

MICHIGAN INDO AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2005

MIADC MEETING – December 4, 2005

The next meeting of MIADC members is scheduled for Sunday, December 4, 2005 from 2 to 5 PM at Oakland University, Rochester, MI. The meeting will be in room 235 in Elliot Hall.

The map to Oakland University is available at <http://www.oakland.edu/map/> or contact Mukesh Bhargava bhargava@oakland.edu. Elliott Hall is next to the parking lot Number 36. Only the front door to the building will be open.

The purpose of the meeting is to determine the direction and future activities of MIADC. Please take a moment to examine and answer three questions listed for this purpose at the end of this newsletter. Send your reply to Usha Tummala -Narra at utummal@umich.edu. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.

SAM SINGH ELECTED MAYOR - EAST LANSING

The East Lansing City Council unanimously voted on November 15, 2005 to elect Sam Singh as the Mayor of East Lansing for the next two years. He was recently reelected to serve a four year term on the city council. Sam is one of the founding board members of MIADC. He is a member of Governor's Advisory Council on Asian Pacific Affairs, appointed by Governor of Michigan. He is the president and CEO of Michigan Nonprofit Association. Before joining MNA he worked at several other nonprofit organizations. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Point of Light Foundation, the Capital Area Transit Authority, Michigan Association of United Ways, and the Capital Regional Community Foundation. Karan Pal and Abha Singh, parents of Sam are very proud of his achievements. He is a bright rising star of our community and we wish him all the success.

RAVI YALAMACHI ELECTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL – ROCHESTER HILLS

Congratulations to Ravi Yalamanchi of Rochester Hills who defeated a strong Republican opponent to win a seat on the Rochester Hills City Council, District 1!

Ravi's involvement in city government for several years and his concern with how local issues were being handled provided him with the impetus to run for office

Ravi was born in Secunderabad, India and came to the US as a student in 1983. He has a bachelor's degree in International Trade from Eastern Michigan University and an MBA from the University of Michigan. Ravi is currently CEO of Metro Housing Partnership Inc. based in Flint. Prior to this he was Executive director of the Saginaw Housing Commission. Community involvements include being on the board of the Genesee County Habitat for Humanity, Vice-President to the Board of Directors of Legal Services of Eastern Michigan Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of The Resource Center and Member of United Way Investment Cabinet and Solutions Council.

Ravi lives in Rochester Hills with wife Anita and 14 year old daughter.

And, Ravi welcome to MIADC....you are a role model not only for our organization but our community as well!

RAMZI DALLOO UNSUCCESSFUL FOR CITY COUNCIL – TROY

Ramzi was the first candidate endorsed by the Democratic Party in twenty five years to seek election for a seat at the city council of Troy. He ran a clean and passionate campaign for the future of Troy. He stood by the values of honoring diversity and fair treatment for all. His republican opponents were able to beat him with a campaign of dividing the community and spending considerably large amounts of cash. We hope that the lessons learnt from this years' election campaign will be useful at the next election.

MARK BREWER - ELECTIONS 2006

At the general body meeting of MIADC at the home of Jayanthi and Guruswamy Balakrishnan in November, Mark Brewer, Chair Michigan Democratic Party, presented the insights into the Governors' race for 2006. He explained the strategy for winning back the State Senate and State House of Representatives. He gave a preview of Presidential election in 2008. He also explained the proposed Rule change to be presented at the State Central committee allowing all MDP members present at the state conventions to have the right to vote as delegates. The MDP State Convention scheduled in August 2006 will nominate the democratic candidates for the Lt Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Supreme Court justices and many others.

ANDY MEISNER - STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

State Representative Andy Meisner reviewed the origins of MIADC. He reiterated Mark and his role in initiating and sustaining the organization. He then presented the status of politics in Lansing. The house and Senate controlled by the Republicans appears to have the interest of the party above the interest of the State of Michigan. The budget compromise to foster job growth in the state is paramount. He urged Indo Americans to come forward with a candidate for the House from the Bloomfield area. He described the issues related to clarity of message and branding for the democrats to win local elections. He encouraged taking the initial step of getting elected as precinct delegates for the Democratic Party.

RAM RAMANATHAN AND GOPI NAIR - HONORED

Ram Ramanathan, founding chair and Gopi Nair the immediate past chair of MIADC were honored with a plaque for their services to our community. Ram was instrumental in conceiving the idea and launching the Indo American Democratic caucus in Michigan with the help of Mark Brewer and Andy Meisner. Gopi sustained the organization and broadened its reach by building a coalition with other ethnic democratic caucuses. Presently our organization is well established within the MDP and is prepared to participate in the upcoming state elections.

STATE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION – FEBRUARY 18, 2006

The MDP State Convention featuring Governor Jennifer Granholm and Senator Debbie Stabenow will be held at the Lansing Center, Lansing on February 18, 2006 from 10 AM to 5 PM. It is free to MDP members and Precinct delegates. You will hear from Democratic elected officials and candidates, learn more about ballot initiatives and get ready for the 2006 elections. We urge our members to be visible and attend this convention.

POLITICAL INTERNSHIPS – NOW AVAILABLE

Political Internships are now available to qualifying Indo American youth. The candidate will be placed in the offices of an elected state or US legislator during the summer of 2006. A stipend will be provided by

MIADC. To apply for this opportunity visit our website at www.miadc.org or contact Jayashree Kommareddi at (810) 953-1614.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP - RENEWAL

With the approach of New Year it is good time to renew your membership. The annual membership is only \$25 per person. This membership entitles you to all the privileges of a strong and progressive democratic caucus. You can pay your dues for any number of years up to a maximum of ten years. Please mail your check to MIADC, PO Box476, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303.

PROGRESSIVE TALK RADIO – 1310 AM wdtw

Nancy Skinner and her team continue to do a fabulous job of keeping us progressives folks in tune with the political sentiments of local and national listeners. This Detroit area radio station gives a clear rationale for the values of the Democratic Party. Nancy is on the air during the morning drive time. She is followed by Jerry Springer, Al Franken and Ed Schultz in three hour segments. The talk show is opinionated, informative and funny. Listen to AM 1310 any time of the day.

MEMBER SURVEY - Usha Tummala-Narra

Please respond to a brief survey about issues that you feel are pertinent to the Indian American community. Gathering this information will be useful in helping us to further conceptualize MIADC's mission statement or general objectives. It would be good to have this information prior to our next meeting on December 4, 2005 at the Oakland University.

Questions for MIADC members

1. What social, economic, and political issues do you consider to be most important in being supported by MIADC? What is your stance on these issues?
2. What are some areas that you feel less informed about with respect to social, economic, and political issues within the Indian American community?
3. How do you think we can expand political awareness and involvement within the Indian American community?

Please send your reply to Usha at utummak@umich.edu.

Newsletter prepared by
Swarn Rajpal, Ramesh Verma and Jayashree Kommareddi
Website: www.miadc.org
Email: membership@miadc.org