



Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam  
The World Is One Family



Sarve Bhavantu  
Sukhinah  
May All Be Happy

# Sewa International Central Jersey Chapter

## The Power of Community: Sparking Innovation

### Serving Communities Since 2018

**AmeriCorps NJ State Planning Grant in Environmental Stewardship**

**AmeriCorps National Days of Service Grant**

**NJ State Governor's Volunteerism Award 2023 Honoree for Health Care Service**



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### NJVOAD - NJGOV



**Building and Sustaining a multi-track neighborhood focused volunteering organization**

**Sewa International - A Case Study**

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# OUR ORGANIZATION



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# Sewa International Central Jersey Chapter

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## Our Vision, Our Mission, Our Motto



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Sewa International is a humanitarian, nonprofit service organization  
Sewa International USA was founded in 2003

- **Our Mission:** To serve humanity in distress, aid local communities, run developmental projects for the underserved, and assist people in transformational change through the power of innovation by mobilizing partners, donors, and volunteers
- **Our Vision:** *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* - The World is One Family
- **Our Motto:** Together We Serve Better
- **Our Belief:** Serving Humanity is Serving Divinity
- **Our Outlook:** *Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah* - May All Be Happy

We aspire to be a humanitarian organization that serves selflessly and with compassion to create a positive impact. We envision and strive for a world in which all people live in harmony, free from suffering.

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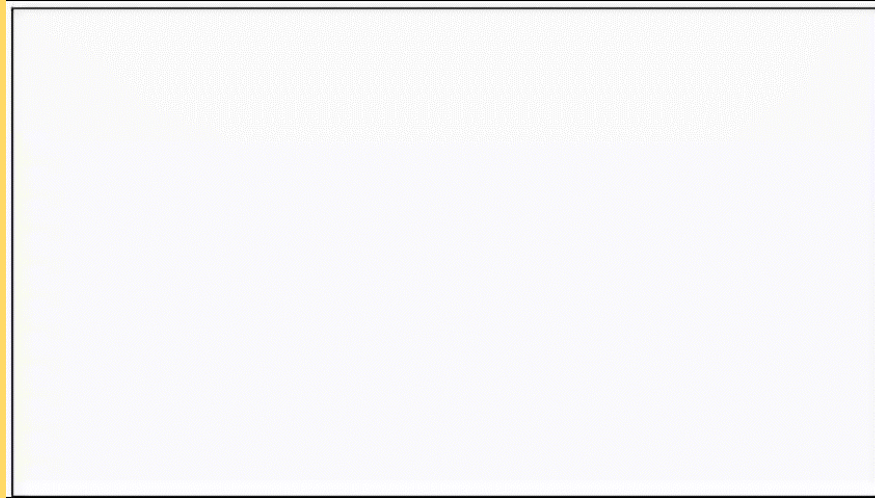


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## The Power of Community: Sparking Innovation

### Our Organization



Sewa International, USA

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The image features a dark blue background with a faint, out-of-focus photograph of several small green seedlings with two leaves each, growing out of a mound of dark soil. A bright yellow L-shaped graphic is positioned on the left and bottom edges of the frame, framing the central text. The text "OUR BEGINNING" is written in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font, centered horizontally and partially overlaid by the seedling image.

OUR BEGINNING



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# Sewa International Central Jersey Chapter

**The Power of Community: Sparking Innovation**

## **Central Jersey Sewa: Our Beginning**



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- **Established in 2018, the Central Jersey Chapter of Sewa International embarked on its mission to support distressed communities and families**
- **Initially, the focus was on cultivating volunteerism among high school-aged young adults**
- **Recognizing the prevalent gaps within New Jersey, particularly concerning food insecurity, the chapter sought to foster volunteerism to help those in need**
- **However, initiating the chapter came with its own set of challenges and risks, primarily reliant on volunteers and the commitment required to fulfill the organization's long-term strategic objectives**

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OUR GROWTH  
OUR OUTCOMES





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## Our Growth: Outcomes and Achievements

Promote Volunteerism,  
Fund Development,  
SAC / SHE Program

Disaster Recovery,  
Family Services

Grants,  
AmeriCorps

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

2024

Middlesex County  
Volunteer  
Organization  
Nomination for  
2020

Pravasi Bhartiya  
Award  
(Sewa International  
COVID Support)

NJ Governor's  
Volunteerism Award  
Honoree for Healthcare  
Services

NJ Commission of  
AmeriCorps Grant for  
Environmental  
Stewardship in Middlesex  
County, NJ

NJ Commission of  
AmeriCorps Grant for  
Environmental  
Stewardship in Middlesex  
County, NJ

9/11 National Commission  
of AmeriCorps Service  
Day Grant

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PROMOTE VOLUNTEERISM,  
FUND DEVELOPMENT &  
SAC/SHE SUPPORT

# Sewa International

## Central Jersey Chapter

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## Promote Volunteerism, Fund Development, SAC/SHE Development

