



# Hindu American Seva Charities

www.hinduamericanseva.org

## PRESS RELEASE

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## Eastern Faiths Lead Prayers of Peace for 9-11 - Historical Non-violence Message of the Hindu American Community-

**Washington, D.C., September 8, 2010** – The National Day of Service and Remembrance is an opportunity to salute the heroes of 9/11, recapture the spirit of unity and compassion that inspired our nation following the attacks, and rededicate ourselves to sustained service to our communities.

“As Hindus, we believe in what Mahatma Gandhi repeatedly emphasized, the Vedic statement – *Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah* – non-violence is the foremost duty to the extent that it supersedes all other duties,” said Anju Bhargava of Hindu American Seva Charities ([HASC](http://HASC.org)) and member, President’s Advisory Council on Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

In honor of the 9/11 Day of Service, Hindu Americans across the country are planning acts of service – large and small – to strengthen their communities and build stronger bonds. HASC is partnering with [Corporation for National and Community Service](http://Corporation for National and Community Service) to organize the Hindu American Call to Service (seva) this 9/11.

Hindu/Dharmic/Indian Americans (of all faiths) also remember the *other* 9/11. Mahatma Gandhi's [Satyagraha](http://Satyagraha) movement started in South Africa, on September 11, 1906, the [launch](http://launch) of the modern Non-Violent Resistance Movement, which inspired America's Civil Rights movement.

Also on September 11, in 1893, [Swami Vivekananda](http://Swami Vivekananda), the first Hindu saintly leader to come to America [addressed](http://addressed) the first World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, saying:

*"Brothers and Sisters of America. It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome, which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions, and I thank you in the name of millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects."*

However, this year, 9/11 is particularly significant. Based on the lunar calendar, it happens to be the Hindu Holy Festival of Ganesh Chaturthi, when Hindu Americans across the world will observe festival through prayers, as a day of the birth and renewed remembrance of Ganesh, the remover of obstacles. For the Hindus, it is a day to take fresh spiritual resolve and pray for inner spiritual strength to attain success in all undertakings. This observance and prayer for the removal of obstacles is especially relevant now as the country faces difficult challenges ahead.

Hindu places of worship and spiritual centers will also invoke these values through prayers and service, such as YogaSeva as a way of healing and food bank drives. They will organize service projects and offer prayers for peace (*shanti*) and the victims of 9/11.

HASC aims to bring Hindu community service into the forefront in America while supporting development of other Dharmic institutions (Dharmic refers to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain) and collaborating with all faiths.