2017
YEAR IN REVIEW
MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR & INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!

The country’s social climate and the transitioning of our Executive Director made 2017 one of the most challenging and important years in the organization’s history. How the team and community responded showed the strength of our institution and the character of sangats across the nation.

In 2017, while we said goodbye to a few excellent colleagues, we added the kind of amazing people needed for the continuation and expansion of our high-impact work. With this team the Sikh Coalition shared #RememberOakCreek that reached millions, launched a nationwide initiative to improve gurdwara security and ensured that generations of students will learn about the Sikh faith and community in schools in Tennessee and Idaho. We also continued to combat the rise of hate crime in the United States while securing significant victories in our employment discrimination work, including dramatically improved standards for Sikhs and other religious minorities who seek to serve in the U.S. Army.

It is critical that we have the spirit and talent to face the mounting challenges and use our Sikh values to guide our actions. Principles like chardi kala (eternal optimism), sarbat da bhala (blessings for everyone), and dasvandh (giving ten percent of one’s resources to charitable work) give us the ability to be a vessel of change for not just Sikhs but all people. We educate the world about the character of who Sikhs are by fighting for more than just ourselves.

We need your man (mind), tan (body) and dhan (material service) to help us achieve this, and we humbly ask for your support.

Chardi Kala!

Narinder Singh
Board Chair & Interim Executive Director

A SNAPSHOT

- 13 million Americans reached during #RememberOakCreek
- 200+ requests for legal assistance
- 2,500+ news hits in U.S. press
- 50+ gurdwaras better protected in gurdwara security initiative
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- 50+ gurdwaras better protected in gurdwara security initiative

“...The Sikh Coalition kept their focus on supporting our local community, and the results speak for themselves.”

-Mandeep Kaur

25+ op-eds written and placed
50+ Sikh soldiers now serving with their articles of faith intact
9 million Americans reached through Vaisakhi awareness initiative
2 more states now include Sikhism in public school education standards
NEW THEMES: GRASSROOTS, PROACTIVE, AND RESILIENT

The Sikh Coalition was formed over 16 years ago in response to violence and discrimination against Sikhs in the aftermath of the September 11th terror attacks. As our organization continues to grow, we have made a strategic decision to focus more heavily on grassroots projects that are proactive instead of reactive and which promote resilience instead of victimhood. Our gurdwara security initiative; our expansion of the Sikh Advocate Academy and Day of Seva; and our continuing push to include Sikhs in state education standards underscore this focus.

Since our inception, the Sikh Coalition’s advocacy work has centered on engaging federal agencies and lawmakers to promote civil rights for all Americans, including Sikhs. While this work will absolutely continue, we are laying the groundwork for expanded local and state advocacy. Over time, we believe this proactive outreach will expand opportunities for grassroots engagement in the cause of making our community more resilient against bias-based violence and discrimination.
COMBATING HATE THROUGH ADVOCACY & COMMUNITY SECURITY

In response to rising xenophobia and attacks against religious minorities and their houses of worship throughout the nation, the Sikh Coalition made hate crime prevention a strategic priority in 2017. The urgency of this work was underscored in March 2017 when a Sikh man was shot and injured outside his driveway in Kent, Washington by a gunman who told him to “go back to your own country.” Just a few days earlier, Srinivas Kuchibhotla – an engineer from India – was shot and killed in Kansas by a man yelling epithets. These shootings occurred against the backdrop of bomb threats and arson attacks against Jewish synagogues and Muslim mosques throughout the nation.

In response to these attacks, the Sikh Coalition and its grassroots partners in Washington State asked Senator Maria Cantwell to send a letter to the Trump administration calling for the creation of a federal task force on hate crime prevention. Twelve U.S. Senators endorsed this request. In May 2017, the Sikh Coalition partnered with Dr. Prabhjot Singh to deliver testimony at a U.S. Senate hearing on hate crimes. We participated in a Justice Department hate crime summit the following month.

To reduce the risk of future attacks against gurdwaras in the United States, the Sikh Coalition distributed a Gurdwara Security Toolkit to over 200 gurdwaras nationwide and offered to facilitate free consultations with federal security experts. So far, over 50 gurdwaras have taken proactive steps to begin the work required to strengthen their facilities and better protect lives. Five years after the attack on the gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, we believe our drive to strengthen gurdwara security will make our community more resilient and make our gurdwaras safer places for our loved ones.

