

HEMKUNT INTERNATIONAL

SIKH YOUTH SYMPOSIUM
KIRTAN DARBAAR
PANTHIC DIGITAL VOICE
HOUSTON, TEXAS
JULY 23-27 2025



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Mission

To encourage, promote and disseminate teachings of the sikh gurus, and their message of universal brotherhood, peace and tolerance. To impart spiritual, moral and religious teachings in a scientific manner. To encourage participation of children, youth and adults in social and religious activities, learning of keertan, gurbani, philosophy of sikh religion, sikh history, fine arts and culture. to promote learning of punjabi language in gurmukhi script and study of spiritual teachings including guru granth sahib. To establish institutions like schools, libraries, art galleries and allied institutions and to organize camps, conferences, study tours, lectures and seminars in various parts of the world for achieving the above mentioned purposes. HEMKUNT2.ORG

Words of Wisdom



A Welcome Message

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**By: Dr. Hardam Azad, Chairman of the Board
of Sikh National Center**



On behalf of the Sikh National Center (SNC), I extend a heartfelt welcome to all the participants, families, and guests joining us for Hemkunt International 2025. It is a privilege for our Houston community to host this milestone event and bring together Sikhs from around the world in celebration of Sikhi, education, spirituality, and unity.

The Sikh National Center was founded with a purpose that extends far beyond bricks and mortar. One of our core missions is to promote Sikh education—especially for our youth. That vision led to the creation of the Sikh National Education Institute (SNEI), which serves as a platform to inspire the next generation with Gurmat, Sikh history, and leadership values. This same vision has shaped our campus. From its inception, the SNC Darbar Hall, stage, and sound system were designed with programs like Hemkunt and Keertan Darbaars in mind. We wanted to ensure that Sikh youth have the opportunity to share their voices, their talents, and their passion for Sikhi in an environment built to support them.

We look forward to seeing the next generation shine throughout this historic week. Welcome to Houston, welcome to the Sikh National Center, and welcome to Hemkunt International 2025!

ਜੀ ਆਇਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੇਮਕੁੰਟ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ

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**By: Prithvipal and Manmeet Likhari
of Gurdwara Sahib of Southwest Houston**



Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!

It is with open hearts and deep gratitude that we welcome the global Sangat to Houston for Hemkunt International 2025. This is more than a competition—it's a celebration of Sikhi, youth empowerment, and shared values that unite us no matter where we come from.

At Gurdwara Sahib of Southwest Houston, we are proud to stand alongside fellow Houston gurdwaras in hosting this year's symposium. Since our founding in 2006, our community has steadily grown into a spiritual home for hundreds of families. The Gurdwara has become a place of daily connection—where paath, kirtan, langar, and learning come together in the spirit of seva and Simran.

Over the years, our Sangat has been shaped by one guiding principle: the belief that every generation must be supported, inspired, and heard. From our vibrant youth programs to Punjabi language classes and Gurmat camps, we've worked to ensure that children and young adults have every opportunity to explore their identity and deepen their relationship with Sikhi. In this regard, we have hosted multiple Gurmat Sangeet Dewaans by late Padma Shri Bhai Nirmal Singh, a gifted and legendary exponent of Gurmat Sangeet and Dr. Gurnam Singh, former dean, founder professor head of Gurmat Sangeet chair.

Events like Hemkunt are a true reflection of this spirit. Here, young minds engage with Gurbani, reflect on Sikh history, and build the confidence to lead with humility and purpose. Watching these participants take the stage—reciting, presenting, and singing with such grace—is a reminder of how bright the future of our Panth truly is. To every guest arriving in Houston: we hope you feel at home. Whether you visit our Gurdwara or participate in the events elsewhere across the city, know that the entire Houston Sikh community is here to serve you with love and respect. We are honored to be part of this moment. May your time in Houston bring inspiration, joy, and lasting memories.

Greetings Hemkunt Family! ⁷

**By: Amrik Singh Nijjar, President of
Sikh Center**



Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!
It is my heartfelt pleasure to welcome all participants, families, judges, and organizers to Houston for Hemkunt 2025. It's always a special moment when Sikhs from across the world gather to celebrate Sikhi, nurture the next generation, and share knowledge and devotion. The Houston Sangat feels blessed to once again host this remarkable event. Our city has seen tremendous

growth, not just in numbers, but in unity and spirit. Over the years, the Sikh Center of the Gulf Coast Area, where I have had the privilege to serve, has played an important role in building that foundation. Established in 1973, the Sikh Center stands as one of Texas's oldest and most active gurdwaras, dedicated to seva, sangat, and Sikh education. It is the First Texas Historical Marker Gurdwara in Texas! This year, as we welcome the Hemkunt family to our city, we reflect on how far our community has come—and how much we can achieve when we come together with purpose and love for Sikhi. On behalf of the Sikh Center and the entire Houston Sangat, I extend a warm welcome to all of you. May your time here be filled with inspiration, friendship, and a renewed commitment to Sikhi. We look forward to seeing you in Houston! Amrik S. Nijjar President– Sikh Center of the Gulf Coast Area. We look forward to seeing the next generation shine throughout this historic week. Welcome to Houston, welcome to the Sikh National Center, and welcome to Hemkunt International 2025!

Welcome to the 2025 Sri Hemkunt Symposium

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By: Prithpal Singh, President, Sri Hemkunt Foundation



Dear Friends and Family of Sri Hemkunt Foundation,
It brings me immense joy to welcome you to this year's Sri Hemkunt Symposium. Each year, this gathering renews our collective spirit and reminds us of the power of community rooted in Sikhi, seva, and shared purpose. My journey with the Hemkunt Foundation began more than four decades ago, inspired by the vision of our founder, Sardar Shamsheer Singh. What started as a single speech competition has since evolved into a global platform nurturing the minds and hearts of Sikh youth. I still remember when my own children first participated. The impact it had on their confidence, their connection to Sikhi, and their sense of self was transformative. That experience ignited a lifelong commitment in me, to ensure that every child has access to this same opportunity for growth.

Together with a dedicated team of sevadars, we expanded Hemkunt Foundation's offerings to include Kirtan. We became the first international organisation to formally promote the study and performance of tanti saaj (traditional Sikh string instruments) and Raag Kirtan that had nearly faded from wider access. By creating spaces and incentives for children to learn and perform this vidya, we are not only preserving history, but we are also helping them embody it.

To the parents: thank you for entrusting us with your children's spiritual and cultural development. Your encouragement and support are the pillars that make this movement sustainable and strong. To the children and youth participating each year: you are the reason we do this. Your dedication, your passion, and your curiosity inspire me every single day. You are not just the future; you are the present. Your voices matter. Your leadership matters. And through this platform, we hope to nourish your love for Sikhi and give you the confidence to shine in every part of your life.

To the many sevadars and volunteers behind the scenes: thank you for your unwavering commitment. Whether you're coordinating logistics, mentoring youth, or offering your time in quiet ways, your service is the heartbeat of this Foundation.

This symposium is more than a competition, it is a space for learning, self-expression, and deepening our shared connection to our heritage. It is a chance to grow not only as speakers, musicians, or learners, but as compassionate leaders guided by Sikh values.

We are proud of how far we've come, and even more excited for what lies ahead. Let us continue to walk this path together, with purpose, humility, and collective hope.

Waheguru in the Wired World: Cultivating Sikh Wisdom Through Modern Tools

By: Karamjit Singh,
Vice President of Sri Hemkunt Foundation Inc.



Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa! Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!!

It is my pleasure and honor to welcome participants, parents, judges, coordinators, volunteers, and guests from London, U.K.; Kenya; and various parts of America who have come to Houston, Texas, for yet another inspiring international program.

The Sri Hemkunt Foundation, established in 1980, has long been dedicated to nurturing a love for Sikh history, Gurmat Sangeet, and spiritual values, particularly using traditional string instruments associated with Guru Sahibaan. We have also embraced modern tools, helping children express their understanding through digital media.

In recent times, we are witnessing a transformative opportunity: the integration of artificial intelligence in education. AI can play a pivotal role in deepening spiritual understanding among the youth. With its power to personalize learning and make content engaging and accessible, AI can help bring Sikh teachings to life in ways we could not imagine before. Through intelligent storytelling, voice-guided Kirtan practice, interactive quizzes on Sikh history, or virtual Sangat simulations, we can nurture a spiritually enriched environment for our children. Used properly, AI can be a bridge to connect young minds with the timeless wisdom of Guru Granth Sahib.

My journey with the Foundation began in 1986 when my younger son, Jaspal Singh, participated in the 2nd age group. Although he didn't win first place, he gained so much more. Public speaking skills, confidence, and most importantly, the foundational values of Sikhi became part of his being. Today, he speaks comfortably before thousands and explains Sikh principles to those unfamiliar with them. With AI-powered tools, we now can pass on these same skills and values to children across the globe, even in remote areas. While healthy competition is beneficial and motivates improvement, I urge all participants and parents to focus more on the inner journey — the values, discipline, and spiritual insight that come from participating in these programs.

The Foundation's mission has always inspired me. I began volunteering and have been moved by witnessing the growth of countless children into thoughtful, confident individuals. I invite our alumni and parents to get involved — not only to sustain our programs but also to help us innovate. Let us together harness the tools of today, including AI, to preserve and spread the eternal message of Sikhi for generations to come.

Texas Hemkunt 2025: A Legacy of Faith, Leadership, and Seva

By: Ruben Singh Bains, Southern Region Sewadaar



With folded hands and an open heart, I welcome you on behalf of the Sun Belt Zone Host Committee to Hemkunt International 2025 in Houston, Texas — ਜੀ ਆਇਆਂ ਨੂੰ. This year marks the 36th International Symposium and the 17th Keertan Darbaar. I have served as a Hemkunt sewadaar for nearly 15 years because I believe — deeply and unequivocally — in Hemkunt's vision. Since its founding, Hemkunt Foundation has pursued a noble mission: to instill the values of Sikhi in the next generation and to empower them to lead with purpose, integrity, and spiritual grounding. This mission is not merely aspirational — it is being fulfilled every day. I have personally witnessed children who once hesitated to speak on stage go on to become leaders in law, medicine, technology, business, and public life — all while remaining anchored in the eternal principles of ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨੀ, ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣਾ, ਨਾਮ ਜਪਣਾ (honest living, sharing with others, remembering God).

