

Moving Forward Together Annual Report 2022



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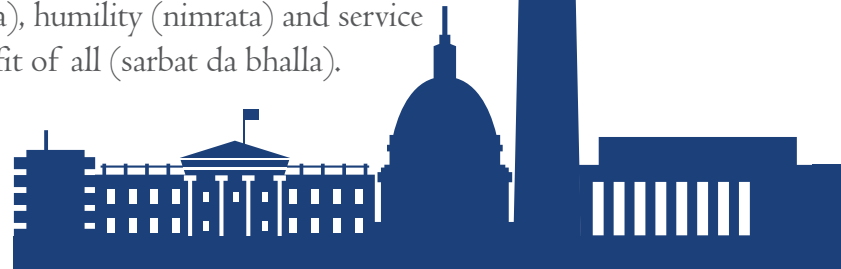
Founded in 1996, SALDEF is a national Sikh American impact organization focused on building leadership and capacity in the Sikh American community.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

Our mission is to empower Sikh Americans by building dialogue, deepening understanding, promoting civic and political participation, and upholding social justice and religious freedom for all Americans.

We envision a United States where Sikh Americans are respected and recognized as a vibrant and integral part of the fabric of this nation and are appreciated for our shared values of service, social justice, and an unshakeable belief in freedom and equality for all.

We are grounded in our values of optimism (chardi kala), humility (nimrata) and service (seva), inspired by the community (sangat) for the benefit of all (sarbat da bhalla).



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Wabeguru ji ka Khalsa, Wabeguru ji ki Fateh!

As I look back over the last 26 years, I continue to be inspired by how far our community has come. We have seen the Sikh American voice elevated in the halls of Congress with increasing influence year after year.

This past year, I was pleased to work with over 70 dynamic young leaders through our SikhLEAD internship program. These young leaders were able to get exposure to some of the highest levels of government and a firsthand look at the legislative process. Many of these young leaders were instrumental in the success of our SikhVOTE program, conducting outreach to over 100,000 Sikh voter contacts. This was the largest mobilization since SikhVOTE was launched a decade ago.

2022 also marked the 10th Anniversary of the Oak Creek mass shooting. The Remembrance event, which SALDEF supported, became a national model for what successful interfaith and government collaboration can look like after tragedy.

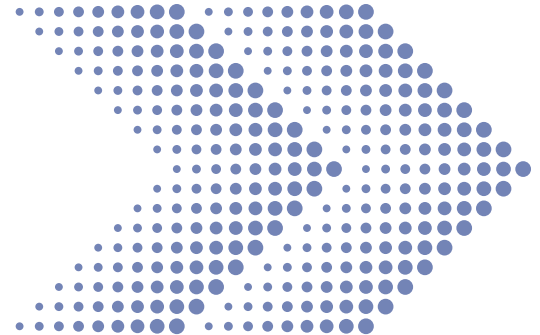
Additionally, this past year, among growing safety concerns toward houses of worship, I was appointed Chair of the Department of Homeland Security's Faith Based Security Advisory Council (FBSAC). As the first Sikh American to serve as Chair and only Sikh American on the 25 member Council, this appointment ensures the Sikh voice is at the table as we tackle some of the most pressing and challenging safety concerns of our time.

We could not do this important work without our incredible network of supporters. Thank you to our partners, staff, donors and volunteers for helping to make this possible.

Guru Fateh,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kiran K. Gill". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kiran Kaur Gill, Executive Director



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Training TSA Officers on Screening Sikh Travellers

SALDEF is grateful to be awarded the Multicultural Coalition Partnership Award by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The award recognizes SALDEF's decade-long partnership with the TSA along with our significant work on developing an educational online training titled "Effective Engagement and Screening of Sikh Travelers and their Religious Items". This impactful training is aimed at raising awareness of Sikhi to TSA officers nationwide and providing a clear understanding of how to respectfully engage with Sikh travelers and the Sikh articles of faith.

