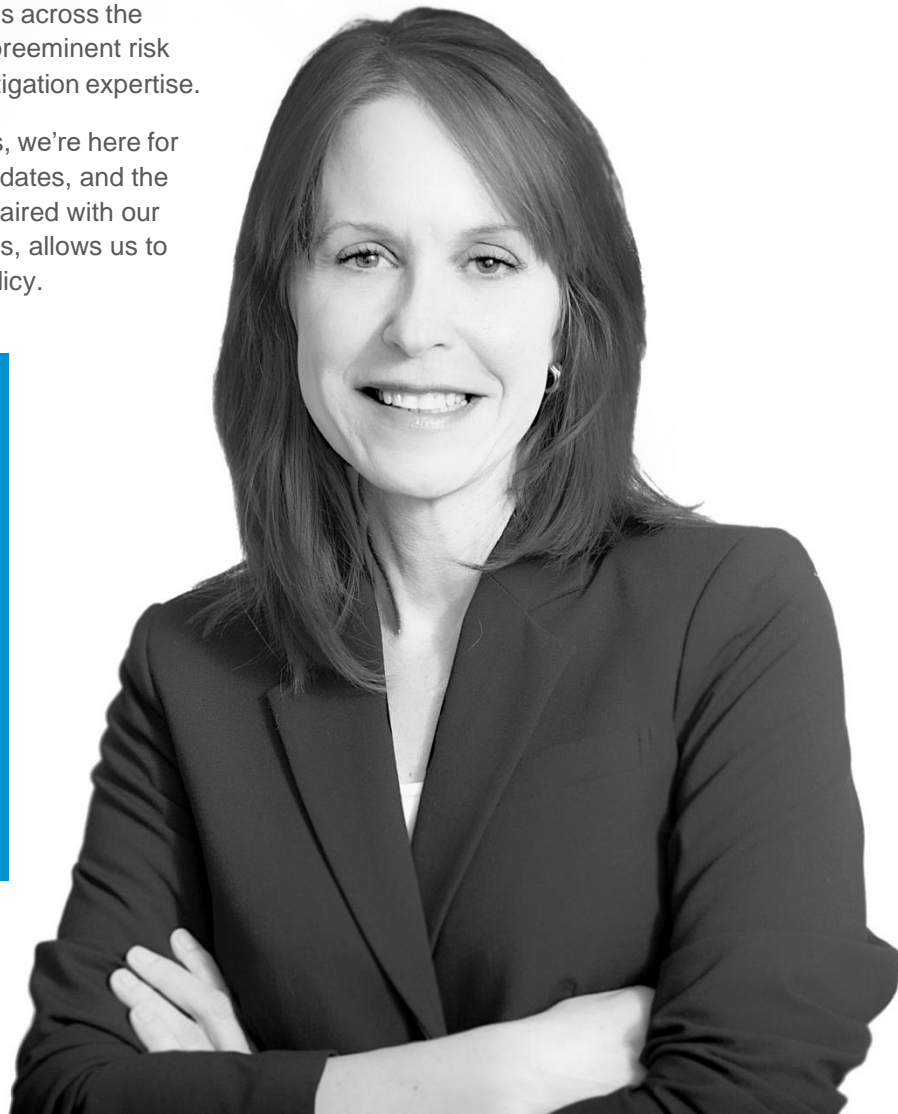
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Risk Management Resolutions for the New Year

Written by

Professional Risk Management Services® (PRMS®)

It's that time of year again – the time when we take stock and reflect upon where we have been and where we are headed. Physically, you may have traveled far less in the last 21 months than ever before, but you have, nonetheless, been on quite a journey!

Many of you have likely made changes to the way you practice. You may have decided to give up the expense and hassle of working in an office in favor of practicing telemedicine from your home. You may have elected to cut back on your hours or to close your practice entirely and join a group. You may have realized that there are particular conditions you have a special interest in treating or types of patients and situations you want to avoid going forward. Even if you haven't made dramatic changes yourself, you've no doubt been reminded of the unpredictability of life and practice.

This 2022, here are a few New Year's Resolutions from PRMS Risk Management to consider:

- 1. Get control of your charts.** Those who have temporarily given up office space or relocated completely may have been forced to make hasty arrangements for their charts. If you've left part of them behind as you work out of a temporary space, or have boxes stuck in your basement, now is the time to get a handle on them. Make sure you know where all charts are located, determine whether older charts may be destroyed, and ensure everything you keep is securely stored. For additional information see "[Retaining and Discarding Psychiatric Records](#)" and "[Medical Record Storage Company Agreements](#)."
- 2. Determine who your active patients are.** Since the onset of the pandemic, a number of your patients have likely fallen out of treatment due to relocation or changes to their financial situations or health insurance plans. You've likely also had a few patients who saw you remotely for a visit or two but didn't follow through with treatment. In order to ensure that there is a clear understanding between yourself and the patient as to the status of your relationship, consider sending them a letter to either confirm their decision to end treatment or make them aware that their chart will be closed if you do not hear from them within a given timeframe. Sample letters may be found in "[Termination of the Physician-Patient Relationship](#)."
- 3. If you are unable to see patients in person at your current practice location, consider making arrangements to borrow space from a colleague in the event a face-to-face visit is needed at some point in the future.** During the PHE, the DEA has waived the Ryan Haight Act's requirement for an in-person visit prior to prescribing a controlled substance; however, it is anticipated that this requirement will be reinstated once the PHE has expired. Many states follow this rule as well, but others may have a state requirement in effect for an in-person visit. Beyond the need to satisfy prescribing requirements, there may also be other patients for whom you believe an occasional face-to-face appointment would be beneficial. If you do not have a colleague with extra space, consider seeing if your local hospital can accommodate you.
- 4. Develop a contingency plan to allow someone to either take over your practice during your unexpected absence or shut it down completely in the event you are not able to return.** For more information see "[Initiating My Contingency Plan](#)."

