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AKMG Reporter

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AKMG REPORTER / Fall 2017 — Official Newsletter of the Association of Kerala Medical Graduates and AKMG-HS

39th Annual AKMG Convention in Ottawa, August 9th–11th, 2018

Ottawa is calling! Discovering Friendships, Transforming Lives!

by Nigil Haroon, MD, Ottawa Convention Chair

If you are a regular attendee of the AKMG annual conference I do not have to make the case on why you should come to Ottawa. If you have never been to one, get ready for a life transforming experience! I can guarantee you will not regret it.

The Ottawa 2018 AKMG Meet will build on the success of the previous meetings and go beyond to make it an even better experience for all of you. Congratulations to the Chicago team and thank you for the guidance.

For Ottawa 2018, we would like to have even greater interaction, more in-house and local talents and at the same time develop the highest quality entertainment and education for you. The focus will be 100% you. We will do our best.

We have distinguished speakers and hot topics lined up for the CME program. The CME will be theme-based and pitched to a mixed audience. You will hear more on this from our CME Chair, Dr. Vimoj Nair. There is always room for new ideas and if you would like to make suggestions please contact us. Be prepared, you will be busy and no, there is no downtime. The pleasant golf course and resort-like setting will set a perfect stage for what promises to be the best showcasing of our food,

… *Continued on page 4*

Raji Menon, MD
rajimenon961@gmail.com

From the **President**

Ottawa, Canada…

I am now entrusted with leading this great organization, and am greatly honoured. It is also very humbling, when I have been meeting many of the founding members, and going through the history of this organization. I salute all those great minds that conceived this idea, and all that have helped to grow it to the level it has, today. I also look to many of those great minds for support and guidance.

First of all, a few words about the 39th Annual Convention. AKMG Canada will be hosting the convention at the Brookstreet Hotel in Ottawa, from 9 to 11 August, 2018. Dr. Nigil Haroon has taken on the role of Convention Chair, and has already assembled a great team to help us put up a great show. The link for the Hotel Reservations will be up very

… *Continued on page 4*

2018 AKMG Ottawa Convention

Brookstreet Hotel, Ottawa, Canada
August 9th–11th, 2018

Visit **www.akmg.org** *for the latest convention info.*

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AKMG-HS# 32-0051235

President
Raji Menon, MD
rajimenon961@gmail.com

President Elect
Thomas P. Mathew, MD
thomaspmathew01@gmail.com

Vice President
Usha Mohandas, MD
ushamohandas@gmail.com

Secretary-Treasurer
Saji Gopinathan, MD
saji.gopi@gmail.com

Immediate Past President
Majeed Paduvana, MD
mpaduvana@gmail.com

Board of Governors
Rajesh Mohandas, MD (FL) - 2017
dr.mohandas@gmail.com
Nigil Haroon, MD (Canada) - 2017
nigilharoon@gmail.com
Rajesh Janardhanan, MD (AZ) - 2017
rajdoc2005@gmail.com
Madhu Bhaskar, MD (NY) - 2017
Binu Chacko, MD (NY) - 2015
S. S. Lal, MD (DC) - 2017
drsslal@gmail.com
Sankar Nair, MD (MI) - 2016
sankar27@comcast.net
Joseph James, MD (MI) - 2016
jjames@beaumont.edu
Anupam Kumar, MD (MI) - 2016
drkumar83@gmail.com
Palangat Radhakrishnan, MD (NY) - 2016
radhaks2006@gmail.com

Board of Trustees
Aravind Pillai, MD (Chair)
dpillai605@aol.com
Alex Thomas, MD
alexthomasmd1@gmail.com
Sunil D. Kumar, MD
suvanesh09@gmail.com
Majeed Paduvana, MD
mpaduvana@gmail.com

