

FEBRUARY 2025 IDA NEWSLETTER



CONNECT. INSPIRE. COMMUNITY.



Dear IDA Family,

As I step into the role of President, I am deeply honored and excited to have the opportunity to lead this remarkable organization. It is a privilege to work alongside such a talented and dynamic community, and I am committed to serving each one of you to the best of my abilities. Together, we will explore new horizons and exciting opportunities for IDA this year.

As we move forward together, I urge each one of you to continue your active participation in our events and programs. Your participation is the cornerstone of IDA's success and growth. I take immense pride in the success of the programs and initiatives IDA has launched over the years, and our Board remains fully committed to expanding our efforts. This year, we will focus on new ventures and partnerships that prioritize mentorship, medical education, advocacy and health equity—core values that are aligned with our mission to Connect, Inspire, and build Community.

I am pleased to announce our first event of the year - the Annual Educational Symposium for physicians, scheduled for March 29th, 2025. This event will feature sessions addressing both professional and personal development with a focus on physician wellness. It marks just the beginning of a series of exciting events that will provide ample opportunities to connect, engage, volunteer, and make a lasting impact in our society.

As we embark on this exciting journey together, I welcome your thoughts and feedback. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly at ssaikiamd@gmail.com, or to the IDA team at idahoustontx@gmail.com. Let's work together to continue growing our organization, expanding our membership, and enhancing the positive impact we make on our community.

I look forward to what we will accomplish together this year.

Warm regards,

Sangeeta Saikia, M.D.
Cardiovascular Medicine
President, Indian Doctors Association- Houston

IDA HEALTH EQUITY PROGRAM



IN COLLABORATION WITH
SEWA INTERNATIONAL



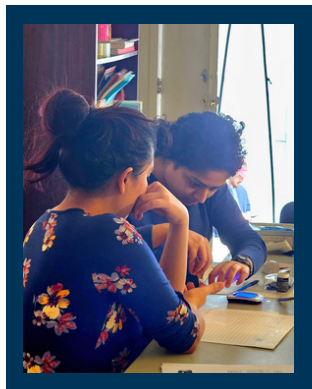
ON JANUARY 25TH, 2025...

IDA member physicians Dr. Vinita Bhagiya, Dr. Archana Sadhu, Dr. Manoj Bhardwaj, and Dr. Sangeeta Saikia volunteered at the SEWA ASPIRE health clinics at the Villa Madrid, Trails at Woodlake, and Los Arcos locations on January 25th, 2024, alongside members of SEWA and Americorp.

**AN IMPACTFUL COLLABORATION
SPREADING CARE TO
COMMUNITIES IN NEED**

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!**

Contact :
idahoustontx@gmail.com





SAVE THE DATE

INDIAN DOCTORS
ASSOCIATION
HOUSTON

ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 2025

March 29th, 2025
8 AM - 2 PM

Pinstripes
3300 Kirby Dr. Suite 3A
Houston, TX 77098

**The IDA Annual Educational
Symposium will be held on
March 29th, 2025.**

FEATURING:

- A dynamic line-up of clinical experts and experienced professionals
- Wide range of topics directly relevant to everyday practice
- Special physician focused financial segment

**We look forward to your participation
in this informative and engaging event.**

[CLICK HERE TO RSVP](#)

**Please mark your calendars and
stay tuned for further details!**

COMING SOON...



IDA HOUSTON ANNUAL PICNIC

SUGARLAND
MEMORIAL PARK

APRIL 6TH, 2025

IDA HOUSTON PRESENTS
GOLD & GIVING



IN COLLABORATION WITH
TANISHQ

THE POWER OF PHYSICIAN ADVOCACY WHY YOUR VOICE MATTERS



- Dr. Vidya Mathivanan

“As physicians, we dedicate ourselves to healing, educating, and advancing medical science. However, beyond our daily practice, critical decisions about healthcare are being made - by policymakers, insurance companies, and institutions -that directly impact how we care for patients and how we practice medicine.

