



SOUTH ASIAN MARROW ASSOCIATION OF RECRUITERS

Established 1992

www.samarinfo.org

samar@samarinfo.org

SAMAR signpost

NEW SAMAR WEBSITE!!!

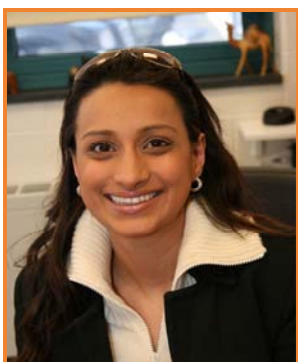
SAMAR is proud to announce the launch of its new and redesigned website. You can now fill out drive requests forms directly on the website and join our volunteer network. You can also leave us a testimonial!

Also, please add our new email address to your contact list:

samar@samarinfo.org

ANNUAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DAY

On October 11, 2008, SAMAR held its annual Volunteer Appreciation Day. More than 50 SAMAR volunteers joined the staff at Delhi Palace Restaurant to wrap up and celebrate another successful year, as well as to give the coming year a loud welcome. The evening began with volunteer and staff introductions along with a “mingling of the minds” to share memories, drive experiences, and new thoughts and ideas about donor recruitment. To praise the spirit of volunteerism, each introduction was followed by an inspirational quote. “Volunteers don’t get paid, not because they’re worthless, but because they’re priceless.” Emotions ran high the entire evening, as two marrow recipients and their families shared their thoughts and gratitude. Afterwards, Mr. and Mrs. Khan gave a presentation highlighting the upcoming year’s goals and strategies for improvement. After the presentation, the volunteers enjoyed dining and conversing with one another. We also shared a special celebration of the New England Chapter’s Lead Coordinator Vikramjit Chhabra’s birthday. The evening was concluded by giving out gifts to the volunteers, SAMAR clocks.



NEW SAMAR CHAPTER: PHILADELPHIA

SAMAR is proud to announce the opening of a new chapter in Philadelphia. Jyoti Johal, a devoted volunteer, started the chapter in Fall 2008. She began working with SAMAR as a volunteer for the Swab4Bevin Team and has conducted many drives and helped to recruit hundreds of new donors to the registry. We are proud of her dedication to help patients find marrow matches.

There are also chapters in New England and the Washington DC Metro Area along with the corporate office in New York.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

REGISTER:

If you are not a registered donor, we urge you to educate yourself about marrow donation. More information about marrow donation, past donors and the need for committed donors can be found at www.samarinfo.org.

If you are interested in registering, please visit our [DRIVE CALENDAR](#).

STAY COMMITTED:

In the past fiscal year, 26% of matched donors were not interested in further testing and 21% were unable to be contacted. It is *vital* for donors to keep their information updated. If there has been a change in your contact information or health history, please visit the [NMDP WEBSITE](#). You can also use this link to check if you are on the registry. If you have any questions, would like to attend or set up a drive, please contact SAMAR.

SET UP A DRIVE:

The chances for a minority to find an unrelated match can be upwards of 1 in 20,000. If you would like to see these statistics changed, please set up a drive in your home, at a community event, religious center or any other place you can gather a few people. For more information on how to set up a drive, please visit the [DRIVE PAGE](#).

VOLUNTEER WITH SAMAR:

Volunteers are needed across the nation to help set-up and volunteer at drives. Bilingual volunteers can also assist with language translation and interpretation. For more information and to join the Volunteer Network or email listserve, please visit the [VOLUNTEER PAGE](#).

ARE YOU A STUDENT?

We are looking for young, vibrant student leaders who are dedicated to creating change especially within their campuses. This is a great chance for you to get hands-on volunteer experience, to teach and moreover the opportunity to bring a smile back to life. Please visit the [STUDENT NETWORK](#) page for more information.

CURRENT PATIENTS

Everyday over 6,000 people search the NMDP Registry. These are some of their stories...