### 2018: Launch

- 84 registered high school volunteers
- Flagship Projects
  - Kiddie Keep Well Camp for Underprivileged kids of Middlesex County– ongoing
  - Hands of Hope Food Pantry – ongoing
  - Menlo Park Senior Citizen Center – ongoing
  - Thomas Edison Memorial Tower at Menlo Park - ongoing
  - Burlington County Bench Restoration (over 100 benches)
- Coding camp for Java, Scratch, Alice
- SAC/SHE: Sponsor a Child & Women Rehabilitation & Empowerment Programs; Menstrual Hygiene & Awareness, Yoga, Self Defense, Skills

### 2024:

- 150+ registered high school volunteers
- 50+ Partners and Beneficiaries
- 25+ Unique Projects
  - Environmental Preservation & Education, Biodiversity Conservation, Reforestation & Tree planting, Sustainable Gardening & Addressing Food Insecurity, Support for Under resourced, Educational Support Initiatives, Support for Veterans & Servicemen
- Execution of 5k – Support for Healthcare Needs
- Community Outreach initiatives for significant township events
- Fundraising events & Multiple individual fundraisers
- SAC: Supporting 25 Children for 1 full year (Since 2023)
- SHE: Allocated funds for Sanitation, Hygiene and Skill Training of 15 Women (Since 2023)

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### Testimonial



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A 3D rendered image of a hand holding a small house model. The hand is positioned at the bottom, with fingers slightly curled, supporting the house. The house is a two-story structure with a gabled roof, a chimney, and a balcony. The entire scene is rendered in a monochromatic blue color scheme. The background is a solid dark blue, and the text is in a bright yellow color. There are yellow L-shaped brackets in the top-left and bottom-right corners of the image.

# DISASTER RECOVERY & FAMILY SERVICES



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## Disaster Recovery and Family Services

### 2020: Launch

- **Mission Mask**
  - 28 hospitals served in NJ, NY, PA
  - Over 10,000 hand-made masks donated
- **Drive-thru PPE distribution to first responders**
  - 25,000 PPE distributed
- **Drive-thru food distribution to 5,000 families**
- **Local helpline created**

### 2023-24:

- **NJ Governor's Volunteerism Award Honoree for Healthcare Services**
- **Critical Care Medical Health Assistance**
- **Fatal Domestic Violence Cases; Bereavement Support for Families**
- **Supervised Visitation Support; Mental Health & Mentoring Support**
- **Support for Domestic Violence Survivors & Gender Based Violence**
- **Free Medical Screening Camps including Blood Work**
- **Referral to Specialized Doctors Network in Neonatology, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Nephrology, Gynecology & Pediatrics**
- **Yoga Therapy Camp for Back Pain**
- **Repatriation, Legal and Financial Advisory through Partner organizations**
- **CPR & First Aid Training**
- **FEMA Training for Disaster Management - Disaster Preparedness Workshops**
- **Helpline support continues**

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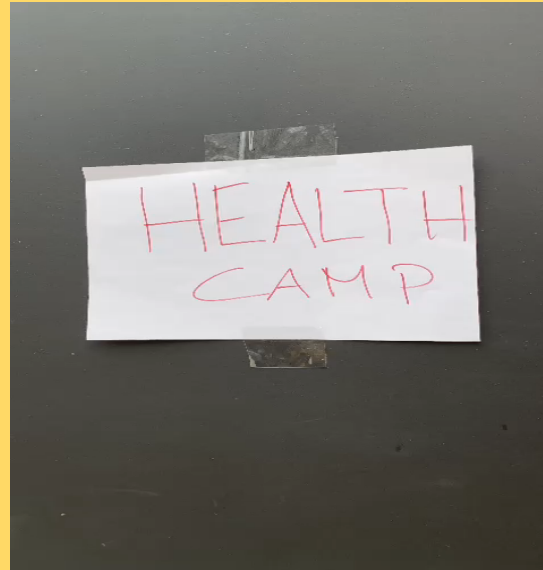
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# GRANTS & AMERICORPS



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## Sewa International Grants and AmeriCorps

### 2022: Launch

- Explore AmeriCorps grant for NJ
- Applied for NJ Commission Planning Grant in Environmental Stewardship

### 2023-24:

- Received the NJ Commission Planning Grant in Environmental Stewardship
- Commenced on National Commission of AmeriCorps Days of Service and 9/11 Service Day Grant
- Submitted an application for the Operating Grant for Environmental Stewardship in Middlesex County to the NJ Commission
- Filed an application for the USDA Grant for the Food Security Program in Middlesex County

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## Sewa International Grants and AmeriCorps

Sewa International AmeriCorps programs - Child Education, Family Services, Mental Health, Environmental Justice, Disaster Preparedness, and Community Engagement.