Committee Chairpersons

Convention Chair
Nigil Haroon, MD
president@akmgcanada.com

CME
Vimoj Nair, MD
drvimojnair@gmail.com

Registration
Mr. Tony Chirayilkalam, MD
tony.i.chiyrayil@gmail.com

Entertainment
Nisha Nigil, MD
events@akmgcanada.com

Souvenir
Mariamma Joseph, MD
mariamma.joseph@lhsc.on.ca

Finance
Mr. Santhosh Pillai, MD
psk63@hotmail.com

Committee Chairpersons

Directory
Sunil D. Kumar, MD
(954) 401-6098
suvanesh09@gmail.com

Publications
Krishna R. Prasad, MD
(262) 244-7547
krishnaprasad1974@gmail.com

Constitution and Bylaws
Chandra Venugopal MD
pravaasi@aol.com

Humanitarian Services
Prem Menon, MD
(225) 928-7229
drmenon@drmenon.com

Membership
Tomy Paul Kalapparambath, MD
(248) 224-1467
tomypaulmd@aol.com

MSR-YP Forum
Gatha Nair, MD
gatha.g.nair@gmail.com
Anisha Mohandas, MD
anisha.mohandas@gmail.com

AKMG Ottawa Convention August 9th–11th, 2018

Krishna R. Prasad, MD
krishnaprasad1974@gmail.com

From the Editor

We, all the AKMG Family members, had a very wonderful and also very unforgettable time in Chicago, thanks to the leadership of Dr. Majeed Paduvana, and Dr. Tomy Paul Kalapparambath and the 38th Annual AKMG Convention team. The "pazhampori" - the traditional Kerala style banana fry- was flying out of servers' trays in the big boat within minutes of the start of the Chicago River Cruise on July 20th, 2017 evening. Things went crazy afterwards with the wildly successful CME and Entertainment programs that followed in the next 2 days.

AKMG Annual Conventions have always been the great occasion for the young and old AKMG members and families, irrespective of the socio-economic class in North America, or the academic vs non-academic, urban vs rural, or US vs Canada.

AKMG Convention in Ottawa, Canada, August 9-11, 2018: It is not very often that we all get to meet in Canada for AKMG annual Conventions. So the 39th Annual AKMG Convention in Ottawa, Canada, needs very special attention. On a very personal note, myself and my dear wife, Mini, have attended almost every single annual AKMG Convention since 1995, starting with Kochi, Kerala, India. The last couple of the AKMG Conventions in Canada that I remember are the ones in Toronto and then in Vancouver. Kindly mark your calendar and make sure that our Ottawa 2018 AKMG Convention is the best attended.

In this issue of the Reporter, you can find much more details about the 2018 Annual AKMG Convention in Ottawa, Canada. Our AKMG President Dr. Raji Menon and the Ottawa Convention Chair Dr. Nigil Haroon have written very concise articles in this regard. Please also note the hotel reservation link as well. Also please note that a digital edition of the AKMG Reporter is made available on our website at www.akmg.org.

We can make a difference when we participate – the motto that I began preaching in 2008 as the AKMG Membership Chair **"Strength in Members, Strength in Numbers"** always matters.

Membership Update…

Tomy Paul Kalapparambath, MD
tomypaulmd@aol.com

From the Membership Committee

Good News. Our AKMG membership application process, for both new memberships and renewals, is done exclusively online since we launched the process last year. The online system streamlined the application process for the applicants and for the system administrators. I am glad to report that we have more than 2000 members now.

The membership drive during our Chicago convention was a huge success. The Young AKMG membership is growing, and I was able to meet lots of new, energetic young AKMG members during the convention. They all seem to have a great time meeting, greeting and networking. It was a pleasure to see both first and second generation new members joining together.

I would like to encourage all of our annual members to become life members. It is incredibly easy now with the new online renewal process.

I would suggest to all members to update their member profile at akmg.org. Please login to the Members page with your credentials and update your profile, especially contact information (address including email and phone numbers). Having an updated member contact information is vital for any organization to keep in touch with all the members. Please note that the membership directory is also available online exclusively for all AKMG members.

Membership comes with privileges.
Become an AKMG Life Member Today!