The bylaws of the Indian Doctors Association (IDA) recognize that our organization has the responsibility to take positions and express opinions on issues affecting both medicine broadly and our members specifically. Advocacy is a natural extension of our role as leaders in healthcare. It ensures that our collective voice is heard in matters such as physician autonomy, healthcare policies, administrative burdens, and patient rights.

Advocacy doesn't require a political background—it starts with awareness, engagement, and action. Whether by collaborating with medical associations like the Texas Medical Association (TMA), meeting with legislators, or raising awareness through community forums, each of us can contribute to shaping the future of healthcare.

The strength of our profession lies in unity. Let's use our expertise and leadership to influence policy and protect the integrity of medicine. Join us as we launch new advocacy efforts within IDA—because when physicians speak, healthcare listens.

Coming soon:

Women in Medicine - the trials & triumphs

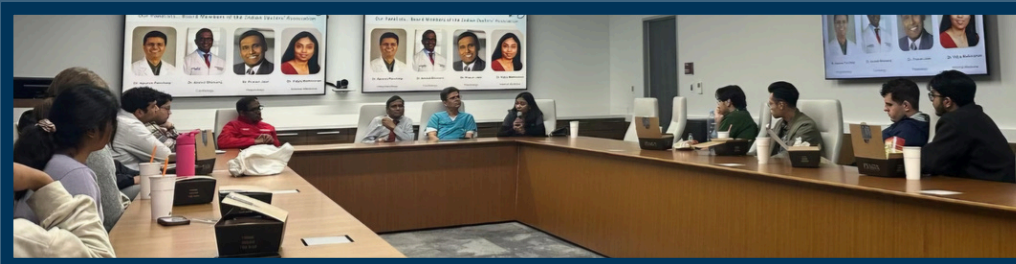
April 13th, 2025 4-6 pm
The Junior League Society of Houston

IDA-MEDICAL SCHOOL CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAM

On January 27th, members of the IDA Board of Directors engaged with students from the Texas A&M University School of Engineering Medicine as part of the IDA-Medical School Career Guidance Program.



Dr. Arvind Bhimaraj, Dr. Prasun Jalal, Dr. Vidya Mathivanan, and Dr. Apurva Pancholy participated in a dynamic and insightful discussion with the students, exchanging ideas and providing valuable guidance to support their academic and professional growth.



**TO VOLUNTEER WITH THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM
PLEASE CONTACT: idahoustontx@gmail.com**

Indian Doctors Association has launched a mentorship program for medical students with a focus on career guidance and preparedness for the practice of medicine in the real world.

While our intent is not to disrupt the medical student's mainstream institution-based mentorship, we want to create a supplemental guidance that can be practical knowledge for career and life.

We plan to create a database of Physicians interested in providing mentorship that the students can choose from.

Once matched, you will be expected to meet the student at least once in two months to check in on their needs. If interested, please email idahoustontx@gmail.com with your CV.



Dr. Manoj Kumar Bhardwaj

Board-Certified Physician in Internal and Family Medicine
Board Certified American Board Of Lifestyle Medicine
Certified Integrated Hypnotherapist

Dr. Bhardwaj is a highly experienced board-certified physician specializing in Internal and Family Medicine, with over 18 years in practice and certification from the American Board of Lifestyle Medicine. Passionate about mind-body and integrative medicine, he focuses on the underlying causes of health issues, enhanced by his training in Integrated Hypnotherapy. Dr. Bhardwaj has volunteered at numerous charity clinics and medical camps, including impactful missions in Haiti and Tacloban, Philippines, during times of crisis. His dedication to holistic healing and compassionate care continues to transform the lives of his patients.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS!

SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES FROM INDIA

-Sangeeta Saikia, M.D.

DEFINING OUR ROLE

International medical graduates (IMGs) comprised 25.1% of all matched applicants for first year residency positions in accredited U.S. Graduate Medical Education programs for the year 2024, an increase of 657 (7.8%) from the previous year. Of the IMGs matched, 5,864 (64.8%) are non-U.S. citizen IMGs who filled 15.2% of PGY-1 positions, this number increased by 832 compared to 2023. However, despite record-high applicant participation, and the fact that IMGs are a key addition to the U.S. physician workforce as it strives to meet the needs of a growing patient population, the match rates for IMGs have remained fairly stable.

