

## Chaudhry Family's Police Brutality Case Achieves Justice!

The United States District Court jury reached a unanimous verdict on Monday, January 24, 2011 that Joseph Cruz, a former officer of the Hollywood Division of Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), used excessive and malicious force in the fatal shooting of Mohammad Usman Chaudhry. Mr. Chaudhry, a 21 year old autistic Pakistani man, was shot multiple times and killed by the ex-LAPD officer on March 25, 2008. The Chaudhry family was not notified of their son's death until 21 days after the killing.

The jury awarded the family \$1.7 million in damages. Cruz insisted that Mr. Chaudhry attacked him with a knife and that Cruz fired his gun in self defense. However, trial evidence verified that DNA found on the knife did not belong to Mr. Chaudhry. This marks a huge victory of justice because cases against law enforcement are difficult to win at trial. **Continued on Page 3.**



Chaudhry Family at 2008 SAN Vigil

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## Artesia Office Turned Health Clinic

One hundred and three people gathered in SAN's Artesia office-turned-health clinic on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The CHAI unit's recurring health clinics are some of Artesia's uninsured and low-income South Asian American community's only opportunity to access much needed-health services. Services checking community members' vital signs, blood sugar, cholesterol, bone density, hemoglobin as well as dental, eye, pap smear, and mammogram exams were available.

In 2010, CHAI held four clinics – two in Artesia, one in South Bay, and one in Koreatown – focusing on health services to prevent diseases for the South Asian American community. Health data shows 60% of attendees were women ... **Continued on Page 3.**



Community Member Getting Blood Pressure Checked

## Human Rights Report Released: *From Displacement to Internment*



Community Members and Staff Gather at Release

On Friday, November 19, 2010, South Asian community members gathered to hear numerous community stories presented at SAN's launch of its report, *From Displacement to Internment*. SAN held a press conference to share the patterns of human rights violations experienced by South Asian Americans in Southern California in the last twenty years.

Told in their own words, the stories seek to present a holistic account of daily-lived experiences of vulnerable community members, low-income workers, undocumented immigrants, survivors of domestic violence and targets of police abuse. **Continued on Page 2.**

## Manjusha Kulkarni starts as SAN's Executive Director



Manjusha at SAN's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner

*Manjusha Kulkarni started as Executive Director at SAN on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Here she shares a note:*

Beginning my first days at SAN, I knew I had much to look forward to. Through my time on the Board, I was familiar with SAN's multi-prong approach to social justice that incorporates civil rights, health, and violence prevention.

Joining as SAN's Executive Director, however, has shown me how intricately involved in

these efforts SAN is, how dedicated staff are, and how long the road is to achieving social justice.

In these past few months, the political climate in the U.S. has worsened with Wisconsin's union-busting attempts, Arizona's continued anti-immigrant enforcement and Peter King's hearings that assign suspicion to Muslim Americans. Meeting with SAN staff, community members, and SAN's collaborative partners affirms that SAN's efforts are one piece in the broader effort to addressing inequities and seeking change.

Looking at SAN's programs, mapping out SAN's short-term and long-term goals and moving SAN's work forward, I am excited to be a part of this new journey with SAN's community members, staff and partners. SAN is uniquely positioned to address concerns for South Asian Americans locally and nationally.

### (From Report, pg 1)

Hamid Khan, SAN's outgoing executive director, Susan Alva, report author and staff at Occidental College's Migration Policy and Resource Center, Rizwana Shaheen, domestic and state violence survivor, Farhana Shahid, staff member experiencing racial profiling, and Manjusha Kulkarni, SAN's new executive director, all spoke.

Khan stated, "This report reveals the continued failures to protect and uphold very basic standards of human dignity and security at the global and local levels. Over the last 20 years, SAN has been on the frontlines to expose and challenge such violations."

The stories we share convey how South Asian American communities have been criminalized and punished, yet dealt with emotional trauma through resilience. This report is a living document to build bridges and draw parallels with histories of other communities.

