

## Daya Commemorates October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month

HOUSTON: "Stop domestic violence" "Our children deserve safer homes" "Love is not abuse." these were the signs that volunteers and supporters of Daya carried as they formed a human chain on Hillcroft Avenue on Saturday, October 15. Clad in bright yellow t-shirts and dancing to the beat of dhol and desi music, they marked One Voice Against Domestic Violence, Daya's fifth annual outdoor event held in partnership with the Houston Police Department to bring awareness to family violence in South Asian communities. The sun was bright, the energy level was high, and the message of zero tolerance to violence was just as loud and clear. More than 140 participants showed off their signs and distributed pamphlets and the passers-by responded by honking and cheering.

Since 2007, Daya has been conducting this event in Hillcroft Shopping Plaza, the hub of South Asian businesses buzzing with activity on Saturday mornings. The setting with the white tent, DJ music, dhol, food and camaraderie provided an ideal forum to inject the message of domestic violence in a non-threatening manner. This year Daya recog-



From left: Sam Merchant (representing congressman Al Green), presented a proclamation to Abhilasha V (Outreach coordinator-Daya) and Nighat Ahmed (Daya President)

nized Vijaya Emani, an Indian-American from Ohio who will (posthumously) receive the 2011 Presidential Citizens Medal from President Obama (the second highest civilian honor one can receive) for surviving and conquering domestic violence and bringing awareness to it in her

community. Sam Merchant read a proclamation from Congressman Al Green.

Primary sponsors of this event were Verizon Wireless and Simmons Foundation. Food and refreshments were donated by Hot Breads, Kohinoor Diamonds, Kirti Jewellers, London Sweets, Laxmi Sarees, Roop Sarees, Sam's Club and Udipi café.

Daya promotes healthy family relationships in the South-Asian community by providing services that include counseling, referrals, legal advocacy, and financial support to women and children affected by family violence and sexual assault. Daya also promotes awareness on topics relevant to the welfare of South Asian families through educational seminars, publications, and outreach events. In 2010 Daya served 229 South Asian Victims of Domestic Violence of which 40% and 33% were of Indian and Pakistani origin respectively, and the rest from other countries in the region.

Daya's vision is to create a South Asian community in Houston that is free from family violence. For information, please visit, [www.dayahouston.org](http://www.dayahouston.org) or call 713-981-7645.

### 'Occupy Wall Street' Sentiments Understandable: Vikram Pandit

WASHINGTON (SI): Banking giant Citigroup's Indian American CEO Vikram Pandit thinks the sentiments of the Occupy Wall Street protesters are "completely understandable" as US economy recovery fell short of what was wanted.

"Their sentiments are completely understandable," Pandit said in an interview Wednesday with Fortune Magazine.

"The economic recovery is not what we all want it to be, there are a number of people in our country who can't achieve what they are capable of achieving

and that's not a good place to be."

Demonstrators have been camped out in Manhattan's financial district since Sep 17 protesting against income inequality, corporate greed and the power of financial institutions. The protests have inspired similar demonstrations across the country.

"I would also corroborate that trust has been broken between financial institutions and the citizens of the U.S. and that it's Wall Street's job to reach out to Main Street and rebuild that trust," Pandit said.

"I'd talk about the fact that they


should hold Citi and the financial institutions accountable for practicing responsible finance."

Pandit added that he'd "be happy to talk to them anytime," noting that he would emphasize Citi's efforts to expand small business lending and their decision not to charge a fee for debit card use.

Bank of America announced last month that it would start charging a \$5 fee for using a debit card for purchases starting in 2012.

Wells Fargo also announced it would test a \$3 fee.

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