



A Ray of Light

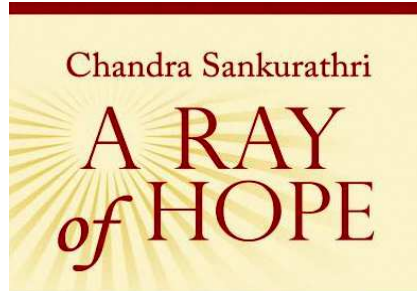
Autobiography of Chandra Sankurathri



Mrs. Jennifer Daubeny, Consul General of Canada, Bengaluru, India @Sankurathri Foundation, Kakinada, India

"Srikan has a unique distinction of performing 90% of the eye surgeries free of cost to poor. It was possible only because the Foundation was fortunate enough to have the support of Manjari Sankurathri Memorial Foundation (MSMF) in Canada and through them several donors and organizations."

Chandra Sankurathri



On June 7, 2010, David B. Harris wrote in *The Ottawa Citizen*, "You learn quickly, in counterterrorism, that people who outlive terror victims often pay with a lifetime's grief and disadvantage: permanent psychological trauma, damaged health, economic loss and frequently - especially for young dependents - a lack of education, and possibly even poverty and addiction".

A member of one of such families is Chandra Sankurathri. Chandra, who came to Canada for Graduate Studies and later with a Ph.D degree worked as a Scientific Evaluator at Health Canada, became a success story, as Terry Milewski described him in his hour long award winning CBC documentary - *A Ray of Light*. Chandra is one of those survivors

of a tragedy Harris was worrying about in the *Ottawa Citizen* article.

Chandra, after losing his wife, son and daughter in the 1985 Air India Bombing is fortunate to have had good friends, great family in India and the courage and strength to reorient his life from that one with a happy family in Canada to the other full time in Community Service in India. The memorials he has established for his wife Manjari, son Srikan, and daughter Sarada will succeed. The services provided to the communities from Srikan Institute of Ophthalmology, Sarada Vidyalayam School and Spandana Disaster Relief Program are well acknowledged and admired locally in India and in Canada and the USA.

Chandra says that the purpose of writing his autobiography is to document "my life story which could inspire some people, and give encouragement to people in distress to overcome their feelings".

Chandra Sankurathri will launch his autobiography on Saturday, June 9, 2018, from 2:30 - 5:30 pm, in the Atrium of Ben Franklin Place, 101 Centrepointe Drive, Nepean / Ottawa.

Sarma Vishnubhatla
RSVP : info@msmf.ca

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Srikiran Silver Jubilee celebrations (January 19, 20 & 21) What has changed in Srikiran in terms of eye care delivery over the years?

Dr. Madhu Uddaraju

Dr. Avinash Mahindrakar

First day started off with screening camp at the Hospital's city center operations in Bhanugudi and Mayor Mrs. Sunkara Pavani graced the occasion. Mayor felt that the surgical services at the city center were convenient for the patients in the city getting quality comprehensive eye care services in their vicinity. Mayor also applauded 25 years of SIO services to the poor.

Exclusive meeting for all the print and electronic media journalists at the SIO auditorium was held, and was attended by more than 75 press core. Prof K Purnanandam, Rector of Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University was the chief guest and described the Srikiran journey and the efforts of Dr. Chandra and his team in spreading light in the lives of millions of people. This was followed by an update on silver jubilee activities by Dr. Chandra.

Dr. G Natchiar and Sri R. D. Thulsiraj from Aravind Eye Care system Madurai inaugurated the state of the art CSO Sirius Topography system in the Cornea clinic. This system would help in early detection of keratoconus, a corneal disease that could be potentially blinding if not diagnosed and treated early. Dr. Natchiar acknowledged corneal transplant work and academic accomplishments by the team. Sri T D Janardhan MLC and Convener of TDLP in Andhra Pradesh toured the hospital and was in awe about state of the art modular operating theaters. He commended the excellent work being done by the team led by Dr. Chandra.

The evening concluded with felicitations for Lions club and Rotary club members who played a critical role in SIO mission. Mrs Jennifer Daubeny from the Canadian high commission, Bengaluru was the chief guest for this meeting along with the senior management team from Aravind and Dr. Seetharama Swamy who is a strong supporter of our outreach activities for more than two decades. Dr. Sarma from MSMF Canada expressed his gratitude to the support extended by the community members for this noble cause.