PREVENTING ATTACKS ON GURDWARAS

COMBATING BIAS-MOTIVATED CRIME THROUGH CONTINUED LEGAL WORK

With increased national attention on hate crimes, this year we continued our robust legal work to combat bias-motivated violence across the country.

Maan Singh Khalsa, a Sikh father and IT specialist, was brutally assaulted in Richmond, California in September 2016. The Sikh Coalition strongly responded to the attack in 2016 and 2017, providing direct legal and advocacy support, as well as bringing widespread media attention to the case. In May 2017, the defendants were found guilty on felony aggravated assault and hate crime charges. They were sentenced to prison time and restitution payments to Mr. Khalsa.

Violent crimes damage the lives of victims, their families and the communities in which they live. Hate crimes, in particular, can have deep, lasting effects on victims and targeted communities. In order to develop effective policy solutions to combat hate crimes, policymakers must first understand the scope of the problem. Our work to ensure a hate crime designation and bring public attention to the problem is the first step towards systemic change.
FIGHTING BACK IN THE FACE OF EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

In addition to our campaign to end discrimination by the Department of Defense - our nation’s largest employer - we continued our work to defeat employment discrimination in the private sector.

The Sikh Coalition filed a lawsuit in 2016 on behalf of Dr. Jaswinder Pal Singh after he was denied a neurology job following an inquiry into his religious appearance by the employer and recruiter. In October 2017, a resolution was reached in which the employer, a Tennessee-based medical group, agreed to improve its hiring policies. The employer will strengthen its equal employment policies and retain a consultant to provide anti-discrimination training for staff responsible for recruiting, interviewing and hiring employees.

Also, in March 2017, the Sikh Coalition secured an accommodation for Vikash Deol to box in USA Boxing-sanctioned amateur matches while maintaining his beard, opening a pathway for anyone who maintains a religiously mandated beard to become an Olympic boxer.

These successes join a long series of high-impact victories that the Sikh Coalition has secured since 2001.

I want to thank the Sikh Coalition for protecting my rights and working to ensure that religious appearance is never a factor in the job application process.

- Dr. Jaswinder Pal Singh

FATEH! EDUCATION VICTORIES IN IDAHO AND TENNESSEE

In 2017, we continued to engage with educators and sangat members nationwide to ensure that students learn about Sikhism.

In April, the Idaho State Board of Education moved to include information about Sikhs in its Social Studies standards, effectively ensuring that 250,000 students enrolled in Idaho public schools from grades six through nine will gain a better understanding of Sikhs.

In July, the Tennessee State Board of Education voted to approve new social studies standards, which for the first time ever include Sikhism. The new standards will give 700,000 high school students in Tennessee access to educational content about the Sikh community, a major step towards creating awareness about Sikhs for many generations to come.

Both victories resulted from several months of vigorous advocacy from the Sikh Coalition. These new states join New York, New Jersey, Texas, and California in working with the Sikh Coalition to include accurate information about Sikhs in their public school education standards. We look forward to additional education progress in the future.
SUSTAINABLE & STRATEGIC MEDIA ENGAGEMENT THAT DELIVERS LASTING IMPACT

Through our media and communications work, the Sikh voice continues to reach millions of Americans every month and helps support our advocacy as we drive for change through the community, courtrooms, classrooms and halls of Congress.

- In March, we responded to the shooting of a Sikh man in Kent, WA by providing direct communications support to the local sangat. The results included increased local and national news attention on the case and on the need for more concrete action to effectively combat bigotry.

- In April, 50 bipartisan members of Congress joined the Sikh Coalition to celebrate Vaisakhi. This resulted in over 60 social media posts from United States Senators and members of Congress that reached a potential of 9 million Americans.

- In June, working directly with the Oak Creek sangat and Sikh leaders nationwide, we helped secure local and national news coverage around the fifth anniversary of the Oak Creek gurdwara shooting. This media initiative focused on the courage, strength and resilience of the community and reached a potential 13 million Americans.

- In August, we worked with producers and Sikh leaders to film an upcoming episode of CNN’s Emmy award-winning primetime television show, United Shades of America. The host, W. Kamau Bell, extensively interviewed Sikh Coalition Board Member Harpreet Singh, Senior Counsel Hansimran Kaur and Social Justice Fellow Winty Singh.