### (From Chaudhry family and justice, Pg. 1)

Represented by Olu Orange and Donald Cook, the family filed a federal lawsuit against LAPD and sought justice.

SAN, in partnership with the family, has educated the South Asian American community about this tragic killing as well as the ongoing violence experienced by other ethnic communities and races. According to the Los Angeles County Coroner's office, there have been 153 documented cases of homicides resulting from the use of police force since January 1, 2007.

SAN, the Chaudhry family and other civil rights and anti-police brutality groups organized a vigil on June 21, 2008, in Hollywood where Mr. Chaudhry was fatally shot to both empower local witnesses and unite diverse communities to take action together against police violence.



SAN Vigil in Hollywood in June 2008

Orange commented, "This case revealed LAPD's disturbing practices to prevent disclosure of the truth about officer misconduct. Through the support of organizations like SAN, the lawyers on this case were able to reach community members who stood for justice and helped the family fight."

When asked about this victory, Mohammad Umar Chaudhry, the elder brother of Usman, stated, "The family is most thankful for the outcome. Justice was sought and it has been served."

## Meet SAN: Community, Board, & Staff Profile!

### **Community Donor: Meenaxi Deo**

Meena started her time at SAN as a volunteer and then became SAN's first staff member in 1999! Her time at SAN allowed her to focus on public health, policy, research and building relationships with immigrant rights organizations.



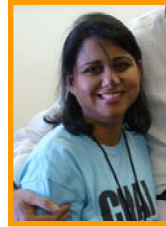
Being at SAN was an amazing experience for Meena because she felt that she was dropped into a helpful family where people cared about SAN's work, mission, social change, and each other. She continues to donate to SAN every year.

Meena is now in Oakland with her husband and two girls and still misses SAN.

### **Staff Member: Farhana Shahid**

Farhana started at SAN in 2004.

Farhana has always been a part of SAN's health unit. When she joined, Farhana took on health access and assisting South Asian American seniors. Recently, she has been instrumental in setting up SAN's Older Adult Walking Club and Nutrition program.



Farhana also works on community mental health through regular home assessments and facilitates several health and caregivers workshops a year.

Farhana remains passionate about supporting elders and the community. She urges you to give to SAN's programs in any way you can.

### **Board Member: Reshma Shamasunder**

Reshma recently became SAN's new Board Chair after three years of serving on SAN's Board. She brings dedication to advancing justice for South Asian Americans and low-income immigrant communities.



Outside of SAN, Reshma is the Director of the California Immigrant Policy Center, a statewide immigrant advocacy organization that protects and enhances the well-being of immigrants in California.

Reshma's years of work on homelessness and domestic violence makes her appreciate SAN's intersectional approach. She always enjoys bringing her family to SAN's events.

### **(From Artesia Turned Clinic, Pg. 1)**

while almost four out of ten were men. Almost half of those who accessed services were older adults.



Most strikingly of the post-health fair data is the fact that 80% of the attendees at the clinic were uninsured. Ramji Gautam, CHAI staff commented that "We achieved part of our goal, which was to provide an opportunity for those who can't access regular health check ups as well as vision and dental care, to be screened and to discuss their medical concerns with a professional."

Completing SAN's 8<sup>th</sup> successful health fair, staff and community members find that these fairs have become an instrumental resource. With volunteer translators as well as doctors who speak the language and the trust from SAN overall, community members feel safe attending SAN's health clinics. In the upcoming year, SAN seeks to learn from community feedback to improve its clinics.