Greetings from AKMG Greater NY Chapter

Thomas P. Mathew, MD
thomaspmathew01@gmail.com

From the President-Elect

AKMG Greater New York Chapter meeting held its Chapter meeting and Onam Fiesta on September 9th, 2017 at the Mint Restaurant. It was a packed-gathering with many senior members and new young physicians participating. Our invited speaker was Dr. Thankamani Muthu Kumar from Weil Cornell who spoke on Biomarkers in Health and Disease, especially Renal Disease. Other highlights included were the beautiful Malayalam Onam song by renowned artiste Anitha Krishna and of course the Onam dishes. The AKMG New York Chapter has its Annual Gala celebrations scheduled for December 9th at The Cotillion.

As we prepare for the 2018 Convention in Ottawa we should take the responsibility of bringing our colleagues and friends whom we know to our conventions and chapter meetings. Strengthening the organization happens only if we do it at the grass root level. Please explain the fun and comradery we have at these conventions to potential new members.

The Greater New York Chapter Advisory and Executive Committee has taken up the task of going ahead with scheduling and arranging the 40th AKMG Convention in New York City. New York will hopefully be the dream conference for all our AKMG members and our Committee is hard at work for this dream to come true. We have already toured a couple of hotels and are scheduled to finalize and announce the dates as soon as we can, so our members have the privilege of scheduling the trip to New York for the convention by the end of this year. We hope to open registration by end of July 2018 for the convention. Please feel free to voice your suggestions for the 40th Convention to our New York Chapter at akmgny@gmail.com.

From the President

Continued from page 1

soon, and I recommend that you all book your rooms early. I would also suggest that you take a few extra days and extend your stay — you will not regret it. I shall leave it to Nigil to inform you of all the details, as we have it at present.

In recent years, many new initiatives have been brought forth, and have been well accepted by the members. The most commendable of these has been the many ways in which we have managed to attract young AKMG members to take an active role in the conventions and in the running of the organization. While we have made great strides, there is plenty of work to be done. I have been encouraged by the enthusiasm of many of our newer office bearers, and hope that we can continue to bring in young members.

The Humanitarian Services (HS) Committee, led by Dr. Prem Menon, has been doing good work on behalf of our members. For those who do not know, this committee receives funds from Conventions, when there is a surplus of funds. Unfortunately, the cost of organizing conventions has gone up considerably, and the HS committee has not received any funds in the last 3 years or so. It is also quite disheartening to know that there has not been much voluntary donations into the committee, even when requested, for specific causes, like the fireworks tragedy in Kollam in recent years. The AKMG-HS is able to give receipts for charitable donations, and I implore the membership to open up your hearts, and make whatever donation you can. There have been many disasters this year, with all the hurricanes in the Southern US, the floods in Mumbai, and more recently, the stampede in Mumbai. We should rise to the occasion, and do whatever we can, to help. On a personal note, Prem was telling me about his own experience with previous floods, when he lost a great deal, personally. Fortunately, as a physician, he was able to recover — but not without some financial scars. Think, then, of the less fortunate people, and please donate what you can.

Dr. Sunil Kumar has been leading the Website and Directory work. Much has been done, and much is still to be done. It has been a daunting task, to update the directory. It would be great if everybody could go online and update their details — and inform us of any changes, in the contact details of other members (with their permission), who have moved or, for other reasons, cannot access AKMG.

Dr. Krishna Prasad continues to work hard at getting the newsletter out dutifully. My sympathies are with him, for the effort required to herd us all, and to collect our articles on time. There has been much discussion about making it electronic, but the membership has strongly opposed this idea. We realize that we need to raise more funds, if we are to keep the paper copies going — and so, will be selling advertisement space in our newsletters, to cover the cost of publication.

The Education committee, and the Bylaws committee continue to silently do their work, while not receiving much open acknowledgement — and I would like to give them a shout-out as well.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to personally invite all of you to attend the Convention in Ottawa, with your families and friends.

Thanks, and God Bless.

