

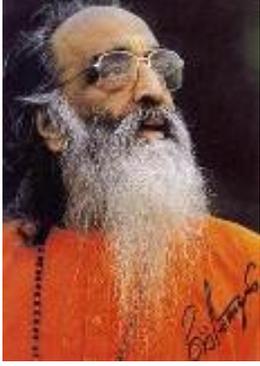


Chinmaya Pradipika

CMSD Quarterly Newsletter



July 2013, No. 7



The Master Speaks:

*Bhakti is the attitude of the mind,
Jnana is the attitude of the intellect.
Both flow towards the Lord.*

Swami Chinmayananda

In this issue of *Chinmaya Pradipika*

The highlight of this issue is the *mūrti sthāpanā* of **Jyoti Vināyaka** that took place in June at the *Samskr̥ti Nilayam*. We also concluded the thirteenth graduation ceremony on Mother's day. There were also thought provoking annual performances from the Bala Vihar classes as well the language classes.

Hanumān Jayanti and *Rāma Navami* were celebrated with fun and meaningful class presentations.

IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Jyoti Vināyaka sthāpanā</i>	1
Annual Day	5
Mother's day	7
Chinmaya Jayanti and Bala Vihar Graduation Ceremony	8
Class Presentations	10
CMSD on-going events	13
CMSD in the community	15
CMSD Awards	16
Seniors Reflections	18

Jyoti Vināyaka Sthāpanā

At 10:40 AM on June 12, 2013, CMSD auspiciously unveiled **Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka** as the resident deity of *Samskr̥ti Nilayam*- which houses Bala Vihar classrooms and a lecture hall. The beautiful two-foot tall Lord *Vināyaka* made of *pañca-loha* is now installed on black granite at *Praṇava Nilayam* - the lecture hall in *Samskr̥ti Nilayam*. The momentous event was graced by **Swami Ishwaranandaji** and **Acharya Mahadevanji** of CM Los Angeles and **Brahmachari Girish Chaitanyaji** of CM Austin.

Over a hundred CMSD members were also present to ceremoniously welcome **Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka**. The ceremonies were conducted by **Pandit Ravichandran**, who was blessed by *Pujya Gurudev* in many ways before His *Mahāsamādhi*, and who also conducted His last rites in San Diego in 1993.





The ceremonies leading up to the inauguration of Lord *Jyoti Vināyaka* began at Chinmaya Nivas at 8:00 AM on June 11, 2013. Preparations were done several days prior to arrival of the deity with the guidance of Panditji. That day, the Lord was worshipped for sacred waking up in the morning, followed by the bathing ceremony. This was followed by auspicious meal ceremony and finally the Lord's *śayanadhi vāsam*



(auspicious retiring for the day ceremony) at 7:00 PM. Br. Girish Chaitanya and several CMSD *sevaks* and *sevikas* attended the unique vedic ceremonies.

On the day of the auspicious installation, the central courtyard of *Samskr̥ti Nilayam* was prepared for *Homam/Havan* (Holy Fire). The entrance to the courtyard was festively decorated with *toranam* of fresh mango leaves and side posts of plantain trees. Every precaution was taken to ensure protection from spillages



on the delicate floors, where the concrete had been poured only the previous day. The worship invoked *Agni*, the messenger of the Gods. Delicately wrapped in cloth, *modaka/kozhakkattai*, *copra*, fresh ghee, paddy grains, wheat grains, yogurt rice and other favorite sweetmeats of Lord *Ganeśa* were offered at the *homam*. The traditional *kalaśa* was worshipped for good biddings. Then *abhiṣeka* of Lord *Ganeśa* (offering of libations) was performed with milk, honey and purified water. A short ceremony to remove evil spirits was completed with the help of Owen - the project superintendent- who has been instrumental in bringing the construction site expeditiously to this stage to enable the inauguration.



During these ceremonies, there were several interval periods when Acharya Mahadevanji sang beautiful bhajans with the devotees joining in chorus. **Devesh Vashishtha**, a medical student at UCSD also propitiated Lord *Ganeśa* with several scintillating songs in classical Carnatic style.