- In September, we launched the first-ever comprehensive guidebook for journalists reporting on Sikhism. The partnership between the Sikh Coalition and the Religion News Foundation joins guides on Christianity, Islam and Judaism as the latest resource in the foundation’s series.
MAJOR PROGRESS FOR #LETSIKHSERVE CAMPAIGN, EXPANDING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

In January 2017, the U.S. Army issued updated rules governing religious liberty that significantly improve the standards for Sikhs and other religious minorities who seek to serve their country with their religious articles of faith intact. This policy update is the most significant development in our #LetSikhsServe campaign since the military’s 1981 ban on visible articles of faith.

In June, Sikh Coalition client Captain Simratpal Singh officially took command of an engineer company inside the 249th Engineer Battalion. Captain Singh was the first Sikh soldier in over a generation to receive a religious accommodation while serving on active duty in the U.S. Army.

In August, Cadets Arjan Singh Ghotra and Gurjiwan Singh Chahal successfully completed Cadet Basic Training at the prestigious United States Military Academy at West Point. With full religious accommodations, both Sikh Coalition clients are the first male Sikh soldiers to maintain their articles of faith in West Point’s 215-year history.

In 2014, we also added Becket Law to our legal team; we partnered with the firm in several successful lawsuits against the Department of Defense on behalf of four Army clients in 2016. Since 2009, our collective advocacy has resulted in 20 Sikh Coalition clients and reportedly dozens more observant Sikhs serving in the U.S. Army with their unshorn hair and turbans.

The Sikh Coalition continues relentless advocacy to end religious discrimination by our nation’s largest employer, the United States Department of Defense, which continues to ban observant Sikhs from serving in all of our Armed Forces. Though the new policy represents tremendous progress, we are still fighting to change the military’s presumptive ban.
COMMEMORATING FIVE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF OAK CREEK, WISCONSIN GURDWARA SHOOTING

The Sikh Coalition joined community members nationwide this August in commemorating the five-year anniversary of the Oak Creek, Wisconsin gurdwara shooting, one of the deadliest mass shootings in a place of worship in American history. We were honored to support the Oak Creek sangat through attending and documenting local commemoration events. We organized the fifth annual National Day of Seva (selfless community service) in honor of those who lost their lives and their loved ones at the Oak Creek gurdwara on August 5, 2012.

On the weekend of August 4-6, 2017, the Sikh Coalition successfully completed a communications campaign to #RememberOakCreek that reached a potential 13 million Americans. We secured 130+ print and broadcast news stories, 17 op-eds and coverage of commemorative seva events across the country. In addition, our trending #RememberOakCreek social media campaign engaged interfaith allies, elected officials and other partners to amplify the anniversary.

For this year’s National Day of Seva to commemorate and remember Oak Creek, community members participated in 24 service projects across the country, the most in the five-year history of our annual service initiative. The seva projects included donations to food pantries, packing lunches for children, volunteering at homeless shelters, park restoration projects and partnerships with Habitat for Humanity.

We solemnly remember Paramjit Kaur Saini, Sita Singh, Ranjit Singh, Prakash Singh, Suveg Singh Khattra, and Satwant Singh Kaleka. We continue to be inspired by the perseverance of those who were critically injured: Baba Punjab Singh, Bhai Santokh Singh, and Lt. Brian Murphy. And we admire the strength of the entire Oak Creek sangat, which sets a powerful example of resilience for the entire nation.

“We refuse to let tragedy define our story when resilience is at the core of who we are.” — Pardeep Kaleka

In commemoration of the attack five years ago at the Oak Creek gurdwara on August 5, 2012, we partnered with sangats across the country to remember, educate and serve.
PROACTIVE GRASSROOTS OUTREACH IN COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE

In order to create local policy solutions that can make a difference in people’s lives, the Sikh Coalition has contacted over 3,000 government officials at the state, county and city levels in 2017.

The Sikh Coalition has provided important information and resources on bullying to 279 superintendents and 2,167 school board members. We have also shared Sikh cultural competency materials with 341 police departments. As a result of our dialogue with local and state government officials we have been able to facilitate Sikh cultural competency trainings and introductions to Sikh communities.