2018 AKMG Ottawa Convention

Continued from page 1

culture and talents.

Beyond the program, we are close to tourism hotspots including the world renowned 1000 Islands, Montreal, Quebec City and of course the Niagara Falls. You may want to unwind with your family in Toronto, the 4th largest, most friendly and hip city in North America. For your convenience we have also secured several rooms in Toronto at special AKMG rates during the shoulder period around the convention.

Fusion music, comedy skits, dance, multi-genre entertainment are just some of the items in the line up. Our talented young AKMG team is organizing mentorship sessions, mock interviews and other special programs.

The Registration Committee headed by Dr. Shereen Brajit and Tony Chirayilkalam is preparing a user-friendly interface for signing up. You will soon get a link to register and book your hotel rooms.

Come enjoy, make friends and get enriched.

— Nigil Haroon, MD
2018 Ottawa Convention Chair

https://aws.passkey.com/go/AKMG2018

If you want to book more than one room at a time, or if you have any problems making a reservation, please call the hotel and they will assist you. Their number is: (1) 613-271-1800.

Your Secretary-Treasurer

Saji Gopinathan, MD
saji.gopi@gmail.com

From the Secretary-Treasurer

Hello from Tennessee,

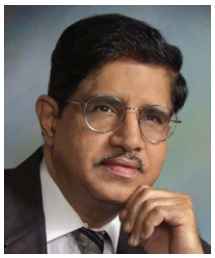
I am honored and excited to take up the responsibility as Secretary-Treasurer of AKMG. Originally from Trivandrum Medical College, I work as a pediatrician in rural Tennessee.

New to the AKMG community, I have a lot to learn. Led by our wonderful leaders in the past, the organization continues to give quality education at our conventions. The charitable wing has done some great work. We will strive to get our community together with more membership and engagement.

Together, we have a great potential of doing wonderful things for our friends in North America and in Kerala.

See you all soon.

Donate today to AKMG-HS Thank You!



Prem Menon, MD
Chair, AKMG Humanitarian Services
drmenon@drmenon.com

AKMG-HS (Humanitarian Services), our charitable foundation, has supported various causes in the U.S., Canada and Kerala. AKMG continues to initiate and maintain multiple educational and other supportive activities in the various medical colleges in Kerala. This has been an important part of our obligation to give back to the communities in North America and India/Kerala that have supported our clinical education as well as ongoing professional activities.

AKMG- HS is proud to sponsor and support the philanthropic activities of the **Dr. Ramesh Kumar Foundation**, remembering and honoring the memory of late Dr. Ramesh Kumar, Saginaw, MI. Visit www.drrameshkumarfoundation.org

Trivandrum Medical College alumni with the encouragement of Dr. Krishna Prasad and the enthusiasm and leadership of Dr. John Panicker, Kerala, has been doing ongoing projects at the Trivandrum Medical College. I want to acknowledge a recent contribution by Dr. Prem Chandran, West Des Moines, IA.

Disaster Relief: Response by AKMG members to recent appeals for disaster aids for the victims of devastating floods in Houston, TX, Florida and in Puerto Rico has been disappointing. Those folks are in inexplicable financial ruins. I request that everyone please send any contribution to AKMG-HS and mark it for Disaster Relief. I would like to thank Dr. Raji Menon, AKMG President for her phone calls and efforts in the disaster relief efforts.

Kerala Alumni: Alumni of the various medical colleges in Kerala are urged to send any financial assistance to your alma mater through the AKMG-HS.

Recognition: I would like to recognize Parakkat Gopalakrishnan MD, Mullins, SC and Anil C. Stevens of New York, NY for their generous annual contribution for sustaining the AKMG and AAPI jointly sponsored full time clinic at Panangad, Cochin. Staffing and day to day operations of the clinic is accomplished in collaboration with the Amrutha Institute of Medical Sciences, Cochin.

Please remember AKMG-HS in your year-end gifting. Remember that one hundred percent of the donations will reach the charity you choose.

