



LIONS LIGHT

Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley

NEWSLETTER

2024 DECEMBER

Chief Editor: PDG James Varghese | Editors: Khush Bodhan, Sunil Bhakta and Koshy John

Lions Clubs International Leaders



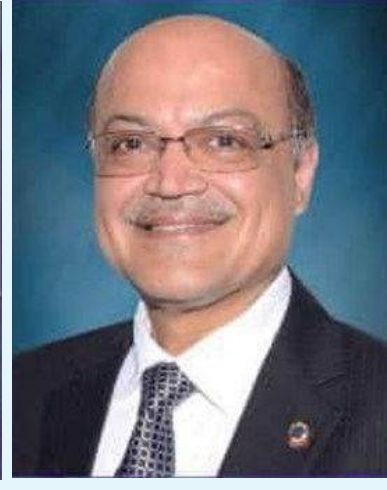
Fabrício Oliveira
(President)



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(1st Vice President)



Mark S. Lyon
(2nd Vice President)



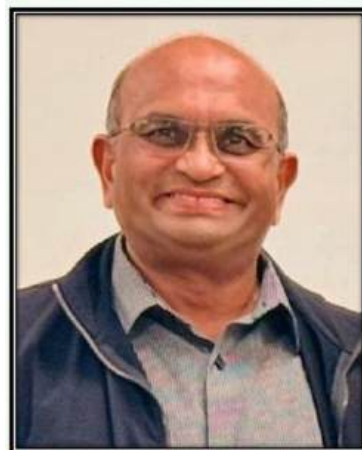
Dr. Manoj Shah
(3rd Vice President)



Dr. Patti Hill
(Imm. Past President)

Message from the Club President

As the President of the Hayward Silicon Valley Lions Club, I am pleased to acknowledge the contribution of every member and every volunteer of the club who has contributed so much of their time and effort to make a positive change in the community. It is your commitment and energy that makes a difference in the lives of people around you and across the world.



Lion Sunil Bhakta

Whether it's organizing events, lending support to those in need, or simply being a reliable and caring presence, your contributions are invaluable.

Through your selflessness and teamwork, you've created opportunities, brought people together, and uplifted spirits, reminding us all of the power of community and shared purpose. Your work does not go unnoticed, and we are profoundly grateful for your contributions.

Message from the Foundation President

Being the Chair of the Hayward Silicon Valley Lions Club Foundation has been a great privilege to be able to help the community and the world.

In the course of the last year, we have been able to perform tremendously both in the United States and other parts of the world in supporting people in need. We would like to thank every one of our donors, but our special thanks go to the Eva Roza Trust that has been a constant source of support for our foundation. Towards 2025, we shall be growing the project to reach more people in need. I am sure that with my great team we will be able to go on helping people in the same selfless way.

On behalf of the Hayward Silicon Valley Lions Club Foundation, I wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous new year!



Khush Bodhan CPA



PDG James Varghese

Message from the Club Service Chair Person and Past District Governor

Dear Fellow Lions,

As another year closes, I'm filled with gratitude for our incredible work together. Your dedication and passion have brought positive change to countless lives, making us one of the best Lions Club in California!

Every project, fundraiser, and hour of volunteer work played a vital role in this achievement. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we've been able to enhance our services and positively impact even more lives. A special thanks to Eva Roza Trust for supporting us. As we enter the new year, I wish you all a happy, healthy, and fulfilling year ahead, with opportunities to make a meaningful difference.

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Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley and IPAC- New Year Celebration at Hayward Veterans Memorial Hall

Event inauguration was done by Lions International District Governor Darlene Ridle along with PDG Bill Ridle, PDG James Varghese, PDG Manil Shrestha, VDG Valerie Griffin, Program Coordinator G. Gopa Kumar, Secretary Koshy John and IPAC Leaders

New Year's Celebration 2025: A Fusion of Cultures and Community

The Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley and the Indian Performance Arts Collective organized a new year celebration at the Hayward Veterans Memorial Hall and the turnout was more than 200 people. It was a great success where people were entertained by outstanding performances and the feeling of hope for the new year.

