

Winter 2014

# Momentum



South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) is a national, nonpartisan, non-profit organization that elevates the voices and perspectives of South Asian individuals and organizations to build a more just and inclusive society in the United States.

Dear SAALT Community:

I have been at the helm of SAALT for nine months now and it has been a time of deep learning—and action. I am excited to tell you about four key areas of work that the SAALT team has been focused on over these nine months, and to invite you to join us continue our efforts to build stronger South Asian communities!



- Played a critical role on a new White House Hate Violence Task Force, which was announced in November. The Task Force, which includes core components of a model developed by SAALT and critical ally organizations, will unite numerous government agencies such as the Domestic Policy Council and the Department of Justice, among others, to develop strategies that help protect our communities and connect them with local and federal government.
- Released a new report, *Under Suspicion, Under Attack* which documents how South Asian, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Arab communities around the country have increasingly been the target of hate violence and xenophobic political rhetoric nationwide. The report's findings were featured on MSNBC's *Andrea Mitchell Reports* in September.
- Mobilized over 2,000 volunteers from 10 cities and 34 campuses to participate in *Be the Change*, our national day of service facilitated in the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi's message
- Trained 13 young leaders from 12 college campuses and 2 organizations serving South Asian communities to buttress our pipeline of organizers, community builders, and advocates

This is just a snapshot of the program and policy initiatives at SAALT, which you can read more about in this year's *Momentum*. And in 2015, I hope to meet many of you—at the National South Asian Summit in Washington, D.C. on April 10-13, 2015, and at forums and events throughout the country. Thank you for being part of our family of activists, partners, and supporters!

In Solidarity,

## Training New Leaders

The third annual Young Leaders Institute took place this summer in Washington, D.C. with the support of Comcast and Southwest Airlines. Through the Institute, 13 university students representing artists, advocates, and organizers came together, both as members of the South Asian and LGBTQ communities, and supportive allies. Students developed their leadership and communication skills, learned about the history of South Asian communities, and developed campus and community-based projects to address discrimination against LGBTQ individuals of South Asian descent.



## Representing Your Voice on Capitol Hill

SAALT engages regularly with the White House, Congress, and federal agencies to highlight issues affecting South Asian American communities. In 2014, we focused on two main issues: the need to reform the country's immigration system and the importance of creating a government task force to address the spike in hate violence against our communities since 9/11.

This summer, we met with over 20 Members of Congress who represent the highest concentration of South Asian constituents to inform them of our communities' needs and priorities.



## Strengthening South Asian Organizations

SAALT coordinates the National Coalition of South Asian Organizations (NCSO), a network of 49 groups that provide direct services, organize, or advocate on behalf of South Asian communities. In 2014, through *We Build Community*, SAALT's flagship capacity-building program, SAALT provided trainings, networking opportunities, and subgrants to five organizations including Chhaya CDC, DRUM-South Asian Organizing Center, South Asian American Policy and Research Institute, Sapna NYC, and the Sikh Coalition.



## Are You Ready? The 2015 National South Asian Summit

*“From community storytelling to digital organizing, immigration policy to caring for seniors, the National South Asian Summit was a place where I could learn, be challenged, and meet wonderful new collaborators and friends from across the country.”*

- Anirvan Chatterjee



## SAALT by the Numbers: Informing Media Coverage of Our Communities

3,060 Twitter followers

2,957 Facebook followers

52 media hits

17 speaking events

Reached **9,371** people with our report, *Under Suspicion, Under Attack*

**The National South Asian Summit is around the corner!** On April 10-13, 2015, SAALT will be convening community leaders and active members from around the country to attend the fifth biennial conference in Washington, D.C. The Summit will engage participants in workshops and sessions related to key issues affecting South Asians, and include an Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill for community members to meet with policymakers. Save the date on your calendar now!

## Get Involved with SAALT in 2015!

Start a SAALT Circle

Bring us to your campus or community for a workshop or presentation

Attend the National South Asian Summit 2015, or sponsor a student to attend

Apply for the Young Leaders Institute 2015

Donate \$1000 and become a SAALT Champion

Donate \$500 and become a member of our Sustainers Circle



## Thank You for Making Our Work Possible

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Southwest Airlines

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...and donors like you!