On second day, a new vision center was inaugurated at Pithapuram by the local MLA Mr. S V S Varma which would cater to a population of more

Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology has been at the forefront of delivering ophthalmic eye care in the northern coastal Andhra Pradesh, especially in the East Godavari and the adjoining districts for the past 25 years. This is an attempt to capture some, if not all of them.

In the early nineties when Srikiran was established, there were not many properly trained ophthalmologists in this part of the country. Dr. V. K. Raju from the USA used to visit once every couple of months to do cataract surgeries. Clearly, this was not enough to meet the demands in this area. Srikiran took an initiative by sending an ophthalmologist for training in the USA before establishing a full time facility. The initial decade it was dedicated to camp based high volume cataract surgery. Considering the surgeries there wasn't enough time to concentrate on the development of various subspecialties.

than 3 lakhs in the surrounding villages. The senior management team from SIO and MSMF were present to mark this occasion. "HemaSoudha" – A well furnished guest house with nine air conditioned rooms was inaugurated by Mrs. Lakshmi Vishnubhatla from MSMF Canada. In the evening Dr. Chandra thanked the representatives and leaders from the corporate sector like ONGC, Reliance, Coromandel, State bank of India, Brandix and other players who were of great support to our cause through their CSR initiatives

The third day celebrations were started by a CME program on Corneal disease, which was presided by Dr. Vinod Mootha. Guest faculty from leading institutes delivered lectures in this meeting that was attended by more than 80 ophthalmologists and post graduates. The cornea team led by Dr Siva also conducted a wet lab in corneal lamellar procedure in which they trained more than 20 ophthalmologists.

The grand finale was held in the evening in which people from all walks of life who were associated with Srikiran were invited as token of gratitude for their association and support. All the ophthalmologists who actively contributed in this journey were recognized and honoured on this joyous occasion. Retired DIG of Andhra Pradesh Mr. Sambasiva Rao IPS, Mr. Nageswar Rao from Eenadu journalism school presided over. Dr. Avinash concluded the celebrations acknowledging the efforts of the team in conducting the 3 day events.

As the number of outpatients kept on increasing, the number of complex cases requiring specialty care also increased exponentially. Many visiting surgeons from the North America catered to the needs of the complex cases – however most cases needing specialty care were being referred to higher centers. Of note, the nearest tertiary care centre was 600 kilometers away. Many patients could not afford to travel so far, and those who did found the cost of treatment there prohibitive.

From the first decade of the 21st century, there has been an increase in the number of subspecialty trained doctors working at Srikiran. This was possible because of the availability of the right equipment at Srikiran. However, the subspecialists were small in number, with each department being manned by only one. This led to 'all or none' phenomenon as far as the specialty care was concerned – there would be no subspecialty surgeries when the concerned doctor left the institute. Now in the second decade, we have steady availability of subspecialists in Pediatric Ophthalmology, Strabismus, Oculoplasty, Cornea and Refractive Surgery departments..

Another change in the delivery of health care has been the opening of satellite centers. The first one was opened in the Kakinada town as the base hospital happens to be situated outside of the range of public transport. Very recently, this centre has expanded by acquiring an operation theatre. Other vision centers (eleven) were opened in faraway areas lying tens of kilometers away. These are run by the vision technicians who can do refractions and basic eye examinations to identify patients who need to be referred to the base hospital. This should encourage the patients to actively seek health care in remote areas. It is particularly disheartening to see patients 'wait' for eye camps in their areas without actively seeking advise for their ailments by visiting the hospital. Hopefully presence of 'Vision Centers' in their areas will encourage this.

Though not directly related to eye care delivery, I would like to add a word or two about research here. Research activities have been started with the establishment of 'Chandrasekhar Medical Research Foundation' and we have already published two scientific papers in peer reviewed journals

Continued from previous page
 in the field of Ophthalmic Genetics. The support of Dr. Vinod Mootha, visiting Professor from University of Texas Southwestern for the research work needs special mention. We are actively pursuing accreditation by the National Accreditation Board for Healthcare by trying to inculcate their protocols in the regular hospital procedures. Though we are far ahead of other hospitals in this area in terms of delivering healthcare, our efforts to expand and explore the possibilities is still surging strong.

Dr. Ralf Buhrmann - MSMF Humanitarian Award Winner - 2018



Dr. Ralf Buhrmann is the recipient of MSMF Humanitarian Award for 2018. He has been a strong supporter of the partnership between Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology (SIO), in

Kakinada, India and the University of Ottawa Eye Institute (EI) for the last 15 years and currently chairs the taskforce at the EI that oversees this collaboration. Dr Buhrmann worked closely with Dr. Chandra Sankurathri to put in place an International Elective Ophthalmology at SIO for Ophthalmology Residents from the EI who have now been visiting SIO annually for the past 11 years to exchange knowledge and surgical skills with the physicians and staff of SIO.

