



Madhavi Sekharam

AUG 19, 1955 - DEC 24, 2023



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Madhavi Sekharam

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A TRIBUTE TO TAMPA BAY COMMUNITY LEADER DR. MADHAVI SEKHARAM

Tampa Bay community leader and education proponent Dr. Madhavi Sekharam, age 68, passed away on December 24th after a 2.5 year battle against colon cancer.

Madhavi showed staunch commitment to education, steadfast community values and service, which can be attributed to an upbringing within a family deeply rooted in progressiveness and strong principles. Born in Punadipadu in Andhra Pradesh, it was Chennai where she spent the majority of her youth as her father pursued a career in the movie industry. Education remained a cornerstone in her family, prioritized above all else. She completed her undergraduate studies in Chennai, Masters in Chemistry at Kanpur, and PhD in Biochemistry from Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) Mysore. It was also in Mysore that she met her future husband Dr. Sekharam Kotha, got married, and had daughter Anupama.

After securing a post-doctoral research opportunity in Knoxville, Tenn. (University of Tennessee), Madhavi was soon accompanied by Dr. Kotha. Their journey then led them to Gainesville, where she furthered her post-doctoral research at UF and had son Vikas.

In 1993, the family settled in Tampa where Madhavi would dedicate years to scientific research at Moffitt Cancer Research Center. Eventually, accompanied by her husband Dr. Kotha, Madhavi ventured into entrepreneurship and founded esteemed pet health manufacturing enterprise Florida Research Group LLC. The company supplies top-tier global pet health brands. Madhavi meticulously oversaw the business operations, ensuring an unwavering commitment to product quality.

While working full-time, she and husband Dr. Kotha managed the volunteer Sunday Gurukulam School at the USF campus for almost three decades while raising two children. She served as a leader, organizer, scheduler, counselor and motivator. The school not only provided education



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for hundreds of students each year, every Sunday for over 30 years but also fostered a sense of community and cultural integration for Indian families.

Madhavi's enduring commitment was evident through her unwavering support and continuous stewardship in key roles within several community organizations.

She cofounded Telugu Association of Florida (TAF), which started in 1998 with a handful of people which subsequently has grown into a prominent Telugu community group. For the North American Telugu Society, Madhavi was among the core five-member organizers to celebrate the first NATS conference in Orlando. She served as past chairwoman of Federation of Indian Association of Tampa Bay (FIA) and afterwards continued to provide guidance and support. She co-founded the Tampa Bay chapter of Akshaya Patra. She was the largest supporter of the Tampa chapter of North-South Foundation and played a key role in organizing the 2016 National Finals. She also was founding member of Gurukulam of Tampa Bay Toastmasters, as well as organizing weekly coaching for the national GEOBEE resulting in several national champions. She was an executive member and Angel donor of the charitable organization Awareness USA (www.awarenessusa.org).

Demonstrating the essence of a remarkable individual, she was a devoted wife and mother and dedicated herself to family and community. Her tireless efforts to humanity and unwavering commitment to community service set a standard and continue to inspire the community. While speaking at her son's wedding recently, she mentioned that it takes a village to raise a family as an immigrant working in a new land. But it bears pointing out that she herself provided that support and guidance for countless individuals in the community.

She is survived by husband Dr. Kotha Sekharam, daughter Dr. Anu Kotha, son-in-law Dr. Arun Iyer and grandchildren Sumana and Teja, son Dr. Vikas Kotha and daughter-in-law Josephine, mother Girija Devi and sister Madhuri.

Celebration of Life will take place on Saturday December 30, 2023 at 11:30am at Trinity Memorial Gardens (12609 Memorial Drive, Trinity, FL 33655).

~ Tribute lovingly compiled by Shefali Rele (KhaasBaat)

To view services via livestream, follow the link below:

<https://view.oneromstreaming.com/index.php?>



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[data=MTcwMzcwNjgyNTI4NzUyMyZvbmVyb29tLWFkbWluJmNvcHlfGluaw==](#)




Events


Madhavi Sekharam

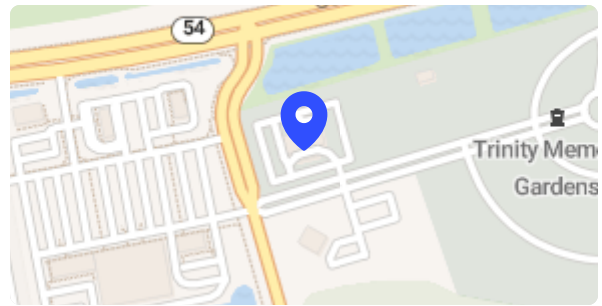
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Celebration of Life

 **Saturday**, December 30, 2023

 11:30 AM ET

 **Trinity Memorial Gardens**
12609 Memorial Dr., Trinity FL 34655





Tribute Wall

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MG

Meera And Gopi Gopalan posted:

We have been in Tampa area for more than two decades. You can't be in Tampa and not know Sekharam and his dynamic life partner Madhavi. We used to meet them at many social functions and both have always been very kind. Madhavi spoke my native tongue Tamil and that made the friendship special. She has been a leading role in various activities - from giving medals at 5K run in a park or congratulating winners in competitions. I will always remember her for her turbo charged energy and friendly attitude. It certainly is a major loss to Sekharam and family and also to our community. Being away from US, my wife meera and I convey our condolences through this message. Sekharam, people like Madhavi might have left us physically but she will always be with you emotionally and spiritually. Everything around you - the things she liked, the food she cooked, some actions of your daughter - the way she looks or talks , the memories you had made - will always be with you. We pray the great Lord Balaji to bless you and family so you can cope with this huge loss. Om Shanti.