The long term goal behind this growing grassroots advocacy is to ensure that Sikhs are recognized and empowered to bring change to their schools, workplace, and community. We look forward to continuing to provide greater Sikh awareness and resources to your neighborhood.
NYPD POLICY UPDATE FAVORS SIKH RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

In December 2016, the New York Police Department, the nation’s largest municipal police force, announced that it will now allow Sikh officers to wear beards and turbans while in uniform.

Since 2003, when the Sikh Coalition first sued the NYPD over a Sikh Traffic Enforcement Agent’s right to wear a turban, we have been fighting to change the discriminatory policies of the NYPD. In 2011, the Sikh Coalition spearheaded improvements to the city’s workplace religious freedom laws. The latest progress is attributable in large part to the internal advocacy of Sikh NYPD officers, and we are proud that it will benefit not only Sikhs but also Jews and Muslims who have encountered discriminatory barriers to employment with the NYPD.

The Sikh Coalition will monitor implementation of the new policy to ensure that Sikhs have an equal opportunity to serve as NYPD officers without violating their religious beliefs.

IN GAME-CHANGING DECISION, FIBA LIFTS BAN ON HEAD COVERINGS

For more than three years, the Sikh Coalition helped lead the campaign to fix a FIBA policy that forced observant Sikhs and others off the court in international competition. In a game-changing move, FIBA, the world governing body for basketball, unanimously approved a new rule in May 2017 that would lift its ban on observant Sikhs and others wearing religious head coverings. The new rule went into full effect on October 1, 2017.

Since 2014, the Sikh Coalition and grassroots supporters worked to put pressure on FIBA to change its policy. From placing op-eds and news stories to working with congressional offices on multiple advocacy letters, we helped build a groundswell of public support for equal opportunity. Although this update is a remarkable victory for athletes, Sikhs and others still face challenges in this country in different sports at varying levels, and we continue our work to protect their rights.

"FIBA’s new rule will allow athletes across the world to pursue their dreams without compromising their faith.”

-Darsh Preet Singh
JUNIOR SIKH COALITION PROGRAM FOSTERS YOUNG LEADERS

In 2017, the Junior Sikh Coalition (JSC) completed its fifth year of training Sikh youth to be fearless leaders and exemplified community building, teamwork and individual leadership.

This new generation of leaders continued to build solidarity through awareness by directly engaging with Native Americans organizing at Standing Rock and learning from leading activists about advocacy issues like the school-to-prison pipeline and key strategies involved in campaign building.

As JSC members learned from interfaith and activist groups, they also continued their groundbreaking work within the community by delivering 10 presentations that reached hundreds of children and adults on issues related to bullying and hate crimes. These presentations also expanded outside of the tri-state area for the first time and we are excited to continue this growth next year.

Inspired by human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra’s words to “shed a little light in darkness,” the JSC also worked tirelessly to carry out their Jyot Projects, service and community projects, with brilliance. From hosting two full Kaur Kirtan Darbars in New Jersey that elevated women in our gurdwaras, to writing and producing a play taking on sexism, these teams made a local impact while highlighting youth power to the community and themselves.

As we reflect on these five years of Junior Sikh Coalition, we recognize its impact in building the community from within. By developing this strong network, we have enabled these talented and passionate young leaders to run with these opportunities and they are flourishing into young professionals with an aptitude and desire to continue giving back to our community. We look forward to watching these young leaders continue to grow and thrive.

BUILDING COALITIONS AND CIVIL RIGHTS AWARENESS

In 2017, the Sikh Coalition endorsed multiple letters and amicus briefs initiated by civil rights partners objecting to the Trump administration’s unconstitutional travel ban. In addition, we joined Communities Against Hate, a consortium of civil rights organizations that are pooling resources and data to combat hate violence in the United States.

Building solidarity with our fellow Americans on civil rights issues and sharing our expertise within our community and beyond are integral to our work, and we look forward to expanding these partnerships in 2018 and beyond.
In May 2017, the Sikh Coalition successfully trained 10 volunteers from six states through the Sikh Advocate Academy, our grassroots advocacy training program in Washington, DC. The program focused on engagement with government, media and the community. This was our sixth training since the inception of the program in 2011.

The Sikh Advocate Academy continues to result in strong returns on investment. In the last half of 2017 alone, our graduates published 14 op-eds and letters to the editor in newspapers around the nation in support of stronger protections against hate crimes. These publications reached millions of Americans and amplified Sikh American perspectives on some of the most high-profile issues in American society.