From all of us at PRMS, we wish you a safe and healthy new year!

*[Website links for all resources can be found at www.PRMS.com/Resolutions](#)

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Q & A with the “World’s Most Traveled” Psychiatrist

(from <https://www.prms.com/prms-blog/articles/2021/december/guest-blog-q-a-with-the-world-s-most-traveled-psychiatrist/>)

As part of PRMS’ ongoing commitment to mental health, we are pleased to feature Tarak Vasavada, MD, Secretary of the Indo-American Psychiatric Association, as a guest blogger this month. Dr. Vasavada interviewed his colleague and fellow IAPA member, Jagannathan Srinivasaraghavan, MD, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and a practicing psychiatrist, on his extensive travel experiences.

Dr. Jagannathan Srinivasaraghavan, better known as “Dr. Van,” has traveled to all 193 United Nations countries and 326 of the 329 countries and territories listed in the Travelers’ Century Club (travelerscenturyclub.org). Dr. Van is ranked #6 among the Most Traveled People (MTP.travel) by visiting 863 of 995 sites listed as MTP locations. He was the first Asian to plant the Indian flag at the North Pole in April 1985 and visited the South Pole in December 2011 at the Centenary Celebration of Amundsen reaching the South Pole in 1911. Dr. Van was gracious enough to spend some time with me during this Q&A session.

How did you get started on your journey of traveling?

Dr. Van: My father spent his career as a physician in the Indian Railways, and we received multiple free family passes to travel in First Class. I had traveled all over India by the time I finished medical school. My first trip outside of India was to Singapore and Malaysia to take the ECGMG Exam in 1974. Arriving in the United States in 1977 was my passport to extensive travels. By the time I finished residency, I had visited six continents and circumnavigated the world twice. In 1986, I quit my job and traveled the world for a year, hiking to Mount Everest Base Camp and climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, in addition to also visiting many countries. I have literally circumnavigated the world nine times. Nowadays my focus is on remote islands and missing regions in countries on my list.

What is your favorite place that you have visited?

Dr. Van: Every place has its own charm – be it culture, people, scenery, or arts. I love mountains and oceans. The glaciers, icebergs, and wildlife of Antarctica, and the fact that a large continent can be visited by anyone, as it does not belong to one country and everyone helps each other, makes it the top choice for me. I fell in love with Antarctica when I first visited in 1985, as the youngest passenger on a cruise, and I have gone there three more times since, including the South Pole.

What is your favorite cuisine?

Dr. Van: I am a vegetarian, so my opinion may not apply to all. I like Indian, Greek, Italian, Ethiopian, Thai, Mexican, Middle Eastern, and Vietnamese food. I love French, Argentinian, and Chilean wines.

What are your scariest moments?

Dr. Van: I was mugged in Gabon, West Africa and lost my passport, camera, and money. It was scary at that time, but with the help of the U.S. consulate, I received assistance and the culprits were arrested – unfortunately they did not recover my valuables. Spending a week waiting for a new passport and getting out of all obstacles was quite an experience to endure, but I can smile about the whole thing now. I made it a point to revisit the place to get over my fear and negative thoughts so I would not have ill feelings towards Gabon. It was an opportunistic crime, and I was at the wrong place at the wrong time. This could happen in any country, including ours.

(cont)

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What is a must in your bag?

Dr. Van: Passport, credit cards and money, camera, phone, and extra memory cards. I bring with me a few books, usually historic based fiction by famous authors and listen to all kinds of music.

What does your family say about your traveling?

Dr. Van: My wife has visited more than 150 countries on the Travelers' Century Club list and my younger son is also a member of the club. My older son has been to more than 95 countries. My wife is very supportive and accepts my passion, though sometimes she feels it has become an obsession. When the COVID-19 pandemic grounded me for 18 months, until I got the booster, I heard no comments from her!

Have you visited any Psychiatric facilities in your travels?

Dr. Van: I have visited many psychiatric facilities in India, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, Cuba, Russia, Armenia, Australia, Kiribati, Seychelles, Senegal, South Africa, and Eritrea. I have presented and lectured in nearly 35 countries. I have collaborated with psychiatrists from many countries and encouraged and mentored young psychiatrists.

How has traveling shaped your thinking and helped you in your work?

Dr. Van: I have learnt we have more in common among us than differences, irrespective of our countries of origin and native culture. All people want to live peacefully, prosper, and wish that their children have a better future than themselves. I have been impressed most by the poor people in developing countries who are willing to share what little they have. This open mind and my ability to say a few things about any place in the world helps my patients relate to me easily and discuss their issues with me, without any reservation.

Where are you planning on traveling to next?

Dr. Van: The most likely location for my next trip is to Nicobar Islands, which can be visited without a special permit. I will be assessing, based on the pandemic situation, where to be traveling in the next year, though I am very eager and enthusiastic about getting moving.

Will you be traveling in space?

Dr. Van: I was registered for space travel on a private shuttle to fly in October 1992. However, when The Challenger crashed in 1986, all private shuttle programs were cancelled. It is quite expensive now, but I certainly am looking for an opportunity to fulfill my dream!

Thank you, Dr. Van, for your time and for sharing important information.

Posted: 27 Dec 2021

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