"Our collaboration with TSA has resulted in a solution that strengthens TSA's ability to protect our nation's airports while respecting the civil liberties of all travelers of faith. We will continue to work closely with TSA to ensure that the implementation of new procedures does not result in the inappropriate profiling of Sikhs and other travelers."
— Kiran Kaur Gill, SALDEF Executive Director



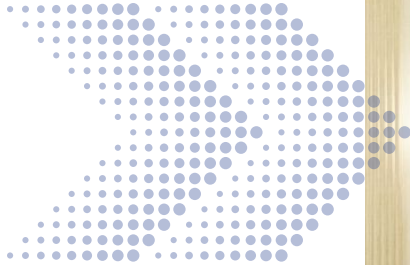
Ensuring a Seat at the Table

Secretary of Homeland Security appointed Executive Director Kiran Kaur Gill to serve as Chair of the Department of Homeland Security Faith-Based Security Advisory Council. As Chair of the 25-member council, Kiran will advise on strategies and recommendations to help keep faith-based communities safe.

"These prominent faith and law enforcement leaders will help us build and strengthen the community partnerships that are so vital to our mission success. We will work together to increase access to our services, ensure equity, maintain openness and transparency, and fully restore the trust of the communities we serve."
— DHS Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas

ADVOCATING AT THE WHITE HOUSE AGAINST HATE

SALDEF Executive Director Kiran Kaur Gill met with President Biden, Vice President Harris, and other national leaders at the White House multiple times throughout this year to share strategies to counter hate and violent extremism that threatens minority and marginalized communities. She presented and shared recommendations with the Commissioners of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders about the connection between gun violence, mass shootings, and racism.



STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRACY



Every citizen of the United States has the right to a ballot, but many eligible voters have been conditioned to believe their votes don't count. This is due to decades of voter suppression, language barriers, and misinformation.

At SALDEF, we believe that language accessibility is something that doesn't need to be another barrier in the voting process. We collaborated with JusPunjabi TV to reach Punjabi-speaking voters. We began to work

with local and rural communities around the country to mobilize and create awareness around the lack of Punjabi voting materials in areas that needed them the most. As a result of our partnerships and advocacy, SALDEF mobilized over 100,000 Sikh American voters across the nation.

Phone-banking, social media engagement and in person community outreach have all been tools in our efforts to ensure accessible voting for all Sikh Americans.

TURNING TRAGEDY INTO UNITY



Remembering Oak Creek Victims at 10th Anniversary

On August 5, 2022, we commemorated the ten year anniversary of the mass shooting at the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin in Oak Creek, which resulted in the death of seven members of the sangat. To ensure that we never forget the tragedy at Oak Creek, SALDEF organized a remembrance event in coordination with affected community members and partner organizations. Together we came together to heal, reflect, and take action.

- SALDEF staff members conducted gurdwara tours for interfaith residents of Oak Creek to help them understand the role of the gurdwara in Sikhi.

- Concurrently, SALDEF hosted a series of workshops featuring partner organizations and SikhLEAD program alumni such as “youth mobilization” led by SikhLEAD alumna Tarina Ahuja.
- Along with the commemoration events, SALDEF hosted a panel featuring Sikh youth of Oak Creek, Wisconsin, as they discussed their vision for the Sikh American community, their path to advocacy and the support they received from community members in the aftermath of the shooting.

In response to the tragedy of the Oak Creek shooting, SALDEF also released a whitepaper, “Taking on Hate & White Supremacy: Policy Recommendations Ten Years after the Attacks in Oak Creek, Wisconsin” to offer concrete policy solutions to better protect our community and others who may be facing similar challenges.

SALDEF continues to actively work to empower our community to get engaged and advocate for policies to use the lessons from Oak Creek to prevent acts of hate, build united communities, and support those who are impacted by tragedy.



UNITING AGAINST HATE

The nearly 3,800 reports of incidents targeting the Asian American community over the past year are a challenge to the conscience of the country. On June 25, 2022, SALDEF collaborated with national Asian American organizations to march in Washington, D.C., alongside other marginalized communities to unite against hate.

With several thousand people in attendance, SALDEF highlighted key Sikh American agents of change across the United States, including J.J. Kapur from Iowa, Komal Chohan from Indianapolis, and Pardeep Kaleka from Wisconsin.