Professionally, I have practiced intellectual property law for nearly three decades. When I began in the 1990s, I was the only turbaned Sikh practicing patent law in Texas. I started at one of the state's most respected firms, walking into boardrooms and courtrooms where I often stood alone in both identity and conviction. But I was never truly alone. I carried with me the strength of my Sikh upbringing and the teachings of the Gurus. That spiritual foundation allowed me not only to persevere, but to rise — to embody the Sikh ideal of excellence with humility, resolve with grace. And it is these very qualities — confidence, clarity, and spiritual integrity — that Hemkunt helps cultivate in its youth. Organizing an International event of this magnitude is a profound responsibility. It begins with careful planning, complex negotiations, and collaboration across many institutions. In Houston, our team has been working with dedication to raise nearly \$150,000 and to prepare for close to 1,000 guests — including over 250 youth participants. Behind the scenes are countless volunteer hours, meetings, phone calls, spreadsheets, and sacrifices. But this July, when the youth of our Panth walk into the opening ceremony with their heads held high and their hearts filled with the light of Sikhi — that will be the moment when every challenge becomes a blessing. For my family, Hemkunt is not just an organization — it is a lived experience. Every child in our extended Bains family has been shaped by this program. And we have seen them emerge more grounded, more articulate, and more committed to their faith. That is why my wife, Dr. Amrita Bains, and I were inspired to help establish the Gurmat Sangeet Academy at the Sikh National Center in Houston nearly 10 years ago. What began with one teacher and ten students has now grown into a thriving institution with five professional instructors and nearly sixty students — learning kirtan in raags, tabla, and tantisaaz. It is our small attempt to preserve and pass on the sacred sound of our tradition. Hemkunt has given our family so much. Through this International event, we, along with the Sun Belt team, are humbled to give back — not just to Houston, but to the global Sikh community. May you leave this gathering with your spirit uplifted, your heart inspired, and your commitment to Sikhi deepened. As Gurbani reminds us:

"ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਤ ਹੋਇ ਨਿਹਕਾਮੀ, ਤਿਸ ਕਉ ਹੋਤ ਪਰਾਪਤ ਸੁਆਮੀ"

When one serves selflessly, they draw closer to the Divine.

Welcome to Hemkunt 2025. May it be a milestone in your journey of faith, leadership, and seva.

Developing Future Sikh Storytellers!

By: Dr. Preeti Singh



Social media and content creation have become integral to our daily lives. An impressive 63.9% of the global population engages with social media, spending an average of 2 hours and 21 minutes each day (February 2025, according to Webindex). Children and youth are at the forefront of this revolution, producing engaging reels and captivating videos with remarkable skill. Sikhs have minimal or no representation in main-stream digital media or journalism.

Introducing PDV (Panthic Digital Voice), the creative playground for young creators! PDV was launched by the Hemkunt Foundation in collaboration with SikhLens in the year 2017. This program was developed under the guidance of Chapman University's Dodge College of Film and Media Arts. This platform provides Sikh youth and children with an opportunity to create short Sikhi-inspired films.

This initiative marked an exciting new venture from the Hemkunt Foundation!

In 2023, children from the Sunbelt region participated enthusiastically in this competition. A trio of young filmmakers from Houston collaborated to produce a film centered on the theme of Naam Japna. Despite coming from two different Gurdwaras, they united their friends and families to involve their schools in this creative endeavor! Though only three creators, they ignited a wave of curiosity among peers from diverse backgrounds about the profound concept of Naam Japna.

By 2024, interest surged, prompting us to host a filmmaking workshop in collaboration with SikhLens. Led by the talented Harjus Singh, the workshop was a resounding success! Participants absorbed valuable filmmaking insights from an expert, and we received five film submissions from the Sunbelt region, with two films earning accolades at the international level!

Kudos to the Hemkunt Foundation for this fantastic initiative to engage young content creators! We eagerly anticipate more children joining the movement to create their own Sikh-centric short films. Our unwavering support and encouragement are always behind them!

The PDV Team of Houston comprises of Dr. Preeti Singh, Mandeep Singh, Dr. Harcharan Singh

A Journey of Faith and Confidence

By: **Manpreet K Singh**



"Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!" I confidently greeted the sangat before me each time I stood or sat in our Gurdwara. I was taught to speak our greeting firmly and loudly. It wasn't until law school, where I saw my fellow students' hands trembling before they spoke, that I realized I had Gurdwara and my sangat to thank for my unwavering confidence. After each shabad and Hemkunt speech, the aunties and uncles would approach me, placing their hands on my head to bless me and express their pride. Entering the legal field was much like being in middle and high school, where I was often the only Sikh in the room. I represented what our parents taught us about the Gurus' embodiment. I was told that we have a duty not only to ourselves but also to those we meet to portray our amazing faith and the principles that mirror many of our daily values.

At your age, you may feel frustrated and annoyed that your parents are pushing you to participate as they do. While you might not mind the money or gifts promised for placing in competitions, consider this: each time you take the stage, you project your voice through the microphone and carry pride in the message you convey. Remember that whenever we stand before the sangat, we represent our people. We often hear this, but we must not forget that we embody the fight for justice, the quest for gender and class equality, and oneness with those around us. After three elections in one year, I finally became fully integrated into the American fabric by becoming a Judge. On the day of my investiture, I witnessed a sea of turbans entering a historic civil building in the nation's third-largest county. Our mayor even remarked that he knew where to go by following the turbans into the building. As the proceedings began, my beautiful turbaned friend Juspreet Kaur stood before 250 people who were unfamiliar with our community and proclaimed: "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!" What it must have looked like to the members of the audience to see this! One speech led to another, and suddenly I was raising my right hand while my left rested on a gutka. I did what I had done in Gurdwara for years: I bowed my head for my parents to touch and bless. As I reached the podium to address the audience about our community's monumental accomplishment, I stood before the microphone just as I had hundreds of times at the Gurdwara – and proceeded with ease. This is truly a blessing. Our faith gives us the ability to project our beliefs through an intrinsic skill set. I am forever grateful to my sangat for this gift. Now in my third year as a Judge, nothing brings me greater joy than zipping up my black robe each morning and seeing my jura atop my head in the mirror. I walk into my courtroom, seeing the words "Sabna jee ka ik daata so mai visar na jae" beneath a painting of a lion and its mane. I pass by a beautiful picture of my nani ma and nana ji, who began this journey for me long before I was born. Only then do I hear "all rise" and take my seat. As I assume my position each day, I am humbled by the path given to me. I am also consistently reminded of the principles of Sikhism that guide my everyday compassion for our fellow brothers and sisters. I love our faith, I love our Guru's teachings, and I love that YOU have committed to understanding the role that Hemkunt and your sangat will play in your life, both today and in your future. Always stay in Chardi Kala—in high spirits, with unwavering optimism and courage!

Hemkunt Symposium 2025 13

By: Inderpal Singh Gumer

Last time Space City, Houston Sikh Community hosted the Hemkunt Speech and Keertan competition was in 2011, fourteen years ago. Since then, Sikh and South Asian community in Houston probably doubled. In 2011 Sikh National Center Gurdwara was a virtual dream and now it is a reality. Gurdwara building is complete, occupied and being used for daily and weekly services. Since 2011 Sikh Center of the Gulf Coast Area building has increased in size and enhanced their outlook. Gurdwara on Breen Road has face lifted their building and Southwest Gurdwara as well has added more acreage to their holdings. In all, the Houston Sikh Community has substantially grown since the last Hemkunt symposium. One sector for significant Sikh population growth is in the transport industry. This may be due to Houston being located almost in the middle of Interstate 10 East – West stretch. The first Sikh Center of the Gulf Coast Area building was inaugurated in November 1973 at Guru Nanak Sahib Gurdwara. In 2023 the Sikh Center celebrated its Golden (50th) anniversary throughout the year. Several events like the Interfaith event, Blood Drives, Health Fair and more were held. Events peaked out in November at Guru Nanak Sahib Parkash day celebration. Final day highlights included speeches by Honorables Houston Mayor and area County Commissioner. The Mayor and Commissioner issued a proclamation in honor of Guru Nanak Sahib Parkash celebration and Sikh Center Golden anniversary. A Souvenir and Sikh Center history books were issued the same day as well. The Mayor and Commissioner both wore turbans as a respect to Sikh community. The Sikh Center of the Gulf Coast Area achieved another milestone in 2023. Sikh Center has become part of Texas history and was awarded the Texas Historical Marker. Physical marker itself was received recently (January 2025). This was after almost two years of continuous effort in meeting County and State requirements. I am a long time resident of Houston, and I had the opportunity to coordinate this effort. Input came from the founders of this organization, while some of them have even passed away. Historical marker is awaiting erection and opening ceremony, most likely to happen at Guru Nanak Sahib Gurdwara in November. I want to conclude my humble few words with a quote from our County Chair for Historical Markers: I'll conclude this by saying that I am really happy about this. When we first started working on it I did some research and (as I recall) found that the Sikhs had one historical marker in Canada and something, but not much, in Ohio. This accomplishment is not only significant in the Houston area as Inderpal mentioned but throughout our nation. In the end, we welcome another opportunity to host Hemkunt 2025 participants, Judges and guests. I am very positive that we, the Houston Sikh community, and your local hosts will do everything to make your stay a worthwhile experience.

Our Journey with the Hemkunt 14

Foundation

By: Mrs. Joginder Kaur Manchanda

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for my association with the Hemkunt Foundation for over the past 36 years, particularly in organizing the Symposium for our Sikh youth in Houston.

This service (Sewa) has afforded me a wonderful opportunity to deepen my understanding of Sikh history, the lives and teachings of our revered Guru Sahibs, and Gurbani and Gurmat. I have had the privilege of reading several insightful books and connecting with Sikh children and their young parents. The children are encouraged to share the challenges they face, and together, we discuss strategies for overcoming these obstacles.

May Waheguru Ji bless the organizers of the Hemkunt Foundation.

An unexpected yet encouraging development occurred when I received a letter from the Hemkunt Foundation inviting me to participate in the speech symposium. S. Rangeel Singh, a relative of Shamsher Singh, noticed the letter in my hand and urged me to participate in the competition. Seeking further information, S. Rangeel Singh Ji spoke with Shamsher Singh Ji, and within a week, I received a call from him. He inspired me and connected me with Madanjit Singh Ji, who was coordinating the Symposium in Florida but was fortuitously stationed in Houston then. This meeting marked the beginning of Houston's involvement in this esteemed competition.

From the outset, our children have excelled at the international level, garnering various accolades that have motivated both the participants and their parents and led to increased engagement.

Parents, such as Davinder Singh Khera, have stepped forward to assist in organizing the symposium. As time progressed, Madanjit Singh Ji expanded the initiative to include Arizona, forming the South Zone. This expansion posed challenges for some parents, but Prof. Harcharan Singh Ji, who relocated to Houston, facilitated discussions with the headquarters, establishing a separate Texas Zone. The Sikh community in Houston has since flourished, and we now have three centers. Prof. Harcharan Singh Ji and S. Davinder Singh Khera oversee programs at the Sikh National Center with the support of numerous dedicated volunteers. Manmeet Kaur Likhari Ji and local volunteers are organizing events at the Sugar Land Gurdwara Sahib. Sundeep Singh Bhatia and various other volunteers have adeptly managed the Sikh Center Gurdwara Sahib for many years. Participation has surged, and we are thriving at the Sikh Center.