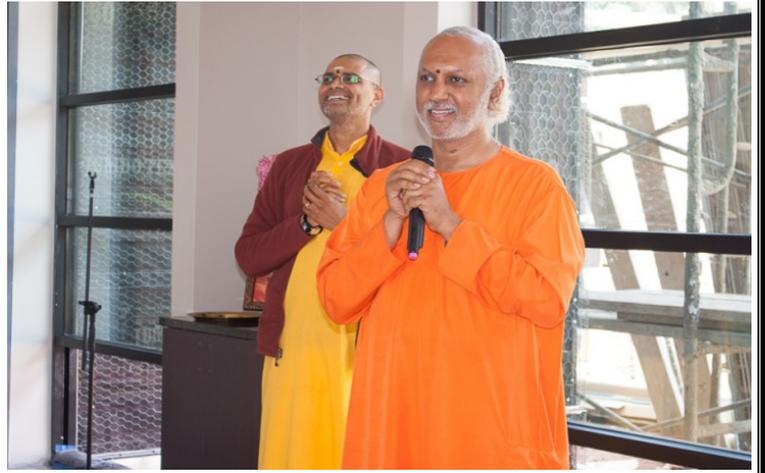
Then amidst vedic chants, *Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka* was carried by Swami Ishwaranandaji, Br. Girishji and our own Ranga Sampath, and placed on the pedestal at *Praṇava Nilayam*. Veiled from public view, Panditji dressed Him in white Brahmachari attire and bedecked Him in fresh red-orange hibiscus flowers and garlands of jasmine and pink flowers. Fresh sugarcane tree stubs were auspiciously placed behind Him to symbolize Him as presiding over our minds in our subsequent thoughts and actions. The audience cheered and welcomed Him as His enchanting form when unveiled. Bala Vihar 7th grader **Solana Garcia** performed the “*Ganeśa Vandanam*” in *Bharatanatyam* style worshipping and depicting the enchanting form of Lord *Vināyaka*. This was followed by traditional *lazium* movements by our Marathi *sevikas* and *sevaks*.



After *naivedyam* offering, the eminent elders and dignitaries addressed the audience. Swami Ishwarananda remembered the beginning of CMSD twelve years ago which he attended along with Pt. Ravichandran, and noted the unparalleled perseverance of **Smt. Lakshmi** and **Sri Srinivas Sukumar** to make this day a reality. He gave a lucid exposition of Adi Sankaracharya's beautiful *ekasloki*, where the guru points out the inner *Jyoti* (light of consciousness) to the disciple – the substratum of all. With the words, "I offer you *Jyoti*", he thoughtfully gifted a large *Vināyaka-Dīpam* for *Chinmaya Jyoti*. Acharya Mahadevanji, who was witness to Pujya Gurudev's last days before His *Mahāsamādhi*, also highlighted the yeoman service and dedication of the Sukumars. Br. Girishji also echoed their words and wished for every success of *Chinmaya Jyoti*. Pandit Ravichandran recounted the many ways he felt blessed by Gurudev since they first met in 1973, including the remarkable way he was made the instrument for performing Gurudev's last rites in San Diego in 1993. He also spoke on how the beautiful *Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka* came to San Diego miraculously in the space of only a few weeks from when he made arrangements in Chennai – Panditji said this was solely because Gurudev wanted it to happen. Sri Srinivas Sukumar and Smt. Lakshmi Sukumar also spoke briefly with emotion on how they felt blessed being instruments for doing the *sevā* for *Chinmaya Jyoti*.

With the ceremonies completed and *Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka* installed, sevikas and sevaks served ceremonious home-cooked lunch to all the Acharyas, followed by lunch to all the attending devotees. *Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka* had ensured delicious items to be prepared along with sweets and savories. For new members, these events served to demonstrate the great *yajña* spirit and brotherhood at Chinmaya Mission San Diego, practiced in strict accordance to Vedic scriptures.

- **Sumathi Iyengar**



Annual Day: A Wonderful Ending to an Inspiring Year

The annual day program is the culmination of the Bala Vihar school year and all the classes present snippets of what they learned throughout the year. Some of our members have expressed their experiences of this day.