Please contribute any amount to the AKMG-HS when you register for the AKMG convention. I request the Ottawa Convention Committee to make such a provision on the Convention Registration Forms.

Keep Our Digital Directory Updated

Please login to www.akmg.org and click on the Member Login button on the upper left corner and search for your file using your first and last name, and multiple searchable data from the pull down menu. Once you identify your file, click on Member Login and enter the universal password "09876". This will take you to your profile in the AKMG directory. Click on "Edit Profile" to update your profile. Please change the temporary password to a personal password and make a note of it. Once your profile has been updated, and your password has been changed, click "SUBMIT" to save the information. Remember to logout once done. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Sunil Kumar at suvanesh09@gmail.com.

Kerala Medical Camps by NRIs

NAAIIP is conducting a series of Medical camps in Kerala in partnership with Local MLA's and associations. Each MLA will conduct 20–30 medical camps in their locality. I am supporting few camps in my area in Ernakulam (PT Thomas, VD Satheesan, Eldhose, Sharma) and Kottayam (Jos K Mani, Mons).

AKMG along with NAAIIP, FOKANA, FOMA from USA will be supporting these camps. For more information, please contact: Shoji Mathew, National President, www.NAAIIP.org, Chicago, USA; shojimathew@gmail.com

Dr. Ramesh Kumar Foundation

The **Dr. Ramesh Kumar Foundation** was established in May of 2017 to honor the late Dr. Ramesh Kumar, son of Dr. Narendra Kumar —Past President of AKMG and AAPI— and a resident in Urology at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, MI. Dr. Kumar tragically passed away at the young age of 32, and this foundation was created to continue his legacy of generosity and selflessness for others.

With the tremendous nationwide support, the foundation has raised over $200,000 in four short months. With the benefaction it has received, the Dr. Ramesh Kumar Foundation is dedicated to eliminating the barriers of financial burden on individuals and families in need of medical treatment, and also advocating for programs of medical research and education.

Moving forward, the Dr. Ramesh Kumar Foundation plans to broaden their footprint and continue helping those less fortunate through service and outreach.

Giving On the Green Charity Golf Outing: A Huge Success for the Mid-Michigan Community

Over $150,000 was raised at The 1st annual Dr. Ramesh Kumar Foundation Charity Golf Outing for the medically underserved members of the mid-Michigan community. It is said to be one of the largest and most profitable golf outings in Saginaw, MI history.

The Dr. Ramesh Kumar Foundation hosted their first annual golf outing at the Saginaw Country Club and Apple Mountain Golf Course. 240 golfers filled two of Saginaw County's most prestigious courses to participate in a 18 hole four man scramble golf tournament. After the tournament, the foundation hosted a charity fundraising dinner, including a live and silent auction, hosting over 350 guests.

At the the charity dinner, the foundation gave back to some worthy organizations in the mid Michigan community. The CMU Health College of Medicine, The Henry Ford Vattikuti Urology Institute, Great Lakes Bay Health Centers, and The SVSU Foundation were all recipients of donations totaling $65,000 on behalf of the foundation.

The Dr. Ramesh Kumar Foundation would like to personally thank AKMG - Humanitarian Services, AKMG Michigan, and all of the AKMG members for their generosity and support. The contributions from Association of Kerala Medical Graduates will go towards helping the members of the medically underserved population.

"The amount of support we have received from the community is incredible. We are honored to give back to these organizations who all greatly impact the medical sector in mid-Michigan. Those who live for others, live forever." — *Chief Marketing Officer, Ben Arnold.*

"Today marks a remarkable day where generosity and selflessness throughout this community raised an extraordinary amount of money for others. Today also marks a day that Ramesh would be proud to know his legacy lives on through the work of others." — *Chief Operating Officer, Jay Mohan.*

For more information the Dr. Ramesh Kumar Foundation please visit:
http://www.drrameshkumarfoundation.org;
email: barnold@drrkfoundtion.org; phone: 269-929-5658.

From the AKMG Youth Leaders

(LtoR) Gatha Nair and Anisha Mohandas

Hello, AKMG!