Samiah, a beautiful 13 year old of South Asian descent, was only 11 when she was diagnosed with a rare type of Aplastic anemia. She is an avid reader and swimmer and just like most girls her age,

loves to go shopping in her spare time.

Gaurav, is a 34 year old professional working in Datacraft Asia in Mumbai, India. He is a loving husband and father to a 6 year-old boy.



Gaurav has been diagnosed with (Acute Myelogenous Leukemia).



Jisong (Sara) is a vibrant 16 year old girl who is very active in her community and church. She loves swimming, playing the

violin and has great dreams for the future. Unfortunately she has to put all that on hold until she finds a match.

For more information please visit www.samarinfo.org/patients

IMPORTANT NOTE TO MATCHED DONORS

Becoming a marrow donor is a serious commitment, but a commitment that can considerably increase the chance of survival for a patient. Without a transplant, survival rates range from 0 to 15 percent. For a matched, unrelated donor transplant, overall survival rates (two to three years after transplant) currently range from 30 to 60 percent.

If you are contacted by SAMAR or the NMDP as a potential match for a patient, we urge you to seriously consider being a marrow/blood cell donor. If you have any reservations, please contact SAMAR at 718-592-0821 or samar@samarinfo.org and we can try to answer your questions and concerns. When you are contacted, you hold the key to that patient's life, and to say no without fully being informed would be a terrible mistake.

We can even put you in touch with previous donors, so you can hear first hand how the process works and the sense of fulfillment that each donor feels. Of course we understand that various extraneous complications might deter you from donating. But, we want you to be well informed before you make a decision. After all, you can provide that patient with hope and a second chance at life.

LETTERS FROM RECENT DONORS

DINESH

To donate or not to donate was my dilemma when I got a call from Roop Jyot Kaur, a SAMAR coordinator in fall of 2007, notifying me that they had matched me with a leukemia patient and asking me if I'm ready for donation. Many years before that, I had registered into NMDP registry at a donor drive sponsored by SAMAR. When the call came, I hesitated as I was more concerned about my own health than the patient's. I consulted couple of my doctor friends and they assured me that there is no risk to my health. They encouraged me to donate because there is shortage of Asian registered donors, and I may be the only one to save his/her life.



I agreed to proceed and went ahead with the process leading up to stem cell donation in March 2008. Throughout the process, SAMAR and HLA Registry volunteers provided all the relevant information, support and facilitated whole process. I had minor side effects but nothing serious. My family and friends were all supportive and I recovered in short period of time. Minor discomfort and inconveniences are small price to pay compared to potential benefit of saving someone's life. It was an enriching experience for me. *I encourage everyone and anyone to register in the NMDP program.*

JULIA

I gave blood one time and while at the clinic someone asked me whether I would allow them to take a sample for the NMDP. I thought nothing of it at the time.

The next spring, I was contacted by the NMDP and told I was a potential match for someone; would I be willing to make an additional donation. **OF COURSE!** I was thrilled that I could be a potential match for someone in need! I knew nothing about the person who would receive my donation. I remember the representatives at the clinic assuring me that the person was in dire need. I remember thinking, "I trust you. You don't have to work so hard to convince me." My recipient didn't need marrow but I still had the blood stem cells he needed.



The process moved along and during the week of the collection I had to get injections to induce stem cell reproduction. This would give my recipient the best possible chance to recover. My stem cells were extracted over two days. There were some unpleasant moments, but I kept my eye on the prize. If I could offer someone even one more day it was worth it.

I was lucky enough to meet my recipient in July 2006; an incredible young man with a fantastic family!

There was never any question as to whether I would donate. It was just a matter of time and if needed again, my answer would be the same. My feeling is it's not really about me. It's about my recipient. *If my message can encourage someone else to donate, then I will tell my story.*

A NOTE FROM ROOP JYOT KAUR

DONOR CALLBACK SPECIALIST

Signing up as a Marrow Donor helps us make a commitment to change the life of a complete stranger if given the opportunity. Opportunity comes disguised as a phone call when you are contacted and informed of being a potential match with a patient.