January 1 at 5:44 PM

VP

Vijaya Peesapati posted:

We have had the pleasure of knowing Drs. Madhavigaru and Sekaramgaru for the last 16 years. My husband started working with Dr. Sekaramgaru after we moved to the USA. Our two sons attended the SAT classes at USF that were organized by Dr. Madhavigaru & Sekaramgaru. From the beginning, we were struck by her discipline, simplicity, honesty, dedication to education, and deep concern for the futures of the children she was working with. She has always been a role model for me throughout our relationship. Our family gained tremendous strength from her example and my husband and I were able to successfully direct our children into higher education to become a pharmacist and doctor, in part because of her guidance. I am honored to say that we became close family friends and we were graced with their presence at several of our family functions. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for everything you have done for us and our community 🙏 our prayers and heartfelt condolences to your family for the great loss. With Love, Vijaya Peesapati & family

December 30 at 12:54 PM



Ramesh Kolli posted:

Madhavigaru will be missed dearly! Hope Sekharamgaru and family members find comfort & strength in the loving memories left behind by Madhavigaru. Our thoughts n prayers in this difficult time 🙏
Ramesh. Neelima and Ashrith Kolli

December 30 at 7:20 AM



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SB

Sharmistha Banerjee posted:

Madhavi is no more!! This was a shocking news to the core! We have known Madhavi since the time our daughter Anwasha started Gurukulam, at USF, decades ago. Since then we have seen her as a strong, caring person & and a community leader, passionately working towards the betterment of the community. She will forever be remembered lovingly! May her soul get the eternal peace. May God give Dr Kotha Sekharam, the kids & the entire family the strength to bear the loss & to move forward. OM Shanti! - Sharmistha, Arabinda & Anwasha. 🙏

December 30 at 7:16 AM

AS

Asha posted:

Madhavi, You represented courage, service and commitment. May god give strength to your family to get through this most difficult time. You will continue to live through your children. Om shanti. Asha, Lakshman, Arvind, Karen

December 30 at 5:02 AM

RS

Raju & Subhadra lit a candle in honor of Madhavi.

We will always remember for her wit, kindness, intelligence and more importantly as a caring big sister. If we are involved in TAF or FIA, only because of her. We are forever indebted to her for the service she provided to our Indian community in Tampa Bay. We will always cherish the fond memories. With love, Raju and Subhadra



December 30 at 4:02 AM

PK

Prasanna Kota posted:

We knew Madhavi garu and shekaram garu family over 2 decades, she always guided her right way, we like her frankness, she always expressed her views openly and frankly, we are still in shock that I don't get to see and talk to this beautiful personality any more... Madhavi garu we really miss you andi, shelaram garu, Anu and Vikas, our prayers are with you..Lata and Prasanna kota

December 30 at 3:58 AM



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RS

Raghuveer Sankineni posted:

Dr. Madhavi Garu's unwavering commitment to community service through organizations like Gurukulam, Telugu Association, North South Foundation, and FIA has left an indelible mark on Tampa Bay. Her guidance and leadership have been a guiding light for many, and her passing is a profound loss to the Indian community. May her legacy continue to inspire and be a source of strength during this difficult time.

December 30 at 3:57 AM

MA

Manju Akinapalli posted:

Madhavi Garu holds a special place in our hearts. She was always so caring and affectionate towards each and every one of us. Her constant encouragement and loving words were a source of warmth. Her presence was felt everywhere, from our kids attending Gurukulam to our weekly bhajans. We will miss her. - Manju Akinapalli & Family

December 29 at 1:11 PM



Anonymous sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Sekharam family.



December 29 at 11:55 AM

BD

Bhanu P Dhulipalla posted:

"In loving memory of Madhavi Garu, my cherished sister and a true guiding light. Her encouragement led me to TAF and FIA, where her impact resonates. A pillar of support, she will always be remembered as more than a friend – an elder sister dearly missed."- Bhanu Prakash Dhulipalla

December 29 at 10:40 AM



Anonymous sent a Sweet Tenderness to the Sekharam family.



December 29 at 9:12 AM



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From Purna, Tara, Ankush Tej Bikkasani's planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Madhavi.

December 29 at 8:08 AM



From Purna, Tara, Ankush Tej Bikkasani's sent an Infinite Love to the Sekharam family.

December 29 at 8:08 AM



Anonymous sent an Arrive in Style to the Sekharam family.