The beautiful morning of June 9th 2013 started off with an invocation prayer by Sukumarji and Lakshmi, followed *Chinmaya Dhvani's* singing to celebrate our thirteenth annual day program.

..At the outset, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all the teachers for their best effort in bringing out the essence of *Bhakti Yoga*, which was our study throughout the year. About 200 Bala Vihar children participated in and played various roles throughout the event.



Devotion to the Lord and faith in the teacher and scriptures are the main concepts in *bhakti yoga*, and these ideas were the main motifs in the presentations by each grade. From office Vedanta to the chanting of the daily prayers, one could clearly understand the notion of *Vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*. The episodes of the unflinching devotion and selfless love of *Prahlāda* and *Bharata* personified the glory of the Lord. The story of the *brahmin* boy *Giri*, who became *Totakācārya*, showed how complete faith in the teacher is also a part of *bhakti yoga*. At the same time, we can learn from a pure-hearted devotee like *Vidura* that all we need is humility without vanity in this transacting world.



Personally, I was touched by the culmination of *Ananya Bhakti* in the heart of *Kevat*, the boat man, and the message that this story delivered—surrender to the Lord is the ultimate goal of the human birth.

- Mallika Sridhar

....What struck me personally though is even though I knew the content of each class presentation already there was a new sweetness and a new meaning that had not occurred to me before. The same presentation was internalized by me in a different way this time.

Interestingly in certain parts of the play specifically the *karma yoga* examples brought unconsciously a solution in my mind to a problem I had been mulling over for days! Something just clicked in me!

This has been the experience in my years at Chinmaya Mission, San Diego. Every time I hear an idea or discussion it makes me think on a different plane and immediately I am able to apply it in my day to day life. I continue to get so much knowledge and support from my Chinmaya family!

- Poonam Bhatia



...These classes lay a strong foundation and teach the children the value of their own culture. This system of spiritual learning and practical knowledge helps answer the innumerable questions that the children have, making them both sensitive and sensible human beings. It removes their confusion, provides clarity and makes them strong and confident individuals. It gives me immense pleasure to see how the mission has brought the whole Indian community together with love and unity.

- Shirlu Mulchandani

... It was such a joy watching these little children come up and present what they had learnt. The *sevaks* and *sevikas* did a wonderful job coordinating their class performances and getting them ready for this day.

The upper grades presented the thoughtful lessons learned from their teachings in past years, like the Lessons from *Vibhīṣaṇa Gītā*, *Vidura's* devotion, vegetarianism, *yajña* Spirit and *ananya bhakti*. The senior class concluded with Self Unfoldment. Every grade had a lesson to share on the above topics.



The program concluded with recognition and an award ceremony for the best quiz score, attendance, *Bhagavad Gītā* chanting and a special *Chinmaya Dhvani* award. The seniors were inducted into CHYK-West by reciting the CHYK-West Initiation pledge.

This was our last session at the JCC, a facility that has let us house CMSD BV for the past 10 years. As we show them our gratitude, we are also excited about moving into our very own facility, *Chinmaya Jyoti*.

- Kalpana Gidwani

Mothers' day



During my visit to San Diego this year I had the privilege of being part of the Mother's day celebrations held at CMSD. Being associated with the mission in India, I had observed this beautiful ceremony, but this is the first time that I was part of the humbling *pūjā*. This ritual inculcates in the children very essential values of reverence, respect and gratitude. It teaches them to be humble, grateful and appreciate all that they have. As mothers we feel special, loved and proud to see our children on the right path. As an individual we realize how insignificant our role is in the grand scheme of things. It is God's grace and the loving Mother Nature who nurtures all life. I am really grateful to Sukumarji and Lakshmiiji for giving my children and myself an opportunity to learn and practice the right way of Life.

- Shirlu Mulchandani

Hearing Lakshmiiji and the Sevaks sing Pujya Guruji's *Mātṛ -Stavanam*, was magical. The song was very melodious and pleasant. And hearing the song along with the meaning brought out the emotions of motherly love. It has inspired me to sing this song again to my Mother when we visit India this summer.

