

Highlights of the evening included comments by IT Industry icon and a leading Indian American in the Washington area, Ken Bajaj, who was honored for his past support to the cause of higher education. While delivering his remarks, he inspired the audience and said, "If we do not invest in the education of our bright young people, we are throwing away the future of our community."

He added, "In this world, you are better off being rich and stupid than poor and bright. We should all make sure that poor and bright kids get a fair chance to go to college. Higher education is the best investment one can make to succeed in life. Education is a great equalizer. So, let us make sure that the financial status of these kids is not an impediment to the realization of their dreams."

He declared, "We should not judge ourselves with what we have achieved, but by how many lives we have changed with our achievements." Ken Bajaj gave a large donation in the evening and Surinder Singh, SHDF Council member, thanked him for his generous support.



Ken Bajaj

"Every scholarship brings a welcome journey from potential destitution to dignity. Such is its magic. It moves our youth from darkness to light; from bitterness, frustration and despair to a life of hope, gratitude and dignity. This program not only brightens the lives of the scholarship recipients; it also brightens the lives of their families and raises the status of the community." Said, Amar Jit Singh Sodhi, while welcoming the audience.



SIKH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
Umeedan Di Shaam

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Satinder Satti

Press Release



It was a gala dinner event organized by the Sikh Human Development Foundation, a Washington-based charity. Over \$ 213,000 were raised at the Fund-raising Dinner, titled 'Umeedan di Shaam'. This entertaining event, attracting many leading personalities of the Washington area community, had Satinder Satti, the famous punjabi artist and an anchor of Zee TV in India, enthrall the guests with her songs and poems. She was the star attraction of the evening.

**Sikh Human Development Foundation
Raises over \$200,000 for scholarships
for Needy Students in India**

Washington, April 22, 2008: "It is a historic evening when some 700 members of our community have come together at one place to support young men and women of Punjab and neighboring areas who can't afford higher education. We are gratified and we thank you for your vote of confidence", declared Amarjit Singh Sodhi, Chairman of the Sikh Human Development Foundation, in front of a large gathering of 700 people at the Sheraton Premier Hotel in Vienna, Virginia, on April 6, 2008.

UMEEDAN DI SHAAM

Gurvendra Singh Suri, CEO of Optimal Solutions Integration, Inc., and a prominent community leader from Dallas, Tx, was the Chief Guest. Gurvendra challenged the audience to donate generously to support higher education for children from low income families. He passionately appealed and said, "Your pockets are deep, our cause is noble. And, with our combined efforts, there is no way in this world we cannot provide education to every deserving Sikh student in India. Living in this country, we all know the importance of good education. Education is the foundation of a good life. It opens new vistas, new doors and new worlds. It replaces an empty mind with an open one. It is the most powerful weapon which we can use to change the world. We need your help in helping those hundreds of deserving kids who want to study further but cannot do so because of their unfortunate circumstances. I am sure, you have heard million times in your life, but I am going to say it anyway. That when you give unto others, it comes back to you, in one form or the other and in many folds. Much like when you light a torch to brighten the path for others, you brighten your own path too. So dear friends: Life is short, Be swift to love, and make haste to be kind. Because you will find, as you look back on your life, the moments that stand out, are the moments when you have done the things, for others."



Dr. Rajwant Singh, Executive Council member of SHDF, along with Satinder Satti, appealed to the audience to donate and pledge their support. They went from table to table and made personal appeals. This created an excitement in the audience and soon checks and pledge cards started pouring in. Many in the audience donated large sums of funds ranging from \$5000 to \$10,000. Satti gave an example of Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, who himself received scholarships to continue his education. She pointed out "a person from a humble beginning reached the top because there was someone to support him for fulfilling his dream."



Other major donors and supporters who were honored during the event were SHDF Platinum Circle Member, Dr. Pavanjit Kaur Sawhney, Baldev Singh, Dr. Rishpal Singh Aujla and an SHDF supporter in Chandigarh, Manmohan Singh Kohli.

Baldev Singh and Manmohan Singh Kohli



Supreet Kaur Malhi performing Gidha

Harjot Singh playing Dhol



Gurvendra Singh Suri, Chief guest of the event and his wife, Manjeet Kaur

SHDF officials with organization's patrons and benefactors: Navin Singh Sethi (extreme left) and Dr. Jatinder Kaur Sidhu (4th from left) and Dr. Baljit Singh Sidhu (3rd from left)



SHDF Executive members with Satinder Satti and Mr. Suri. From left to right: Dr. Rajwant Singh, Veena K. Oberoi, Gajinder Singh Ahuja, Amar Jit Singh Sodhi, Surinder Singh, and Dr. Harbaksh Singh Sethi



Participants from Virginia Sikh community

Bhangra performance by MAR Group