By highlighting the resilience of the Sikh American community, SALDEF offered the stories of our community as a lesson and inspiration for communities facing crisis. We shared a roadmap, underscored by our values, to fight hate and violence in communities across the country.



BUILDING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY FOR SIKH YOUTH

SikhLEAD is a national youth leadership development program that empowers students to unlock their potential. As a premier leadership program for Sikh youth, the power of the SikhLEAD program stems directly from its innovative approach grounding leadership principles in Sikhi, social justice, and civic engagement.

In 2022, 73 Sikh youth from across the nation interned in Congressional offices, at the White House, in the State Assembly and with federal agencies and partner organizations.

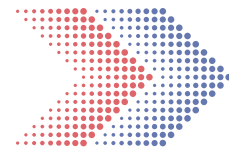
Participants in the DC-based federal SikhLEAD Internship Program gained hands-on experience in national-level policy and advocacy. To give back to their sangats, they launched the SikhCIVICS project, researching and writing on key policy issues from a Sikh lens. Along with developing professional and leadership skills, the DC interns were provided stipends of \$1500 to help defray housing and living costs.



With the support of our alumni, donors, and mentors, SALDEF promises to continue enhancing our flagship SikhLEAD program in the coming years to help our Sikh youth to develop leadership skills, encourage political and civic engagement, and foster interest in public service careers.

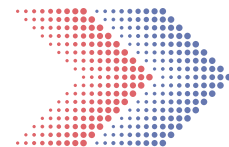


SIKHLEAD CLASS OF 2022: DC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



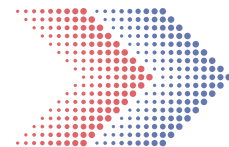
Name	State	School	Internship with
Tandeep Sawhney	NY	Baruch College CUNY	Senator Chuck Schumer
Anmol Chowdhary	DC	The George Washington University	Senator Richard Blumenthal and New Heights
Sukhmani Kaur	WA	University of Pennsylvania	New Heights Communications
Jaskaran Singh	NJ	Rutgers University- New Brunswick	Senator Bob Menendez
Navraj Singh	VA	University of Pennsylvania	White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHP)
Gurmehar Kaur	NJ	Rutgers University	Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership (CAPAL) and Act to Change project
Rhea Vermani	CA	University of California, Berkeley	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
Gursimar Singh Rana	CA	University of California, Berkeley	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
Sukhmani Kaur Khalsa	MD	American University	United Nations Information Centres (UNIC)

SIKHLEAD CLASS OF 2022: REGIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



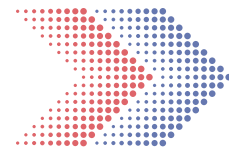
Name	State	School	Internship with
Jasman Padam	MA	Shrewsbury High School	Institute for Youth in Policy & Community Department
Trinjan Kaur	MA	King Philip Regional Highschool	Massachusetts State Rep Shawn Dooley
Jashika Kaur	MA	Natick High School	Sikh Media Representation Project with SALDEF
Suroop K Marwah	MA	Westborough High School	Sikh Media Representation Project with SALDEF
Tanisha K Kapoor	MA	Algonquin Regional High School	Congressman Jim McGovern
Muskeen S Talwar	MI	Eisenhower High School	Sikh Media Representation Project with SALDEF
Yuvraj S Chand yok	NY	Monroe Woodbury High School	Sikh Media Representation Project with SALDEF
Karamjot Singh	NY	Williamsville East High School	Congressman Brian Higgins
Gurkirat Pal Singh	NY	Western New England University School of Law	SikhLight Podcast Project with SALDEF

SIKHLEAD CLASS OF 2022: REGIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