The Hemkunt Foundation initially launched the speech competition to promote awareness of Sikhism—championing values such as equality, selfless service, Sikh identity, and commitment to our principles.

The organizers subsequently introduced the Gurmat Sangeet competition, which has provided excellent opportunities for learning Gurbani Kirtan based on the Rags. We extend our gratitude to all the Bhai Sahibs who have been training the children to play various instruments, with multiple Jathas participating in the Gurbani Sangeet competition at the international level. In this technological age, The PDV (Pantheic Digital Voice) competition, which focuses on creating short films, has also been started. The children are enthusiastic about participating in this program as well.

As time has passed, we have mourned the loss of several remarkable individuals who were the backbone of the Hemkunt Foundation: S. Shamsher Singh Ji, Dr. Balwant Singh Ji, Dr. Gurinder Singh Bedi, S. Jasbir Singh Sethi, and S. Joginder Singh Ji. These torchbearers of the Sikh faith served as invaluable guides for our youth. Waheguru Ji, may you place the Sikhi torch in the hands of dedicated Gursikhs. At the headquarters, S. Karamjit Singh Ji and Bhenji Rajinder Kaur, who flourished under Shamsher Singh Ji's mentorship, have taken charge and are doing commendable work.

The foundation's organization has been exemplary. In Houston, S. Harcharan Singh Ji, Veer Davinder Singh Khera Ji, Ruben Singh Bains, Amrita Kaur Bains, Sundeep Singh Bhatia, Gagan Kaur Bhatia, Manmeet Kaur Likhari, Mandeep Singh, Preeti Singh, and all other volunteers are executing their roles splendidly.

With the grace of Akal Purakh, the Hemkunt Foundation is thriving! My Ardas is for Waheguru Ji to bless the torch bearers of Sikhi. Whenever I encounter the pioneering participants of the Hemkunt symposium—handsome Gursikhs successfully established in their careers and dedicated to Sikhi, who have organized Sikh youth camps in major U.S. cities—I am filled with immense joy and pride.

Always Ardas resonates in my heart.

"Waheguru Ji, Mehar Karan."

Taking Small Children to Religious Services

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By: Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev, M.D., F.A.A.N*

Culture and faith are very much intertwined with one another irrespective of the country or continent. The influence of culture on faith is fairly significant to the extent that the same religion could be practiced in entirely different ways in two distinct cultures. This distinction becomes more important and apparent when the faith assumes international proportions to the point that one might have difficulty in recognizing one's own faith on confronting it in another continent or country.

In the multi-faith societies of the world including that of India, the minority faiths often get wrapped up with the local cultural traditions, rituals and popular majority faith concepts to the extent that it might become difficult to discern minority faith traditions from that of majority. The Christianity, a world religion, is a clear example of what has been stated above. Some of the ritualistic practices seen in Christianity in countries of Latin America, Africa or South Asia as well as in India might not be that common in the Western world and in fact, be poles apart from the way Christianity is practiced in the West.

The Christians of India, not surprisingly, have incorporated some of the Indian religious practices, albeit in their own ways. In fact, on leaving India, the country of their birth in order to settle abroad in the West, they may end up continuing those Indianized Christian rituals that they had adopted earlier back home.

In the same context, there are certain other culture-based practices, some very good, good, worthy and others not so virtuous, that we, the Indians as a whole regardless of our faiths, have imported to the Western world from our native lands. One that is under the scanner here relates to our emphasis on taking toddlers and children to our religious congregations, more so than the local people born and raised here in Western culture. In fact, one might notice that even the Christians from the Eastern countries such India and other South Asian nations also tend to involve their children in their religious activities from a very early age like other Indians, more than the indigenous Western Christians.

I am a Sikh, and I attend religious services every Sunday in one or the other Gurdwara Sahib in my hometown. Given that the life of a Sikh primarily revolves around Guru Granth Sahib Ji and Gurdwara; I have seen many Sikh parents in the Western world consistently and proactively encouraging and trying to get their children involved in Gurdwara affairs from early childhood. And that is good from my point of view. This may not be much different from the people of other faiths with Eastern background. The intent of taking little children and infants to the religious service from my perspective is noble as this kind of experience at an early age can and will make them not only practically learn a bit more than what would otherwise be possible about their faiths, their cultures and their roots. Additionally, interacting with others having similar backgrounds would allow them to understand and know what the other minority children like them are going through in their day to day life outside the confines of their homes.

A gradual introduction of rudimentary forms of Sunday schools in many India based religious places; much akin to the Western model has been an additional attempt to help children learn the languages and cultures of their home countries. This has truly added another jewel in the crown of understanding of the faiths of the minority group of people. In this regard, the Sikhs living out of India have done a remarkable job. Almost all the Gurdwara Sahib in the Western world, irrespective of how small or large they might well be and regardless of the scope of their audience, have been successful in creating and running such schools.

Even if Western-settled parents themselves might not have attended religious functions in their childhood in their native countries, they are often noted to be trying hard for their children to do so after arriving and settling in the West. They consistently insist that their children must learn their mother tongue as well as fundamentals of their faiths. This in fact is true with people of all the faiths from India. All this is good and well.

But what needs to be clearly highlighted here about this matter is a dire lack of our desire to understand that our responsibility doesn't end in merely taking our children to religious places and then unleashing them and letting them loose. We all know well that what goes on during our religious services is beyond the comprehension of children. For our children lack of discipline, poor understanding of religious etiquettes, religious singing and reading as well as non-adherence to the codes of conduct while attending services, all are major distractions in realizing the intended purpose of learning or following the faith.

In case of Sikhs and to some extent also in other Eastern religious congregations, the audience often sits on the floor which ironically makes the Divine space more conducive for children to act out. They start doing what their young age compels them to do anyway. Running around inside the sanctuary, shouting, or pulling and pushing one another becomes their major activity while their parents end up merely accepting the role of helpless or unconcerned onlookers. They understand the dilemma fully well but somehow tend to conveniently ignore it all, as if it were none of their business to stop their children. Pretending that everything is fine and dandy and nothing wrong of consequence is happening, turns out to be the most common response from them.

Journey - A Personal Odyssey

By: Rajveer Singh Kindra

Three facets which separate humans from other species: intelligence, communication, and consciousness. The Hemkunt Speech Competition incorporates these elements into months of preparation and a few minutes of delivery. The research it takes to write the speech, our ability to deliver it, and most importantly, the feelings it leaves us and the audience with. We can traverse the stars and create life where it shouldn't be possible, but our single greatest achievement and the root cause for why we're so capable is storytelling. Generations of knowledge compounded over millions of years; it's the essence of who we are.

I've witnessed firsthand how this platform transforms lives for those who find public speaking daunting or exhilarating. Beyond trophies and accolades, Hemkunt offers a unique trifecta of growth: sharpening innate talents and deepening ties to Sikh identity. Here's how it empowers young Sikhs to thrive.

1. Personal Growth: A constantly sharpened sword

Public speaking may come easily to some, but Hemkunt challenges even the most confident speakers to refine their craft. Researching complex topics like sarbat da bhala (universal welfare) or the strategic leadership of Guru Gobind Singh Ji cultivates critical thinking from the pragmatic and spiritual lens. Drafting speeches taught me to structure ideas with precision. Every hook, analogy, and conclusion must resonate. Feedback from judges, many of whom are Sikh scholars or industry leaders, pushes participants to elevate their delivery, tone, and emotional impact to their absolute zenith. For those already comfortable on stage, the competition becomes a masterclass in excellence over ease. It instills immense discipline. Rewriting drafts, rehearsing timing, and adapting to diverse audiences- these skills translate to academic excellence, creative project capability, and leadership roles. Confidence isn't just about speaking; it's about owning your voice with intention.

2. Connection to Heritage: Roots That Ground and Guide

In a world where cultural identity can feel diluted, Hemkunt anchors young Sikhs to their legacy. Preparing speeches on themes like seva or the defiance of Banda Singh Bahadur isn't just about storytelling, it's about internalizing our history. I've interviewed grandparents, studied Gurbani, and visited historical sites to deepen my understanding of who I am because of what I'm studying. This process transformed my relationship with Sikhi from passive familiarity to active pride. For second or third-generation diaspora youth, this connection is transformative. Articulating the Sikh ethos of equality, resilience, and Chardi Kala (eternal optimism) in speeches reinforces these values as personal mantras. The competition becomes a mirror, reflecting the strength of our collective identity while serving as a staunch reminder that we carry a 500-year legacy of courage and compassion, Sant and Sipahi.

3. Why Every Sikh Should Participate:

Hemkunt isn't about being a "natural" speaker. It's about growth, history, and opportunity. Whether you're basking in Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teachings or debating modern applications of Sikh values, you'll emerge with sharper skills, deeper roots, and a toolkit for future success. While entrants may encounter politics at any level that can stifle their success or motivation, it's Guru Arjan Dev Ji who reminds us: "ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ", those who immerse themselves in Naam their purposeful labor will find fulfillment. Hemkunt is that directional labor, irrespective of success. Hemkunt will provide a space to speak your heart to your sangath- that's worth more than any prize anyone can offer. My Singhs and Singhnis reading this: amplify your voice, honor your history, and prepare for a world where your ideas matter. This is just the beginning of our story.

Daaman Sankoch Chalo: A Lesson in Discipline and Mindfulness 17

By: Dr. Divya Kaur

“Daaman Sankoch Chalo” – A simple phrase, but one with the power to transform the way we live, work, and interact with the world around us. This wisdom comes from a profound moment in history, when Guru Hargobind Sahib shared a critical lesson with his grandson, Baba Har Rai Ji. While walking through a garden, Baba Har Rai Ji was perturbed after his long robes caught a delicate branch and crushed the flowers beneath. Observing this, Guru Hargobind Sahib gently advised him, “Daaman Sankoch Chalo”- “Be mindful of your actions and surroundings.” At first, this may seem like a minor lesson; however, it is anything but. The teaching goes beyond just being careful with one’s robes—it is a profound reminder of discipline, self-awareness, and respect for the world around us. It is a call to move through life with mindfulness, making sure our actions, no matter how small, don’t cause harm. In a world where we often rush, distracted by the demands of modern life, this teaching beckons us to slow down, pay attention, and live with purpose. Baba Ji learnt that lesson and later on became the successor Guru to his grandfather.

“Daaman Sankoch Chalo” isn’t just about personal conduct—it’s a challenge to our entire way of living. It reminds us to focus on what truly matters: being humble, using only what we need, and being responsible in how we interact with the world. In today’s fast-paced, material-driven world, where we’re often consumed by our work, social media, and the pursuit of fleeting desires, this phrase is a call to step back, take a breath, and recalibrate.