Graduates of the Sikh Advocate Academy also lead 10 community service projects nationwide through the Sikh Coalition’s Day of Seva initiative, accounting for almost half of the total Day of Seva projects in 2017. Our volunteer advocates also spearheaded interfaith events, urged their members of Congress to use their convening power to speak out against hate violence, and raised Sikh awareness by securing Vaisakhi proclamations from elected officials at the state and municipal levels.

"The Sikh Advocate Academy is an incredible opportunity to learn new skills that help promote civil rights in our local communities."

-Harleen Kaur, Class of 2017

"Being a part of the Sikh Advocate Academy was truly a transformative experience. I didn’t just walk away with a whole host of new skills, networks and ideas, but also a genuine sense of efficacy."

-Jaydeep Singh, Class of 2017
RAISING SIKH AWARENESS THROUGH ART & POP CULTURE

In 2016, we launched an art exhibition called The Sikh Project in New York City in partnership with acclaimed British photographers Amit and Naroop. We aimed to spark new positive conversations focused on the courage, strength and beauty of the Sikh community. We achieved that goal by reaching a potential 20 million Americans last year, but that was just the beginning!

In 2017, we started a multi-year project to take the exhibition on the road to different parts of the country so that the Sikh awareness and education can continue at the grassroots. So far, the exhibition has been displayed at New York University, in Houston, Texas for a Vaisakhi city hall celebration, and at the California State Capitol building for California Sikh Awareness Month. In partnership with Sikhlens and Chapman University, the Orange County, California exhibition launched in November 2017 and will be on display through the early part of 2018. We are excited to continue to see this project evolve, and we look forward to announcing new cities next year.

Separately, the Sikh Coalition also launched a new project to provide direct support to organizations like Revolutionary Love and Harness to bring Sikh roles and actors to primetime television. In June, September and October, we held casting calls for shows looking for Sikh actors and actresses in New York and Los Angeles, and on October 31, 2017, a Sikh character was featured on NBC’s primetime television show ‘This is Us.’

Ultimately, the Sikh Coalition understands that in order to continue our high-impact communications work aimed at educating Americans about the Sikh faith, traditions and community, we must continue breaking new ground. The arts and pop culture play an important part, and we are excited to continue this work on your behalf.
VAISAKHI CAMPAIGN REACHES MILLIONS

Fifty bipartisan members of Congress joined the Sikh Coalition in April this year to celebrate Vaisakhi by sharing over 60 social media posts that reached a potential nine million Americans. The #Vaisakhi campaign trended on Twitter, and for many congressional offices, it was the first time they had ever publicly celebrated Vaisakhi with their constituents. Further, Sikhs nationwide helped pass Vaisakhi proclamations and resolutions in ten municipalities, four states and in the United States Congress.

As this exciting work continues in 2018, we look forward to sharing many more successful Sikh awareness initiatives, which reach Americans in a sustainable and cost-effective way.

CELEBRATING CALIFORNIA SIKH AWARENESS MONTH

For the sixth straight year, the Sikh Coalition celebrated November as Sikh Awareness and Appreciation Month in California.

A selection of photos from The Sikh Project were featured inside the California State Capitol, and in partnership with Sikhlens, the free exhibition launched at Chapman University in Orange County, CA. The combined initiative successfully reached thousand across the state.

The Sikh Coalition also worked with the California Department of Education to circulate a statewide memorandum encouraging schools to promote Sikh awareness while remaining vigilant against school bullying. Additionally, we worked with community leaders to secure citywide proclamations, pack meals for those in need and drive a social media campaign that got California public officials to celebrate #CASikhs.

Last but not least, the Sikh Coalition partnered with the L.A. Clippers for the fourth annual Sikh Awareness Night that reached 15,000 inside the stadium and many more on television.
CONTINUING TO PROTECT KIRPAN RIGHTS FOR SIKHS

In 2017, we continued our tireless work to protect kirpan rights. The Sikh Coalition provided direct legal and advocacy support to two kirpan-wearing Sikhs, Ms. Jasjot Kaur Sidhu and Mr. Gurlaljit Singh, who were denied medical care in Northern California last year related to Ms. Sidhu’s pregnancy. In May, the two Sikh parents received an apology from healthcare provider Kaiser Permanente along with a system-wide religious accommodation to wear their kirpans. In addition, Kaiser committed to reviewing its policies on religious accommodations and implementing a plan specifically to meet the needs of Sikh Kaiser members.

