



Our Vote,
Our Impact







impact

Desis Decide

SUMMIT PROGRAM

Day 1: Wednesday, May 15

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Time	Location	Session & Presenters
10:00 AM	2nd Floor	REGISTRATION OPENS
10:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Gallery 6 & 7 2nd Floor	Community Table Expo <i>We invite you to learn more about all the ways in which organizations are elevating and supporting the South Asian diaspora.</i>
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Metropolitan Ballroom 2nd Floor	Youth Who Impact <i>Aara Sampath, Student Activist</i> <i>Ananya Kachru, Youth Committee Co-Chair, South Asians For America and Organizer, Operator, & Investor</i> <i>Bianca Shah, Youth Committee Co-Chair, South Asians For America</i> <i>Chandra Chouhan, Founder & Executive Director, Chup, Go Vote!</i> <i>Jahnvi Rao, President and Founder, New Voters</i> <i>Shivani Parikh, South Asians For America</i> <i>Shreya Srivastava, Student Activist</i> <i>Join us to explore strategies to amplify youth engagement, dismantle barriers to civic engagement, and ignite the youth vote. Individuals of all ages who share our commitment to fostering a more inclusive and participatory democracy are encouraged to join this session.</i>    
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Gallery 8 2nd Floor	Desis in Health <i>Facilitated by Aliya Bhatia, Vot-ER</i> <i>Whether you're directly in health or your parents wanted you to be in health, join us for food, networking, and live examples of where health, policy, and civic engagement connect. With special guests!</i>  






Time	Location	Session & Presenters
12:30 PM - 1:15 PM	Metropolitan Ballroom 2nd Floor	WELCOME PLENARY Summit Opening with Aditi Shah Healthcare Equity Lightning Talks <i>Facilitated by Rep. Megan Srinivas, Iowa State Representative & Physician</i> ----- <i>Dr. Namratha Kandula, Professor of Medicine and Co-Principal Investigator of the MASALA study</i> <i>Dr. Meena Seshamani, Director, Center for Medicare</i> <i>Mini Timmaraju, President & CEO, Reproductive Freedom for All</i> <i>Dr. Ashwin Vasana, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene</i> <i>Dr. Vin Gupta, NBC News Medical Analyst; Major, US Air Force Medical Corps</i> <i>This session brings together the nation's leading healthcare experts, policymakers, and practitioners to discuss the pressing health challenges facing the South Asian community and innovative strategies and policy solutions to address key issues.</i> <i>Presenting Sponsor: Indiaspora</i>





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Breakout Session 1: Choose One

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Time	Location	Session & Presenters
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Metropolitan Ballroom 2nd Floor	<p>Confronting the Climate Crisis: Charting the Path Forward</p> <p>Panel moderated by Kriti Sehgal, Founder, Chai Capital, Board, Bluebonnet Data</p> <p>Arpita Bhattacharyya, Chief Climate Officer with Loans Program Office at the U.S. Department of Energy</p> <p>Saad Amer, Climate Activist, Founder, Justice Environment</p> <p>Varun Sivaram, Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer at Orsted</p> <p>Followed by remarks from Nidhi Khanna, Sierra Club National PAC Director</p> <p>The urgency and magnitude of the climate crisis requires whole of society solutions. Join us to hear from the nation's leading policymakers and nonprofit leaders to hear how we can collectively chart a path forward towards a sustainable future.</p> 
	District 1 & 2 3rd Floor	<p>Creator 101: Digital Media Campaigns and Reaching People Where They Are</p> <p>Sharon Angel, Best-selling Author, Podcast Host, Media Executive</p> <p>Ravjot Mehek Singh, Filmmaker & Art Activist</p> <p>Vidyut Ghuwalewala, Cofounder / COO, Social Currant</p> <p>Ashwath Narayanan, Cofounder / CEO, Social Currant</p> <p>How do you leverage digital, web and social media platforms to rally young voters? Sharon Angel will facilitate this session on strategies for digital campaigns and cross promotion on multiple platforms such as podcast, YouTube, website, social and digital platforms.</p> <p>Ravjot Mehek Singh will walk you through audience retention, video making and the use of storytelling techniques.</p> <p>Social Currant will wrap up the session with tips on how to work with creators and influencers to reach audiences more effectively and build your online footprint.</p>    









