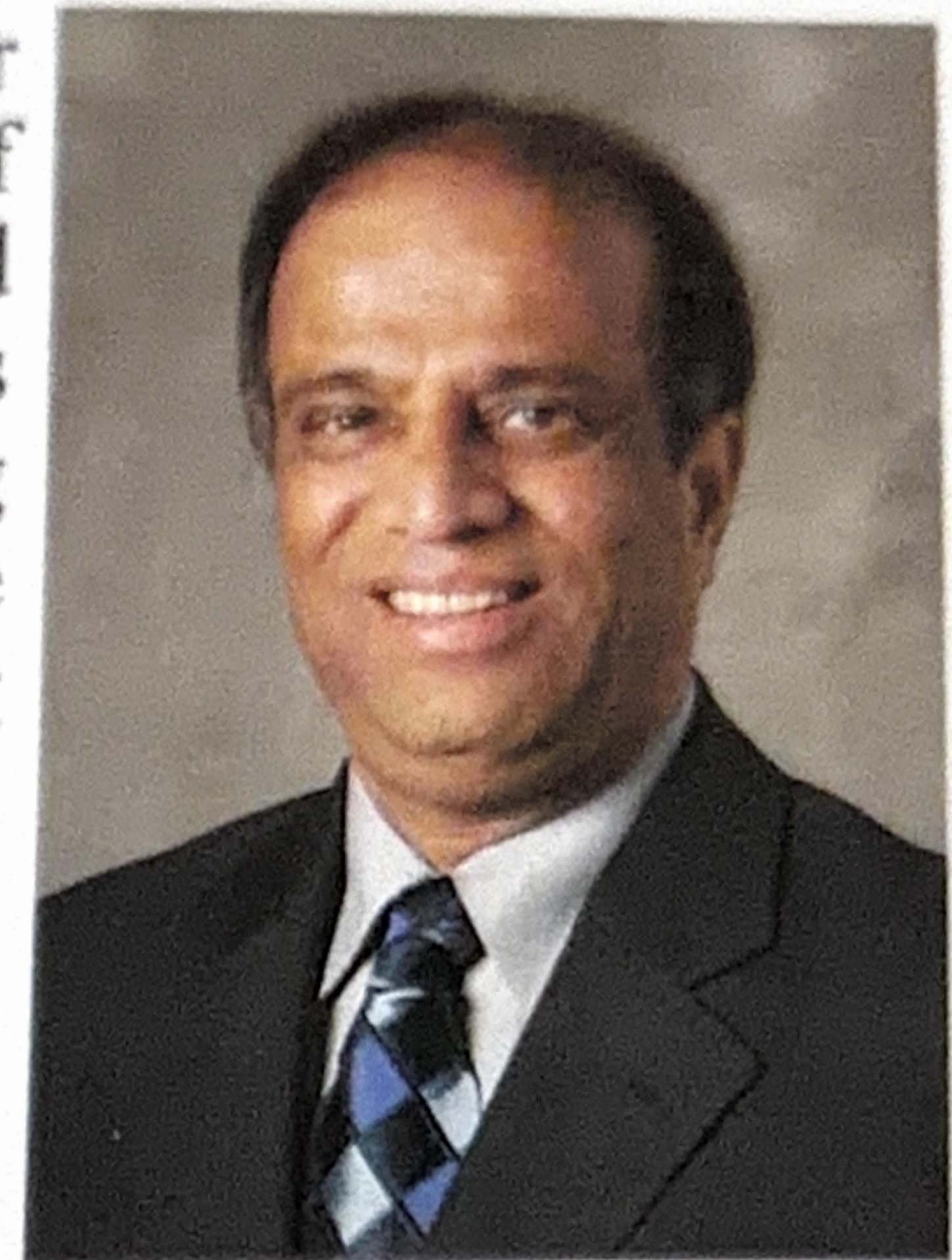


History of the Alumni Education Center and the Formation of the Gandhi Medical College Global Alliance

The idea of creating something special, with an enduring legacy for our alma mater ("nourishing mother"), was conceived by Ravinder Surakanti, a former President of GMC student union, now a practicing internist in Crawfordsville, IN, USA. The seed for this idea was sowed in the mind of Ravinder Surakanti, even as the preparations for Gandhi Medical College Golden Jubilee Celebrations had started. Following this, the evolution of Gandhi Medical College Global Alliance (GMCGA), and the building of the Alumni Education Center (AEC) became intertwined with planning for the Golden Jubilee Celebrations. Ravinder Surakanti was made the Chair of a Committee to prepare for this event of Golden Jubilee by the then President of the Osmania University Alumni Association (OUMA), Jagan Ailinani.



In June 2002, Ravinder Surakanti presented a concept plan for the Alumni Education Center (AEC) during an AAPI meeting in San Antonio, TX. Two months later, this concept was again discussed at a wedding gathering in Cleveland, OH. During that briefing, Ravinder sought volunteers and drafted Sudhaker Rao to head an ad hoc committee to study the feasibility of such a project. Sudhaker Rao requested Vithal Kusuma to serve as its co-chair, to which the latter kindly agreed. An ad hoc committee was formed with approximately 20-25 Gandhi Medical College (GMC) alums.

The committee consisted of the following members: Narsingam Gatla, Govind Rao, Vithal Kusuma, Babu Ramdev, Koppolu Sarma, and Sudhakar Rao. Advisors: Raja Reddy, Gopal Kishan, Vidyasagar Dharmapuri, and Ravinder Surakanti.

As a result of discussions, it was decided to draft a letter to the then CEO of Government of Andhra Pradesh and Honorable Chief Minister, Nara Chandra Babu Naidu. This letter was to request allocation of land at the GMC's new campus for healthcare-related and medical college purposes, and to ask for funds for restoration of an original plan for the hospital that included construction of 9 floors. Sudhakar Rao, as a member of the ad hoc committee, was given the task of drafting this letter, which was to be forwarded to the OUMA for further action and proper presentation to the Government of Andhra Pradesh. Koppolu Sarma also called attention to the fact that there was no cancer institute in the vicinity of Secunderabad and suggested a radiation oncology unit be included in the teaching complex. Subsequently, overseas alumni and Gandhi Medical College Alumni Association (GMCAA) members prevailed upon the AP government to allocate 1000 square yards for the construction of the proposed AEC.

During the first six months, this committee worked very hard in collaboration with other volunteer alumni in creating the committee infrastructure, vision and mission statements, and on the concept of building the AEC. It was proposed that the AEC should have an auditorium, lounge area, classrooms for workshops and demonstration sessions, a library, rooms for visiting faculty and alumni, and a heritage hall to preserve the history of Gandhi Medical College & Hospital. It was estimated that the AEC would cost around \$250,000 for a 3-story building: on the first floor, an auditorium and a lounge; on the second floor, a library and workshop rooms; and on the third floor, faculty rooms with full facilities.

It was anticipated that with a strength of about 1500-2000 GMC alums in the USA and about 500-750 around the globe (UK, Australia, Middle East, the Caribbean etc.), we could easily raise \$250,000 if each alumnus contributes a one-time lifetime membership donation of just \$1000. Additionally, it was envisioned that this could provide another \$1-2 million for a corpus fund, which would support the AEC in perpetuity. Raising \$250,000 for AEC seemed achievable.

However, it became apparent early on that only a few alumni were enthusiastic about contributing \$1000. It was then decided that each ad hoc committee member would donate \$2000, which became the seed