In June, a Sikh man was arrested in Catonsville, MD because of his kirpan and subsequently released. The Sikh Coalition engaged with the media, furthering public education about the kirpan and Sikh articles of faith. We will continue to educate police departments about the religious significance of the kirpan so incidents like this are not repeated.

“Without the Sikh Coalition to protect our rights, I know that securing a kirpan accommodation for commencement would have been an impossible task. I’m awed by the legal support, guidance and attention that my case received.”

-Jasjot Kaur Sidhu & Gurlaljit Singh

OUR NEW WEBSITE WINS AWARD FOR SIKH STORYTELLING

At the beginning of 2017, we launched a new website to better meet your needs as you look to access the wealth of Sikh Coalition resources and information. Not only does the website look better, it is also easily navigable on any device and now remains constantly updated with the latest news and information that matters to you.

In March 2017, the Sikh Coalition was honored to receive the award of excellence from the Religion Communicators Council for our new website. The award was specifically given for making the Sikh American story more accessible through our work in digital communications. If it has been a while since you’ve seen our website -- www.sikhcoalition.org -- take a look! It’s worth the visit.
BREAKING NEW GROUND THROUGH INTERFAITH PARTNERSHIPS

In the spirit of sarbat da bhala (blessings for everyone), we have continued to cultivate interfaith partnerships to help lift up all people. These interactions include participating in interfaith dialogue and worship programs at local and national levels. We have also worked with multi-faith organizations to ensure that Sikhs are represented. These included several projects from this past year that have fostered relationships with various communities.

We led out on responding to rising bigotry and intolerance in America by actively pushing back against hate directed at other communities. One of our most unique efforts on this front was organizing letter-writing campaigns to help affirm and support our Muslim and Jewish sisters and brothers around the country. We partnered with Groundswell for this effort, a digital platform for interfaith organizing, and we published our guidance for organizing local campaigns through NYU's Center for Religion and Media.

In remembrance of 9/11, we joined an interfaith project to pack food and supplies for the needy of various communities, including those affected by poverty, homelessness, and natural disasters. On that same day, we were invited to join a group of faith leaders and ring the bell collectively to open the New York Stock Exchange.
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

In the wake of rising cases of bias, backlash and discrimination against minority communities nationwide, the Sikh Coalition unveiled a new 2017 series of Know Your Rights materials called “Know & Act.” These new resources were designed to empower better understanding of your legal rights in areas of employment discrimination, school bullying, hate crimes and gurdwara security. In each case the material was also translated into Punjabi to enable full dissemination across the Sikh community.

This work continues to build upon our proud history of providing the leading legal services and resources to the Sikh community. Building on our success over the last 16 years, we will continue to protect your constitutional right to practice your faith without fear through our work in the courtroom, classroom, community and halls of Congress.

REPORT HATE

The Sikh Coalition continues to strongly encourage you to report cases of bias, backlash and discrimination whenever it occurs. After a year of hate crime rising nationally, it remains critical that law enforcement agencies and government officials recognize the severity of the problem and the impact it has on our community. The data matter because they inform how many resources then go into combating and preventing future hate crime.

Over the last year, the Sikh Coalition has partnered with Communities Against Hate to further document hate and demand action and we continue to run Report Hate (www.ReportHate.org), an online tool for community members to confidentially document incidents even if they are not legally actionable or a crime. Of course, if you experience a hate crime we recommend that you notify law enforcement and contact the Sikh Coalition for free legal support.
NEW STAFF & EVOLVING CAPACITY

The very best way to provide expanding resources to the Sikh community is to pour much of our budget back into the talented team that works tirelessly to serve you. While we are exceptionally proud to be the largest Sikh civil rights organization in the United States, we remain small compared to peer organizations. The goal behind increasing our annual budget is to be better prepared to take on the challenges and opportunities that this work presents. We thank you for making this possible.

Over the course of 2017, we welcomed a valuable teammate back, added a new board member and brought on a wealth of new exciting talent that ensures that the leadership and results you depend on continue.

THANK YOU SAPREET

After eight excellent years as the Sikh Coalition’s Executive Director, Sapreet Kaur stepped down in September to become the Chief Fund Development Officer with the Girl Scouts of the USA.