Dr. Buhrmann MD, MPH, PhD FRCSC is an eye physician and surgeon at the University of Ottawa Eye Institute specializing in the care of patients with complex cataract and glaucoma. He directs the University of Ottawa Ophthalmic Surgical Simulation Center and is an award-winning surgical teacher and a sought-after mentor for surgical skills transfer courses nationally and internationally.

After completing his medical school training (1989) and residency in ophthalmology at McGill (1994) Dr. Buhrmann spent a year serving in mission hospitals in Sierra Leone and Cameroon. He completed an MPH degree at Johns Hopkins University in 1996 followed by fellowships in Preventive Ophthalmology and in Glaucoma and a PhD in Clinical Epidemiology. He has been serving as President of the Canadian Society of International and Public Health Ophthalmology for the past decade.

We would be remiss if we didn't mention his love for improving patient care and supporting research. His efforts to raise funds are noteworthy. In the recent 2018 fundraiser, "Dancing with Docs", organized by The Ottawa Hospital Foundation, his team raised more than \$133,000, and he won the coveted "Medicine Ball Trophy."

Dr. Buhrmann has been instrumental to further broadening the partnership between the EI in Ottawa, Canada and SIO in Kakinada, India. We thank him.

"In this journey of 25 years we have crossed many milestones and some of the achievements are quite commendable and unique for a Non Governmental and not for profit organization."

Chandra Sankurathri



16th Annual MSMF Picnic
Saturday, June 16, 2016
11.30 AM to 4.00 PM

Advanced Tickets until June 8, 2018
\$50 Family of Four
\$16 13 years or older
\$12 12 years or younger
Tickets at the Gate
\$20 13 years or older
\$15 12 years or younger

For Advanced Tickets
Contact
Mrs. Lakshmi Vishnubhatla
info@msmf.ca
613-523-5413

The Statistics Speak for Themselves

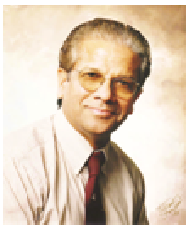
The statistics below provide a glimpse of what we have been able to achieve with the support of our funding partners and volunteers. Donors and volunteers are very important partners in what we do. It is essentially people empowering people.

Facts Cumulative	Cumulative 1990-2018	Jan-Apr 2018	Statement of Expenses & Support 2017(Not audited)	
Out Patients Treated	2,830,866	76,567	Expenses not audited 2017	(Jan- Dec)
Surgeries Performed	247,221	4,089	Projects	\$200,000
Vision Centres	11	2	Professional Fees	\$10,732
City Center	1	0	Fundraising	\$5,865
Eye Screening Camps for Adults	2,634	74	Credit Card Fees	\$2,410
Eye screening Camps for Children	1145	3	Office	\$2,821
Medical Personnel Trained	396	3	Total (Expenses in 2017)	\$221,827
Support Staff Trained	153	1		
CME Workshops Conducted	63	1	Support Provided in 2017(Not audited)	
Children Educated	2,685	190	Sarada Vidyalayam	\$101,040.0
Scholarships Provided	615	0	Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology	\$ 98,960
School Children Screened	380,872	3130	Total Support	\$200,000

We need your generous support for Education and Eye Care Programs.

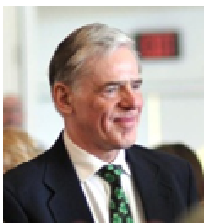
Look Back at Volunteer Doctors at Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology (SIO)

In the last two and half decades, many doctors have volunteered at SIO. All of them brought their skills to help the poor, who are in need of eye care. They not only helped the patients, but brought equipment, trained staff, and transferred their knowledge to the doctors of SIO. The following doctors played some pivotal roles in shaping SIO. Subsequently, all of them received the MSMF Humanitarian Award



Dr. V.K. Raju is the co-founder of Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology (SIO) along with Chandra Sankurathri. Chandra always credits Dr. Raju, his childhood friend with

Srikiran's vision and initial growth. Dr. Raju, with the help of "The Eye Foundation of America" brought in operating microscopes, lasers and latest technology to SIO, which was a very valuable addition to the list of modern equipment available for eye surgeries at the Institute. Dr. Raju always feels that doctors and the institutes should collaborate and combat all avoidable blindness, Dr. Raju participated in several Eye Camps organized by SIO and other organizations over time. He brought into light from his decades of experience some of the problems found in children due to marriages among first cousins, a common practice in SIO surrounding areas. He successfully organized workshops at the Institute that were attended by doctors from all over India. Dr. Raju feels Eye Foundation of America (EFA) was lucky to find his childhood friend Dr. Chandrashekar to start Srikiran Eye Institute. After this endeavour EFA could start projects (service, teaching and research) in 25 countries.