## Support SAN

**\$50 supports 15 older adults with one Walking Club session.**

**\$250 assists 5 community members in one Immigration Clinic.**

**\$300 supports a Violence Prevention Workshop impacting 25 community members' attitudes and practices.**

Here are ways you can [support SAN](#):

- 1. Donate monetary cash, credit card or check contributions.**
- 2. Contribute office store gift cards, a printer, print cartridges, or butcher paper.**
- 3. For survivors and low-income community members: toiletries, taxi vouchers and food coupons.**
- 4. For SAN's walking club: board games.**
- 5. Volunteer your expertise in family and/ or employment law.**

## Peter King's Hearings on "Radicalization of Muslims"

Congressman Peter King, New York Representative, began congressional hearings on what he considers to be "the radicalization of American Muslims" on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The on-going hearings continue in the House Homeland Security Committee.

Many are decrying these controversial hearings for the way they stigmatize an entire group of people and assign mistrust to Muslim American community members.

Likening these hearings to the climate that provoked internment of Japanese Americans based on suspicion, 128 faith leaders in Southern California signed a letter to King stating, "the implication [of how King frames his hearings] is that we should be afraid of our neighbors, co-workers, or classmates on the basis of their religion." SAALT also urged people to send letters to King and to contact your own representative.

SAN's long-time efforts include a vivid memory of how the post-9/11 stigmatization and fear of Muslim, South Asian, and Arab Americans occurred. Discrimination became a part of everyday life while hate crimes and violence increased. SAN condemns these hearings and asks you to take action with SAALT to counter such rhetoric and violence.

## Healing through Stories: A New Play!

Once a month, a group of women gather at SAN's office. They greet each other with warmth, laughter, and stories to catch each other up on their lives in the days that passed. Conversation flows between them with food, art, meditation, and yoga.

These women are all survivors of physical or emotional violence; the session they attend is SAN's AWAZ Voices Against Violence Survivors' Support group. AWAZ staff trained in art healing through "A Window Between Worlds" rotate session facilitation. The newest addition to the facilitation team is renowned community arts activist, Shyamala Moorthy. Shyamala brings to SAN's Survivors' Support group her years of experience with Post Natyam and TeAda Productions, where she has produced artwork focused on domestic violence in the South Asian community and South Asian women's roles.

In collaboration with SAN's Survivor's Support group, Shyamala has created a new multidisciplinary dance, theater, music and video piece called *SUNOH! Tell Me. Sister*. The play includes themes of healing and encompasses stories of women's resistance and power as well as the experiences of domestic violence survivors.

The show, which runs April 1-3, 2011 in the Miles Memorial Playhouse, is one element of what Shyamala and the Survivors' Support group have been able to achieve in their time together.



Artist Shyamala Moorthy and Survivor Uma Perform Together at SAN's Dinner

The Survivor's support group is a part of AWAZ's overall violence prevention efforts which include counseling, family law guidance, shelter placement and safety planning and community workshops.

Each week, survivors and the artist continue to use yoga, breathing, writing, and the telling of stories as ways to process and heal through their experiences. Through these moments, many survivors feel that SAN's programs provide a much needed space of empowerment.

## Staff & Board

### SAN Staff

Aisha Ishtiaq  
Asha Gandhi  
Bhasker Shah  
Dolly Husein  
Farhana Shahid  
Joyti Chand  
Manjusha Kulkarni  
Preeti Sharma  
Riffat Rahman  
Saima Husain  
Tamia Pervez

### SAN Board

Ahilan Arulanantham  
Binna Chahal  
Jyoti Nanda  
Nitin Shah  
Rashmita Mistry  
Reshma Shamasunder  
Sanjay Chhugani  
Suresh Seeram  
Sumun Pendakur

South Asian Network (SAN) is a grassroots, community-based organization dedicated to advancing the health, empowerment and solidarity of persons of South Asian descent.

Visit our website:

[www.southasiannetwork.org](http://www.southasiannetwork.org)

## Upcoming Events

### March

**Sunday, March 27:**  
Healthy Me, Health Family  
Workshop, 12:30pm  
9989 Laurel Canyon Blvd,  
Pacoima CA 91331

### April

**Friday-Saturday, April 1-3:**  
*Sun Oh! Tell Me Sister*, 8pm  
Miles Playhouse, Santa Monica