The celebrations were kicked off by Lions International District Governor Darlene Ridle where she lit the traditional lamp to signify the new year. It was followed by cultural performances which included both American and international artists to entertain the crowd.

Lions International Past District Governor James Varghese welcomed the gathering and guests. He extended new year wishes for everyone to have a great, peaceful and prosperous new year.

'Mantra School of Dance', a professional dance group, entertained everyone with their smooth movements and dramatic presentation. It showed how beautiful and graceful Indian classical dance form is.

Thus, the evening was diversified by other acts, including the American black metal band Tehmodhjin which performed strongly and vigorously, satisfying the audience. Their unique sound and energy became an excellent addition to the overall diverse bill. It was quite intriguing to see one of the best performances of the night which was the traditional South Indian drum concert called Panchari Melam. This high energy drum concert with the sounds of Chenda gave the audience a feel that they were a part of something special which continued throughout the event.

It was not only exciting to watch the various performances but people also shared their wish for a happy, peaceful and prosperous new year. This event also created a feeling of togetherness among people and made everyone realize how important it is to accept each other's differences and be one.

Happy New Year from Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley! As we embark on 2025, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our incredible leaders, dedicated volunteers, and supportive community. We look forward to another year of collaboration and positive impact, creating a brighter future together. Wishing you joy, peace, and fulfillment in the year ahead!

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Hayward Silicon Valley Lions Club donated 20,000 Meals



Our amazing volunteers packed 20,000 meals for families in need!



Volunteers putting labels on each packet



Our youth volunteers dedicated to serve those in need!

September 29: The Hayward Silicon Valley Lions Club, in partnership with Rise Against Hunger, hosted a powerful meal-packing event on September 29th at the Hayward Veterans Memorial Hall. Over 100 volunteers assembled 20,000 meals for those facing food insecurity worldwide.

Energized volunteers filled packages with nutritious ingredients, driven by a shared purpose. "It's truly heartwarming to witness this unity," remarked Sunil Bhakta. Club president Khush Bodhan added, "We are packing our love and compassion for those facing hunger."

This initiative reflects the club's dedication to serving both local and global communities. By collaborating with Rise Against Hunger, they ensure these meals reach those most in need. The event also raised awareness about hunger and inspired community action.

The Hayward Silicon Valley Lions Club's successful event demonstrated the impact of collective compassion and offered a powerful message of hope in the fight against hunger. Past International Director Ken Ibarra, District Governor Darlene Ridle, Vice District Governor Laxmi Chaudhari, PDG James Varghese, PDG Kevin Patel and Falguni Patel were also joined the meal packing.

"An empty stomach knows no philosophy, no morality, no hope. Let us fill those stomachs and nourish those minds, for a world without hunger is a world with a future."

