



NEWS FROM

# HOINA

HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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## My Presence in HOINA

By Sundara Rao T.

*[Editor's Note: As we move through 2021, HOINA looks back from the first days that HOINA Founder Darlene "Mom" Large had the vision to start this work. Now, 50 years later, we celebrate our milestones by sharing with you different HOINA graduates and their life stories. This month features Sundara Rao.]*

I joined HOINA in the 1980s at the Bapatla, A.P. campus. After losing my mother when I was only a child, I was living in extreme poverty. My aged father John T. brought me to there after learning about an organization called HOINA. From then until the early 1990s, I studied at HOINA in Vijayalakshmipuram in Bapatla. After that I came out of the HOINA campus and grew up to be active in this community independently with the academics that HOINA gave me. I was very active in many different extra-curricular activities while I was at HOINA. I'm a very good singer, and I play the drums very well. I am proficient in all games. I speak Telugu, Tamil, and English. Humanity, goodness, love, respect, and traditions are some character traits that HOINA taught me. That is what helped me to rise to the top. Most importantly Mom [HOINA's founder, Darlene Large] is what I love the most. The love she shared with so many orphans like me in India is amazing. That's why I always say Mom is a second Mother Teresa. She is a great woman who came from America somewhere, and joined many unfortunate people like me in India and gave us a good life. All the



After sifting through dozens of 35 mm slides in HOINA's archives, we were fortunate to find this photo of the author, taken in the 1980s.



As a respected television reporter stationed in Dallas, Texas, Sundara Rao is seen here interviewing famous Indian actor Allu Arjun for TV5, a Telugu news channel in the U.S.

## Presence in HOINA continued

children who grew up and got educated under the shadow of HOINA and Mom's love are fortunate in my eyes.

I am currently working as chief journalist in America on India's TV5 Telegu news channel. When I was asked to meet then-Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu for Mom and HOINA, I talked to the Chief Minister and arranged a meeting for Mom with him. Mom was very happy that a HOINA student she raised had reached to the level of being able to arrange a meeting for her with someone as high in government as a Chief Minister.

I came to America via TV5 with a White House invitation in America. I have been in the U.S. for the last six years. I have roamed all the states in America and have also provided my services in Canada. I conducted a live interview with Mom & Papa from TV5 studios in New Jersey for HOINA Development. I was the first person to settle in America from the children that Mom raised in India. Talking to Mom every day in her old age keeps me informed about her health. Mom is in America but her heart and soul are always in India. I am very proud to say that I am a product of HOINA. Whatever status I grow to, I will do my part for HOINA's upliftment in the future.



HOINA grad Sundara Rao interviewing then-Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu.



Left to right: The article author Sundar Rao; Mr. Srinivas, HOINA manager; Darlene Large, HOINA founder; and Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister.

An advertisement for a news show. At the top are logos for 'mana tv HD', 'mana tv INTERNATIONAL HD', and 'TV5 NEWS'. The main title is 'Live with SUNDAR' in a yellow box. Below this are two circular portraits: the 'GUEST' is Uma Mantravadi, an attorney at law, and the 'HOST' is Sundar. At the bottom, a 'TIME' box lists the broadcast times: June Thursday 26th, 11am (EST), 10am (CST), 8am (CA), and 8:30pm (IST).

An advertisement for Sundar's news show.



It is Spring cleaning time again. Time to get rid of the old and to clean the fuzzy “woo woos” out from under the bed, the attics, closets, and basements. Time to look at the months that have passed and to rid our souls of the “woo woos” that would depress us and slow us down in our work for the Lord.

One day in India, I had bought mops and buckets to take to the orphanage. Not knowing where to go, I had gotten on the wrong train; and it was the wrong place and definitely the wrong time of day. The afternoon was very hot, and walking across the country searching for a road and a bus to take me to our village was not the best way to spend a day. Several miles later I found the road and finally a bus. The cleaning had to wait until another day. This was one of those trying days when I had forgotten my piece of fruit and my bottle of water. Thank you, God, for America, for food, and for water.

This was the day that we bought seeds to plant. Thank you, God, for the protection you give here. Thank you for sunshine and for rain that you give us so that we might grow food not just for ourselves but for our neighbors as well.

When I think of all the closets I have to clean in my house in the USA, I am saddened. The poor do not have to worry about cleaning closets; they have nothing to put into those closets. They may want



to wash and paint their walls, but there is no soap or paint to do this. Think about this when you pass your neighbor's house. Do you have extra flowers to share from your garden? Did you bake some cookies today? God gave you that increase. Someone may have lost a job or a friend and may need a gift of sunshine today. There is a designer named Flavia Weedn who makes cards that I love to buy. Recently, I saw one that said, “If I could sit on God's back

porch, I'd thank Him for lending me you.” Do you realize how much is being done because of the prayers that all of you offer on behalf of the HOINA children? Thank you! I can tell when you are all praying because those prayers move the hand of God in a mighty way.

*[When this newsletter was originally written in 1982, we were trying to build one of our first buildings. India was experiencing a tremendous shortage of cement, which we needed desperately. The black market was the only place where it was available, and so we waited... and waited. I wrote about those prayers working because I had just gotten word that the ban on purchasing cement by individuals had been lifted so we could finish the roof on our new HOINA home. Yes, prayer works!]*

HOINA is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization.

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This newsletter is published to inform our readers of the work HOINA does among the handicapped and abandoned in India.

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**Send donations and address changes to:**

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## MEET the HOINA BOARD

**Dr. Dave Fyfe** *HOINA Vice President* • Professor, York College of Pennsylvania

I first learned of HOINA when I was a graduate student at Penn State University in the geography program. One of my graduate colleagues had taught a class called "International Service Learning" with the Schreyer Honor College students. The program had not run for a couple of years so I went to the dean and asked what it would take to restart the program. As it turned out, they were looking for someone interested in teaching the course—so I volunteered. As a graduate student I taught the course twice and took groups of students to India in 2004 and 2005. I then passed the course along

to fellow graduate students who continued to teach the course during my time as a PhD student at Penn State. In 2009 I had just graduated and taken a job at York College of Pennsylvania when Penn State contacted me and asked me to lead a group of students again. During this third trip to HOINA, Mom asked if I would be interested in joining the board of HOINA, and I have been serving on the board ever since. I now take students from York College to India every other year and have made nine trips so far and looking forward to many more.