



Between Friends

Maitri Quarterly Newsletter

April 2024

You are **STRONG**

It is **NOT** your fault

We **BELIEVE** you

BREAK the silence

We are here for **YOU!**

It's ok to ask for **HELP**

You are **NOT** alone

APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH



Believe & Support
Survivors



As we mark April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, it's imperative to ask: What are we doing to end the culture of victim blaming? This question is not merely rhetorical; it's an urgent call to action. If we persist in placing blame on victims while turning a blind eye to the actions of perpetrators, we become complicit in perpetuating abuse, whether directly or indirectly. Domestic violence or sexual violence does not happen in a vacuum; they exist within a web of interconnected -isms—sexism, racism, classism, ableism, and heteronormativity. As individuals and as a community, we must acknowledge that we have a crucial role in addressing and preventing these pervasive issues so that we can end gender-based violence.

Let us use this month as an opportunity to reevaluate our beliefs and behaviors, challenge the status quo, and advocate for a future where justice and compassion prevail. Together, we can create a world where no one lives in fear, where every voice is heard, and where empathy guides our collective actions.

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[LAST QUARTER AT A GLANCE](#)



Maitri Turned 33

In February this year, the Maitri board, staff, and volunteers celebrated 33 years of compassion and empowerment! We celebrated the joyous occasion with food, laughter, and camaraderie. Together, we remembered our significant milestones and renewed our commitment to the cause! [Photos.](#)



The Maitri Gala 2024

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters the Maitri Gala 2024 raised more than \$600K! This community support will enable us to make a positive impact on the lives of those we serve. Together, we're building a brighter future for our community. [Photos.](#)

Survivors in the Center

WELLNESS DAYS



We host monthly wellness days for our transitional housing residents. This quarter, they explored still life drawings, watercolor paintings, and colorful crepe paper roses. Our heartfelt gratitude to our volunteer Sonu Kaul for donating meal boxes at our wellness days and committing in continuing her support.



Earlier this year, we also celebrated the New Year with a potluck party for the families staying at our transitional housing. The delicious spread and the fun and laughter made it an enjoyable evening for adults and children alike.

Advocating for VOCA Funding

The Victims of Crime Act's (VOCA) Crime Victims Fund is a key funding source to support thousands of victim service providers like Maitri serving millions of victims annually. A proposed 40% cut in funding will jeopardize essential services that victims need. Maitri's Director of Survivor Advocacy, Zakia Afrin, speaks to the need for VOCA funding to serve the unique challenges of immigrant survivors. Watch the video [here](#).



California Assembly Panel

Maitri had the honor of providing testimony at a hearing in the California Assembly - Select Committee on Domestic Violence, organized by the Culturally Responsive Domestic

Violence Network (CRDVN). Tejeswi Dodda, Maitri's Self-Sufficiency Coordinator, represented us on the economic justice panel focusing various barriers faced by immigrant survivors. Watch the video [here](#).



Quarterly Program Statistics

- Total Survivors Served: 252
- Total Helpline Calls: 411
- Total Transitional Housing Bed-nights: 1298
- Total Legal Advocacy Sessions: 160
- Total Economic Empowerment Program Sessions: 51

Youth Engagement

Maitri at Ohlone College

Maitri was invited by the Ohlone College Multicultural Student Center. Maitri representative Nandini Ray met Ohlone students in an engaging session to delve into identifying red flags in partner relationships and sharing tips for building healthy relationships. 100% of the attendees said they will take part in raising awareness about this issue.

Community Session

The City of Milpitas invited Maitri to commemorate Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. Nandini Ray had an interactive session about the impact of partner violence on our community and the importance of prevention work. 75% of the attendees informed us that this session helped them understand that IPV is a community issue not a private matter.



Maitri at MacDonald High

We attended a Volunteer Fair at MacDonald High School, San Jose! It was an amazing opportunity to connect with students and inspire them to make a difference in the community through volunteering.



Maitri at SFSU

San Francisco State University's Muslim Student Association (MSA) hosted an event on their campus to end Islamophobia. Maitri co sponsored the event to stand against all forms of violence, abuse injustice, and inequality.

Women's History Month



Women Making History

We celebrated Women's History Month upholding achievements and activism of South Asian women in the gender justice movement. Please visit the [campaign page](#) to learn about those incredible women who have left an indelible mark with their work!



