



INSAF RECOGNIZES BHAVENDER PAUL SHARMA



Ms. Padmashri Lad (Left), INSAF Auditor (Internal), is shown presenting a plaque on behalf of INSAF to Bhav (with wife Kaye) to honor his devotion and exceptional service to INSAF [Dr. Raj Lad photo].

A few INSAF colleagues have shared their personal experiences below. A resolution was also passed by the Executive Committee to raise funds through voluntary contributions for charitable causes selected by Bhav.

INSAF Executive Citation

On behalf of INSAF, it is truly a privilege to recognize Dr. Bhavender Paul Sharma for his immeasurable contributions to INSAF over the last four decades.

As a bit of history for those not in the know, INSAF had its humble beginnings in Friends of Punjab University Alumni Association (FOPUAA), founded in 1972 by Dr. Sharma and colleagues, in New Jersey, USA. This group believed that those who got their start in India should give something back. With extremely limited membership and budget those days, members had to be content with small projects like sending notebooks, pencils, pencil sharpeners to Indian schools or installing a water hand pump in a remote village school.

The first Executive Committee formed in 1972 headed by Dr. Sudershan Bhateja as its President, Sh. Ashok Mehan as Vice President, Dr. Bhavender Sharma as General Secretary and Sh. PK Malhotra as treasurer deserve a great deal of credit. As a member of this Pioneer Committee, Dr. Sharma was the guiding force to get FOPUAA/INSAF started on the right path. First steps, first leadership, is more significant than what it appears. To let any title/position go for the wider interests of the public is not an easy job, nor is it easy for any person to volunteer for a new organization. A solid foundation is very essential for the formation of a new organization.

In 1994, the name of the organization was changed to Indian Schools Alumni and Friends (INSAF) to accurately reflect its all-India focus almost since inception. Bhavender has been one major, constant driving force to keep the charitable efforts and the organization growing. His generosity and selfless contributions have never known any bounds.

Bhavender is one Ph.D. engineer, who uses his MBA also exceptionally well. His humble and mild-mannered approach, together with people and management skills, bring out the best in others. From the very early days of "notebooks and pencils", INSAF has grown substantially, and Bhavender has had something to do with all of it!

It is really satisfying to finally and formally acknowledge Dr. Bhavender P. Sharma for his exceptional contributions to INSAF. We look forward to his future association with INSAF and wish him continued success in his personal and professional life as well!

Some of the friends of Dr. Bhavender Paul Sharma

The current Executive Committee (Dr. Prem Bajaj, Dr. P. Harshavardhana, Dr. Suresh (Raju) Keshavanarayana, Mr. K. Kumar Kapur) sincerely appreciates the support of several founding members who have had long-term association with Bhavender and INSAF. We thank the

following members who have provided help in this effort: Dr. Sudershan Bhateja, Sh. Joginder Kundra, Dr. Ramesh Paliwal, Dr. Soma Murthy, Sh. P.K. Malhotra, Sh. Ashok Mehan, Dr. Ram Chaudhari, Ms. Manju Chexal, Dr. Santosh Chokhani, Sh. Surinder Maheshwary, Ms. Padmashri Lad, and Dr. Ashok Sachdev.

The personal notes honoring Bhavender shared by some of his friends follow on the remaining pages of this Newsletter Supplement:

Bhav ji,

You have been a source of inspiration to many. When, in 1971, you decided to pay back to our country of origin, you took up a cause, larger than life. That says it all. I wish you and your family all happiness in life.

Prem N. Bajaj, INSAF President

I have known Bhavender for over four decades when he came to the USA in 1969 to further his education. My wife Sudesh has known him since childhood days so she has all the good things to say about him — too many to list here. I was immediately impressed by this young gentleman and knew right then that he would not only accomplish his goal of excelling in his education and career but also knew that there was something very special about him since he showed a great deal of empathy for those less fortunate and how best to give back to the country where he got his start. It was this passion and desire that he shared with his colleagues in 1971 and an idea was brought to fruition by creating FOPUUA/INSAF. Bhav, you have great qualities and your dedication and self-service to INSAF have no bounds. It is great to see that Kaye also possesses this philanthropic nature and both of you have devoted yourselves to this great cause. You have inspired many others and always believe in getting the work done and are always ready to help out to accomplish this with credit to others. Sudesh, myself, Suman, Monisha along with family members wish you all the best.