Specialties with the highest percentage of first-year positions filled by IMGs:

- **Internal Medicine : 43%**
- **Pathology : 37.4%**
- **Family Medicine : 31.8%**
- **Neurology : 29.5%.**

The largest number of non-US citizen IMGs are from India.

In the evolving landscape of US residency programs, the journey for the IMG from India has become increasingly arduous. Former IMGs such as the members of the IDA have a unique opportunity to give back to their community by mentoring the next generation of foreign medical professionals, a vital endeavor in an era marked by heightened competition and stagnant acceptance rates.

A key element of an IMG's application for US residency programs is US clinical experience (USCE), which can be obtained through hands-on clinical rotations or observerships. However, securing these opportunities is challenging. Academic hospitals offering such rotations are limited, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many hospitals prioritize specific medical schools, requiring applications 1.5 to 2 years in advance. Application fees can range from \$200 to \$1,000, often without any guarantee of acceptance.

Faced with these obstacles, many IMGs turn to “agency” rotations, which are facilitated by companies that connect IMGs with physicians willing to take rotators. While some agencies provide valuable services, such as managing onboarding paperwork and accommodation, others operate under predatory practices. Students may find themselves paying inflated fees for substandard experiences and the structure of these agency rotations often leads to disappointing outcomes. It is not uncommon for multiple rotators to shadow a single physician, resulting in generic letters of recommendation despite significant effort and investment. In some cases, rotators may find themselves performing secretarial tasks unrelated to patient care, which detracts from their educational experience.

Mentorship emerges as a crucial lifeline in this context. Former IMGs who have successfully traversed the residency application landscape can offer invaluable insights. Their experiences can illuminate the nuances of the US healthcare system, help refine application materials, and prepare candidates for the rigors of interviews. This guidance not only fosters essential skills but also builds networks that are vital for success in a competitive environment.

As members of the IDA we can engage and empower the next generation of IMGs from India and offer them a pathway to transform their challenges into opportunities. By engaging with current IMGs through workshops, formal observerships, or informal shadowing opportunities, former IMGs can provide not just education but also essential mentorship, bridging the gaps in their training with hands on experience in the clinic and hospital settings that prepares them to navigate their journey through residency with confidence and success. And for those of us who take on this responsibility, the reward will extend beyond individual mentorship; it will strengthen the entire medical community and the patients we serve.



A MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION

On behalf of the Board members of the India Doctors' Association, Houston, we would like to extend our deep gratitude to Dr. Arvind Bhimaraj for his exemplary leadership and dedication during his tenure as President. Under his guidance, the IDA launched the medical student mentorship program and the collaboration with the SEWA ASPIRE health centers in 2024. In addition, we established significant relationships with the Denver Harbor Clinic and UNICEF through our Health Equity Program.



Dr. Bhimaraj's commitment, vision, and tireless efforts have been key in shaping the success of our organization in the past year. The programs he has developed will continue to grow and thrive in the coming year under his continued tenure as a Board officer in the capacity of Past President. We are grateful for the direction and purpose he has provided, which will continue to resonate for years to come. We wish him the very best in his future endeavors and express our deepest appreciation for his service to the IDA.

With sincere gratitude,
The Board of Directors
Indian Doctors' Association,-Houston

IDA SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow us!



@idahouston15



@houstonindian



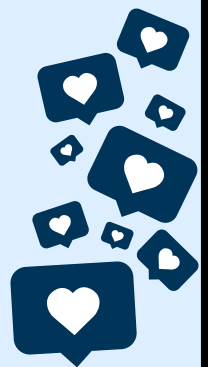
Indian Doctor's
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INDIAN DOCTOR'S ASSOCIATION

BECOME A VOLUNTEER



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

*HELP STRENGTHEN IDA'S
PHYSICIAN VOLUNTEER PANEL*

MENTORSHIP

- Medical Students Career Guidance program
- International Medical Graduate Observerships

HEALTH EQUITY PROGRAM

- Community clinics
- Health Fairs
- Speakers Forum

REACH OUT TO: IDAHOUSTONTX@GMAIL.COM