



News Release

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Donation supports Surrey School District summer camp kids

The Janta Sewak Society and Surrey businessman Jagmohan Singh have donated \$5,000 to the Surrey School District's inner-city elementary summer camp program.

The donation will provide all 325 students participating in the inner-city camps this summer with a nutritious snack on each day of camp. The snacks will ensure participating students have the nutrition and energy they need to focus, learn and play throughout the camp. The district's school meal program will coordinate provision of the snacks.

The district has been offering the inner-city elementary summer camp program at 13 schools every year since 2005. The camps operate from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each weekday for two weeks during the summer. The program is provided free to students in Grades 4-7 who have been identified by teachers and principals, counselors, parents or community organizations as facing exceptional challenges or limited opportunities.

The goal of the camps is to develop skills in arts and athletics; provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment for at-risk students; build self esteem and confidence, and help students return to school in September invigorated and ready to learn. Camps are made possible by funding from local foundations and private donors.

"Camp is extremely important to this community because there is no nearby recreation centre and families in this area often cannot afford community classes for their children," says Cedar Hills elementary summer camp coordinator Gina Challenger. "Camp provides a healthy outlet for children. Instead of being unengaged over the summer, the kids participate in physical activity, receive top-notch art instruction and get encouragement and support from teachers."

"The Surrey School District is very happy to receive this donation from Janta Sewak Society and Jagmohan Singh," says Surrey Board of Education chair Reni Masi. "The camps provide important opportunities to connect with at-risk students over the summer. Feeding the campers each day is a critical part of the program's success, as otherwise the kids often go hungry and become disinterested or disengaged in camp activities."

The Janta Sewak Society, which means "community services" in Punjabi/Hindi, is British Columbia's largest South-Asian charitable organization. The society generates funds through private donations and through an annual fundraising dinner held in Surrey and hosted by CTV reporter Renu Bakshi and her father Surdharshan Bakshi, who started the Janta Sewak Society. For 20 years, the society has been funding projects that focus primarily on youth, physical and mental disabilities and health care.

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