Our daughter did *pūjā* for mom with flower petals. Before offering the petals, children put them on their hearts and they chanted along prayers by repeating after Lakshmiiji. Also it was very inspiring to see some of the volunteers toil away to have the food preparation/distribution setup to feed good food for the entire Chinmaya family.

- Prem Venkatesan



Chinmaya Jayanti celebrations and Bala Vihar Graduation Ceremony



On the evening of May 8th, over sixty attendees gathered at Chinmaya Nivas for the 97th *Chinmaya Jayanti* celebrations. Before beginning the observances, Lakshmiiji explained why the birthday of a *mahātmā* is an important occasion. A *mahātmā* brings joy to the whole world. He blesses our life and illumines the path to supreme happiness and therefore it is a special joy to express our gratitude in celebrating his *Jayanti*.

Addressing the Bala Vihar graduating seniors participating in the *pūjā*, she hoped the occasion would be a memorable one for all of them. Lakshmiiji and Sukumarji then led the *pādukā pūjā* with the graduating seniors in the entrance hall. An overflow of attendees watched the proceedings on closed-circuit TV in the living area. The *ṣoḍaśopacāra pūjā* was followed by chanting of *Śrī Guru Stotram*, *Śrī Tapovana ṣaḍkam*, *Guru pādukā stotram* and then *saṅgīta sevā*, *ārati* and *prasādam*.

- Rajasekar Vaidyanathan



It was a wonderful feeling to attend the *Guru Pādukā Pūjā* on *Chinmaya Jayanti*, Wednesday, May 8th at Chinmaya Nivas along with other graduates and their family members. Dear Sukumarji and Lakshmiji had organized the *pūjā* very well. We truly enjoyed it. It was an emotional and a proud moment.

The convocation ceremony during Mother's Day on Sunday, May 12th and the CHYK initiation ceremony during the annual program on Sunday, June 9th also were memorable events for us.

Our daughter Spandana has been attending Chinmaya Mission Bala Vihar program since her pre-K year and it was nice to see her graduate from Bala Vihar program with her 13 other classmates. Bala Vihar program has been a way of life for us. The Bala Vihar experience has been invaluable for our family and it has helped her achieve success in many areas. Our kids are very lucky and blessed to get exposure to our Hindu values, Indian culture and spirituality from such a young age in a very methodical way. We are confident that with the Bala Vihar training and the high school education, Spandana is well prepared to go off to college and build her career and personality.

We are truly blessed to be part of the Chinmaya Mission San Diego. Our heartfelt thanks to dear Lakshmiji, Sukumarji and all the Balavihar teachers. We take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to Pujya Gurudev.

- Sethu Madhava

Class Presentations

Third grade presentation on *Rāma Navami*

Śrī Rāma Navami marks the birth of Lord Rāma and falls on the *navami thithi*. Śrī Rāma was the seventh incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu and the main character in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. This auspicious day was celebrated at our CMSD Bala Vihar on April 21, 2013 by our 3rd grade children. The children were dressed aptly for the occasion. The play commenced with the depiction of the unhappy childless king *Daśaratha* who was advised by Sage *Vasiṣṭha* to perform the *yajña* and distribute *pāyasam* among his wives, followed by the chanting of *Śrī Rāmajanma copai* welcoming the birth of *Śrī Rāma*. The divine life of *Śrī Rāma*,



who is the embodiment of virtue, and righteousness, was well depicted in the melodious singing of the *Śrī Nāma Rāmāyaṇa* which helps in the meditation of the different facets of Lord Rāma. Let me conclude with the thought, that to chant the *Rāmanāmam* with love, will free us from all bondage & sufferings.
- Mallika Sridhar