We are members of the incoming leadership team of Young AKMG for 2017-2018, and are looking forward to seeing you all in Ottawa for the 2018 annual convention!

Young AKMG is a growing group of the larger AKMG community, composed of pre-medical students, medical students, residents, fellows and young practicing physicians. Over the past two years, Young AKMG has grown both in numbers and enthusiasm, under the leadership and efforts of Tracy Paul, MD and Anupam Kumar, MD. With the strong support of our most recent presidents, Dr. Sunil Kumar and Dr. Paduvana, they have rallied many young clinicians and trainees to join AKMG and participate in the annual conventions in Miami and Chicago. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their efforts, and look forward to carrying the energy generated in Young AKMG into the future of this organization.

Earlier this year at the Chicago convention, Young AKMG hosted events to engage individuals in all aspects of their training. Some of the highlights were mini-seminars/small group discussions within the group, career advice mixer, Young AKMG family breakfast and other social outings. The group discussions run by members of the Young AKMG forum centered on various issues including residency/fellowship applications, job interviews and contracts, malpractice, work/life balance and avoiding burnout, among others. The career advice mixer allowed the youth and veteran AKMG members (who volunteered their time to participate in mentorship) to interact and network. The Young AKMG family breakfast was organized by Tania Paul, MD, and provided a setting for members with young children to mingle and get to know one another, with fun activities for the children. Young AKMG members Kevin Nella and Dimble Joseph were instrumental in arranging youth mixer events on both evenings. The annual poster presentation organized by AKMG was an opportunity for these younger members to present their academic efforts .

Over this next year, we hope to build on the momentum generated by these past years' leadership, and are excited to work with Dr. Raji Menon and the convention team to continue to grow the Young AKMG wing of this organization. AKMG has a strong community of healthcare professionals with a wealth of knowledge and experience, and many of our veteran members have already guided young learners towards pursuing successful careers in medicine. One of our primary goals in conjunction with AKMG is to develop a mentorship program to connect young professionals seeking guidance with veteran members. At the 2018 Annual Convention in Ottawa, Ontario, we plan to host another mentorship/career advice mixer event, the second annual Young AKMG family breakfast, youth mixer events and another session for mini-seminars and small group discussions. We look forward to seeing you all there!

There has been a significant increase in the youth participation in AKMG, but we need to reach out and encourage more medical students, residents, fellows and young physicians to join! We are a strong community, and we need to cultivate the youth chapter to support AKMG's future! If you are interested in joining Young AKMG, please contact us or reach out to us through our contact information below.

We look forward to seeing you all in Ottawa!

Your Young AKMG Youth Leaders:
Gatha Nair and Anisha Mohandas
Visit our Facebook group:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/2204803321/?fref=nf
Or email us at
gatha.g.nair@gmail.com or anisha.mohandas@gmail.com

A Very Successful Chicago Convention

Majeed Paduvana, MD
Imm. Past President, mpaduvana@gmail.com

From the Imm. Past President

38th AKMG Annual Convention Delivered — What the Convention team Promised!

The City of Chicago turned into vibrant colors as the Physicians of Kerala heritage, family and friends started arriving in large numbers. Soon thunderstorms gave way to a very pleasant evening in Navy Pier where the majestic Mystic Blue was waiting for them. A perfect start for our three–day celebration. The Lake Michigan cruise truly was a memorable one.

The next two days saw the perfect mix of education, relaxation, friendship and ample entertainment. The morning hours were for cutting edge CME and delightful variety of Spousal programs. The coffee break in the exhibit hall gave everyone —including the sponsors— a great opportunity to socialize, interact and learn. The afternoons were less intense with Young AKMG programs and Literary sessions. The entertainment programs on Campus night and the Gala Banquet night were magical and truly enjoyable keeping the audience spellbound!