We live in a time where waste and excess are normalized. But true strength, as this teaching reminds us, is found not in abundance, but in restraint. Whether it’s in the way we use resources like water, or in the way we relate to others, real power lies in self-control. “Daaman Sankoch Chalo” teaches us to be humble—not to flaunt excess or indulge in waste, but to live with purpose and intention. Moreover, this teaching extends beyond our personal lives—it calls us to take responsibility for the world around us. We are part of a larger community—one that is interconnected, where our actions have a ripple effect. Exploiting others, or causing harm to those who are vulnerable, weakens the very fabric of society. “Daaman Sankoch Chalo” is a call to live with fairness, justice, and integrity. It urges us to remain strong in our values, even when it’s difficult, and to stand firm in our principles no matter the challenges.

In my own work as a future cardiologist, this principle resonates deeply. Every patient I treat and every decision I make is done with mindfulness, discipline, and care. “Daaman Sankoch Chalo” reminds me to be responsible with the knowledge and resources I have. In healthcare, as in life, we find power not in overreach but in purposeful action. This principle calls us to live with a sense of responsibility in everything we do.

But it doesn’t stop with our individual actions—it also calls us to think about our collective impact. As we plan large gatherings like the Hemkunt Symposium in 2026, this teaching offers a roadmap for environmental responsibility. Imagine the positive impact we could have by embracing sustainability and mindfulness at a larger scale.

If you’re involved in planning future Hemkunt events—or any large gathering—I’d love to collaborate with you to bring this vision to life. Whether it’s through working together or connecting with others who share the same passion, we can create an event that reflects the values of “Daaman Sankoch Chalo”—discipline, mindfulness, and the Sikh way of living.

Let’s not wait for change to happen. Let’s make it happen. Reach out, and together we’ll ensure that the essence of this powerful teaching is felt, not just in our personal lives, but in the community we build together. Let’s act, and let’s act with purpose.

My Kirtan Journey

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By: Ekam Kaur

Hemkunt Kirtan holds a special place in the hearts of many, especially for those who have dedicated themselves to this spiritual practice. As someone who has been involved in kirtan for seven years and specifically in Hemkunt Kirtan for the past three years, I, Ekam, can attest to its profound impact. Hemkunt Kirtan is not just a form of musical expression; it is a deeply spiritual experience that connects individuals to their faith, culture, and community. The serene melodies and sacred hymns, infused with the divine words of Gurbani, have the power to uplift the soul and bring a sense of peace and tranquility. Chanting the name of Waheguru during these sessions brings a deep sense of connection to the divine.

Participating in Hemkunt Kirtan has been a transformative journey for me. It has provided a platform to delve deeper into the teachings of Sikhism and understand the rich heritage behind the hymns we sing. The discipline and dedication required to master the art of kirtan, especially playing the vaja/harmonium, have also instilled in me a sense of perseverance and devotion. Each session is a reminder of the values of humility, service, and love that are central to our faith. The communal aspect of kirtan, where we come together to sing and meditate on Waheguru's name, fosters a strong sense of unity and belonging.

The impact of Hemkunt Kirtan extends beyond the individual level. It has a ripple effect on the entire community. The gatherings, often held in gurdwaras or at special events, create an environment of collective worship and reflection. These sessions serve as a source of inspiration and motivation for others, encouraging them to explore their spirituality and cultural roots. The shared experience of singing and listening to kirtan strengthens the bonds within the community and promotes a spirit of togetherness. The divine vibrations of Gurbani resonate within everyone, creating a powerful spiritual atmosphere.

In conclusion, Hemkunt Kirtan is a powerful and impactful practice that enriches the lives of those who participate in it. For me, Ekam, it has been a journey of spiritual growth, cultural immersion, and community building. Playing the vaja/harmonium and singing the sacred hymns of Gurbani brings immense joy and fulfillment to my life. The melodies and hymns of Hemkunt Kirtan resonate deeply within the soul, offering solace and inspiration. As we continue to uphold this beautiful tradition, we ensure that the teachings and values of our faith are passed down to future generations, fostering a legacy of devotion and unity.

Being part of Hemkunt Kirtan is like a soothing balm for the soul. It's not just about the music; it's about connecting with Waheguru on a deeper level. When I'm playing the vaja or harmonium during Kirtan, it's like my heart is singing along with every note. The divine essence of Gurbani fills the air, and it's like a spiritual journey that uplifts me and brings me closer to my faith.

I absolutely love working with people in the jatha. The sense of community and connection during Kirtan is truly something special. Learning about each raag and practicing them has been an incredible journey. I've seen myself improve so much over the years, and it's all thanks to the guidance and support from my fellow jatha members. The bond we share, chanting Waheguru's name together, is like a powerful tie that brings us all into a shared spiritual experience.

Playing the vaja or harmonium during Hemkunt Kirtan is more than just music; it's a form of devotion and service. It's a way for me to express my love for Waheguru and share that love with others through the beautiful hymns. The harmonium becomes an extension of my soul, resonating with the sacred words of Gurbani and creating an atmosphere of peace and harmony.

Practicing Kirtan and improving my skills has been a rewarding experience, and I am committed to continuing this journey. I will keep doing Kirtan, learning, and growing in my faith. Hemkunt Kirtan is not just a musical practice for me; it's a spiritual journey that fills my heart with love, devotion, and a deep connection to Waheguru. It's a way for me to express my faith, find inner peace, and connect with the divine in a meaningful and profound way.

Chasing the Strings of Wonder: My Journey with the Rabab

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By: Harlene Kaur Bhatia

Growing up, the Hemkunt Kirtan Competition was a key part of my childhood. It was always an event to look forward to and an excuse to spend time with my friends and learn something new. Until recently, I never realized how it helped shape my desire to wander and stay curious. I was always in awe of the wonderful instruments I would see being played by other groups worldwide and knew I had to learn something new. Once I heard the rabab I fell in love with it and was stubborn enough to insist on playing it even if there was no formal rabab teacher available to me. I had a teacher who worked hard with me to help me learn how to play the instrument even though she also had never previously played it.

I felt a connection with the rabab because of the sakhis I had grown up listening to about Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Bhai Mardana Ji, I admired how they traveled the world and brought so many people together through poetry and a simple string instrument. Playing Bhai Mardana's instrument helped me open my eyes and find beauty in every small thing. When I played the rabab and remembered him I could feel the love and appreciation he had for the world. I felt that not enough people valued the beauty of the rabab and hoped that if even one other person saw me play the rabab, they would want to learn how to play it as well and would feel the same way I did.

I want to forever be an admirer of the world the way Bhai Mardana Ji was and I thank the Hemkunt Foundation for giving me the opportunity and outlet to learn how to play the rabab and allow me to be closer to my Sikhi.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

A Collaboration Of Texas Gurdwaras

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Sikh National Center



Gurdwara of Southwest Houston



Sikh Center



Gurudwara Sahib of Houston (Breen)



Texas
Gurudwaras

Gurdwara Singh Sabha Dallas



Austin Gurudwara Sahib



Sikh Dharamsal San Antonio





Honorable Keertan Judges



Dr. Gurleen Kaur

Dr. Gurleen Kaur is a Canadian-American ethnomusicologist, baptized Sikh, and kirtaniya, whose work focuses on Gurmat Sangeet as both a devotional practice and a culturally embedded musical tradition. With over four decades of combined scholarly and performance-based experience, her research examines Sikh sacred music as a locus of spiritual expression, identity formation, and diasporic continuity. Dr. Kaur holds a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from the University of Maryland and has pursued advanced studies in Indian classical music and Sanskrit in Varanasi, India. Her musical training includes intensive vocal study under Shrimati Mangala Tiwari (Gwalior gharana) and under Dr. Gurnam Singh (Punjabi University), grounding her in both Hindustani vocal traditions and the interpretive frameworks of Sikh devotional music. Her pedagogical approach centers the Shabad as a method of spiritual inquiry, emphasizing deep, affective engagement with sound and text. As a prolific writer, her scholarship is featured in academic journals both in the USA and abroad. Her most recent contribution is a published chapter in *Music and Dance in Everyday South Asia* (2024 Oxford University Press). She continues to contribute to broader discourses in South Asian musicology, religious studies, and diaspora studies through academic conferences. She is currently completing a monograph titled *Mapping Multiplicity: The Complex Soundscape at Darbar Sahib*, which explores sonic practices and spatial meanings in Sikh devotional life around the Harimandir Complex. Dr. Kaur also leads an innovative pedagogical project: a *Children's Songbook of Gurbani Kirtan in 31 Ragas*, integrating visual art and musical instruction to introduce young learners to the aesthetic and spiritual dimensions of raga. For over a decade, she has served as a judge for the Hemkunt Kirtan Competitions, further contributing to the cultivation of Sikh musical practice among emerging generations. She is very honored to perform Seva for this current competition. More info can be found at: <http://www.janprotopapas.com>.



Sardar Manmeet Singh

Manmeet Singh is a devoted practitioner of Gurmat Sangeet. A multi-instrumentalist with a deep reverence for sound and craft. He plays the sarangi, sarod, harmonium, tabla and various instruments with soulful precision. His musical journey has been shaped by a lifelong commitment to preserving and promoting the rich heritage of Sikh, Sufi and Indian classical music. Beyond performance, Manmeet is also a skilled luthier, specializing in crafting harps and restoring traditional instruments—blending technical mastery with a meditative attention to detail. His craftsmanship reflects the same spiritual depth that informs his musicianship. Based in Washington, D.C., Manmeet has played a key role in the DC Indian Musical Circle, where he has spent years fostering appreciation for South Asian classical music. Through performances, workshops, and community outreach, he has helped introduce diverse audiences to the subtle beauty and devotional essence of Gurmat Sangeet. Manmeet Singh continues to be a bridge between tradition and innovation, offering his artistry in both intimate spiritual gatherings and public performances, always grounded in the intention of sharing music as a path to inner stillness and collective harmony. He's performed at The Kennedy Center, Smithsonian Museum, SXSW Festival and various prestigious venues. He's also produced award winning films - The Widow Colony and A Little Revolution. He's traveled to 81 countries with his life and travel partner, Harpreet Kaur.



Dr. Manpreet Kaur

Dr. Manpreet Kaur: Dr. Manpreet Kaur is the Robert H. Putnam Endowed Chair of Bipolar Research and Treatment at the University of California, Davis, where she leads an internationally acclaimed Pediatric Mood Disorder Program dedicated to advancing the understanding and early treatment of youth with, or at risk for, lifelong mood disorders. The program promotes healthy brain development from childhood and boldly envisions the prevention of progressive and chronic mood disorders through research, education, and innovation. In addition to her academic and clinical accomplishments, Dr. Kaur has been classically trained in Gurmat Sangeet by many esteemed ragis, including Bhai Avtar Singh and Gurcharan Singh, Bhai Ajit Singh Alankari, and Bibi Amrit Kaur. She has competed and won first prizes in kirtan samelans across North America. Dr. Kaur has studied and composed kirtan in all 31 raags and 62 variations found in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. She continues to teach Gurmat Sangeet and has served as a judge for the Hemkunt Foundation Kirtan Competitions at the regional, national, and international levels for over a decade.