Kumar Kapur, INSAF Financial Secretary

Dear Bhav,

You have taught me the art of patience and polite persistence and demonstrated its value time and again, thank you.

Harsha, INSAF Vice President

Bhavender has been one constant driving force since the inception of FOPUUA (later renamed INSAF). Through his untiring and relentless posture, he has kept the charitable efforts and our organization growing. His generosity and selfless contributions know no bounds and his impact on INSAF spans an entire spectrum.

His humble, mild-mannered approach, people and management skills enhance others' contributions as well. Personally, working with him has been a memorable journey. Since suffering health problems many years ago, I significantly escalated my INSAF efforts, especially for my Punjab schools projects. Bhavender's input has been invaluable there too. I love to call him "Dr. Kirkut" for his knowledge of Cricket as well."

Sudershan K. Bhateja, Former INSAF President

My friendship with Bhavendra and his whole family goes to 1975 when we both were Graduate Students at Rutgers University – Bhavendra in Chemical Engineering and me in Mechanical Engineering. Our families were neighbors. Bhavendra introduced me to FOPUA at that time. I liked FOPUA's mission and goal and joined it as a member around 1975.

Besides knowing Bhavendra as a dedicated founding and continuing member of INSAF, I have known Bhavendra in many other ways. For self-less service to community, I have not yet come across a better person than Bhavendra. Since its birth, whether holding INSAF office or not, Bhavendra's contribution to INSAF's day-to-day working has been more than anybody else, say 70 to 80%.

Whenever I have called Bhavendra, I have felt motivated and enthusiastic. For my children, he is the most favorite uncle among my friends. He connects to them with unparalleled love and affection.

I salute Bhavendra for his dedication, integrity, honesty, sincerity and self-less service.

Ramesh Paliwal, Former INSAF President

I was first connected to Bhavender Sharma since my first day in the USA, June 6, 1971. Bhavender ji opened the doors of his apartment to me when I had just come to the USA. Bhavender ji has touched many lives due to being kind at heart and his innermost desire to serve the society. We listened to the first and only Indian music program from Rutgers University broadcasted by Bhavender ji in the New Brunswick, NJ area in early seventies. This program was one of the very few entertainments available to the new Indian immigrants in the region.

Then came INSAF, organized by Bhavender ji and his friends as payback to the society and the country we came from. Under INSAF we have touched the lives of many people especially the young children who needed support from the society to survive. There is no better way to change and enrich someone's life than giving him or her the gift of education. By doing so we change their lives forever.

All this would not have been possible if we did not share our thoughts and feelings to influence each other and encourage each other that it is the right thing to do. Bhavender ji, you have provided the leadership and an avenue for all of us to connect to each other and guidance to serve the underprivileged. You have worked very hard to keep this torch stay lighted and we are very thankful to your untiring desire to serve. We are also very thankful to your family for their continuous support in this noble cause.

Joginder Kundra, Long-time INSAF Member

The idea of FOPUAA (INSAF's previous name), was first conceived and discussed about 40 years ago (1972 my recollection, when some of us from P.U. Chemical Engineering Dept. Class of 1969 were in an apartment near Rutgers University's campus in New Jersey).

BHAV was the key driving force and took initiative to give the idea the practical shape to form FOPUAA. He spent numerous hours, days, months and years to give the organization " direction, purpose and leadership". Without his untiring and timely efforts, FOPUAA would

not have survived or grown to become INSAF as we know it today. Thank you, Bhav, for your fabulous contributions.

Surinder Maheshwary, INSAF Co-Founder

Dear Brother, You have been a role model to me when it comes to values, behaving and treating others.

Santosh Chokhani, Former INSAF President and Newsletter Editor

I believe, it was around the year 1991, Dr. Bhavender Sharma was at Rochester (NY), and he was invited to address a meeting in Syracuse. In the meeting, he talked about formation of a new organization, named FOPUAA (Friends Of Punjab University Alumni). The concept was very simple, it was to enable Indian donors to send funds to Charitable Organizations in India without charging any fee. (Organizations like OXFAM did charge a fee). Since then I started sending money to Charitable organizations in India, via FOPUAA, later via its new name INSAF. As time went on, I found that, occasionally, Dr. Sharma sent additional funds to my projects, a very pleasant surprise.

