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## US hospitality industry raises \$75,000 for Mumbai terror attack victims

Donation from the three-city happy hour fundraiser hosted by Charters Lodging goes to American India Foundation (AIF)

**New York (SATimes):** A three-city, industry-wide happy hour fundraiser organized by The Chartres Lodging Group, LLC, of San Francisco at its signature hotels in New York, San Francisco and Chicago raised more than \$75,000 for the victims of the November 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks. In support of the one-night effort, Starwood Hotels, Kimpton Hotels, Hilton

Hotels, Taj Hotels, Highgate Hotels and a host of other hospitality leaders donated to the effort or created their own relief programs

The original goal of "One Night for Mumbai," conceived by Chartres' No Reservations Giving Program as a response to the terrorists' intentional targeting of India's hotel and tourism industry, was

\$10,000 per city. The Jan. 29 happy hours featured authentic Indian food, a raffle of prizes donated by local merchants and industry partners and a presentation by dignitaries

and members of the local Indian community in each city. Local Indian and non-Indian businesses in each city donated food and other resources.

All proceeds from the evening went to the nonprofit American India Foundation (AIF), which is directing funds to the Taj Public Service Welfare Trust, the Oberoi Care Fund, the Bombay Community Public Trust and other Indian charities and organizations providing direct and immediate relief to the victims.



Raffle draw in progress



Auctions drew a lot of enthusiastic participation

"Since the terrorists intentionally targeted Mumbai tourist locations and there were a number of Chartres employees and families personally impacted by the tragedy, we knew we wanted to do something tangible to show our support," explained Rob Kline, president of Chartres Lodging. "What was most gratifying, however, was seeing the level of immediate and

continuing response from our friends in the hospitality industry."

Participating Chartres Lodging restaurants and hotels included the Lex Lounge at the Radisson Lexington Hotel in New York, Harry Denton's Starlight Room at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel and M Avenue Restaurant and Lounge at the Allerton Hotel Chicago.

Inspired by the program, Kimpton Hotels and Restaurants hosted a related program entitled "Dollar a

Night," in which it donated \$1 for every occupied room on Jan. 29 at all 42 Kimpton-managed hotels in the U.S. and Canada. Starwood Hotels & Resorts; Hilton Hotels; Taj Hotels, Resorts and Palaces; Marriott Hotels and Resorts; Morgans Hotel Group; and Highgate Hotels also contributed in various ways.

The Allerton Hotel's sister hotels in Chicago, the Doubletree Chicago Magnificent Mile and the Inn of Chicago Magnificent Mile, also donated proceeds from their Jan. 29 happy hours.

Other contributors included: Trinity Investments / Kahala Resort, DoubleTree Metropolitan, San Francisco C&VB, Kokua Hospitality, The Food Network, Bombay Sapphire Gin, Lotus Vodka, Pomeroy Champagne,

Juslyn Vineyards, Nic's Martini Lounge and Restaurant, Kingfisher

Beer (in addition to airlines), Southern Wine and Spirits, Testa Produce, Gordon Foodservice, Cornell University alumni, Kuwait Airways, Continental Airlines, Air India, Jet Airways, Qatar air among others.

The mission of the Chartres Lodging No Reservations Giving Program is to provide direct relief to

employees' families, friends and communities in need. No Reservations Giving is founded on the "ripple-effect" belief that taking small steps can lead to big improvements in the lives of those impacted by crisis, tragedy or natural disaster. Similar to Chartres Lodging's basic philosophy of allowing employees to

partner in its turnaround investments, No Reservations Giving participants directly contribute their time, talent and passion toward enhancing the lives and futures of those less fortunate.



**One Night for Mumbai at the Allerton Hotel in Chicago: (L to R): Dan Sheline, vice president asset management, Chartres Lodging Group, LLC; Andrea Mayer, general manager, Allerton Hotel Chicago; Vimal Bahugada, trustee for AIF and president of the Drona Group; Arjun Aggarwal, chairperson for AIF's gala and managing director for Huron Consulting Group.**

## Lend-A-Hand India hosts "Chocofest 2009" to raise funds

**New York (SATimes):** Over two hundred young professionals from all walks of life attended "Chocofest 2009", a chocolate festival for a good cause hosted by Lend-A-Hand India in New York City on February 8, 2009. Attendees enjoyed dipping selections in chocolate fountains supplied and manned by Divalicious Chocolates, who helped prove the mantra that "anything can be dipped in chocolate"! People also ate a variety of chocolates supplied

by "The Sweet Life NY", a 25 year old candy and gourmet chocolate shop. Among the notable attendees were well-known food blogger Grace Yang of [www.gracenotes-nyc.com](http://www.gracenotes-nyc.com) and Nina Agrawal from [www.changeNYC.org](http://www.changeNYC.org).

Chocofest 2009 raised over \$5,000, which will contribute to providing vocational training to young girls and boys from rural India. Welcoming the attendees, Raj Gilda, co-founder of Lend-A-Hand

India gave an overview of the event's impact and thanked its many supporters. "We could not be where we are today without our donors and volunteers," said Gilda. In the last five years, over 10,000 boys and girls from 60 villages in India have benefited from the programs carried out by Lend-A-Hand India. Under its flagship project "PLAN100", Lend-A-Hand India aims to ultimately reach and equip 20,000 boys and girls from 100 high

schools with job and life skills in next two years. Lend-A-Hand India is a non-profit venture launched in 2003 by young professionals. It is based in New York City and focuses on issues related to youth. The current focus of its programs is pro-

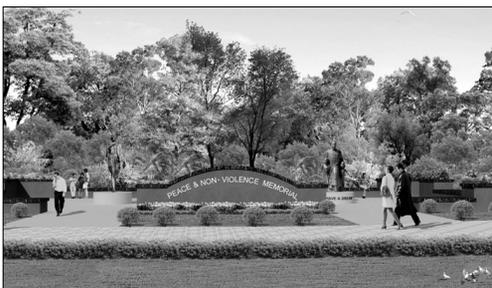
viding vocational training, career development, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities for young boys and girls in urban and rural communities. For more information, visit [www.lend-a-hand-india.org](http://www.lend-a-hand-india.org).

## Fundraiser for Peace and Non-violence Memorial in New Jersey

**Edison (New Jersey):** New Jerseyans continue to celebrate President Obama's Inauguration. Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula, Pastor Rev. Dr. DeForest Soaries and the Holiday Inn of Edison have hosted an Inaugural dinner celebration fundraiser for the Peace and Non-Violence Memorial for Mahatma Gand-

hi and Dr. Martin Luther King, which is proposed to come up at the Franklin Township Municipal Township

Complex located in Somerset County. The event will be held on Sunday, Feb. 15 from 5.30 pm onwards at Holiday Inn, 3050 Woodbridge Avenue, Edison, NJ 08837.



Visualization of proposed memorial



**Sonal Shah, Roopal Shah, Shamina Singh and Anurag Verma spoke at the Indian American Leadership Initiative and Indicorps Inaugural reception held at the Heritage India restaurant in Washington DC on January 21. Photo courtesy: Rahil Calcuttawala/www.rakimagery.com**