When it comes time for a potential donor to commit to donation, SAMAR volunteers help him or her make that decision. SAMAR volunteers are equipped to provide support, share information and expertise about donation, and communicate trust. Every donor contacted by SAMAR is given in-depth knowledge about their role as donors and equipped to make an informed decision. The volunteers try to address all concerns that the donor and his friends and family might have as best as possible. SAMAR volunteers can communicate effectively in many regional South Asian languages and also be sensitive while talking about any unique cultural issues that may come up while communicating with some donors and their families. This is a critical asset that SAMAR has while talking to potential donors, because we at SAMAR realize that every donor is unique and that there is a need to connect with them in a subtly different way, every time a potential new donor is contacted.

SAMAR volunteers are also donor advocates. There is an appreciation of the need to use the donor's time efficiently, and to keep the donor's interests in the forefront. They make sure donors have a rewarding experience when they are contacted and taken through the process of donation.

SAMAR volunteers are the vital link between a patient in need and the person who can give the patient a second chance at life when they contact potential donors. SAMAR is on a mission to provide the support and knowledge that donors need when they are the threshold of giving someone another chance at life.

SAMAR has been actively contacting potential donors since 2006 and has contacted almost 600 potential donors thus far.

NMDP UPDATES:

10,000 Transplants by 2010: The NMDP and its affiliates are hoping to facilitate 10,000 transplants by 2010. In order to accomplish this goal, the NMDP has increased the recruitment goals for all of its affiliates. We know that a goal of 10,000 transplants is possible with the help of dedicated volunteers like yourself.

NMDP has also reported that in the past year over **400,000** people have joined the registry, **20,000** mothers have donated their child's umbilical cord blood and 4330 patients have received a transplant through the NMDP.

STATISTICS

2007-2008 SAMAR
Fiscal Year End
Results:

Recruited
7,000 donors

Held over
260 Drives

Helped more than
50 patients

Matched*
240 Donors

Facilitated
7 transplants

and plans to **surpass**
all goals for the next
year!

*matched: signifies the total number of people contacted for preliminary testing. Of these 240 people, 54% were available for further testing. The other 46% were either not interested or unable to be contacted.

MISSION

South Asian Marrow Association of Recruiters (SAMAR), established in 1992, is a community based Network member of the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP).

In our seventeenth year, we continue to 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.

CONTACT US

SAMAR Corporate Office:

55-13 96 th Street , Rego Park , NY 11368

Phone: 718-592-0821 Fax: 718-592-5848

Email: samar@samarinfo.org

New England Chapter

Vikramjit Chhabra

Lead Coordinator

vikram@samarinfo.org

(508) 925-4781

Roop Jyot Kaur, PhD

Recruiter/Donor Search Specialist

roop@samarinfo.org

Washington D.C., MD, VA Chapter

Poornima Vijayanagar

Lead Coordinator

poornima@samarinfo.org

(703) 502-0539

Philadelphia Chapter

Jyoti Johal

jyoti@samarinfo.org

Board of Directors

Rafiya Peerbhoy Khan
President

Rene Lobo
Director

Raj Pahwa M.D.
Medical Director

Indira Sahdev M.D.
Director

Jayendra Shah
Director

Moazzam Khan
Director, Community Outreach

Boston Chapter

Vikramjit Chhabra
Lead Coordinator

Roop Jyot Kaur, PhD
Recruiter/Donor Search Specialist

D.C., MD, VA Chapter

Poornima Vijayanagar
Lead Coordinator

Medical Consultant

Ron Jacob M.D.
Medical Student/Resident Liaison

Student Outreach Coordinators

Shashi Kapadia
Satjeet K. Nayar

A Network Member of the National Marrow Donor Program