Bibi Jasvir Kaur

Jasvir Kaur Rababan MBE is an acclaimed leadership coach, musician, and Ph.D. scholar at the University of California, Riverside, where she researches the intersection of sound, neuroscience, and trauma healing (Kirtan as Medicine). With over two decades of experience in transformational leadership, emotional resilience, and executive coaching, she brings a unique approach that blends ancient wisdom with cutting-edge insights into wellbeing and performance. As the former CEO of Raj Academy and executive producer of the award-winning documentary Sikh Musical Heritage – The Untold Story, Jasvir has led global movements in cultural preservation, community empowerment, and mental health. Her work inspires leaders and changemakers to rethink success through the lens of purpose, presence, and personal transformation.



Sardar Jaswinder Singh Rathour

Jaswinder Singh Rathour, son of Captain Amrik Singh, is a distinguished practitioner of Gurmat Sangeet and an accomplished IT professional. He earned his Master's degree in Music from Punjabi University, Patiala, becoming the first international student to complete this specialized program entirely online. With over 30 years of experience in Information Technology, he has successfully balanced a thriving dual career. Jaswinder has served the Indian community through musical performances alongside his father in the Indian Army. He actively promotes Indian and Punjabi culture in the USA and has the honor of doing Gurmat Sangeet Kirtan at the Indian Embassy in Washington, D.C. and Indian Ambassador's Premises for five consecutive Vaisakhi celebrations.

- Academic Qualifications • M.A. in Gurmat Sangeet (with Distinction), Punjabi University, Patiala • M.Sc. in Information Technology, Pune, India
- Professional Contributions • 30+ Years in Information Technology: Senior-level roles across software, infrastructure, and digital platforms • Preservation of Raag Tradition: Performs and teaches Gurbani Kirtan in original Raags of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji • Judge and Mentor: Panelist in Gurmat Sangeet competitions across India and the U.S. • My Ustads and Inspirations in Gurmat Sangeet- o Captain Amrik Singh Ji - Father of Sharomani Ragi S. Uttam Singh Patang Ji - Uncle (Taya Ji) o Dr. Jagir Singh - Former Head of Gurmat Sangeet Dept Punjabi University, Patiala • Sarbjeet Singh Rangeela Ji – Prominent Kirtaniye of Sikh Panth
- Mission Statement To preserve, promote, and propagate Gurmat Sangeet, the sacred classical musical tradition of Sikhism, in its original Raag-based form as enshrined in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. My mission is to ensure this divine Sikh musicology reaches global audiences— especially the younger generation—by combining traditional discipline through education, digital innovation. I strive to sustain and celebrate the purity and legacy of Gurmat Sangeet as a sacred spiritual treasure.



Bhai Bhupinder Singh Paras

Bhai Bhupinder Singh Paras is a highly respected kirtanya known for his deep-rooted commitment to classical raag-based kirtan. For decades, he has performed alongside acclaimed raagis such as Bhai Gurmail Singh Shaant, with whom he has shared the stage at major Gurmat samagams across North America. He is widely recognized for his command of raags and taals, his discipline, and his ability to elevate the overall kirtan experience through his musical sensitivity.

In addition to performing, Bhai Paas has served as a judge at numerous kirtan darbars and competitions, both at the regional and international level. Based in Houston, he remains an active figure in the kirtan circuit, regularly contributing to religious events and akhand kirtan programs. He is also deeply committed to promoting raag-based Gurmat Sangeet within the Sikh diaspora. His lifelong dedication to preserving this tradition makes him an exemplary judge for the Hemkunt competition and an inspiration to all who value classical kirtan.



Bhai Hardeep Singh

Bhai Hardeep Singh is a distinguished Gurmat Sangeet scholar and accomplished tanti-saaz artist with deep expertise in both Indian classical music and Sikh musical tradition. He is well-versed in all 31 raags—and their parkaars—of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, and has served as a Dilruba Vadak at Sri Harmandir Sahib (Amritsar) for over a decade.

Trained in Gurmat Sangeet from an early age, Bhai Hardeep Singh studied under renowned maestros such as Dr. Gurman Singh (Director, Patiala University) and Professor Kartar Singh (Director, Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Anandpur Sahib). He has experience judging in kirtan competitions, including in the regionals and international Hemkunt Keertan Darbars.

Bhai Hardeep Singh currently serves as a hazoori ragi at Sikh National Center, Houston, Texas, where he continues to inspire the next generation through his seva and musical excellence.

Honorable Speech Judges





Hardeep Kaur

Hardeep is a first-generation immigrant to the United States. Born in Pune, India, she earned her undergraduate degree in Chemistry and contributed to several research publications while working at the National Chemical Laboratory. She later continued her research career at Ranbaxy Laboratories in Delhi for several years. In 1976, after marrying Anoop S. Sareen, she immigrated to the U.S. Raised in a devout Sikh family, Hardeep was deeply influenced by her father, Desa Singh Sodhi, who is still remembered as a true Sikh saint—selfless, compassionate, and unwavering in his commitment to helping others. He instilled these values in his children, and Hardeep carried them forward in her own life. As a devoted mother, she made it a priority to pass these principles on to her three children. All her children actively participated in the Hemkunt Foundation's annual competitions from the very beginning, with each of them winning several medals over the years. She also encouraged them to attend various camps organized for Sikh youth throughout the Tri-State area. Her professional career in New York was centered around librarianship, having earned a Master's degree in Library Science from CW Post College in Glen Head, Long Island. She played an instrumental role in establishing the Plainview Gurdwara library and also served as a past Secretary of the Gurdwara.



Dr. Gurinder Pal Singh

Dr. Gurinder Pal Singh has been associated with Sri Hemkunt Foundation Sikh Youth Symposium since 1992, first as a center convener, then as a zonal convener and is presently the Keertan Darbar coordinator for the Northwestern Region of USA. His other present sewa activities include serving as the director of Guru Nanak Khalsa School, San Jose and Vice president of Sikh Gurdwara San Jose. He is a founding member of Chardikalaa Foundation and was also on the board of trustees and advisors for the Sikh Foundation. Professionally, he has a Ph.D degree in Physics and retired in 2013, after working at famous institutions like, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai; Max Planck Institute for Solid State Physics, Stuttgart ; IBM Almaden Research Center San Jose and HGST research, San Jose. Presently he is a visiting professor at Panjab University, Chandigarh India. He holds 14 patents and over 40 publications in fields of science and technology. He is very thankful to Waheguru and the community for the opportunities for sewa and successes. He believes in "Gurprasad: Our sincere efforts are necessary, but success comes only from Waheguru's Grace"



Mini Kaur Gujral

Geetinder Gujral is a New York-based professional with a background in eDiscovery and real estate. Raised in a family grounded in Sikh values, she is passionate about passing those teachings forward. She serves as a Punjabi language teacher at her local Gurudwara school, where her mission goes beyond language instruction—she aims to help children live by Sikh principles, ensuring these values remain strong in the next generation. Geetinder's connection to the Hemkunt Speech Symposium runs deep. All three of her children have participated and excelled in the program, and over time, the symposium became more than an annual event—it became a family tradition, blending Sikhi, personal growth, and public speaking. Watching her children grow through the experience strengthened her own commitment to the foundation's mission. What began as the role of a proud, supportive mother evolved into meaningful involvement within the Hemkunt community. Over the years, Geetinder has had the honor of serving the foundation in various capacities. This year, she is especially grateful to contribute as an international judge. Outside her professional and community roles, Geetinder finds peace and joy in singing Gurbani. Music has always been a source of light for her—a way to uplift others and stay spiritually connected.



Inder Pal Kaur

Inder Pal Kaur: Postgraduate from Delhi univ in Economics & Political science worked 5 years in Ministry of Rural Development with the collaboration of UNICEF as Economic officer while worked there I judged many cultural activities organized by the Ministry after migrated to US I persuaded further studies as computer programmer and medical terminology and at present Working for Kaiser Permanente I am affiliated with organization when I was start judging the zonal speech completions and my niece start participating at the age of 8 we went to London in 2008 for Hemkunt international speech competition 2023 in New York for my niece kirtan and speech competition and she won gold medal for kirtan last year again went Sanjose for her completions for both categories also I judged category 2 for speech this year my niece Gurman Kaur age 19 also coming for speech and kirtan completion I am also judging the Category 2 Gurfateh ji



Kamlesh Kaur

Kamlesh Kaur, a registered dietitian, immigrated to the United States in 1996. Initially employed as a clinical dietitian at Woodhull Medical Hospital for a duration of four years, she subsequently transitioned her career path to the Department of Education. Kamlesh has since dedicated over two decades of service to the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE), assuming various roles including classroom teacher, attendance coordinator, and presently functioning as a High School Counselor. With an educational background Kamlesh holds a degree in education from Touro College, a counseling degree from NYIT, and a school building leadership degree from the College of Saint Rose. Her extensive expertise lies in a range of areas, including engaging with parents, students, and teachers; program development; counseling services; administrative tasks; professional development and support; delivery of guidance lessons; provision of college and career advice to both parents and students; as well as participating in numerous meetings with outside agencies, colleges, and universities. Kamlesh's commitment to education and active involvement in the Sikh community is evident through her longstanding engagement with The Hemkunt Foundation since 2012. Within this organization, she generously volunteers her time as a judge at local, zonal, and even international levels.



Taranjit K Singh

Taranjit K Singh: Taranjit was born in Kutkhai, Myanmar (Burma) and started her earlier schooling there. After the military coup in 1962, her family moved to Kolkata, so she completed most of her studies there. In 1985 she moved to Houston with her husband and has called it home since then. As her teacher's certification from India was not accepted in USA, she went to University of Houston and studied for slightly over 2 years while taking care of the family and completed her teacher certification. Upon completion of her certification, she was hired by the Fort Bend ISD as a fourth grade teacher. Over the years she taught third and fourth grade, and finally decided to take early retirement. After retirement she started working with her son on the business that he was starting. She is still working there looking over the Accounting and Payroll functions, as the Chief Financial Officer. Besides her work life as a teacher, she is passionate about healthy cooking, Kirtan singing, and yoga. She is fortunate that she has been teaching all her six grandchildren kirtan singing. She has been actively involved in judging Sri Hemkunt Foundation Symposium at Center and Zonal levels for the last 6 years.



