

White House official commends Hindu groups for 'seva' initiatives

By A STAFF WRITER

Joshua DuBois, executive director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, held a teleconference discussion with 50 Hindu leaders Jan. 14.

The interaction was organized by the Hindu American Seva Charities (HASC), a group founded by Anju Bhargava, the only Hindu member of President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Issues discussed included capacity building, proactive com-

munity involvement and interfaith collaboration.

DuBois recognized the work done by Hindu groups over the past summer.

"There was just tremendous work done by over 118 seva centers and temples and ashrams and other organizations all across the country, completing over 1,300 seva projects, and we took note of that and want to make sure that we are working to engage your community to do that even more," DuBois was quoted as saying in a Jan. 27 press release from HASC.

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administration have been serious about engaging the dharmic community over the course of the first year in office and we are honored to connect with the Hindu-American community," DuBois added.

According to HASC, "dharmic"

generally refers to Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Buddhist traditions.

The HASC says, for the first time, the Hindu-American community was mobilized to serve in a national campaign following President Obama's June 22 call urging Americans to participate in the nation's recovery and renewal through acts of service.

"The data collected by HASC showed Hindu Americans increased the ongoing seva. They served in various ways including poverty reduction (47 percent), health (30 percent), environment (9 percent), youth (5 percent), elderly (4 percent), education (3

percent) and assisting refugees (2 percent). Many of the service projects such as health camps and health awareness sessions were interfaith collaborations," the release said.

For more information, visit <http://www.hinduamericanseva.org/seva-report-brief>.

Bhargava urged community members to expand their service activities and help with the Haiti crisis, and to provide follow-up data at <http://www.hinduamericanseva.org/haiti-earthquake-seva>. HASC will compile the information and develop a report of the collective efforts.

URL

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