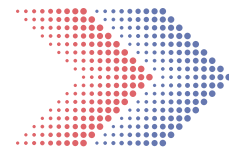
Name	State	School	Internship with
Ekamjot S Gill	NY	Monroe Woodbury High School	State Senator James Skoufis' office
Saachvir Singh	NY	Clarence High School	Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAVote)
Jasleen Kaur	WI	Hamilton High School	Oak Creek Project with SALDEF
Bani Kaur	WI	Brookfield East High School	Oak Creek Project with SALDEF
Hersh Singh	WI	University School of Milwaukee	Oak Creek Project with SALDEF
Jasdeep Pabla Singh	WI	Brookfield Central High School	Oak Creek Project with SALDEF
Chitvan Singh	GA	Lambert High School	Stephen P. Fuller, Attorney at Law
Sejal Singh	VA	Oakton High School	IRF Secretariat (International Religious Freedom)
Simar K Soni	CT	Bethel High School	IRF Secretariat (International Religious Freedom)
Muntara Kaur Singh	CT	The Morgan School	Make us Visible Organization - AAPI curriculum project

SIKHLEAD CLASS OF 2022: REGIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



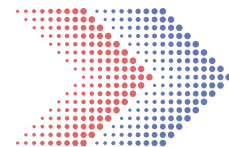
Name	State	School	Internship with
Gurshaan S Sidhu	CT	University of British Columbia	Dasvandh Network (DVN)
Amanjot Kaur	CT	Brien McMahon High School	Mayor of Norwalk- Harry Rilling
Eknour Kaur	MD	Thomas S Wootton High School	Congressman Jamie Raskin
Tavroop Kaur	MD	Centennial High School	Sikh Parent Association Curriculum Project
Ria Sood	MD	McDonogh School	MIMA - Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
Saibhang Kaur	KS	University of Missouri–Kansas City	Social Media Strategy Project - Colorado Sikhs
Himmat Singh	KS	Olathe Northwest High School	Social Media Strategy Project - Colorado Sikhs
Dipneet Kaur	TX	University of Texas, Arlington	Uplifting Impact - DEI Training Organization
Arshia K Narula	TX	Liberty High School	Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)
Ekjot K Birdi	TX	The University of Texas at Arlington	PAGRI Environmental Organization

SIKHLEAD CLASS OF 2022: REGIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



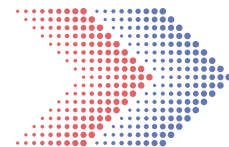
Name	State	School	Internship with
Arbaaz S Sandhu	TX	Texas Tech University	Senator Ted Cruz
Ruhani Ahluwalia	TX	Southern Methodist University	Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership (CAPAL)
Jasmeen Bassi	CA	Live Oak High School	Sikh Media Representation Project with SALDEF
Kajal K Bhangu	CA	University of California Los Angeles	Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Bhajleen K Khalsa	CA	Stockton Early College Academy	Ashley
Jagsher S Mann	CA	Orange County School of of the Arts, Santa Ana	Sikh Media Representation Project with SALDEF
Harleen Kaur	CA	John C. Kimball High School	Representative Jim Cooper
Navjot K Gill	CA	University of California, Los Angeles	IRF Secretariat (International Religious Freedom)
Avaani Kataria	CA	University of Oregon	Parliament of World Religion
Simran Kohli	CA	University of Oregon	Sikh American History Project Communications Internship

SIKHLEAD CLASS OF 2022: REGIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



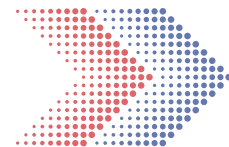
Name	State	School	Internship with
Sereena Gill	CA	New York University	Representative Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Ashley Rehal	CA	University of California, Berkeley	Policy Intern with Saldef
Amrit K Ahuja	CO	STEM School Highlands Ranch	Sikh American History Project Colorado Research Internship
Shaan Singh	NJ	Monroe Township High School	Sikh Health Survey Project with SALDEF
Ishar Singh	NJ	Middlesex County Academy for Allied Health and Biomedical Sciences	Sikh Health Survey Project with SALDEF
Shahj Kaur Chadha	NJ	Monroe Township High School	Assemblyman Daniel Benson
Jasraj K Baweja	NJ	Steinert High School - Hamilton East	Assemblyman Daniel Benson
Nirbaan Singh	NJ	West Windsor High School South	Assemblyman Wayne P. DeAngelo
Manveen K Kohli	NJ	Rutgers University	Middlesex County Commissioner