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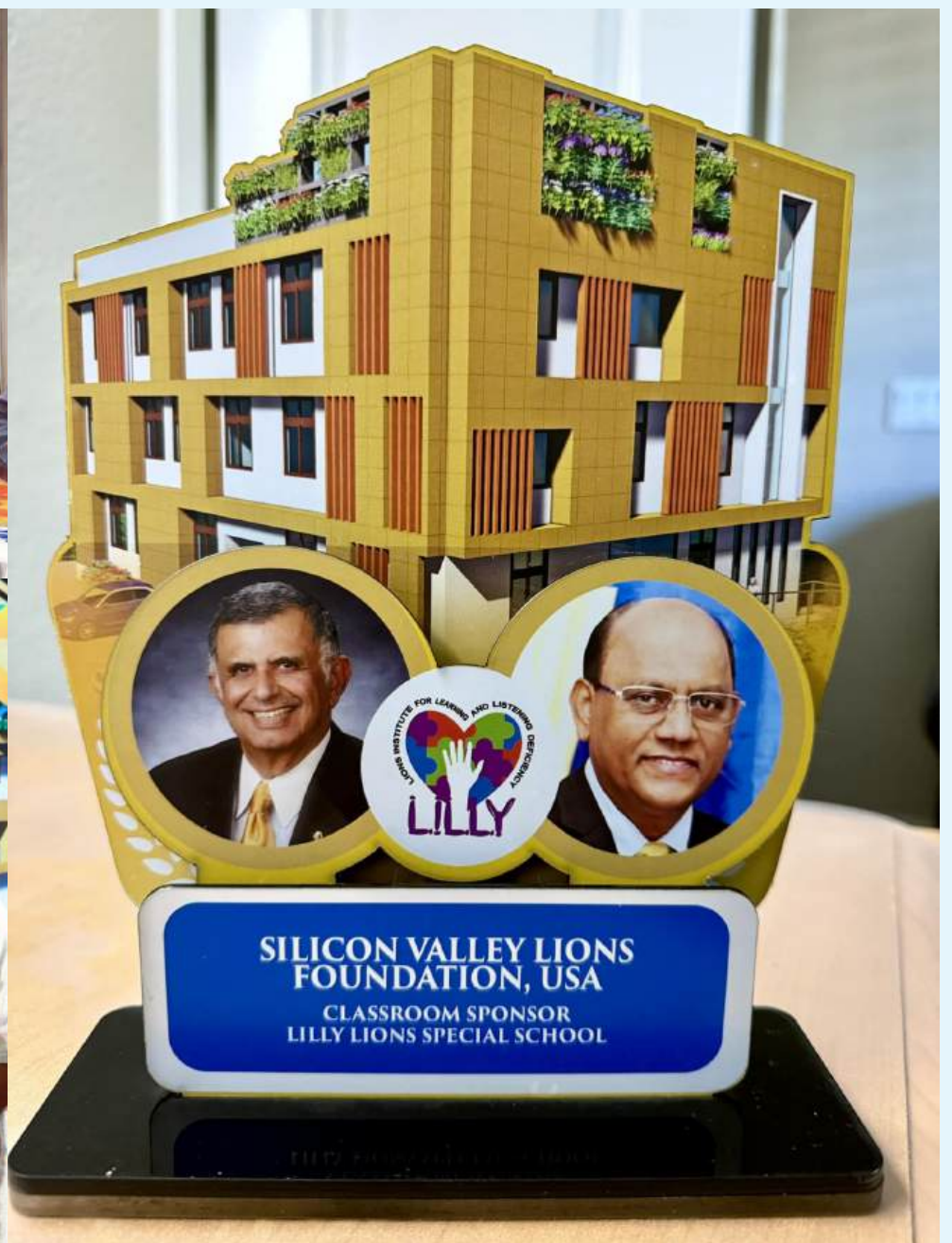
Lilly Lions Special School opens in Kerala State of India

Nov 30, Kerala: Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley has a new reason to roar! Kerala State Government Minister Saji Cherian officially inaugurated the brand new, state-of-the-art facility for the school. Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley sponsored 4 Class Rooms in this school for Special Children. The school has the capacity to train 300 specially abled children.

This three-story building boasts modern amenities, including elevators to ensure accessibility for all students. The fully equipped facility is equipped with an enhanced learning environment and opportunities to thrive. This new building marks a significant milestone in Lilly Lions Special School's commitment to providing quality education and support for children with special needs in the region.



Kerala State Minister Saji Cherian and Indian Parliament Member Kodikunnil Suresh inaugurating the new school building.



During the recent inauguration of the Lilly Lions Special School Building in Chengannur, Kerala, PDG James Varghese from California, recognized two exceptional individuals: S. Gopinathan, a full-time volunteer, whose unwavering commitment and selfless service have been invaluable to Lilly Lions Special School, and K.K. Rajendran, Founder Trustee and Administrator, both were recognized with Lions International Presidents Certificate.