How can I express my sincere gratitude to the handful of very dedicated and hardworking AKMG 2017 Convention organizers superbly lead by the young and dynamic Dr. Tomy Paul Kalapparambath? They all put in a lot of hours to make sure the attendees enjoy each and every moment of this convention; and take home sweet memories. To bridge the gap between the states, Dr. Najeeb Mohideen was there for sure! Two of the Committee leaders deserve a special mention: I want to thank Dr. Vijay Menon who arranged a unique Literary session never seen at an AKMG convention before! He kept everyone spellbound by the special session of his interaction with Malayalam Literary giant, MT. Thank You, Vijay for taking extra effort for me this year. Drs. Shakuntala Rajagopal and Dr. Raveendra Nathan were also behind this amazing show. Thank you.

Let me express my heartfelt appreciation for the banquet/spousal program leaders, Mrs. Tara Najeeb and Mrs. Thahiya Majeed. Convention 2017 saw the best, well-organized, and well-liked spousal activities never seen before in AKMG. The sumptuous meals freshly prepared in Sheraton including authentic Indian menu choices with a touch of culinary delicacies from Goa, were a welcome change from ordinary food choices. I personally thank them for their meticulous planning and innovative ideas.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the attendees, their family and friends who took time to be in Chicago for this convention. It was heartening to see a large group of Young Physicians and students. The Convention team really took great effort to invest in the future of AKMG. There were enormous choices of events tailor-made for the future members and leaders from the young group. I am extremely happy and proud to say that AKMG is stronger than ever and will continue to grow. It was a privilege to be YOUR president this year. I thank all my colleagues in AKMG for the wonderful support I received. I was VERY fortunate to work closely with a few of the fine leaders AKMG has seen over the years, Drs. P. Hari, Alex Thomas and Sunil Kumar. Thank you. Let me wish the current leaders, Drs. Raji Menon, Thomas Mathew, Usha Mohandas and Saji Gopinath all the best in the coming years.

2018 Ottawa Convention – Souvenir

Every AKMG member who had been to previous conventions knows how enjoyable it is to reminisce about the trips taken, sights seen and the friends you met. What better way to document these memories than to collect an assortment of souvenirs from your conventions!

At the Ottawa convention, we are planning to deliver a memorable souvenir magazine for the AKMG members. We are soliciting AKMG members to contribute interesting short articles in this souvenir, free of charge. Possible topics include stories about that special health care travel or holiday trip taken, sights seen, medical school experiences, voluntary work experience, human interest stories, poems etc.

To generate funds, we are also inviting you to submit your home /office business advertisements and family photos at a cost. Deadline March 15, 2018.

Advertisement Rates:

Full Page (Inside)	$1,000.00
Half Page (Inside)	$600.00
Quarter Page (Inside)	$300.00

Special pages (Inside Front Cover, Inside Back Cover and Outside Back Cover) may be available. Let us know if interested.

As the souvenir editor, I look forward to hearing from you. My email address is mariamma.joseph@lhsc.on.ca and phone 519-657-4871. Please state in the mail your choice of sponsorship level to initiate this process.

I wish you a terrific holiday time in Ottawa, a uniquely beautiful city in Canada!

— Mariamma Joseph, MD
Chair, Souvenir, 2018 Ottawa Convention
mariamma.joseph@lhsc.on.ca

AKMG 2017 Chicago Convention – Photo Gallery

Annual

Association of Kerala Medical Graduates
Humanitarian Services
3 East Grove Ct
Freeland, MI 48623-7805

Hotel Reservations:

brookstreet HOTEL

https://aws.passkey.com/go/AKMG2018

If you want to book more than one room at a time, or if you have any problems making a reservation, please call the hotel at (1) 613-271-1800.

39th Annual AKMG Convention
Brookstreet Hotel, Ottawa, Canada
August 9th–11th, 2018

2018 AKMG Ottawa Convention

Brookstreet Hotel • Ottawa • August 9th –11th, 2018

Ottawa photos courtesy of the Ottawa Tourism, www.ottawatourism.ca; and Brookstreet Hotel photos courtesy of Brookstreet Hotel, Ottawa.