Time	Location	Session & Presenters
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	West End 2nd Floor	<p>Desi Care, Desi Loss: Cultural Caregiving and Caregiving Needs</p> <p>Paurvi Bhatt, President, Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers</p> <p>Jaspreet Chowdhary, Senior Legislative Counsel, Compassion & Choices</p> <p>Maithreyi Shankar, Writer, Speaker, Dancer, Consultant</p> <p>Rosalynn Carter once said, "There are only four kinds of people in the world - those who have been caregivers, those who are caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who will need caregivers." Join us to explore the intersection of South Asian cultural values and American healthcare expectations, focused on specialized caregiving needs, how to support and empower fellow caregivers, and how to advocate to ensure you and your loved ones receive values-aligned healthcare and end-of-life experience.</p>  
	Quad 1 - 3 3rd Floor	<p>Breaking the Silence: Fighting for our Trans and Non-Binary Children</p> <p>Aruna Rao, Executive Director of Desi Rainbow Parents & Allies</p> <p>Rahul Deshmukh, Parent Advocate</p> <p>Neeraja Aravamudan, Parent Advocate</p> <p>There has never been a greater need to have educated and engaged allies fighting for the health and survival of trans children.</p> <p>In this session, we'll share our own stories as parents of trans children, and review what you need to know to fight for our trans and nonbinary loved ones. Then we'll put what we've learned to work, navigating real-world scenarios.</p>  

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Breakout Session 2: Choose One

Breakout Session 2: Choose One









Time	Location	Session & Presenters	Time	Location	Session & Presenters
2:45 PM - 3:45 PM	Metropolitan Ballroom 2nd Floor	<p>Driving America's Tech Renaissance: Balancing Competitiveness, Governance, and Access</p>  <p>Moderated by Simi Shah, Founder of South Asian Trailblazers; Strategist Dilawar Syed, U.S. Small Business Administration Deputy Administrator Vivek Chilukuri, Senior Fellow and Director, Technology and National Security Program at Center for a New American Security Koustubh "K.J." Bagchi, VP, Center for Civil Rights and Technology at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Megan Shahi, Director, Technology Policy, Center for American Progress Hirsh Jain, Senior Vice President, Healthcare at Palantir</p> <p>Join us as we navigate the intersections of tech advancement, governance frameworks, and equitable access. We'll discuss how to empower small businesses and ensure a vibrant tech ecosystem that benefits all Americans.</p>	2:45 PM - 3:45 PM	West End 2nd Floor	<p>Boundaries, Intentionality, and Vulnerability: Taking Care of Yourself to Further Your Cause</p>  <p>Prince Bhojwani, CEO, ASANA Voices Israa Nasir, Author and Therapist Pooja Mehta, Mental Health Policy and Community Activist Keerthi Channarasappa, President, SAAFC & Physician Nithya Cherukuru, Psychiatrist, Education and Development Officer, South Asian Americans for Change</p> <p>Come learn from a panel of experienced mental health advocates and organizers who will discuss sustainable actionable strategies for eliciting more reach, assessing your capacity, reducing burnout, and prioritizing your mental health, all in service of being the most effective advocate or organizer you can be.</p>  ASANA Voices 
	District 1 & 2 3rd Floor	<p>Laughing Loud, Speaking Proud: Unveiling South Asian Voices through Comedy</p>  <p>Vick Krishna, Comedian, Actor Neal Patel, Comedian, Zoomer, Engineer @ Policy Analysis Startup Anjali Chandrashekar, Artist, Cartoonist</p> <p>Join cartoonist Anjali Chandrashekar, and comedian hosts Vick Krishna (@HotVickKrishna) and Neal Patel as we explore the landscape of comedy and entertainment for South Asians, and how you can leverage media as a means to amplify key policy and identity issues to a wider audience.</p> <p>Including a live set and demonstration, we'll dive into our experience on and off camera, and look at prime successful examples of videos, acts, infographics, and cartoons that leverage comedy to convey important messages.</p>		Quad 1 - 3 3rd Floor	<p>Confronting Racism and Mass Incarceration in America</p>   <p>Moderated by Sonny Mehta, Musician, Filmmaker, Organizer Jovelyn D. Richards, Co-Founder, White Switch Preeti Mangala Shekar, Co-Founder, White Switch Radhe Patel, Co-Founder, Rikers Debate Project Premal Dharia, Executive Director, Institute to End Mass Incarceration</p> <p>This session explores the relationship between both structural and internalized Racism and Mass Incarceration. The panel will discuss case studies related to policies and programs that are presently the topic of national debate in our highest courts, the halls of Congress, and state houses. The speakers will also address the roots, manifestations, and impact of anti-Blackness—particularly within South Asian communities that have a long history of casteism that serves as a template to continue perpetuating racist systems and policies.</p> 