Pushpinder Kaur

Pushpinder Kaur, born and brought up in a village in Punjab, is a credentialed teacher, author and administrator in Khalsa School San Jose. She has been involved in teaching Punjabi and Sikh culture to the Sikh children in San Jose since 1988. She is one of the founding members of Khalsa School, San Jose. She has helped start a number of Khalsa Sunday Schools throughout U.S.A. She was a pioneer in designing curricular materials to teach Punjabi as a Second Language and Gurmukhi script in the 90's. She holds a Masters Degree in Teaching of English as a Second Language. She has prepared a very comprehensive, step-by-step curriculum that helps facilitate smooth running of the Sunday schools and teaching children Punjabi as a Second Language. She has authored more than 20 books. Her books are based on proven strategies to teach a second language. Her materials have been used to teach Punjabi as a Second Language in Canadian public schools as well as a beginner's level course offered at the university level in the U.S.A. Pushpinder has been involved with Sri Hemkunt Foundation Symposiums for several years as her own children participated in the competitions. She believes that SHF symposiums were a tremendous force in educating her family about the many aspects of Sikh life. Among her passions is supporting diversity in the US Public schools and she has championed this cause through books like *The Boy with Long Hair* and public presentations. *The Boy With Long Hair* has been used as Book of the Month in several schools, endorsed by the California Teachers Association and included in the History and Social Science Framework by the California Department of Education. Pushpinder, for several years, has been involved in diversity training for public school teachers in Punjabi Sikh culture, their religion, traditions and customs. She is also on the board of directors of Kaur Foundation.



Mukhtar Singh Kamboj

Mukhtar Singh Kamboj has been an active member of the Sikh community in the New York tri-state area for over 25 years. Mukhtar was born and brought up in Amritsar, India. He is a graduate of the Thapar Institute of Engineering, Patiala with a degree in Electrical Engineering. He also received a Masters in Electrical Engineering from Polytechnic Institute of New York in 1984. He has worked in the New York City construction industry and civil infrastructure improvement for the last 29 years. Mr. Kamboj has faithfully served the Sikh community in the New York Metropolitan area gurudwaras by focusing on education and by emphasizing the needs of youngsters. He has been the director of the Long Island gurudwara Punjabi schools for the last sixteen years. He has been involved in the Hemkunt Foundation as a central coordinator for the last 11 years and as a judge at the local, zonal and international levels. His wife, Jasbir Kaur, is also involved at the Punjabi School and within the Hemkunt Foundation. His children, Heera and Rattan, have participated in multiple Hemkunt speech symposiums. He has served in the Singh Sabha of NY, Sikh Center Plainview and Mata Sahib Kaur Gurudwaras. He is a founding member and secretary of Shaheed Udam Singh Sabha of New York. He also participates in intercultural and awareness meetings with the Nassau County Police Surgeons Association.



Khalsa Lakhvir-Singh

Based in the beautiful East African country of Kenya where Khalsa Lakhvir-Singh has grown up, studied, lived and worked since the last 1980. He pursues not one, but three professional vocations - seasoned graphic designer, a committed Sikh preacher and a passionate historian. As an independent historian, he researches and publishes the history of Sikhs in Kenya - and Africa in general - in an effort to help the masses understand who the Sikhs are in relation to historical context. His various social media pages command a following in their thousands as he regularly and consistently publishes informative Sikh and historical content, drawing conversations from a cosmopolitan audience who take keen interest to learn from his posts. Founded in 2013, his Kenyankalasingha page of Facebook commands thousands of followers from around the world, helping inform, educate, awaken and enjoin people in rediscovering how intricately Kenyans and Sikhs are connected by history and in turns inspiring each other to take pride in their identities and heritage. A passionate Sikh motivational speaker, lecturer and writer, he has been serving the local Sikh Gurdwaras and wider Sikh community in Kenya for over 20 years in various religious activities. His visionary outlook is to help Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike across the world in understanding Sikhi through the message of Gurbani and how to apply it in their everyday lives. This is being done through his social media platforms and speaking at Gurdwaras, institutions and forums that avail the opportunity to reach out directly to the masses. His proficiency in Punjabi, Hindi, Swahili and English makes him stand out in today's need to reach out to peoples of all demographics who can understand Sikhi and its history in the language of their preference to better their knowledge of the Sikh faith. With over twenty five years of collective experience in the advertising, design, branding, media and creative industries, he most recently served as the Visual Editor-in-Chief at Radio Africa Group, a leading media house based in Nairobi, Kenya. He also takes great interest in developing other skills that come naturally to him - photography, writing, historical research and motivational speaking. All these skills add up to exploit ultimate potential in creative expression for both self and for the professionals that he always seeks to affiliate with. He has been affiliated with Sri Hemkunt Foundation's Symposiums since 2019 when he helped bring back Kenya to the global platform, continues to be associated with the initiatives, even serving as judge for the speech competitions - and is spearheading the 2026 Symposium to be hosted in Nairobi, Kenya since the last time it was held there in 1994 - after a continental gap of 32 years.



Dr. Jaswant Singh

Dr. Jaswant Singh obtained an MBBS degree from Pbi. University and winner of several Gold medals including for the Best Graduate for the session 1962-67 *Board-certified Internist from India with M.D. Internal Medicine.

- a. Completed M.D. in Neurology from New York Medical College.
- b. Fellow from American Board of Neurology.
- c. Board Certified Fellow American Academy of Neurology
- d. Practiced Neurology for over forty years in Phoenix
- e. He is the Author of several books on the Diaspora issues
 - i. "Square Pegs, Round Holes.
 - ii. "Sikhism: Points to Ponder; Perspectives of a Sikh Living Abroad,
 - iii. "One Coin, Two Sides,"
 - iv. "Western Mirror, Eastern reflections"
 - v. "Adapting to the Adopted Culture"
 - vi. "Pearls in Pebbles."
 - vii. "Lonely in a Crowd."
 - viii. "P to P to P, thus moved my Life." My autobiography
- f. Additionally
 - i. BOARD MEMBER Advisory Committee Arizona Interfaith Movement
 - ii. BOARD MEMBER Phoenix Police Advisory Board
 - iii. SELECTED AS One of the Prominent 50 Sikhs of the USA.
 - iv. 2004 OUTSTANDING CITIZEN by Arizona Asian American Association
 - v. FOUNDER of Free monthly free Dinner at PHOENIX Rescue Mission 2000-2020
 - vi. SPEAKER Sikh Identity Awareness
 - vii. Key person Langar Experience AIFM.
 - viii. COORDINATOR FOR Grand Canyon Zone and a Regular Judge for the INTERNATIONAL HEMKUNT FOUNDATION FOR SPEECH COMPETITION .
 - ix. FOUNDER/CONVENER/Moderator of PHX Global Gurmat Vichar initiative, a Weekly Zoom Webinar being held regularly for close to five years where a group of Sikh intellectuals from around the world discuss Sikh Centric Issues regularly.



Madanjit Singh

Madanjit Singh:

1. Education M.Sc. Electrical Engineering-Polytechnic Institute of New York (Brooklyn) Registered Professional Engineer- Electrical and Control Systems
2. Teaching Experience Lecturer & Senior Lecturer In Roorkee University & in Delhi College Of Engineering Instructor in Community College & San Francisco State in Electrical & Control Systems Engineering
3. Professional Experience Worked In Top Engineering Company for 37 years on various positions, Senior Engineer, Engineering Specialist, Engineering Supervisor, Lead Engineer and Principal Engineer Vice President-Dist 3, International Society Of Automation and President of Savannah River Section. Senior Life Member- ISA and Life Member – IEEE.
4. Community Involvement Has been Director/coordinator Guru Angad Dev Khalsa School, El Sobrante CA Secretary- Sikh Center El Sobrante, CA, Treasurer Sikh Center (Queens) New York. Active role in construction of Sikh Center, El Sobrante Gurdwara building.
5. Hemkunt Foundation Involvement Has been involved with Hemkunt Foundation since 1994. Introduced Youth program in California (El Sobrante, Hayward, Fremont, Fresno, and Sacramento), Texas (Houston, Dallas and Austin) and Arizona (Phoenix). Has been Zonal Convener for above centers. Successfully conducted International Youth Symposiums in El-Sobrante/ San Jose, California and in Orlando, Florida with SadhSangat. Has been Trustee of Hemkunt Foundation. Supported first Kirtan Program in the International Youth Symposium at Orlando, Florida



Bhupinder Singh

Bhupinder Singh is a retired Mechanical Engineer. He was born in Bhamo, Myanmar and had his early education there. He did his B.E. in Mechanical Engineering from Regional Engineering College, Surat, Gujarat (now National Institute of Technology). He is a Registered Professional Engineer practicing in the USA. He started his engineering career in New Delhi and lived in South Korea, before immigrating to the USA. He has been actively involved in judging Sri Hemkunt Foundation Symposium at Center and Zonal levels for the last 16 years. Writing is his hobby. His writings are published in The Indo-American News, The Sikhnet, The Sikh Review, Nishaan, Asia Samachar, Studies in Sikhism and Comparative Religions, and Boloji. He has authored seven books and co-authored two books:

- Connecting with the Master
- Gurmat Quotient (GQ)
- Rehraas
- Why are we Here?
- Fish Eat Fish World
- Humility – A Spiritual Journey
- In Bully's Eyes
- Message of Bhagats in SGGS
- Sikhee for Me



Harkishan Singh

Harkishan Singh a retired Software Professional worked in financial and security industries in various positions of responsibility for more than 40 years. Born and brought up in India and studied in Canada and USA in the field of computer science. He moved to New York from Canada in 1979. Realizing the dire need but unavailability of Gurmat and Sikh literature, he with the help of Principal Surjit Singh Gandhi established a fully computerized Sikh Library along with a reference section at Gurdwara Glen Rock New Jersey. The Library was not only used by Sikh Community but also non-Sikh students of universities and others studying and interested in Sikhi. Harkishan Singh is past President of Executive committee and Chairman Board of trustees of Gurdwara Glen Rock. He had been representing Sikh community in the Interfaith Committee of Bergen County, New Jersey for more than 20 years. He also serves on advisory board of Peace Island Institute NJ an organization dedicated towards Dialog, Unity, Education, Welfare and Peace, Harkishan Singh is associated with Sri Hemkunt foundation for almost 30 years serving as a Center and Zonal convenor and as a Judge at the International competition for the last 6-7 years.