Dr. Ram Chaudhari, Long-time INSAF Member

Bhav has been the pillar of INSAF. I don't think there is any way we could meaningfully honor his contribution. Besides his efforts, Bhav is a role model for everyone.

Soma Murthy, Former INSAF President & Newsletter Editor

I was among the first handful of people who was instrumental in starting this non-profit organization. INSAF without Bhav and Kay shall be like muscles without ligaments. Bhav's patience and persistence was quite obvious when he taught me how to drive a car in 1971. At that time, he had expressed his ardent desire to pay back to our motherland among our circle of friends. Some of us put it off due to laziness except Bhav and Kay.

Bhav made extra effort to meet most of the INSAF members in person whenever he got a chance. He has

been a source of motivation for me .

I feel pleasure in joining other members of INSAF in recognizing his efforts. "Many Many Thanks !"

P.K.Malhotra, Co-Founder & Former-President, INSAF

I would like to share some of my memories of Bhavendra Paul Sharma who has influenced my personal growth for the last 10 years. I met him in 1984 and we quickly became friends; we were unaware of our common interest in charitable work till much later. Our friendship has grown out of respect and common interests in music, Indian films and sports. One day he asked me to find an organization in Pune for sponsoring children. Since beginning that first project, we have done many projects with Bhav and Kay. Bhav motivates people, by example - and by excitement, by having productive ideas and making others feel involved.

Bhav is one of those people who talks the talk and walks the walk. He is dedicated to his work, family, sports, politics and most importantly giving back to the communities that were such an integral part of his education and life. I don't know how he finds a time to do all these things and still remains a fun and joyful friend, but I continue to strive to emulate him. I have had the pleasure of introducing him to many family members and friends; every one of them enjoys his company and is surprised by how amazing he is.

In recognizing Bhav it would be a disservice to not mention his better half. Kay and Bhav are truly a team. Kay supports him in every assignment he takes and is a constant source of insight and calm for all of us. I feel fortunate to have Bhav and Kay in my life as friends and colleagues at INSAF.

Padmashri Lad, Auditor (Internal), INSAF

Dear Bhavender,

Since the time I have known you which is 1975, in my eyes you have had only one mission in life, which is to do something to make a difference in the lives of people of your country whether they are here or in our motherland. The most beautiful thing I have seen in you is the passion you carry in your heart to do the utmost you can in a given situation. Your actions have spoken for themselves. You were a very dear friend of my late husband Bindi Chexal. After he left us in 2001, my family and I went through quite

a bit of rough time and it would've been a lot rougher if it wasn't for you and Kaye. I can never forget the selfless kindness and assistance I got from you during the most needful time of my life. You are only one of a kind. My heartfelt gratitude to both of you. I admire you for so many years of total dedication to INSAF and its projects. You deserve the highest degree of honor there is and I wish you all the best to accomplish all your missions successfully and in the process inspire many of us to follow your footsteps. Reminds me of the song" Jyot se jyot jagate chalo, prem ki ganga bahate chalo". Goodluck and God bless!!

Manju Chexal (Long-time Member with Former INSAF President Bindi)

I have known Bhavender since 1965 and he is one of the most compassionate persons I have come across. His and Kay's contributions to INSAF projects are the living proof of his strong desire to make a difference. We were all lucky to have been associated with him in our personal lives too. His genuine interest in well being of every one reflects in regular conversation. We wish him success.

Ashok Sachdev Family (Former INSAF Vice-President)

Bhav's comments

I feel both humbled and embarrassed upon this recognition and upon seeing so many extremely generous and kind comments above. I know in my heart that my work for INSAF was actually possible only because of the constant encouragement of each of the folks who have written the comments above, as well as others who are not mentioned in these pages. We all collaborated together about INSAF and its projects whenever the opportunity came. So many of the INSAF colleagues have been amazingly generous with their financial contributions to the various projects and with their time. Kaye's consistent and sincere support has been a critical ingredient. Therefore, this recognition equally belongs to all the long-term friends, to Kaye, and to the fellow co-founders of INSAF. It is a tribute to each of them that almost all are still active in INSAF and support INSAF to this day even after about 40 years.

We all know that the need is greater than our joint capabilities to give back. However, if we in INSAF did our duty, and the others did in their own way, there is a real chance that all that could add up to make a difference. I hope in my remaining years of good health, I will continue to be worthy of the sentiments expressed in these pages. My heartfelt thanks to each of my INSAF teammates. Let's keep it up.