

2011 Indian-American Achiever Awards

Arts and Letters



Dr. Vijay Prashad, Ph. D

Dr. Vijay Prashad is George and Martha Kellner Chair in South Asian History & is the Professor of International Studies at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut.

Dr Prashad attended the famous Doon School in India, received his undergraduate degree from Pomona College and earned his Doctorate of philosophy from the University of Chicago. A well known commentator on world governance, he has wide areas of interests and specializes in South Asian history. He is an author of eleven books, most recently, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*, which was chosen as the best nonfiction book of 2008 by the Asian American Writers' Workshop and won the 2009 Muzaffar Ahmad Book Prize.

Medicine and Health Promotion



Dr. Madhu Mathur, M.D., M.P.H.

A tireless advocate for children's health, Dr. Mathur is the founding member of Stamford's Childhood Obesity Task Force and has been the driving force behind the Kid's Fans, a childhood obesity prevention program. She is currently participating in a research study, with Stamford Hospital and Columbia University colleagues, to determine how childhood obesity effects the receptors that regulate hypertension.

Besides being the Director of Kid's Fans and Chair of Obesity Task Force, she also holds the following positions:

- Medical Director, Regional Medical Home Initiative, Southwest CT
- Chairperson, Health and Wellness Committee, Childhood Blueprint Initiative, Stamford, CT
- Chairperson, Health and Wellness Committee, Stamford Public Schools

Community Service



Mrs. Vidya Teredesai

Mrs. Vidya Teredesai has been selected for GOPIO Community Service award in recognition of her tireless efforts to better the lives of the underprivileged in our community in the United States and in India. She has raised funds for homeless shelters, Norwalk Senior Center, Evergreen Foundation and others and for the Women's hospital in Baroda India. She has received numerous awards for her community service including the RSVP Award of Excellence.

2011 Young Person of the Year Award



Ms. Mequitta Ahuja

Ms. Mequitta Ahuja is a visual artist, an awardee of the 2008 Houston Artadia Prize as well as a 2009 Joan Mitchell Award. She received an MFA from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2003, mentored by Kerry James Marshall. Her work has been exhibited across the U.S. as well as in Paris, Brussels, Berlin, India and Dubai.

Public collections include the Ulrich Museum in Wichita KS, the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Studio Museum in Harlem, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The U.S. State Department's Mumbai, India offices, and The Cleveland Clinic.

Mequitta's work has appeared in *Modern Painters*, March 2007 and *Art News*, February 2007. In February, 2010, Mequitta was profiled as an "Artist to Watch" in *ArtNews*.

2011 Friend of India Award



Mr. Paul Semanski

In early 2008, Mr. Paul Semanski learned that the international charity Asha for Education was looking to formalize a Chapter in the Hartford area as a satellite of Asha Yale. Paul, along with members of the Indian and American communities organized Celebrate India! in July of 2008 – an Indian Cultural festival raised funds for the Blind School. GOPIO – CT was the first Indian cultural organization to support the Celebrate India event.

Paul serves as a Co-Coordinator for Asha Hartford, which is now its own Chapter and works closely with their satellite Asha UConn organization. Both groups, with the support of generous sponsors such as GOPIO – CT, organize several fundraisers each year on behalf of the Navsarjan Trust Schools for disadvantaged girls in Gujarat and the DF Blind School in Kolkata. For more information, visit CelebrateIndia.org.