Harcharan Singh

1. Harcharan Singh:

a. Master's Degrees in:

- i. a. Political Science and Public Administration, Delhi University, New Delhi
- ii. b. Master in Computer Science, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York

b. Experience:

- i. a. Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at SGTB Khalsa College, Delhi University, teaching Undergraduates and postgraduates for 12 years
- ii. b. IT Professional with IBM for 26 years, responsible for the development of MainFrame Application Development Modules, involved in the Design and integration of Business Processes, Application Architect including specialization in the Client Server Architecture and Project Management for business process and Application Outsourcing.
- iii. c. Adjunct Professor of Computer Science at North Carolina Central University in the Department of Mathematics for two years, from 1989-1991 sponsored by IBM

c. Community Involvement: Elected representative of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee duly constituted under the DSGMC, served as Joint Secretary, Member the Board of Directors of various Committees of the DSGMC, Manager of Khalsa Girls Higher Secondary School. While in the US, stayed involved with Social, Sikh Community and interfaith related activities in the states of New York, North Carolina and in Texas.

d. Hemkunt Involvement: Have been associated with Hemkunt Organization, ever since the organization was conceived while in New York and created a Local Center at Raleigh/Durham, North Carolina. Currently very humble Zonal Convener for the Hemkunt Organization of the Sunbelt Zone, Texas.



Harinder Singh Oberai

Harinder Singh Oberai was born and brought up in India. He is a graduate of the prestigious National Defence Academy and was commissioned as an officer in the Army. He was a consistently top performer, standing first in the overall order of merit, country-wide, in the NDA examination. He went on to get his Bachelor's and Master's degree in Electronics & Telecommunications, summa-cum-laude and has authored several technology related papers for leading journals. He has spent his entire working career in telecommunications and was a pioneer in the field of satellite communications in India, having been deputed to Indian Space Research Organization for early experimental work in the 1970s with UN and NASA sponsored projects. He lived in the Sultanate of Oman for 10 years before migrating to the USA in 1998. His family consists of Savinder Kaur and two sons, Rajveer and Preet. As a new entrant, Harinder is excited to be part of Hemkunt Foundation and is looking forward to working with seasoned and experienced leaders, and to be learning and furthering the cause of Sikhs and Sikhism, within and outside the USA.

Honorable

PDV

JUDGES





Davinder Singh

- Davinder Singh is an Indo-Canadian director, actor, and producer known for impactful projects like Waleed, What's Your Identity, and Beneath the Makeup.
- The project "Waleed" earned honors as the 3rd Best North Indian Film. Singh's recent productions include Apna Farz; Basera; Patka Box; Bold Helmets; Khalsa Centre – Simran, Seva, Sangat; Deportations 700, SIKH MOTORCYCLE CLUB OF CANADA and Benaqab Chehre on Chaupal TV.
- With several compelling films in the pipeline for 2024, Singh continues to garner attention for his directorial skills.



GURDEEP SINGH DHALIWAL

- Gurdeep Singh Dhaliwal is a filmmaker based in Punjab. After completing his studies in English literature and creative writing from London, he returned to his village and began documenting various aspects of Punjab.
- From 2017 to 2019, he utilized scholarships from the Punjab Arts Council and the Punjab Lalit Kala Academy to photograph symbols of mass migration from Punjab. In 2020, he joined farmers from his village in Delhi and co-founded Trolley Times with fellow artists present at the protest site. The newspaper documented the protest, collected essays from various parts of the world, and discussed the challenges faced by farmers in India.
- Since then, he has collaborated with media houses such as India Spend, SikhLens, and Vice News on several documentaries that delve into the arts and culture of Punjab. This fall, he will be pursuing his Master of Fine Arts in cinematography at Chapman University as a SikhLens Scholar.



Only Kewal

- Over the past decade, Only Kewal has honed his acting craft across a range of theatrical productions. He finds joy in both comedic and socially conscious roles, appreciating the chance to explore varied emotions and insights into society.
- Since 2013, Kewal has performed with multiple theatre groups, most recently acting in three Punjabi stage plays in 2023. His repertoire also includes a supporting role in the short film Identity.



Keertan Participants

Southern Region

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
17th Annual Keertan Darbaar

2025 Houston, TX



Group 1: Miri Piri

Participants

- Saizel Kaur
- Ganeve Kaur
- Gurfateh Singh
- Paarth Singh
- Avtej Singh

Trainer

- Dr. Amrita Kaur



Group 2: Kirtan Nirmolak Heera

Participants

- Divraj Singh
- Gracy Kaur
- Arjit Singh
- Ashpreet Kaur
- Bhavroop Kaur

Trainer

- Harlove Singh and Darshan Singh



Group 2: Sarbat Khalsa Kirtan Jathaa

Participants

- Sifatjot Singh
- Sonal Kaur
- Anhad Singh
- Sarina Kaur
- Jobanpreet Singh

Trainer

- Bhai Manjit Singh

Southern Region

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
17th Annual Keertan Darbaar

2025 Houston, TX



Group 2: Raag Naad Preet

Participants

- *Sahib Gobind Singh*
- *Prabshurn Singh*
- *Kavan Kaur*
- *Eksimran Kaur*
- *Gunjot Kaur*

Trainer

- *Bhai Deepak Singh*



Group 3: Sat Santokh Vichaar

Participants

- *Mehpreet Kaur*
- *Nehmat Kaur*
- *Harkeeth Singh*
- *Mehar Kaur*
- *Meher Kaur*

Trainer

- *Harlove Singh and Darshan Singh*



Group 3: Nirmolak Gurbani Jatha

Participants

- *Saheb Singh Randhawa*
- *Preet Kaur Nagi*
- *Hardeep Singh Utal*
- *Anureet Kaur*
- *Anshveer Singh*

Trainer

- *Balkar Singh*

Southern Region

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
17th Annual Keertan Darbaar

2025 Houston, TX



Group 4: Raj Karega Khalsa

Participants

- Gurnihal Singh
- Baani Kaur
- Tapisar Singh
- Ravina Kaur
- Tejbir Kaur

Trainer

- Dr. Amrita Kaur



Group 4: Chim Chim Varse Amritdharaa

Participants

- Gurjot Singh
- Ranveer Singh
- Ishmeet Singh
- Chiraag Singh

Trainer

- Harlove Singh and Darshan Singh



**Regional Keertan
Coordinator**

Eastern Region

36th Annual Speech Symposium and 17th Annual Keertan Darbaar

2025 Houston, TX



Group 1: Ghol Ghumaayi Laalna

Participants

- Sadeev Singh
- Jasleen Kaur
- Gujri Kaur
- Jasnoor Kaur
- Jeevan Kaur

Trainer

- Dr. Manpreet Singh / Ripudaman Kaur



Group 1: Mere Laal Rangeeley

Participants

- Eveleen Kaur
- Eshleen Kaur Banipal
- Iqbal Singh
- Mehar Singh
- Kavleen Kaur

Trainer

- Dr. Manpreet Singh / Anup Kaur



Group 2: Mere Man Bhaj Har Har Naam Gopala

Participants

- Ravijot Singh
- Bani Kaur
- Gurtej Singh
- Hargun Kaur
- Tejbir Singh

Trainer

- Dr. Manpreet Singh / Sukhvir Kaur



Group 2: Dhan Dhan O Raam Baen Baajey

Participants

- *Hervin Singh*
- *Sahib Singh*
- *Akaal Singh*
- *Anhad Singh*
- *Simrit Kaur*

Trainer

- *Dr. Manpreet Singh / Dalbir Singh Khabra*



Group 2: Mero Baap Maadho

Participants

- *Prabhnoor Kaur*
- *Gurseerat Kaur*
- *Priya Kaur*
- *Arshveer Kaur*
- *Saaj Singh*

Trainer

- *Dr. Manpreet Singh / Rajinder Kaur*



Group 3: Mere Man Naam Sion Kar Preet

Participants

- *Harsimran Kaur*
- *Japnam Kaur*
- *Harjot Singh*
- *Prableen Kaur*
- *Manroop Kaur Khabra*

Trainer

- *Dr. Manpreet Singh / Rupinder Kaur Khabra*

Eastern Region

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Group 3: Maangna Maangan Neeka

Participants

- Arnav Singh
- Taani Kaur
- Japmeet Kaur
- Avneet Kaur
- Kudrat Kaur

Trainer

- Dr. Manpreet Singh / Parminder Kaur



Group 3: Har Ko Naam Sadaa Sukhdaayi

Participants

- Ekjot Singh
- Harnoor Singh
- Mayher Singh
- Prabhdeep Singh
- Gurdaas Singh

Trainer

- Dr. Manpreet Singh / Amandeep Kaur



Group 4: Raam Hau Kya Jaana Kya Bhaavey

Participants

- Anoop Singh
- Gurleen Kaur
- Puneet Kaur
- Jind Kaur
- Sehaj Kaur

Trainer

- Dr. Manpreet Singh / Parmjit Kaur



**Group 1: Ghar Ghar Andar
Dharamsaal**

Participants

- *Sartaaj Singh*
- *Ishnoor Kaur*
- *Ganeev Singh*
- *Aviraaj Singh*
- *Fateh Singh*

Trainer

- *Mandeep Singh*



**Group 2: Ghar Ghar Andar
Dharamsaal**

Participants

- *Japji Kaur*
- *Rabtej Singh*
- *Ganeev Singh*
- *Sakhi Kaur*
- *Daani Kaur*

Trainer

- *Deepinder Singh*



**Group 2: GNCA School Keertan
Jatha**

Participants

- *Shanaya Singh*
- *Prisha Singh*
- *Japjot Singh*

Trainer

- *Gursewak Singh/ Jaspreet Singh
Bathinda*



Group 2: Gurmat Sangeet School Phoenix

Participants

- Chitleen Kaur
- Ramanpreet Kaur
- Angad Singh

Trainer

- Dr. Arashpreet Singh Rhythm



Group 3: Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Nanak Sadan Sikh Temple

Participants

- Harnoor Kaur
- Jasnoor Singh
- Keerat Kaur
- Mahek Kaur
- Gurshaan Singh

Trainer

- Gurpreet Singh Bathinda



Group 3: Baba Farid Sangeet Academy

Participants

- Pavit Singh
- Amitoj Singh
- Divleen Kaur
- Gauhar Singh
- Japleen Kaur

Trainer: Ustad Naib Singh Ji

Western South Region

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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2025 Houston, TX



**Group 4: Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Nanak
Sadon Sikh Temple**

Participants

- *Agampreet Kaur*
- *Gurman Kaur*
- *Ranvir Singh Khalsa*

Trainer

- *Gurpreet Singh Bathinda*



**Regional Keertan
Coordinator:**



**Regional Keertan
Coordinator**

Western North Region

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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Group 1: Western North Group 1

Participants

- *Suhavi Kaur*
- *Hargoon Kaur*
- *Mehreet Kaur*
- *Bandagi Kaur*
- *Jodh Singh*

Trainer

- *Prof. Dalbir Singh*



Group 2: Western North Group II-1

Participants

- *Japleen Kaur*
- *Anandleen Kaur*
- *Japji Kaur Ghuman*
- *Gurleen Kaur*
- *Harmehar Singh*