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Breakout Session 3: Choose One

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Time	Location	Session & Presenters
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Metropolitan Ballroom 2nd Floor	<p>Resistance in the Face of Racism: Activating South Asian American Communities in 2024</p>  <p>Moderated by Kiran Bhalla, Project Director, Stop the Hate Program, AAPI Equity Alliance Manjusha Kulkarni, Executive Director, AAPI Equity Alliance, co-founder of Stop AAPI Hate Harmeet Kaur Kamboj, Senior State Policy Manager, The Sikh Coalition Chanda Parbhoo, Executive Director, South Asian Americans for Voter Empowerment, Texas (SAAVETX)</p> <p><i>This workshop will focus on efforts to educate voters and connect the dots between the racism they experience and policy change needed to address it. We will share lessons learned from past elections and engagement activities our organizations have spearheaded and discuss how they inform our current and future strategies.</i></p>    
	District 1 & 2 3rd Floor	<p>Building Inclusive Communities: Harnessing Film, Music, and Dance for Civic Engagement</p>  <p>Moderated by Shilpa Yarlagada, Founder, CEO Shiffon Co Sonny Mehta, Musician, Filmmaker, Organizer Meghna Damani, Filmmaker, Change Maker Shruthi Mukund, Community Builder, Cultural Curator</p>   <p><i>This session will delve into how the arts, as natural magnets for our community, can effectively build civic power and create more inclusive communities using case studies. First, learn about Riyaz Qawwali's successful campaigns in Greater Houston, employing traditional qawwali music to mobilize voters and foster civic participation. Then, hear how Shruthi Mukund uses our collective voice to talk about the diaspora through dance education and performance. Lastly, Meghna Damani, a filmmaker and advocate, believes it's time for each of us to step into our own narratives and become agents of change.</i></p>

Time	Location	Session & Presenters
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	West End 2nd Floor	<p>Strategies for Building Healthy, Resilient Organizations</p>  <p>Mitul Desai, Co-Founder, The Care Hack Kiran Ahuja, Former Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management</p> <p><i>A range of macro stressors from political discord and global uncertainty to lingering pandemic effects, are intensifying the challenges of advocacy and organizing. Our workshop aims to address these challenges by exploring effective strategies for fostering resilience and success at the organizational and individual levels. Emphasizing emotional intelligence and empathy, our workshop offers practical approaches to foster a culture of trust and effectiveness within organizations.</i></p> <p><i>At the individual level, learn how to lead and persuade in settings where traditional motivational tools may be lacking, utilizing emotional maturity and relationship intelligence to inspire action. Join us as we discuss strategies for prioritizing emotional well-being as a key component of organizational triumph.</i></p> 
	Quad 1 - 3 3rd Floor	<p>Building Bridges, Amplifying Impact: Interfaith Advocacy</p>  <p>Salman Bhojani, Texas State Representative HD-92 Safa Ahmed, Associate Media Director, Indian American Muslim Council Ria Chakrabarty, Senior Policy Director, Hindus for Human Rights Jyot Singh, Policy Consultant, SALDEF</p> <p><i>This insightful conversation will explore the transformative power of collaboration between faith-based organizations. Learn how to leverage the collective strength of diverse faith communities, discover how interfaith collaboration can amplify your voice on important issues, and gain practical tools for building strong partnerships with other faith groups.</i></p>   