SIKHLEAD CLASS OF 2022: REGIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



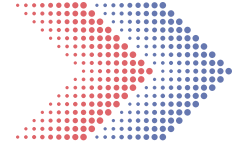
Name	State	School	Internship with
Shanti Narra	TX	Southern Methodist University	Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership (CAPAL)
Harman S Bedi	NJ	East Brunswick High School	Assemblyman Sterley Stanley
Shkeet Kour	NJ	Moorestown High School	Representative Carol A. Murphy
Harman S Kohli	NJ	Wayne Hills High School	Sikh American Veterans Alliance (SAVA)
Simar S Rajpal	NJ	John P Stevens High School	Assemblyman Sterley Stanley
Tanvi K Kohli	NJ	Mahwah High School	Sikh American Veterans Alliance (SAVA)
Hargun K Sachar	NJ	Glen Rock High School	Senator Joseph A. Lagana
Japneet K Chopra	NJ	Marlboro High School	Sikh American Veterans Alliance (SAVA)
Japjeev Kaur	IL	Neuqua Valley High School	Sikh Parent Association- Curriculum & Outreach Intern
Bundna Kaur	IL	William Fremd High School	Sikh Media Representation Project with SALDEF

SIKHLEAD CLASS OF 2022: REGIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



Name	State	School	Internship with
Parveen K Mundi	IL	DePaul University	Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi & Parliament of World Religions
Baani K Parmar	IL	Oak Park and River Forest High School	Oak Creek Project with SALDEF
Ranveer Singh	IL	Warren Township High School	Sikh Parent Association Curriculum Project
Mehtab Singh	IL	Warren Township High School	Oak Creek Project with SALDEF
Jaideep S Talwar	IL	South Elgin High School	Oak Creek Project/ SikhLight Podcast Project with SALDEF
Taranjot Singh	IL	Neuqua Valley High School	Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAvote)
Mantej Singh	IL	York High School	Representative Deanne M. Mazzochi

SIKHLEAD CLASS OF 2022: INNOVATION FELLOWS PROGRAM



Empowering The Next Generation of Aspiring Sikh Entrepreneurs

The Innovation Fellows program provides the opportunity for aspiring Sikh American entrepreneurs to develop professionally through the exposure and evaluation of breakthrough technologies emerging out of federal laboratories and academic research centers over the summer.

Program Mission

1. To identify and foster opportunities for innovation by pairing ambition with emerging technologies for Sikhs to compete in the economy of the future.
2. Support Sikh women and girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and remove the obstacles they face in pursuing careers as inventors and entrepreneurs.
3. Establish SALDEF as a leading social, civic, and entrepreneurial leader for the community.

"It's about engaging in new thinking that connects today's pressures with tomorrow's realities. Join me in playing a role to define the future of work for Sikh Americans who are under represented in high growth jobs"

- Ish Singh, Entrepreneur-in-Residence, SALDEF

Team 1 Project: Wearables to Monitor Strength Training, Introducing Uplift: A customized and collaborative system that uses monitoring to ensure injured athletes succeed by Sirjan Kaur, Henrico High School VA, Siftee Kaur, High Tech High School NJ and Anaahat Brar, Joseph A. Gregori High School CA.

Team 2 Project: Smart materials - Patkas for an active lifestyle by Tej Dhingra, Founder. Tej is a Student at Bowdoin College TX.

"As part of this program, doing numerous customer discovery interviews allowed us to listen deeply to why our customers faced problems. By doing so, we were able to empathize, glean insights and create a tangible solution."

— Bharat Rai, Founder, Nudge

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Leadership Development Program (LDP) is a transformational program that empowers Sikh American youth to become effective leaders committed to exploring and realizing both their personal potential and that of the Sikh American community.