Fourth grade presentation on *Hanumān Jayanti*



CMSD celebrated *Hanumān Jayanti* with the 4th grade class leading us in the chanting of *Hanumān Chalisa*, and *Śrī Nāma Rāmāyanam*. They then did a great presentation on Superman *Hanumān*! How wonderful to hear their enthusiastic voices extolling the attributes of our beloved *Hanumān-ji*! *Hanumān* brings out the child in all of us. His innocent and pure love of the Lord is contagious! The *sevikas* that work with this class are Faith Prasad and Nita Halker. The whole event was enhanced with *Chinmaya Dhvani* singing “The Blessed son of *Añjanā*” in both English and Marathi, and *Jaya Hanumān*. The rest of the day was spent humming

the tunes! *JAYA HANUMĀN JI!*

Sheer joy! That was the feeling evoked seeing the cute *Hanumān* skipping and running around the courtyard at the JCC. What a perfect day to be outside! Pretty soon all our sessions will be in the open courtyard of *Samskṛti Nilayam*.

- Bhavana Garcia

On morning of April 28th we celebrated of *Hanumān Jayanti* with the singing of *Hanumān cālīsā* by our Bala Vihar 4th Grade children. The virtues of Super *Hanumān* as Divine Messenger, Compassionate Minister, Life saver, Super Hero, Resourceful advisor, Virtuous devotee, were well articulated by the children. The climax of the play was welcoming our own tiny, superman *Hanumān*, with joy and enthusiasm in our midst in song.

The celebration concluded with chanting of the Glory of *Hanumān*. “As we think, so we become” So, let us reflect on the qualities of Superman *Hanumān* and take His virtues Home.

- **Mallika Sridhar**

Sixth grade presentation on Sage *Dattatreya's* Teachings



Guru, the teacher, the remover of darkness, is not only the one in orange robes; if we observe carefully we can see Gurus all around us. This insight was presented to us by the sixth graders as they shared sage *Dattatreya's* teachings from the 11th canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. We can learn from everything around us, starting from the five basic elements, to the sun, the moon and the creatures big and small.

The first element space, which is all pervasive, shows us that *Ātman* is all pervading. Air teaches us to mix with all and yet keep to our goal. Fire teaches us that, just as the heat of fire purifies,

Tapas purifies a wise man. Water being grosser cleanses by sight, contact and praise. Finally, earth is ever giving and teaches patience, forgiveness and tolerance to remain undisturbed even while being oppressed. The Sun takes water from the earth, only to give it back as a wise man takes from society only to give back. Just as the sun's reflections are many but the sun is only one, so also the *Ātman* appears different in different bodies. Just as the moon is always complete but appears to wax and wane, so also the *Ātman* is always complete and only the body changes. The ocean receives millions of rivers yet remains unchanged. This teaches us that a wise man should remain unperturbed, by the river-like inputs of the senses.

A male elephant is lured into a pit by the sight of a paper-made female elephant. A moth gets fascinated by fire which destroys it. Aren't we lured by excessive passion that traps us and leads to grief? Aren't we drawn towards overindulgence in our senses that destroys us? The honey-bees take only what is needed from each flower, just as a wise man learns from all scriptures and sages. This was such an eye opening presentation. It makes me look for something to learn from everything around me.

- **Siddharth Mulchandani**

Tamil New Year Presentation



Tamil language class children led by teachers Senthil Chelladurai and Suresh Subramaniam presented a scintillating welcome to the Tamil New Year (first day of *Cittirai* in Tamil calendar) on April 14, 2013. Children enacted to be village folks of rural Tamil Nadu telling the story of *Rāma*, *Sītā* and *Rāvaṇa*, reminding everyone that *Sītā* was none other than the incarnation of *Bhūmi Devi*, and *Rāma* the incarnation of Lord *Viṣṇu*. They sat around a beautifully decorated huge bow strung with bells, used as a primary musical instrument, jingling them rhythmically in the form of a rural folk song called *villu- pāṭṭu*, translated to bow-song in English. Simple tunes and simple verses were set to rhythmic beat and make the story easy to follow. The younger children asked questions and interjected with exclamations, while the older ones described various stories of *Rāmāyaṇa* beginning with the popular *Sītā Kalyāṇam* (the wedding of *Sītā*). The program concluded crisply by all together reciting *Thirukkural* (the first 10 couplets in praise of God) by Thiruvalluvar. Our Tamil Language Bala Vihar children did an amazing job with their crisp pronunciation of Thiruvalluvar's work that is known for its difficult verses. *Thirukkural* is a collection of 1330 Tamil couplets organized into 133 chapters, each containing 10 couplets. It is one of the Tamil *veda*-s or also called as the common man's *veda* from the state of Tamil Nadu.