Trainer

- *Prof. Dalbir Singh*



Group 2: Western North Group II-2

Participants

- *Sangam Singh Dhaliwal*
- *Ajuni Kaur*
- *Hargun Kaur Virk*
- *Sidak Singh Sethi*

Trainer

- *Bhai Nirmal Singh Soora*

Western North Region

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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Group 3: Western North Group 3

Participants

- *Jasleen Kaur*
- *Gurroop Kaur*
- *Sanjam Singh*
- *Sagundip Kaur*
- *Akal Singh*

Trainer

- *Bhai Manbir Singh*



Group 4: Western North Group 4

Participants

- *Ishmeet Singh*
- *Ishmeet Kaur*
- *Maneet Kaur*
- *Sneha Kaur*
- *Sahbaj Singh*

Trainer

- *Prof. Dalbir Singh*



**Regional Keertan
Coordinator**



**Regional Keertan
Coordinator**

SPEECH PARTICIPANTS





**Group 1: Mehtaab
Singh**



**Group 1: Suhi
Kaur**



**Group 2: Harjus
Singh**



**Group 3: Tajbir
Kaur**



**Group 4: Reett
Kaur**



**Group 5: Tapisar
Singh**

Big Apple

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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**Group 1: Rajgurdev
Singh Kahlon**



**Group 2: Sohni
Singh**



**Group 2: Gursees
Kaur**



**Group 3: Aangad
Singh**



**Group 4: Agamjot
Singh**



**Group 4: Prabhjot
Singh**

**Dallas
Texas**

**36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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**Group 1: Dilwaris
Singh**



**Group 2: Prizleen
Kaur**



**Group 3: Japjeet
Kaur**



**Group 4: Pranayjeet
Singh**



**Convener: Bindu
Kaur**

London Mata Khivi

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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**Group 1: Prabhpreet
Singh Walia**



**Group 2: Keeratpreet
Singh Walia**



**Group 3: Udayvir
Singh**



**Group 4: Avmit
Kaur**



**Convener: Sharonjit
Kaur**



**Group 1: Jenicea
Kaur Arora**



**Group 2:
Jugaad Singh Arora**



**Group 3: Elaine
Kaur Bassi**



**Group 4: Harkirat
Singh**



**Group 5:
Karan Kaur Bassi**



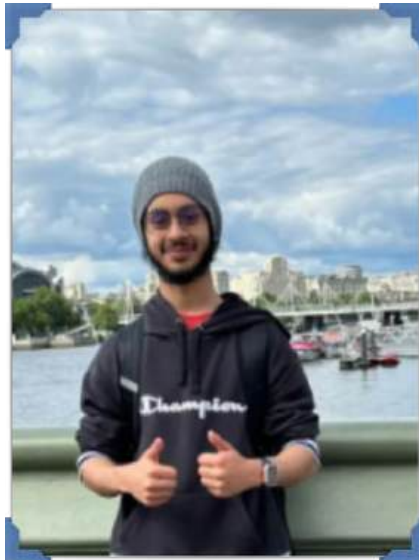
**Convener: Sukhraj
Kiran Kaur**



Group 3: Nirmith Singh Dua



Convener: Gurmit Gulati

London**36th Annual Speech Symposium and
17th Annual Keertan Darbaar****2025 Houston, TX****Group 1: Jyoti Kaur
Mudhar****Group 2: Avani
Kaur Mudhar****Group 3: Gurleen
Kaur****Group 4: Sahib
Singh****Convener: Barinder
Sandhu**



**Group 1: Myra
Kaur**



**Group 3: Jeet
Singh**



**Convener: Kulbir
Singh**



**Group 1: Japjot
Singh**



Group 1: Jaysukh Singh



**Group 2: Sarginoor
Kaur**



**Group 3:
Agampreet Kaur**



**Group 4:
Ranvir Singh**



**Group 5: Inderjeet
Singh**



**Group 1: Amogh
Singh**



**Group 2:
Nishchay Singh**



**Group 3: Sevak
Singh**



**Group 3: Prabhnoor
Singh**



**Group 5:
Manat Kaur**



**Convener: Harpreet
Kaur Sidhu**



**Group 1: Rabani
Kaur**



**Group 2:
Sartaaj Singh**



**Group 3: Taarika
Kaur**



**Group 4: Maanya
Kaur**



**Group 5:
Sahiba Kaur**



**Convener: Jasleen
Kaur**

**Capitol
U.S.**

**36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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2025 Houston, TX



**Group 1: Japtej
Singh**



**Group 2:
Keerut Kaur**



**Group 3:
Nehmat Kaur**



**Group 3:
Jasraj Saini**



**Group 3:
Harnoor Kaur**



**Group 4:
Pahuljot Kaur**



**Group 4:
Dilpreet Singh**

Florida

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
17th Annual Keertan Darbaar

2025 Houston, TX



Group 1: Gia Kaur



**Group 2:
Sohurm Singh**



**Group 3: Suhavi
Kaur Saini**



Group 4: Ruhi Singh



**Group 5:
Ravneet Singh Kathuria**



**Group 5: Amitpal
Singh Saini**



**Group 1: Mehma
Kaur**



**Group 2: Pahul
Kaur**



**Group 3: Simrit
Kaur**



**Group 4: Rusna
Kaur**



**Convener: Jasdeep
Singh Kohli**

California Capitol

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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2025 Houston, TX



**Group 1: Gurnaaz
Kaur**



Group 1: Bhani Kaur



**Group 2: Sukhveer
Singh**



**Group 3:
Mansimran Singh**



**Group 4:
Amrit Kaur**



**Group 4: Keerit
Kaur**



**Group 1: Manveer
Kaur**



**Group 2: Bhavjeet
Kaur**



**Group 3: Harwin
Singh**



**Group 4: Jasamrit
Kaur**



**Convener: Gurdeep
Singh**



**Group 1: Suhavi
Kaur Lamba**



**Group 2:
Achraj Singh
Girdhar**



**Group 3: Sangam
Singh Dhaliwal**



**Group 4: Gurkiran
Kaur**



**Group 5:
Jasleen Kaur Toor**



**Convener:
Gurminder Singh**



**Group 1: Neev Singh
Khanuja**



**Group 2:
Mehar Kaur Makar**



**Group 3: Simrat
Kaur**



**Group 4: Jazleen
Kaur Dhaliwal**



**Group 4:
Reet Kaur Virk**



**Group 5: Ramneek
Kaur Dhami**



**Group 1: Suhavi
Kaur Singh**



**Group 2:
Fateh Singh**



**Group 3: Noor Kaur
Narang**



**Group 4: Prabhnoor
Kaur**



**Group 5:
Kabeer Singh**



**Convener: Akbal
Singh Karlcut**

Tri State**36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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2025 Houston, TX

**Group 1: Agamveer
Singh****Group 2:
Keerat Singh****Group 3:
Sammardeep Singh
Brar****Group 4: Avneet
Kaur****Convener: Tejinder
Singh Pahwa**

Grand Canyon

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
17th Annual Keertan Darbaar

2025 Houston, TX



Group 1:
Jiaansh Singh
Sandhu



Group 2:
Mehar Kaur



Group 2:
Abeer Singh



Group 3:
Mayal Kaur



Group 3:
Eshreen Kaur



Group 4:
Gunayan Kaur



Group 4:
Arshvir Singh



Group 5:
Ronak
Singh



KEERTAN COORDINATORS

Keertan Coordinators

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**Southern Keertan
Coordinator:
Ruben S. Bains**



**Eastern Keertan
Coordinator:
Davinder Kaur Rana**



**Western South Keertan
Coordinator:
Surinder Kaur**



**Western North Keertan
Coordinator:
Dr. Gurinder Pal Singh**



**European Keertan
Coordinator:
Naginder Kaur**

SPEECH CONVENERS



Speech Conveners

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**Big Apple
Convener:
Malkeet Kaur**



**London, Mata
Khivi Convener:
Sharonjit Kaur**



**Sun Belt
Convener:
Dawinder Singh**



**London, South
Convener:
Kulbir Singh**



**London, West
Convener:
Sukhraj Kiran
Kaur**



**London
Convener:
Barinder Sandhu**



**Dallas, Texas
Convener:
Bindu Kaur**

Speech Conveners

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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2025 Houston, TX



**California, L. A.
Convener:
Channpal Singh**



**California, Northern
Convener: Harpreet
Kaur Sidhu**



**California, Orange
County Convener:
Jasleen Kaur**



**Capitol, US Convener:
Herjit Kaur**



**Florida
Convener:
Amitpal Singh Saini**



**Garden State
Convener:
Jasdeep Singh Kohli**

Speech Conveners

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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**California, Capitol
Convener:
Paramjit Singh**



**California, Gadri
Babbe Convener:
Gurdeep Singh**



**California, Silicon Valley
East County Convener:
Gurminder Singh**



**California, Silicon Valley
West County Convener:
Gurumukh Singh Tiwana**



**California, Silicon
Valley Central
Convener:
Akbal Singh Karlcut**



**Tri State
Convener:
Tejinder Singh Pahwa**

The image shows the interior of a large, empty theater. In the foreground and middle ground, there are many rows of bright red, upholstered seats. The seats are arranged in a tiered fashion, facing towards the back of the theater. At the far end of the theater is a large, plain white screen. Above the screen, the ceiling is visible, featuring a grid of dark panels with numerous small, circular recessed lights. The overall lighting is soft and even, highlighting the texture of the red seats and the clean lines of the theater's architecture.

PDV COORDINATORS

**PDV
Coordinators**

**36th Annual Speech Symposium and
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2025 Houston, TX



**International PDV Coordinator:
Ginny Kaur**

PDV Coordinators

36th Annual Speech Symposium and
17th Annual Keertan Darbaar

2025 Houston, TX



**Southern PDV
Coordinator:
Preeti Singh**



**Southern PDV
Coordinator:
Mandeep Singh**



**Southern PDV
Coordinator:
Harcharan Singh**



**Western North
PDV
Coordinator:
Ishmeet Kaur**



**Western South
PDV
Coordinator:
Jagdeep Singh**



**Western South
PDV
Coordinator:
Jasleen Kaur**



**European PDV
Coordinator:
Naginder Kaur**

2025

A photograph of a young boy in traditional orange Sikh attire, including a turban with a silver Khanda emblem and a garland of orange marigolds. He has his hands pressed together in a prayer gesture (Anjali Mudra) and is looking directly at the camera. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a public setting. The text "Our Generous Donors" is overlaid in large, bold, blue letters.

Our Generous Donors

Diamond Tier Donors

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**Dr. Harshi and Dr.
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Ishnella Azad**



Bobby and Jasmita



**Gurmit and Seema
Bhatia**



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