SALDEF's Initiative - Sikh American Health Survey

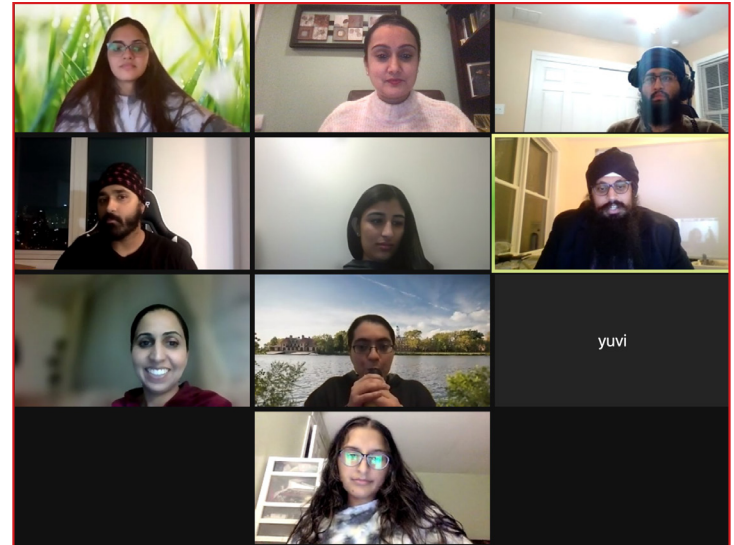
SALDEF's LDP team has produced the first ever Sikh American health survey that will provide key data we need to improve the health status of our sangat.

The Primary goal of this survey is to optimize the health and well-being of the Sikh American community. Through the Sikh Health survey we can understand and address barriers to healthcare access and literacy gaps in the Sikh community.

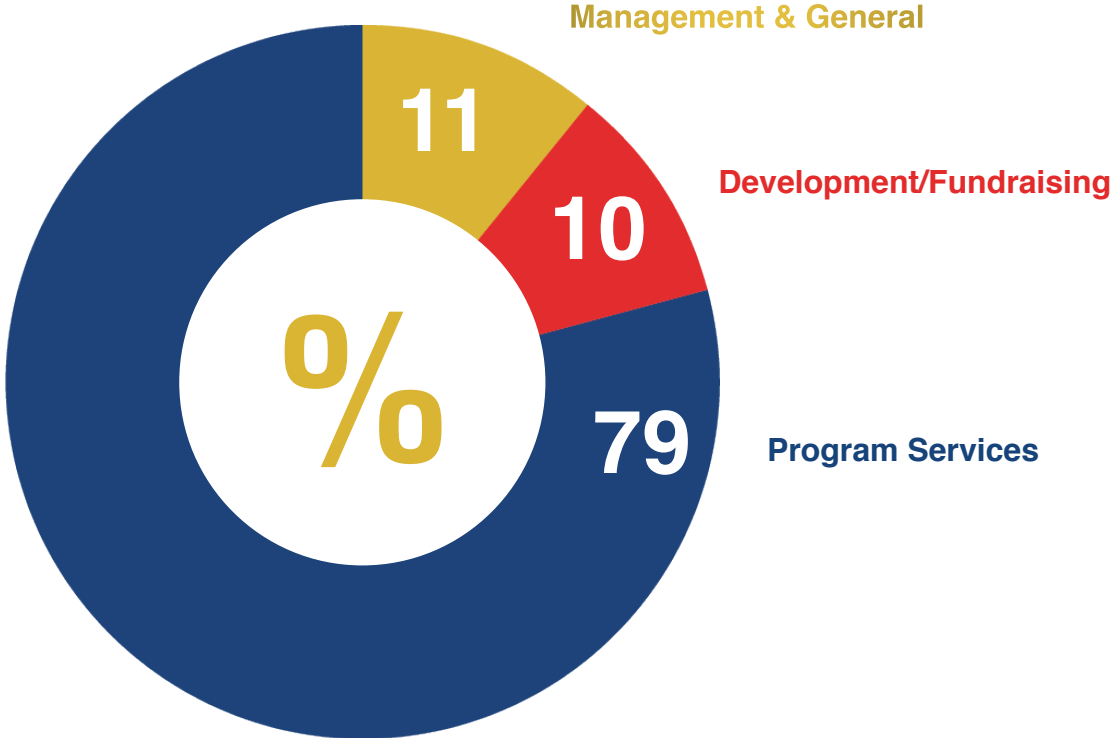
“This program has been an invaluable experience for me. My interest in medicine lies in both global health and health policy and through LDP I was able to gain the skill set needed to steer my career in exactly the direction I wanted. The leadership and organizing teams were extremely helpful and supportive in allowing each and every participant to pursue a project they were truly passionate about and providing us with the resources to turn our ideas into a reality.