During Sapreet’s stewardship, the organizational budget tripled in size as she added a leadership team with more than forty years of experience. Through that leadership, we passed laws protecting the rights of millions of workers, fought anti-bullying cases impacting thousands of children and improved how Sikhism is taught in six states. While these are just a few of the initiatives, her lasting legacy is instilling an understanding that this work impacts everybody and every voice matters. From the emergency responses to the lengthy legal battles, Sapreet has defended the right to be Sikh in all aspects of society.

We thank Sapreet for her exceptional service as she continues in the role of Sikh Coalition Senior Advisor, and we look forward to continuing this important work of protecting and advancing Sikh rights in America.
In 2017, the Sikh Coalition hosted two large-scale community events in support of our work: the eighth annual New York City Bowl-a-thon and the second Southern California Bowl-a-thon. Both events celebrated the sangat’s progress, impact and continued commitment to the work ahead.

The events were enjoyed by over 550 participants and raised a combined total of over $111,000. This helps us towards our required goal of raising $1.1 million before the end of the year, and we are truly appreciative of the sangat’s efforts.

The Sikh Coalition would like to thank all the participants who helped bring these events together. It is only with the support of our dedicated sevadaars that we can continue this work, and neither event would have been possible without them.

The Sikh Coalition would also like to thank our sponsors for their generous support. This year’s sponsors were:

- AMBROSIAL Films
- SIKH lens
- AJIT SINGH Photography
- CUSMAN & WAKEFIELD
- bollywood2jbs Entertainment
- CHUGH Entertainment
- ITBD
- Van Wyck Pharmacy
Since the inception of the Sikh Coalition in 2001, we have endeavored to build an organization which exceeds the highest standards of competence and professionalism and one that is committed to full financial transparency. The Sikh Coalition is independently audited each year and has a 4 of 4 star rating on Charity Navigator.

The majority of the Sikh Coalition’s funding comes from generous donors like yourself. In addition, the Sikh Coalition receives competitive grants from foundations like Open Society Foundation, Proteus, Ford Foundation and the New York Community Trust. We are also excited to announce a new multi-year general operating grant from the NoVo Foundation. This financial support is a testament to our sound financial practices and ability to deliver results.

### FINANCIALS

**2016 Total Income:** $1,901,102

- **Individual Donations** 75% ($1,423,808)
- **Foundations** 24.5% ($465,842)

In addition to the income listed, the Sikh Coalition received $335,620 in donated services for programs in 2016.

**2016 Total Expenses:** $1,887,101

- **Program Services** 72% ($1,222,196)
- **Fundraising** 14% ($236,696)
- **Administrative** 14% ($238,209)

*does not include donated services

In addition to the income listed, the Sikh Coalition received $535,620 in donated services for programs in 2016.

### STAFF

- Narinder Singh, Interim Executive Director
- Satjeet Kaur, Senior Director of Development & Finance
- Mark Reading-Smith, Senior Director of Communications & Media
- Amrit Kaur, Legal Director
- Julian Darwall, Senior Attorney
- Harsimran Kaur, Senior Counsel
- Sim J Singh, National Advocacy Manager
- Ava Master, Senior Development Manager
- Jagmeet Singh, Senior Communications & Media Manager
- Maggie Lloyd, Finance & Systems Manager
- Assees Kaur, Community Development Manager
- Simran Jeel Singh, Senior Religion Fellow

### BOARD

- Narinder Singh, Chair
- Prabhjot Singh, Treasurer
- Manpreet K. Singh, Secretary
- Harpreet Singh
- Suneeet Kaur
- Mannmeet Kaur
- Savneet Singh

### BOARD ADVISORS

- Sapreet Kaur, Senior Advisor
- Rajdeep Singh Jolly, Senior Advisor

### FELLOWS

- Winty Singh, Social Justice Fellow
- Simran Sachdev, Community Development Fellow
- Nikki Singh, Policy & Community Engagement Fellow
- Inderpreet Kaur, Southern California Community Development Fellow
- Giselle Klapper, Legal Fellow
PLEASE DONATE TODAY!

What is freedom worth to you? This full-time, high-impact organization is working day and night to protect your right to practice Sikhi. Your financial support will ensure that the Sikh flag continues to fly high!

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