Dr. Kjell Dahlen, Eye Physician and Surgeon, Eye Care for the Adirondacks, Plattsburg was a regular

visitor to SIO and visited 18 times over twenty years. He provided constant service, equipment, training and valuable advice. Dr. Dahlen was very busy performing eye surgeries and training the resident doctors and nurses in modern operating procedures and the use of latest surgical instruments. His strong volunteer commitment to treat the poor can be seen in his travels to India and his work at the Institute. He trained SIO consultants in PHACO emulsification Surgery. Dr. Dahlen was instrumental in launching the screening of children from the tribal areas in East Godavari District with the cooperation of Integrated Tribal Development Agency. He sought assistance from Rotary International to sponsor cataract surgeries. Dr. Dahlen interacted with Rotary International to get a Zeiss OPMI MDU Operating Microscope for SIO. This instrument is used to train the SIO's eye surgeons in small incision cataract surgery. This enabled quicker rehabilitation for patients and reduced operating time, with immediate resumption of physical activities in a day following surgery.



Dr. Vinod Mootha got his Ophthalmology training from the University of Wisconsin, USA. He felt good to volunteer for almost a year at SIO, as Kakinada is his place of birth, which he left with his parents when they moved to US. Over time he performed keratoplasty surgeries, organized a CME session on Corneal Disorders, which was attended by 32 ophthalmologists as well as organized several information exchange sessions with SIO consultants, students and technicians. He trained SIO doctors in techniques of PHACO emulsification and cornea transplantation. Dr. Vinod's research interests are in genetic disorders. He collected blood samples of patients with various genetic disorders and trained a microbiology technician in such work. Dr. Vinod's lab at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center focused on the genetics of Fuchs' endothelial corneal dystrophy. Dr. Vinod setup a genetic research project on ocular genetic disorders in order to find out its inheritance pattern. In order to evalu-

ate its viability, an independent ethics committee was established to evaluate the research programs and give consent for the project. Dr. Vinod Mootha's services at SIO are exceptional and his contribution is a lasting one.

Thank You for Caring

The success we are achieving in Education, Eye Care and Disaster Relief Programs is because of your generous financial and volunteer support, and the staff, teachers, doctors and paramedical staff at Sarada Vidyalayam School and Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology. We pledge that MSMF will strive to provide outstanding service and care that is possible to the poor, disadvantaged and suffering.

How to support our programs financially ... Please do one of the following:

- 1) Complete the donation form, either attach a cheque made to MSMF, or give details of your credit information and mail it to: MSMF, C/O Davis Bookkeeping, P.O. Box 13, 152 Reis Road, Carp, ON K0A 1L0, Canada. " Please be aware of the risk of attaching donation forms with credit info to emails."
- 2) Go online to Canada Helps dot Org website and follow the instructions to donate: (<https://www.canadahelps.org/charities/manjari-sankurathri-memorialfoundation-msmf/>)
- 3) Contribute through United Way campaigns either in the Community or at work place,
- 4) Donate through " Benevity Causes Portal" a workplace giving and matching program, with a social mission to help improve the way charities access and become eligible for Corporate Giving Programs. (<https://causes.benevity.org/>),

Please note that some organizations and employers match donations of their employees.

MSMF Newsletter, A Ray of Light, is published twice a year, from contributions and reports received from volunteers. Any concerns and comments you may have, please send them to the Executive Director of MSMF by email: ed.msmf@msmf.ca , or in a letter to MSMF, 23 Mary Drive, Gloucester, ON K1V 1G9.

Board of Directors

Chandra Sankurathri, Sarma Vishnubhatla, Vikram Sundar, Allison Haggart, Byatris Kattackal, Badari Kurusetty

Established

MSMF 1989
SaradaVidyalayam 1992,
Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology 1993,
Spandana 1998,

" MSMF is sensitive to the protection of your personal information, and will hold such information in confidence."