Amazing Women

Please visit our [campaign page](#) to read about the stories of some amazing women shared by our supporters. Their stories serve as a reminder of the strength, resilience, kindness, and intelligence of the women around us

Media Outreach

Maitri Podcast



[Episode Link](#)



[Episode Link](#)



[Episode Link](#)

Gala Media Coverage

Did you miss our Gala? Don't worry, you can still catch up on all the glitz, glamour, and insightful discussions by checking out the media coverage! Find all the coverage [here!](#)

Bolly 92.3FM

Maitri board member Ranjita Morton appeared on Bolly 92.3FM to discuss the critical issues of domestic violence and highlight the invaluable support Maitri offers to survivors. Listen to the interview [here](#).



Wisdom of Our Elders



“ —

I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved.

— ”

-B.R. Ambedkar

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891 - 1956) was an Indian jurist, economist, social reformer and political leader who headed the committee drafting the Constitution of India from the Constituent Assembly debates, served as Law and Justice minister in the first cabinet of Jawaharlal Nehru, and inspired the Dalit Buddhist movement after renouncing Hinduism. [More here.](#)

Announcements!



Award & Recognition

We're excited to announce that Shailaja Mahavadi, Maitri's Senior Helpline Advocate, has been awarded as one of Assemblymember [Alex Lee's](#) 2024 Unsung Heroes!

Shailaja has been an integral part of Maitri's culturally responsive crisis intervention support since 2014. Join us in congratulating Shailaja on this incredible achievement!

Donor Database Transition

In our commitment to enhancing our operations so we can fulfill our mission and serve our community better, we transitioned to a new donor database: [Charity Engine](#). With this upgrade, we will continue to strengthen our donor communications and data management. Please whitelist the charityengine.net

domain to continue receiving our donation-related emails.

Welcoming New Staff

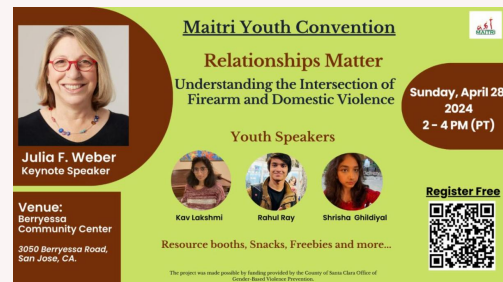
It is a pleasure to welcome Azra Alam as our Legal Advocate! Hailing from Afghanistan, Azra brings with her a wealth of passion and dedication to our cause. She speaks multiple languages including Dari, Pashto, Urdu, and English. Her diverse linguistic abilities will enable us to connect with a broader range of communities, fostering inclusivity and accessibility in our work. Azra earned her bachelor's degree in law from the American University of Afghanistan through a prestigious scholarship. She has a deep passion for empowering women and guiding them through their legal challenges. Her expertise, empathy, and dedication make her a valuable addition to our team.

Upcoming Events!



Join us for a Discussion on Domestic Violence Homicides in the South Asian Community!

Click the [link](#) to learn about the event and register.



Join the Maitri Youth Convention featuring Keynote speaker, [Julia Weber](#), and youth panelists on the issue of Understanding the Intersection of Firearm and Domestic Violence Please register [here](#).

Thank You!



A Big Shout Out

In the U.S., mid to last week of April each year is observed as [National Volunteer Week](#). So this April, we have a special shout-out to acknowledge our volunteers.

Maitri's volunteers are its backbone – just in the last fiscal year, Maitri's volunteer hours provided services valued at over \$40,000. Beyond the monetary worth of volunteer hours, Maitri's volunteers bring immeasurable value to our organization: it was a group of dedicated volunteers who conceived the idea of a nonprofit to support South Asian survivors of domestic violence. In the initial years, they strived tirelessly to build its programs in response to community needs. Through the last 33 years, our committed volunteers have served thousands of survivors as compassionate client advocates, reached out to countless community members to spread awareness about domestic violence resources and have been the change makers our community needs to end the scourge of domestic violence.

We salute their spirit and their unwavering commitment. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts.



Heartfelt Gratitude to Our Supporters

Maitri is incredibly grateful for the community members and organizations that choose to give back to Maitri for their special events.

Renowned Bay Area Chef Ajay Walia for choosing Maitri in The Coeur Foundation's Cabernet Cookoff, hosted by HALL Napa Valley. This annual event features an impressive line-up of renowned Bay Area Chef Teams vying for a chance to win proceeds for a charity of their choice by participating in a food and wine pairing competition.

A huge shout out to Guru Kumar for hosting a Karaoke Fundraiser for Maitri!

In-Kind Donation Gratitude: Grateful for your contribution to Maitri

*Zaid & Rana Ayoub

*Monika Chugh

*Amala Alag

*Rika Alavi

*Sunanda Gangaram

*Nidhi Singh

*Samika Savanur

If you, your organization/company would like to host a special fundraiser for Maitri, please email us [here](#).

[Maitri Website](#)

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MAITRI | P.O Box 697, Santa Clara, CA 95052

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