Day 1: Wednesday, May 15			Day 2: Thursday, May 16		
Time	Location	Session & Presenters	Time	Location	Session & Presenters
5:10 PM - 5:45 PM	Metropolitan Ballroom 2nd Floor	CLOSING PLENARY Achieving Equity Together: Inclusive Civic Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarangi Performance by Ustad Kamal Sabri Stacey Abrams, Voting rights advocate, entrepreneur, and author (joining live via Zoom) Sue Van, President of Wallace H. Coulter Foundation 	8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	2nd Floor	REGISTRATION OPENS
				Georgetown 1st Floor	Breakfast for Elected Leaders & Candidates <i>(invitation only)</i>
Day 1 Formal Programming Ends			8:00 AM - 9:00 AM + 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Gallery 6 & 7 2nd Floor	Community Table Expo <i>We invite you to learn more about all the ways in which organizations are elevating and supporting the South Asian diaspora.</i>
5:45 PM - 6:30 PM	Gallery 6 & 7 2nd Floor	Community Table Expo <i>We invite you to learn more about all the ways in which organizations are elevating and supporting the South Asian diaspora.</i>			
5:45 PM - 7:00 PM	West End 2nd Floor	“Women Who Impact” Happy Hour! Hosted by Impact x South Asian Trailblazers   Moderated by Simi Shah , <i>Founder of South Asian Trailblazers; Strategist</i> Brinda Adhikari , <i>Executive Producer, Journalist</i> Priya Sundareshan , <i>Arizona State Senator</i> Rabia Chaudry , <i>Attorney, Advocate, Author</i>  <i>This women's happy hour and panel offers a supportive space for South Asian women, non-binary folks, and allies to build community and engage in dialogue, networking, and empowerment. With special guests!</i>	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Metropolitan Ballroom 2nd Floor	WELCOME PLENARY Desis Decide: Congressional Panel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spoken Word Performance by Jashima Wadehra Impact remarks Congressional Panel featuring U.S. Representatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pramila Jayapal, Ro Khanna, Shri Thanedar, and Ami Bera Moderated by Zohreen Shah, <i>ABC National Correspondent</i>
					10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