For any Sikh youth interested in meeting like-minded individuals, gaining leadership as well as advocacy skills, and pursuing projects to help the Sikh community, this program is the perfect fit! Each session will continue to build a strong foundation to help you achieve not only your professional goals but also your personal ones. As a healthcare advocate for the Sikh American community, my team and I were able to create a national healthcare survey to

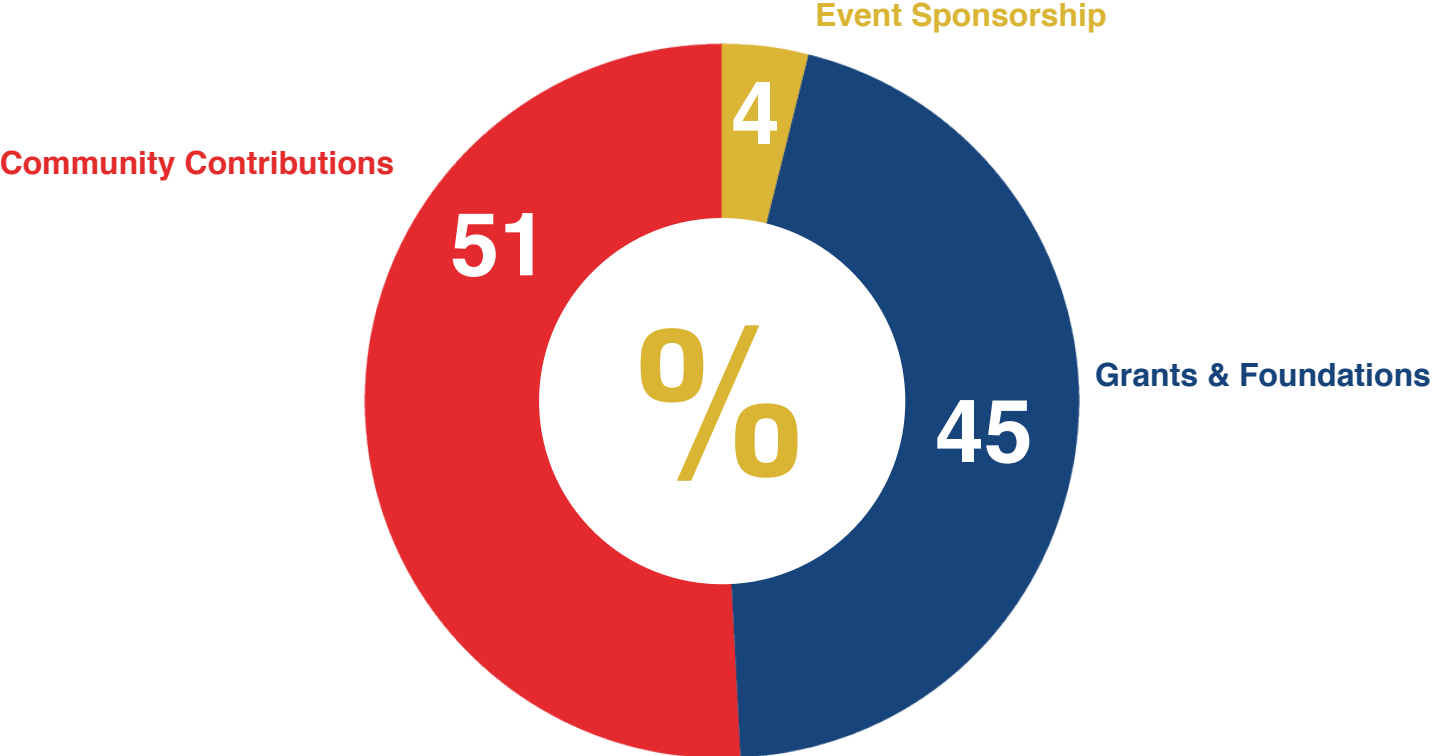
understand barriers to healthcare access in our community. A project of this magnitude and impact would not have been possible without the SALDEF team and the LDP program!” Rhea Singh, medical student at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine. SALDEF Leadership Development Program (LDP) 2021-2022 Cohort.



