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### **NRI Institute Celebrates the “Pride of India Gold Awards”**

The Non-Resident Institute (NRI), Washington D.C. Chapter launched tonight with the “Pride of India” Gold Awards, selecting 24 NRIs from around the world as *Pride of India* Awardees and one special awardee as a “*Friend of India*”. NRI Institute Washington DC Chapter’s mission is to promote the cultural, academic and socio-economic interests of the Indian Diasporas as we strive to stay in touch with our heritage while adapting to the lifestyles of the country of our adoption. The Chapter aims to work collaboratively with other Special Interest Groups that share the common threads of Indian values and contribute collectively to the community via social entrepreneurship.

The NRI Institute ([www.nriinstitute.org](http://www.nriinstitute.org)) issued a call for nominations in April 2007 and received over 250 nominations before the closing date of June 30, 2007. Nomination criteria invited leaders, pioneers and professionals from the fields of Technology, Medicine, Business Management, Legal, Creative Arts, Public Service, or Academia. Nomination was open to Non-Resident Indians (NRI’s) or People of Indian Origin (PIO’s) who demonstrated an exceptional and an inspirational drive to contribute to the community while adapting to the lifestyle of the country they adopted; offered an inspiration to fellow NRIs; promoted leadership; recognized as pioneers in their professions. Nomination forms also invited Corporate nominees who are leaders in their profession; have contributed to the economies of their country and who have demonstrated measurable achievement in their professions; overcome adversity; and made community contributions.

After a thorough selection process conducted by the Executive Team and the Selection Board of the NRI Institute New Delhi, India, 24 nominees were selected to be recognized as the “Pride of India” Awardees. To commemorate the launch of the Washington D.C. Chapter, the NRI Institute selected several leaders, pioneers and professionals from the Maryland – Virginia – DC area and many individuals from other states of The United States. All awardees, their supporters, public leaders and an audience of over 400 NRIs and non-NRIs got together at the Marriott Hotel in North Bethesda, Maryland to attend the event on September 28, 2007. *The NRI Achievers* magazine was launched at the event to share the accomplishments of several NRI’s from around the world.

Deputy Chief of Mission Ambassador Raminder Singh Jassal presided as the Chief Guest and delivered the key Note Speech; Mr. Ron Somers, President of the U.S. India Business Council presented Opening Remarks. Other distinguished guests included Member of Parliament Mr. Tarlochan Singh, Judge Randall Rader, Dean Susan Karamanian of George Washington University, Dr. Brian Johnson, President of Montgomery College, Montgomery County Executive Hon. Isiah Leggett, Representatives from Congressman Chris Van Hollen’s office, and Dr. S.K. Pachauri to name a few. Ms. Payal Tak, President & CEO of TELESIS Corporation was formally installed as the Chairperson of the DC Chapter by the International Chairman of NRI Institute, Mr. Rasik Patel. Entertainment was provided by the Diva of Indian Pop Music, Usha Uthup and highly talented artists of MagikTuch, a Talent Management Organization in India.

The celebration was a resounding success!

The recipients of the Pride of India Gold Awards, Washington D.C. Chapter 2007 are:

**Mr. Abid Abedi:** Chairman & Chief Executive Officer; Adea Solutions, Inc., Texas  
**Dr. Ajay Kothari:** President & Chief Executive Officer, ASTROX Corporation, Maryland  
**Dr. Amit Goyal:** ORNL Distinguished Scientist and Battelle Distinguished Inventor; Tennessee  
**Bibi Inderjit Kaur:** Ambassador of Peace; Bhai Sahiba of Sikh Dharma; Official Representative and Ambassador to India appointed by Governor Bill Richardson, New Mexico  
**Capt. Mukundray (Mike) Patel:** Fellow Member of the Royal Society for encouragement of Arts, U.K.  
**Mr. B. Chatterjee:** President & Co-Founder; CNSI, Inc. Maryland  
**Ms. Dolly Oberoi:** Chief Executive Officer; C<sup>2</sup> Technologies, Inc.; Virginia  
**Mr. D.P. Venkatesh:** Founder & CEO; mPortal, Inc.; Virginia  
**Mr. Girija Shankar Sharma:** Chief Secretary, Rajasthan Bal Kalyan Samiti (Udaipur)  
Director, Higher Education, Rajasthan Bal Kalyan Samiti (Udaipur), India  
**Dr. Hitendra Ghosh:** Vice President & Chief Quality Officer; Hughes Network Systems, Inc.; MD  
**Dr. Krishna Roy:** *An inspiration beyond comparison....*; Washington, D.C.  
**Dr. Mandeep Mehra:** M.D., F.A.C.C., F.A.C.P.; Professor of Medicine; Head of Cardiology & Chief of the Division of Cardiology; University of Maryland, School of Medicine  
**Mr. Mukesh Majmudar:** President & CEO; STAR Hotels; Maryland  
**Dr. Narayan Hosmane:** Distinguished Research Scientist and Professor: Northern Illinois University; Illinois  
**Dr. Pradeep Ganguly:** Director; Montgomery County Economic Development; Maryland  
**Mr. Promod Sharma:** Founder, President & CEO: CNI; Virginia  
**Mr. Raj Khera:** Co-Founder: MailerMailer, Inc. Maryland  
**Dr. Rajesh Rajpal:** Physician, Ophthalmologist, Medical Director, Chief Executive Officer: See Clearly Vision Group; Virginia  
**Mr. Satish Maripuri:** Chief Operating Officer; Lionbridge Technologies; Massachusetts  
**Mr. Sudhakar Kesavan:** CEO and Chairman of the Board: ICF International: Virginia  
**Mr. Sudhakar Shenoy:** Founder, Chairman, and CEO: iMC, Inc.; Virginia  
**Dr. Suri Sehgal:** Sehgal Family Foundation: *Empowering Rural India...* Iowa  
**Mr. V.K. Garg:** Chairman and Managing Director of Power Finance Corporation, India  
**Dr. Vinod Thukral:** *"Father of Health Systems Management Education in India"* Clinical Professor: Tulane University; Chairman: Global Bankcorp: California

Member of Parliament, Mr. Tarlochan Singh presented a special recognition of "Friend of India" to **Mr. Ron Somers**, the President of the US - India Business Council; Washington, D.C. for his many contributions towards promoting the business relations between India and United States.

"We are very pleased with the NRI Institute's decision to launch the Washington D.C. Chapter with the celebration of Pride of India Awards in DC this year. It is an honor to be in the midst of accomplished individuals who have given India reasons to be proud of them. It is awe-inspiring to know that NRIs right here in our community continue to make a difference. Our awardees tonight are pioneers! They are leaders! They are motivators! They are the Pride of India", said Payal Tak, the President of the NRI Institute, Washington D.C. Chapter.