Day 2: Thursday, May 16

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Time	Location	Lunch Hour: Choose a Networking Session/Affinity Group!	Breakout Session 1: Choose One		
11:45 AM - 1:00 PM 	District 1 3rd Floor	<p>Desi Economic Policy Professionals Facilitated by Employ America: Skanda Amarnath, Arnab Datta, Vikas Patel</p> <p>A great deal of South Asian Americans are currently working in the economic policy space across various government agencies, congressional offices, think tanks, NGOs, and state and local governments. Additionally, many private-sector professionals have a strong interest in economics and may have questions about the economic and policy landscape ahead. If this sounds like you, join us to form new connections, share ideas and strategies, and help guide young, aspiring policy professionals to a career in economic policy.</p>	1:00 PM - 2:30 PM	<p>Metropolitan Ballroom 2nd Floor</p>	
	District 2 3rd Floor	<p>Tech-Policy Lunch Hour: Bridging the Gap between Programmers and Policymakers Facilitated by Neil Patel & Vick Krishna</p> <p>Are you a South Asian professional passionate about technology? Whether you're in tech, policy, or just excited about the future of AI and new technology, join us to learn about different opportunities for the public sector and the current (and growing) relationship between budding technologies and policy. Let's forge relationships across the realms of engineering, lobbying, consulting, and policy writing as they relate to technology.</p>			<p>Making the Margin: Organizing Our Communities</p> <p>Chithra Jeyaram, Filmmaker Shruti Parikh, Head of Education and Political Engagement, NC Asian Americans Together and NCAAT in Action Bianca Shah and Ananya Kachru, Youth Committee Co-Chairs, South Asians for America (SAFA) Chanda Parbhoo, Founder/Executive Director, South Asian American Voter Empowerment Texas (SAAVETX) Akash Borde and Jasneel Chaddha, Volunteers, They See Blue Taher Hasanali, National Political and Organizing Director, Impact</p> <p>This session will center around the action and organization we need to take during this election year in order to be the margin. Beyond exercising our right to vote, it will take the South Asian community organizing and volunteering to turn out friends, family, and community members to vote in what will be a crucial election for this country. This session will talk about the importance of community organizing and go through case studies and examples of the different types of organizing folks can do to make a difference in this election including phone banking, text banking, canvassing, relational organizing, and postcard writing.</p>
	Quad 2 3rd Floor	<p>Desis in Climate Facilitated by Radha Adhar with the Bezos Earth Fund</p> <p>This group is dedicated to desis working in the climate, energy, and clean tech space. The ambition for this session is to help establish professional and personal relationships amongst people working on climate change related issues.</p>			
	Quad 3 3rd Floor	<p>Building an affirming future for the LGBTQIA+ South Asian Diaspora Facilitated by Desi Rainbow Parents & Allies and Khush DC</p> <p>In this session, we invite LGBTQIA+ South Asians, families and allies, as well as allied organizations that serve LGBTQIA+ folks within our Desi communities to engage and commit to nurturing a culture of acceptance and inclusivity within our communities, striving towards a future where everyone feels valued and respected.</p> <p> </p>			<p>West End 2nd Floor</p>



Table Expo & Venue Map

Day 2: Thursday, May 16


Table Expo — Participating Partner Organizations:

