

SAMAR



SOUTH ASIAN MARROW ASSOCIATION OF RECRUITERS

# SAMAR SIGNPOST

A vital link with our donors, patients and volunteers

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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This newsletter coincides with the conclusion of a turbulent decade.

While there has been unrest all over the world, we are happy to mention that impressive strides have been made in the areas of recruitment, transplants and the saving of lives of our patients.

We are truly thankful to all our volunteers for their continued support of SAMAR and our mission!

Our goals for this year are substantially higher and we need your partnership to successfully accomplish these goals. We know with your compassionate support, we will exceed the goals that have been given to us.

On behalf of the SAMAR family, we wish you a HAPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

### Be the Match Registry™ operated by the NMDP: Year in Review

The NMDP's mission statement is: *"We are dedicated to creating an opportunity for all patients to receive the transplant therapy they need, when they need it. We are committed to extending and improving the lives of patients by creating and delivering innovations in cellular transplant therapies through, science, service and support."*

#### 2009 Statistics:

- 4820 Transplants were facilitated
- 481, 089 donors were recruited
- 30,000 cord bloods were collected
- Over 8.1 Million donors in the registry
- A new brand was launched: ***Be The Match***

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## SAMAR: Year in Review

### SAMAR's Mission Statement:

*"South Asian Marrow Association of Recruiters (SAMAR) is a community based network member of the Be the Match Registry which is operated by the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP)*

*We serve patients who need a hematopoietic stem cell transplant for leukemia, fatal blood disorders and other conditions requiring a cellular transplant for an improved life. Our focus is the South Asian community (people from India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, East Africa, Guyana, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and West Indies) and other minority groups, such as African Americans, Asians/Pacific Islanders and Hispanics.*

*Our goal is to educate and recruit potential marrow/blood stem cell donors in order to diversify the NMDP registry. We work to bring a smile back to life."*

In 2009 we have completed our 17 years of uninterrupted services. We hope that 2010 will start off with a bang. A lot has happened in 2009. We helped 26 new patients, recruited almost 5000 donors, added over 150 new volunteers to our SAMAR family, provided callback services for 200 potential donors for further testing and possibly saved many lives!

### RECRUITMENT

We have recruited almost 5000 donors during the past year, increasing the total donors recruited by SAMAR to well over 75,000!

Among the donor's over the years, Anand Shah, the son of our director Jayendra Shah was only 14 when he volunteered with us from SAMAR's inception. He registered a few months after his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1997 and twelve years later he fulfilled that commitment by donating his marrow to save the life a patient in need!

### PATIENTS

This year SAMAR has worked on behalf of 26 new patients. One in particular was an individual who had registered as a donor to help another patient. Only a few short weeks later, he too was diagnosed with leukemia and was told he needed a transplant. This underscores the importance of more recruitment and is just another reminder that this can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any age.

We also want to remember the patients who lost their battle to leukemia as they did not find a donor. Their lives and fight against their diseases will always be in our hearts. We continue to remember their family and friends in our thoughts and prayers.

### VOLUNTEERS

It is said that, "We do not pay our volunteers not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless."

This quote truly sums up our feelings and our gratitude for our volunteers. A community based organization like SAMAR is only as successful as committed are its volunteers and in this area we have been truly blessed.

As mentioned earlier, our recruitment goals for this year are substantially higher and therefore we have to look into new areas of recruitment and explore new avenues. For example we can do word of mouth publicity, ask our neighbors and friends and do drives at homes and private residences. For instance, birthday parties and wedding anniversaries may offer an opportunity for a drive. We should also look into corporate drives. We are looking into this area and will keep you posted.

*"We do not pay our volunteers not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless."*