FINANCIALS: 2022 EXPENSES



FINANCIALS: 2022 INCOME



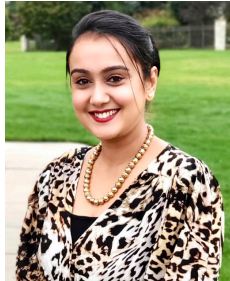
SALDEF TEAM – STAFF



Kiran Kaur Gill
Executive Director



Sharan Kaur Singh
Program Director



Puneet Kaur
Program Manager



Soni Singh
Program Associate



Amrita Kular
Communications Manager



Sahiba Kaur
Media Relations Manager



Deval Patel
Media & Comms Associate



Jyot Singh
Policy Manager



Jaspreet Kaur
Operations Manager



Prabhleen Kaur
Intern



Navdeep Singh
Consultant












Ishinder Singh
Entrepreneur in Residence

SALDEF TEAM – BOARD OF DIRECTORS










1. Kavneet Singh, Chair
2. Amman Singh, Vice Chair
3. Juspreet Kaur, Secretary
4. Simran Singh, Treasurer
5. Manjit Singh, Co-founder
6. Navjeet Singh, Board member






MEDIA MENTIONS

Title	Publication
Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Ensuring AAPI-Inclusive Curriculum is Taught in New Jersey Schools	 State of New Jersey
100 ways Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and allies have found solutions to racism and violence.	 NBC NEWS
The Sikh-American Community Is Building Resilience As Hate Crimes Rise	 Religion Unplugged
A Tribute To Asian-American And Pacific Islander Heritage Month In New Jersey	 Insider NJ
Being Diplomatic: Kismat Dhaliwal '21 Pursues Dream Through Rangel Fellowship	 Wellesely College
Sikh community still under attack a year after Indianapolis mass shooting	 USA TODAY
15,000 turnout expected at Asian American-led march on National Mall	 NBC NEWS
Asian American-led Unity March a reminder of community's history of activism	 AXIOS
FBI Washington Field Office Announces Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund as Recipient of a 2021 FBI Director's Community Leadership Award	 FBI

MEDIA MENTIONS

Title	Publication
A First of Its Kind March on the National Mall Counters Anti-Asian Racism	
What Americans Share In Common Is Far Greater Than What Divides Us	
Sikh community in Oak Creek plans vigil and other events 10 years after mass shooting claimed six worshippers' lives	
As Sikhs mark tragic anniversary, study shows violence against them rising	
On 10th anniversary of Wisconsin gurudwara shooting, Sikh communities call for US Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act	
Facing hate together	
DHS Announces New Members of Faith-Based Security Advisory Council	
Sikh student detained on UNC campus for wearing kirpan, curved dagger central to faith	
A Sikh student at UNC Charlotte was handcuffed after someone mistook a part of their religious attire for a knife and called 911	

MEDIA MENTIONS

Title	Publication
UNC slammed for detaining Sikh student for carrying 'kirpan', a sheathed dagger central to his religion	 MEAWW
Man accused in 2019 shooting death of HCSO deputy Sandeep Dhaliwal during traffic stop fires attorney, will represent himself in trial: Officials	
Man Convicted of Capital Murder in Killing of Sikh Sheriff's Deputy in Texas	
Two Indian Americans named to DHS Faith-Based Security Advisory Council	 American Bazaar
Sikh named to US DHS' Faith-Based Advisory Council	 سياست The Siasat Daily
Kiran Kaur Gill & Chandra Acharya appointed to Homeland Security's Faith-Based Security Advisory Council	 in-depth information you can trust
Sikh Student Detained on Campus Speaks to Lack of Religious and Diversity Training at Schools	
DHS launches panel on religious security as hate crimes rise	



Contact Us

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