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Asian culture and community column

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To submit items for Asian Culture and Community, e-mail metro@dallasnews.com.

The weather was perfect for more than 4,800 walkers who participated in the **Aga Khan Foundation's Dallas Partnership Walk** in downtown Dallas on Saturday.

The walk, one of five held in major cities across the United States, is organized by a huge network of volunteers to raise funds to help fight global poverty. The 3-kilometer trek started and ended at Dallas City Hall Plaza, where an array of booths were set up to offer a variety of ethnic food as well as display creative projects that inspire hope.

"The theme for this year is 'Planting Our Future,' " said media coordinator **Rafiq Lakhani**. He pointed out that in the Village in Action, participants could engage in interactive activities "to learn how people in developing countries overcome the challenges of low income, poor health conditions and limited education opportunities."

In the Village, Seed City and Sprout Town highlighted how pottery, baking, weaving, sewing and other talents can flourish into businesses with the help of microfinancing from the foundation.

Sprout Town included a tree of hope covered in colorful cards that held wishes by children. "I hope that poor people can have more money and start living happily," wrote Ali.

"Always help others" was Sana's wish.

Speakers included broadcasters **Jody Dean**, **Seema Mathur** and **Brad Hawkins**. **Bob Ray Sanders** was the master of ceremonies. Singing and cultural dancing were part of the entertainment at the five-hour-plus event. Visit www.partner-shipsinaction.org/walk.

National Asian American Survey talks about voting trends

Researchers at four universities released a study this week that found a sizable portion of Asian-American voters remain undecided about the presidential race. While national polls report about 8 percent of the electorate is undecided, the **2008 National Asian American Survey** shows that about 34 percent of Asian-Americans are undecided.



REX C. CURRY/Special Contributor
Rahim Lalani, 13, arranged seedlings at the Aga Khan Foundation's Dallas Partnership Walk on Saturday at City Hall Plaza. The event's theme was 'Planting Our Future.'

"With such a high proportion of undecided voters, Asian-Americans are a critical source of potential votes for either candidate," said **Karthick Ramakrishnan** of the University of California, Riverside. The other researchers are **Jane Junn** of Rutgers University, **Taeku Lee** of UC-Berkeley and **Janelle Wong** of the University of Southern California.

Other findings about Asian-Americans are:

- 32 percent are Democrats; 12 percent are Republicans; 19 percent are independent; and 35 percent are nonpartisan.
- 41 percent support Barack Obama and 24 percent support John McCain.
- Of the former Hillary Rodham Clinton supporters, 59 percent plan to vote for Mr. Obama, 10 percent plan to vote for Mr. McCain and 29 percent are undecided.
- Chinese, Filipinos, Asian Indians, Japanese and Koreans tend to be Democrats while Vietnamese tend to be Republicans.
- 80 percent list the economy as one of the most important issues, followed by the war in Iraq.
- One-third receive political news from Asian-language television and newspapers, and 28 percent said they would use Asian-language ballot materials.

Next to Latinos, Asian-Americans are the fastest-growing ethnic group and now make up about 5 percent of the U.S. population. In battleground states such as Virginia, Nevada and Washington, where their numbers surpass 5 percent, researchers said they will probably play a significant role in the election. Visit www.naasurvey.com. Upcoming events

Today through Sunday

- The **Supreme Good Heart Retreat** will be today through Sunday at Double J Hacienda Ranch in Mineral Wells. The Kadampa Meditation Center in Arlington is holding the retreat. Call 817-303-2700 or visit www.meditationintexas.org.

Friday

- **Antorik** and **FunAsia** present a concert by **Aneek Dhar** with guest singer **Keka Ghosal** at 8 p.m. Friday at the Eisemann Center, 2351 Performance Drive in Richardson. Tickets are \$20 and \$30; VIP tickets are \$50. Call 972-744-4650.

Saturday

The Chinese Institution of Engineers will hold its annual convention starting at 1 p.m. Saturday at the Renaissance Dallas Hotel in Richardson. A VIP reception will be at 5 p.m. followed by the evening banquet. Call 214-549-1080 or visit www.cie-dfw.org.

Sunday

The Multi-Faith Friends of the Interfaith Council of Thanks-Giving Square will hold a seminar on

"Health and Healing in Many Faiths: Exploring Traditional and New Approaches" from 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday at the DFW Hindu Temple, 1605 N. Britain Road in Irving. The program is free. Call 214-969-1977 or e-mail interfaith@thanksgiving.org.

Oct. 18

Diwali Mela, a celebration of Indian culture presented by the Dallas Fort Worth Indian Cultural Society, will start at 4 p.m. Oct. 18 at Texas Stadium in Irving. The event includes elephant rides, Bollywood entertainment, children's activities, awards and other activities. Admission is free. Call 214-264-3077 or visit www.dfwdiwalimela.com.

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