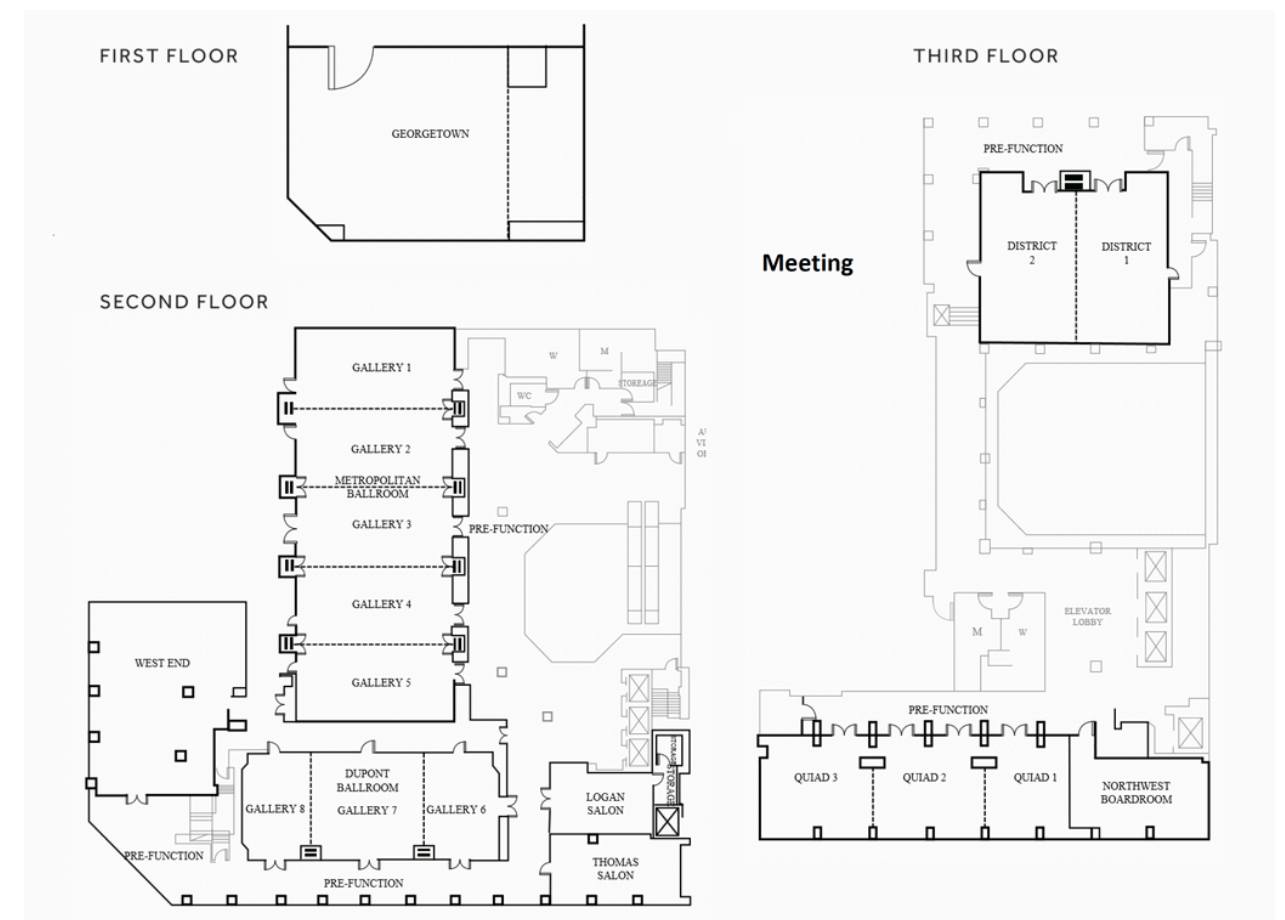
Time	Location	Session & Presenters
2:40 PM - 4:00 PM	Metropolitan Ballroom 2nd Floor	<p>CLOSING PLENARY</p> <p>Desis Decide: Shaping Our Narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monisha Henley, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, Everytown for Gun Safety • Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, CEO of Global Refuge • Neera Tanden, Domestic Policy Advisor to President Biden • Hon. Raja Krishnamoorthi, U.S. House of Representatives • Dance Performance by Ramita Ravi
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM	Gallery 6 & 7 2nd Floor	<p>Community Table Expo</p> <p>We invite you to learn more about all the ways in which organizations are elevating and supporting the South Asian diaspora.</p>

We invite you to learn more about all the ways in which these organizations are elevating and supporting the South Asian diaspora:

- Ashiyanaa
- Desi Rainbow Parents & Allies
- Chup, Go Vote!
- South Asians for America
- Massachusetts General Hospital/OurHealth
- South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA)
- Sakhi for South Asian Women
- South Asian Americans for Change (SAAFC)
- ActBlue
- Everytown for Gun Safety
- South Asian Trailblazers
- Compassion & Choices
- International Museum of the Saree
- Anjali Chandrashekar (Cartoonist and Artist)
- South Asian Marrow Initiative

Day 2 Formal Programming Ends

4:00 PM - 5:30 PM	West End 2nd Floor	<p>“So, You Want to Work in Government or Politics” Happy Hour!</p> <p>Facilitated by Anjan Mukherjee, Pavitra Abraham, Dennis Raj, and Vriti Jain</p> <p>Join us to explore pathways for South Asian Americans into politics and government roles. You'll first hear from a distinguished panel led by experienced Democratic and progressive professionals, focusing on entry points into politics, including volunteering, campaign involvement, and running for office.</p> <p>Then, hear brief talks from seasoned Hill staffers and leaders in the Biden-Harris administration on breaking barriers to working in government before networking with like-minded individuals eager to shape the future of American politics and government.</p> 
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