- **Sumathi Iyengar and Indu Manickam**

CMSD On-Going Events

Sundarakāṇḍa Pārāyaṇa

Host families for the monthly *Sundarakāṇḍa pārāyaṇa* in this quarter were:

April 2013- Bhavi and Dilip Patel

May 2013- Meera and Vilas Shukla

June 2013- Suvarna and Venu Mustyala

In March 2013, we completed the fifth year of our monthly *sundarakāṇḍa pārāyaṇa*. Our 61st *sundarakāṇḍa pārāyaṇa* was extra special as it coincided with *Śrī Rāma Navami*. The *pārāyaṇa* was hosted by Bhavi and Dilip Patel with their children Avika and Anish. It was also the birthday month for Dilip and Anish.



All the attendees chanted the *sundarakāṇḍa* and *Hanumān chālisa*, followed by four *āratis* –

Śrī Rāmāyaṇa ārati, *Śrī Rāma ārati*, *Hanumān ārati* and *Śrī Cinmaya ārati*. The event concluded with soulful bhajans and the melodious *janma dina gītam* to Dilip and Anish to celebrate their birthdays.

- **Amarnath Puthur**



Chinmaya Ślokāñjali

The eighth installment of the *Ślokāñjali* was conducted on the 13th of April 2013 at Chinmaya Nivas. This marked the completion of year two of the competitions. All the children came very well prepared and had a great attitude of humility and dedication while chanting. What is striking is how in most cases, the children have owned up the responsibility and made the effort to learn the *ślokā*-s and *mantra*-s on their own. They have also become accustomed to paying attention to the finer points that most others take for granted. Their ability to learn, memorize and most importantly correct their mistake when pointed to is excellent! We wish these children the very best and encourage others who are contemplating taking up the challenge to do so over the summer months!

- Ranga Sampath

Bhagavad Gītā Chanting competition

The annual *Gītā* chanting competition took place on Saturday, May 4th at Chinmaya Nivas. This year members learned to chant Chapter 12, *Bhakti Yoga*. 24 children ranging from Grades K to 12, and 12 adults participated in the event. It is noteworthy that every member of the Kulkarni family took part in the competition! One by one, the participants came into the hall, offered their prostrations to Pujya Gurudev, and chanted with devotion. It was a moving experience for the judges to listen to each participant offer their best effort after



clearly putting in a lot of practice to learn the words and intonation correctly. Winners in the different categories were awarded prizes after the annual program; but in this competition, everyone who participated was a winner and was awarded the “I chanted the GITA” buttons to wear.

- Rajasekar Vaidyanathan

Pujya Guruji's Birthday Celebration at CMSD

On Sunday, June 30, 2013, a few devotees gathered at Chinmaya Nivas to celebrate the auspicious day and seek *Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda's* blessings. A *satsaṅga* was held with discussions on Swamiji's talk on the “Practical application of *Bhagavad Gītā* in daily life”. This was followed by *bhajans* and *kīrtanas*, *aṣṭottara nāmāvali* of *Pujya Gurudev*, *ārati* and *prasāda*.

CMSD in the Community

Shoe Drive

CMSD does not only stand for Chinmaya Mission San Diego, it also stands for Conserve, Manage, Serve and Dedicate. For Conserve, we decided to keep up with the immortal theme of “reduce, reuse, recycle” and partnered with the non-profit organization Donate Your Old Shoes. Over the past two



weeks, *yuva sevaks* have collected shoes from CMSD families that were sent to parts of Africa, South America, and the Philippines. To advertise for the shoe drive, *yuva sevaks* Kunal, Krishna, Ajay, and Jay presented comedic reminders during the Sunday Assembly with demonstrations and an “airline safety video.” The first week, we collected 128 shoes that were sent to Zimbabwe and the second week we collected 287 pairs that were sent to the Philippines. This has been a very successful drive and we hope to have others in the future. Thank you for your contributions

- Priya Garcia

Cleanup of Lake Poway

On April 27th CMSD youth joined hands with the Poway Interfaith Team and ILACSD (I Love a Clean San Diego) to help with the cleanup of Lake Poway. Many of our high school children participated in this event.