December 29 at 7:52 AM



Parimala Nathan posted:

have known Madhavi and her family for nearly three decades. I consider myself fortunate to have been acquainted with such a dynamic, intelligent lady. Her dedication each Sunday to the administering of the Gurukulam school where I taught English, always put me in awe of her commitment and dedication to a worthy cause; especially when it is a day everyone craves to stay put and relax. The Tampa community has indeed lost a sterling member, someone who made her work and presence go a long way in wholesome service. Parimala Nathan

December 28 at 5:36 PM



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MN

Muttathil P Ravindra Nathan Md posted:

Madhavi was one of the most wonderful persons I have met. Very knowledgeable, always helpful and a pleasant friendly person. A highly accomplished lady. This is a big loss to Tampa Bay Indian Community and we will miss her dearly. My heartfelt condolences to the family. Ravi Nathan

December 28 at 3:28 PM

PB

Purna Bikkasani December 29 at 7:52 AM

Dear families and friends Today, we bid farewell to Dr. Madhavi Sekharam, a life dedicated to the cause of social contribution and the relentless pursuit of a better world. Madhavi Sekaran's remarkable life journey began in Punadipadu, Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh. She was born into a principled, progressive family where the social values of honesty, integrity, and community service were instilled in her from a tender age. Her grandfather was a freedom fighter. We have heard many speakers talk about her. Madhavi has been an angel donor, staunch supporter, and executive member of Awareness USA. Madhavi visited schools in India on behalf of Chaitanya Samadhi, offering inspiration and support to teachers and students alike. Awareness USA recognized her selfless endeavors and awarded a prestigious "Lifetime Community Service Award" for two-decade-long, relentless service week after week without missing a beat to help thousands of Indian immigrant children to excel in studies and succeed in life while at the same time building community support for all the Immigrant families. Madhavi's unwavering commitment to education is self-evident: She earned a doctorate in chemistry. She married a doctorate, Dr. Koth, and raised two children to be postgraduates in medical sciences. She motivated and nurtured young minds through initiatives such as Sunday Gurukulam school, Chaitanya Saradhi, Akshaya Patra, the North-South Foundation, spelling BEE, etc. Through these endeavors, she made a significant leap in ensuring a brighter future for future generations, her lasting legacy. The purpose of life can best be measured not only by the span of one's life but also by the extent of one's contributions to the betterment of society. In this regard, Madhavi's enduring commitment and community service far exceeded many of us. She worked to help others as if it were her primary responsibility, often at the expense of her interests and well-being. Dr. Madhavi is a shining star literally in real life, highly disciplined, organized, focused, a leader, and a speaker. If she could, she would have addressed you all now. She will remain a bright star in the cosmos metaphorically forever. She is a symbol of selflessness and a testament to the profound impact one can have in making the world a better place. Madhavi's legacy is an eternal gift to the world that will continue to resonate through generations. Rest in peace, dear Madhavi, secure in the knowledge that your legacy of love and service will endure through the ages, a guiding light for all who follow in your remarkable footsteps. My relationship with Madhavi is special, bonded with impeccable trust and respect. Tara and I bid her a final farewell with a heavy heart today. Thank you. Chaitanya Saradhi, Mr. Mohan (Bala) Nemani, CEO, Dr. Purna Bikkasani MD chairman.

PN

Parimala Nathan December 28 at 5:29 PM



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MN

I have known Madhavi and her family for nearly three decades. I consider myself fortunate to have been acquainted with such a dynamic, intelligent lady. Her dedication each Sunday to the administering of the Gurukulam school where I taught English, always put me in awe of her commitment and dedication to a worthy cause; especially when it is a day everyone craves to stay put and relax. The Tampa community has indeed lost a sterling member, someone who made her work and presence go a long way in wholesome service. Parimala Nathan



Anonymous sent a Medium Dish Garden to the Sekharam family.



December 28 at 1:20 PM

VT

Vish Tatavarthy lit a candle in honor of Madhavi.

Dr. Madhavi Shekaran was an inspiration and when I first moved to Tampa in 1995, I met her while we were volunteering for various temple building tasks. She was a great mentor and a powerful guidance to lead a positive life. She was a great supporter for younger generations coming from India and always helped them assimilate into new culture and environment. Thoughts and Prayers with family. Tampa will sure miss her presence. Vish Tatavarthy



December 28 at 4:18 AM

SB

Sunil Bandarupalli posted:

Since 2006, when we first moved to Tampa, we have noticed Dr Madhavi Sekharam at the forefront of not only any Telugu social activity but even the Indian community events. It astounded us to know that Madhavigaru, her husband and their children persistently and selflessly ran Sunday school at USF with the help of countless volunteers to benefit young children. Her beaming smile endeared her to everyone and she will be sorely missed by one and all. To walk a mile, we have to first take a step! Madhavigaru inspired us all by promoting community involvement for the betterment of the society. My condolences to Kothagaru, Anu, Vikas and the family. Sunil & Lakshmi Bandarupalli

December 27 at 6:56 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Madhavi by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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