### **BE CALM:**

- A public health initiative funded by AmeriCorps CDC for the mental well-being of individuals
- Weekly mental health first aid training, workshops, and awareness sessions aimed at educating beneficiaries in underserved communities
- Bi-weekly yoga sessions and hiking excursions, to promote mental health awareness and well-being

### **ASPIRE:**

- Achieving Students Progress, Instilling Resilience, and Excellence after-school program (Math, English Language Arts, and Enrichment)
- Provides supplementary language intervention and helps improve academic performance for children from kindergarten to sixth grade
- Children from underserved, refugee, and immigrant communities
- Dedicated to empowering young minds and fostering a culture of learning and growth

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## Sewa International Grants and AmeriCorps

### 9/11 SERVICE DAY:

- Promote awareness and cultivate a spirit of civic responsibility
- Organize Sewa Day of Service, through the year, across cities in the US
- Mobilize volunteers for service initiatives during 9/11 week – 911 Day of Service and Remembrance
- Activities include neighborhood park clean-ups, community gardening, and tree planting

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## Sewa International Grants and AmeriCorps

### **VOLUNTEER GENERATION:**

- Encouraging volunteerism
- Advocating for community service in underrepresented areas
- Attracting and retaining young volunteers
- Collaborating with partner organizations
- Establishing a Volunteer Engagement Hub
- Enhancing the capacity of our partners

### **SENIOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:**

- Engage senior volunteers aged 55 and above
- Provide targeted support including training, certifications, mentoring, and pre- and post-employment assistance to the individuals served

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SUSTAINABILITY AND  
IMPACT



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## Key Steps and Strategies

- **Comprehend the community's needs**
- **Select a focus area that is both easy to implement and impactful**
- **Avoid trying to do everything at once. Take small, manageable steps**
- **Form a team of dedicated volunteers**
- **Initiate the program and continuously improve based on feedback and observations**
- **Utilize social media and other platforms for outreach**
- **Establish meaningful partnerships**
- **Develop relationships with donors interested in the focus area**
- **Organize fundraising events with a dedicated team**
- **Expand the initiative by focusing on new areas while refining existing ones**
- **Regularly reflect, refine, and innovate**
- **Celebrate successes, big or small**

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The image features five glowing lightbulbs arranged in a horizontal line against a dark blue background. The lightbulbs are illuminated from within, casting a soft glow. A bright yellow L-shaped frame is positioned around the central text, with one arm extending from the top left and the other from the bottom right. The text is centered and reads: 

# CULTIVATING CONCEPTUAL IDEAS INTO A FLOURISHING PROGRAM





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## **From Seed to Service: A SewaMeal Program**

- **Commenced in 2020 by assisting a family in crisis following the loss of both primary breadwinners**
- **Scaled up the initiative to provide 50 meals to a Homeless Shelter in Edison, NJ**
- **Further expansion ensued, catering to the needs of over 1000 individuals across diverse communities in Central and South Jersey, effectively combating food insecurity**

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## **From Plot to Plate: A SewaProduce Program**

- **Started out by offering voluntary assistance in community gardens**
- **Empowered young adult volunteers to utilize acquired skills to create Backyard and Bucket Gardening initiatives aimed at producing fresh produce**
- **Currently, contributing our harvest to Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens, Homeless Shelters, and Relief efforts**
- **In addition, our SewaMeal program utilizes the produce we grow**

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# Sewa International Central Jersey Chapter

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## Testimonial



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A hand holding a pen over a document, with a blue overlay and yellow L-shaped brackets.

# LESSONS LEARNED & BEST PRACTICES



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### Lessons Learned

- **Establishing a community service initiative takes time and patience**
- **Consistency and perseverance lead to organic growth**
- **Open communication and feedback are crucial**
- **Financial self-reliance is key**
- **Cultivate a network of supportive donors**

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### Best Practices

- **Implement consistent processes**
- **Enforce compliance to maintain strategic alignment**
- **Delegate tasks to develop leadership within the organization**
- **Provide training to new volunteers on the organization's mission and vision**
- **Establish guidelines for the organization and focus areas**

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PARTNERS & BENEFICIARIES  
TOGETHER WE SERVE BETTER

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## Our Partners and Beneficiary Organizations



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A blue-tinted photograph of a road with a white arrow pointing forward, framed by yellow L-shaped brackets. The road is flanked by grassy fields and a wind turbine is visible in the distance. The text "2024: ONWARDS" is centered in the image.

2024: ONWARDS



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## 2024 Onwards

- **Strengthen Disaster Recovery Program in association with FEMA Region 2**
- **Organize 2 large-scale fundraiser events to supplement the grants**

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Q & A



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**Thank you!**



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