CMSD Awards 2012-13



Perfect Attendance Awards

- K Siona Bapat
- 1 Aathmika Radhachandran, Samitha Senthilkumar, Sumoni Verma
- 2 Rishi Halker, Rahul Vinay Iyengar
- 3 Ketki Chakradeo, Shiva Kansagara
- 4 Soha Bapat
- 5 Dhivya Manickam, Rachna Halker, Rhea Gandhi
- 6 Meghana Garcia
- 7 Aditi Puttur, Kratin Kumar, Sanil Gandhi
- 8 Madhumita Senthilkumar, Solana Garcia



Bhagavad Gītā chanting Awards

- Aniket Chakradeo
- Ketki Chakradeo
- Amoolya Chandrabhatta/Rachna Halker
- Amogh Kaushik
- Namrata Sampath/Solana Garcia
- Sujata Kulkarni



Chinmaya Ślokāñjali

Level-I

Soha Bapat
Omkaar Kulkarni

Level-II

Ketki Chakradeo
Sanil Gandhi
Rachna Halker
Amogh Kaushik
Aditi Puttur



Chinmaya Dhvani

Nikita Akkala



Nikita Akkala has been a member of *Chinmaya Dhvani* since 2005 and has delighted all every Sunday with her soulful singing of bhajans. She is the first Bala Vihar student to receive the award of participation in CMSD's Youth Choir.

Bala Vihar Award of Excellence:

This year the **Bala Vihar Award of Excellence** was presented to graduating senior **Nikita Akkala** for over-all performance in all areas of the Bala Vihar education- Attendance, participation in *pūjā*-s and celebrations, *Bhagavad Gītā* chanting competitions, camps, seva, Chinmaya Dhvani, and a good grasp of the main teachings of CMSD. Last year's recipient was *Hinal Parikh*.

The whole family was congratulated and invited on stage as *Nikita* received the award.



Bala Vihar Graduates speak

Graduating high school students share their parting thoughts-



As I look back and reflect on these last 6 years at Chinmaya Mission, I can confidently say that I am a different person. I am a better person. Chinmaya Mission has clarified my once murky views of religion altogether: I can proudly say that I am a humanist, with humanity being my religion, and people, my God. It further engrained ideas or work ethic and the definition of true volunteering into my personality. And last, but not least, it gave me the power to stand strong for my conviction in the face of adversity. And for that, I thank Chinmaya Mission for helping me discover me, the real me, that was dormant inside.

- Kunal Kerai

I urge all the youngsters to “embrace and take advantage of the wonderful opportunity in front of you. Embrace the wonderful values being taught and the wonderful teachers teaching them to you, and take them in every day with a smile”.

- Akash Rajaratnam



Chinmaya Mission has been a huge guiding factor for me throughout my entire life. I can honestly say that the knowledge I have grasped from all the wonderful teachers at CMSD has helped me to perceive every aspect of the world in a whole new way. However, applying that knowledge has allowed me to react and respond to the world in a more mature and optimistic manner, and that has made all the difference in my life. What I learned at CMSD during my time in Bala Vihar, Language Class, Dhvani, and Yuva Sevaks, I cannot imagine learning anywhere else. I would like to express my greatest thank you to everyone who helped me get to where I am today.

- Spandana Madhava

I am so incredibly thankful for everything I have been given through my Bala Vihar experience - a community, a connection to our culture, a set of positive values to live by, and the discipline that has allowed me to mature and grow spiritually. Attending Bala Vihar for the past eleven years has shaped my identity and I have loved every moment of it.

- Meghan Babla



If your heart is full, you don't feel that hungry.

Swami Tejomayananda