Lions Club and Firefighters Spread Holiday Cheer to Local Children

Hayward, CA: The Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley and the Hayward Fire Department teamed up this week to bring joy to underprivileged children in the community through their annual "Holiday Gifts for Kids" program. This is a wonderful program which has been conducted for the last three consecutive years to make sure that children in need have something to celebrate during the Christmas season.

The Lions Club, which is well known for its volunteering activities, raised funds to buy toys and gifts for children, thanks to Eva Roza Trust for their major contribution. The members of the club prepared 75 gift bags that reflected the holiday spirit and delivered the same to the fire station. The local fire fighters from Hayward who often come across families in need during their duty, deliver the gifts

"As firefighters, we are committed to the safety and well-being of our community, and that means supporting the people in our community who are most in need," said one of the Fire Department officials. "It is our pleasure to work with the Lions Club for this initiative. There is no feeling quite like seeing the happiness in a child when they get a present."

Sunil Bhakta, president of the Hayward Silicon Valley Lions Club, stated. "It's all about bringing smiles to these kids."



75 Gift bags delivered to local fire station for proper delivery to the children in need

Lions Club supporting FFYO

At USS Hornet with the incredible non profit organization 'Failing Forward Youth Outreach' (FFYO). This non-profit is doing amazing work, connecting firefighters and community leaders with at-risk youth. They offer mentorship, guidance, and a safe space to "fail forward" – turning setbacks into stepping stones. Thanks to the Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley for financially supporting this organization.



Photos taken during the meeting with FFYO (Failing Forward Youth Outreach). Lion Khush Bodhan, Lions Sunil Bhakta, Lion Nash Bhakta and Past District Governor James Varghese

Lions Club & AFMC Bring Clear Vision to Those in Need

The Lions Club of Hayward, in partnership with the Ashland Free Medical Clinic (AFMC), is continuing its mission to provide free eye exams and prescription glasses to low-income, uninsured individuals. Over the past two years, the program has helped numerous people regain their vision and improve their quality of life.

"We are thrilled to be able to offer this much-needed service to our community," said Khush Bodhan, President of the Lions Club Foundation. "Many people simply cannot afford the cost of eye care, and this can have a significant impact on their ability to work, go to school, and live a full life."

The program is made possible by the generous support of volunteers from both the Lions Club and AFMC, as well as volunteer optometrists from Kaiser Permanente. "We are so grateful to all of the volunteers who are making this program a success," said James Varghese, Past District Governor for Lions Clubs International. "Their dedication and compassion are truly making a difference in the lives of others."

One recipient of the program, shared their experience: "I was struggling to see clearly, but I couldn't afford to see an eye doctor. I'm so grateful to the Lions Club and AFMC for providing me with free glasses. Now I can see perfectly, and it has made a world of difference in my life."

The Lions Club of Hayward and AFMC are committed to continuing this important program and helping even more people in need. "We believe that everyone deserves access to quality eye care," said Sunil Bhakta, President of Hayward Lions Club. "We are proud to be working with AFMC to make this a reality for our community."



In the Photo: Dr. Nguyen (Volunteer Doctor from Kaiser Permanente), Koshy John (Secretary of the Club), James Varghese Past District Governor, Patient Coordinator Carolina Gonzales



Free Eye Clinic for those who are low income and no insurance benefits

"A free eye exam and a pair of glasses aren't just about clearer vision; they're about giving someone the confidence to see their full potential and live their life to the fullest."

The Lions Club is partnering with Canine Companions!

We're incredibly proud to support this amazing organization that provides expertly trained service dogs to individuals with disabilities at no cost. These remarkable dogs assist with tasks such as opening doors, retrieving dropped items, and offering emotional support. They truly make a life-changing difference!

Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley made our first contribution of \$5,000, which was gratefully accepted by PID Ken Ibarra, the President of Canine Companions.



