

# a model for medical organizations

BIMDA continues its organizational ascent in Brevard County in 2013



BIMDA members at FLORIDA TODAY's Volunteer Recognition Award (VRA) program (pictured from left), Dr. Subhash Rege, Dr. N. Rao Kopuri, Dr. Ashok Shah, Dr. Gobi Balaji and Dr. Mahesh Soni.



Photo by Craig Rubadoux, FLORIDA TODAY

Glad Kurian accepts the VRA award for "Organization of the Year" on behalf of BIMDA.



Dr. Stephanie Haridopolos, president-elect of the Brevard County Medical Society (BCMS), congratulates BIMDA as the VRA Organization of The Year.



Dr. Mark Rumbak, critical care professor at the University of South Florida (USF), delivers a continuing medical education (CME) lecture.

**GLAD KURIAN**, honorary executive director of the **Brevard Indo-American Medical & Dental Association (BIMDA)**, glows with pride when talking about the organization's latest accolade — receiving the 2012 "Organization of the Year" award as part of FLORIDA TODAY's Volunteer Recognition Awards (VRA) program.

"Receiving the award is a major milestone for BIMDA. It is really a tribute to the visionary leadership and loyal members who have contributed immensely to Brevard over the years," says Kurian.

BIMDA was formed in 1996 by Kurian and pediatrician Dr. Mahesh Soni to create a platform for physicians, dentists and other medical scientists of Indian heritage to share ideas and support the availability of medical treatment for those who might not otherwise

have access to it. These core ideals have allowed the organization to not only grow here in Brevard, but also to serve as a model for several other similar Florida-based medical organizations.

In the nearly two decades since BIMDA's inception, its members have supported a wide variety of charitable organizations. They helped raise thousands of dollars for disaster victims in Louisiana, Asia and Haiti. They help support a host of local charities, such as the Merritt Island Rotary Club Foundation, the Brevard Symphony Youth Orchestra, and the Brevard Sheriff's Office's "Camp Chance."

Kurian says that BIMDA has continued to grow largely because the group is a big believer in diversity and inclusion. It's not mandatory to be of Indian descent to join the organization.

Kurian's marketing and

networking skills have proved beneficial in bringing together medical groups across the county. "BIMDA supports an inclusive policy," he says. "While we believe in an independent spirit of enterprise, we look for ways to partner with all medical institutions. Partnership medicine will ultimately benefit patients."

## ■ DR. N. RAO KOPURI ASSUMES ROLE OF PRESIDENT FOR 2013

In November 2012, BIMDA's members elected a new president to guide their efforts, Dr. N. Rao Kopuri, an orthodontist with Central Florida Orthodontic Specialists.

Kopuri has been a member of the organization since 1996, and over the years has held several board titles with BIMDA. This will be his first year as president.

"I'm very happy to take this position," says Kopuri. "I want to take BIMDA a step higher in its charitable efforts."

Specifically, Dr. Kopuri is interested in not only continuing the group's local philanthropic efforts, but also in branching out further by organizing member missions to bring medical and dental care to some of the world's poorest of nations.

"Every human being deserves food, shelter and health care," says Dr. Kopuri. "There are no boundaries for the poor."

Dr. Kopuri has lived in Brevard since 1986 when his wife, Dr. Aparna Kopuri, a child psychiatrist, was offered a position here and became the first child



BIMDA's executive committee for 2013 (pictured from left) includes Glad Kurian, honorary executive director; Dr. Tarun Tewatia, secretary (internist); Dr. Biju Mathews, vice president (cardiologist); Dr. N. Rao Kopuri, president (orthodontist); Dr. Subhash Rege, treasurer (dentist); Dr. Ravi Shankar, president-elect 2014 (radiation oncologist).



Dr. N. Rao Kopuri, president of BIMDA for 2013, with his wife, Dr. Aparna Kopuri.



Congressman Dr. Dave Weldon delivers the welcome message at BIMDA's annual conference.

psychiatrist to come to the county. Back then, Dr. Kopuri admits he was a little skeptical of moving to a small town after spending several years studying in more metropolitan areas of the U.S., but he and his wife have loved every minute of it since making the move.

"This area has been very good (for our family)," says Dr. Kopuri. "We are indebted to this community."

Being a part of BIMDA and its charitable endeavors has also given Dr. Kopuri a great deal of joy over the years. "It's really satisfying. You can't buy this kind of satisfaction," he says.

## ■ 11TH ANNUAL MEDICAL EXPO COMING IN APRIL

BIMDA will host its 11th annual Medical Expo and CME Conference at the Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place on April 27, 2013. The event offers CME (continuing medical education) credit for physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

"The best or nothing! Selection of speakers at the conference is a process that screens for the best."

*Glad Kurian, honorary executive director of BIMDA*

Later that evening, at 6 p.m., the group will hold a reception and banquet for members, sponsors and supporters.

The major sponsors for this year's event are all three hospital systems — Parrish Medical Center, Health First and Wuesthoff Health System; Kindred Hospital Melbourne and Health South SeaPines Rehabilitation Hospital.

Supporting partners include the Brevard County Medical Society (BCMS), several pharmaceutical companies, service providers and medical device manufacturers.

"The best or nothing!" is Kurian's favorite phrase borrowed from the Mercedes-Benz tagline.

"Selection of speakers at the conference is a process that screens for the best," explains Kurian. "We showcase 6-10 leading speakers at every event. This year we hope to bring the Florida governor and a few high-profile political leaders as speakers. Special guests will also include deans of medical colleges in Florida and presidents of several medical societies."

The BIMDA 11th annual Medical Expo and CME will be held on Saturday, April 27 at the Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place, 200 Rialto Place, Melbourne. For more information on attending or sponsoring the expo, contact Glad Kurian at (321) 952-0853, GladKurian@aol.com or visit BIMDA.com. ■