Club Foundation President Khush Bodhan handing over a \$5000 Check to PID Ken Ibarra for Canine Companions



Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley donating \$8000 to Rise Against Hunger organization. From Left to Right: PDG Linda Griffin, Lawrence from RAH, Club President Sunil Bhakta, Treasurer Nash Bhakta, Foundation President Khush Bodhan, PDG James Varghese, VDG Laxmi Chaudhary, District Governor Darlene Ridle and Club Director G.Gopakumar.



Supporting Nepali Dashain Festival and helping children with backpacks

Lions Club Partners with SOLACE to Sponsor 60 Children with Pediatric Cancer

October 29: The Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley is dedicated to supporting children with cancer and their families through impactful partnerships with SOLACE charities.

SOLACE is a non-profit charitable organization based in Kerala, India, dedicated to providing free palliative care and support to low-income children with cancer. They offer a range of services, including pain and symptom management, emotional and psychosocial support, and end-of-life care. SOLACE aims to improve the quality of life for these children and their families, ensuring they receive the care and support they need during a challenging time.



Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley Club Officers handing over a check amounts \$15,000 to SOLACE Charities.

From left to right: Lion Koshy John (Club Secretary), G.Gopakumar (Director), James Varghese (Past District Governor), Khush Bodhan (Foundation Chair Person), Supriya Viswanathan (Solace Charities USA President), Sindhu Nair (Solace Charities, Bay Area Secretary) and Lion Biju Nair

Lions Club Makes Waves with Act of Kindness!

The Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley recently sponsored a beach trip for 20 visually impaired women from the Pothanicad Occupational Blind School, giving them the opportunity to experience the joy and wonder of the ocean.

Imagine the feeling of the cool waves rushing over your feet, the sound of the crashing waves, and the smell of the salty air – all for the first time. This is the gift the Lions Club gave these amazing women.

The Pothanicad Occupational Blind School is a school that provides education and training to visually impaired individuals. The school helps students to develop the skills they need to live independent and productive lives.

This act of kindness by the Lions Club is a wonderful example of how we can all make a difference in the lives of others. The visually impaired women who participated in the beach trip will never forget this special day.



Lions Club of Hayward Roars into Action with Back-to-School Supplies Distribution

July 2024: The Lions Club of Hayward continued its longstanding commitment to education by hosting its annual backpack and school supplies distribution event. Hundreds of local low-income students and many students from Alameda and Contra Costa Counties received backpacks filled with essential tools for the classroom, ensuring they start the school year prepared and confident. "Every child deserves this opportunity," says Club Foundation President Khush Bodhan. "By providing these much-needed supplies, we hope to alleviate some of the financial burden faced by families and empower students to focus on their education."



Hayward Lions Honors Veterans with Thanksgiving feast

November 16: In Partnership with American Legion Post 68 Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley provided Thanksgiving turkey dinner to many veterans at the Hayward Veterans Memorial Hall. Around 200 veterans joined to enjoy the dinner and music band by the Oasis Big Band. Special Thanks to Shimento Inc of Pleasanton for the financial support.



Serving Thanksgiving Dinner

G.Gopakumar, Khush Bodhan and Alfredo Rodriguez



A deserving recognition for Dr. Kim Nguyen for her outstanding volunteering support to Lions Club & Community

**Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley
making headlines with Community Service**



Few News Clippings from print media.

Hayward, CA – The Lions Club of Hayward Silicon Valley is gaining recognition not only locally but also internationally for its impactful community service initiatives. This dynamic group consistently attracts media attention with its wide-ranging projects, from local efforts to global outreach.

Beyond Hayward, the club has been actively involved in international projects. Their efforts include providing disaster relief, supporting educational initiatives, blind school and Schools for special children etc.

"We are committed to serving our community, both near and far," says Club Foundation President Khush Bodhan and Past District Governor James Varghese. "Our members are passionate about making a difference, and we are proud of the impact we are making", club president Sunil Bhakta.

YOUTH VOLUNTEER RECOGNITIONS

