

**KALINGA HISTORICAL CHAIRMAN DR DASH GETS RECOGNIZED FOR HIS MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO MINNESOTA SOCIETY- THE FIRST FOREIGNER TO GETS SUCH A RARE RECOGNITION**  
**MH History Center names rotunda after Edina resident's foundation**



**Sita Kantha Dash and Kent Whitworth, director and CEO of the Minnesota Historical Society, pose for a picture in the new Dr. Dash Foundation Rotunda in the Minnesota History Center.**

Edina resident Dr. Sita Kantha Dash has always prioritized helping people in his work as an entrepreneur, scientist and philanthropist. “This is the best way to make history,” Dash said, “Get people involved and together you can do it.”

For the past two decades, Dash has donated funds to the Minnesota Historical Society to preserve Indian and Indian American history through his charity organization the Dr. Dash Foundation. Most recently, the foundation donated \$1 million to the Minnesota Historical Society in honor of Dash's generosity, the rotunda inside the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul was named. The Dr. Dash Foundation Rotanda.

This is the first space the Minnesota History Center has ever dedicated to a person of color.

Dash said that while the rotunda features his name, it is not only a win for him.

“They will not glorify me, they will glorify the community,” Dash said, “I am for the community by the community, of the community.”

The announcement was made at the Minnesota Historical Society's annual meeting in November. Dash was also elected to the society's honorary council, making him the only person elected to the council in 2022.

“In minnesota, we are a diverse and rich in culture,” Kent with worth director and CEO of the Minnesota Historical Society, said in the press release. “We thank the Dr. Dash Foundation for this generous gift to help us deliver our mission to create powerful engagement with history to cultivate curiosity and foster a more inclusive, empathetic and informed society.”

The Dr. Dash Foundation has funded a variety of projects, including the construction of the Hindu Temple of Minnesota, the largest Hindu temple in North America, Dash noted. The 44,000 square foot temple sits on 80 acres of land in Maple Grove and serves over 50,000 community members.

“I wanted a traditional Hindu temple for people to go to just like back in India,” Dash said.

Dash also plays and active role in Edina's Rotary club. Chamber of Commerce and YMCA as well as Second Harvest Heartland, a hunger relief organization based in Brooklyn Park. Nicknamed the “probiotic pioneer,” Dash is internationally recognized for his research and development of probiotics for humans and is credited with popularizing their usage in the US.

Originally from India, Dash moved to the US in 1969 to obtain a master's in nutrition and a doctorate in nutrition and biochemistry from South Dakota State University. After he completed his graduate studies, he stayed in South Dakota and in 1973, he became this state's director of food and drug.

During this time, he learned that the U.S. Department of Agriculture was using probiotics, or live microorganisms to cure E. coli infections in pigs. Based on the biological similarities between humans and pigs. Dash wondered if probiotics could be as effective in humans.

Through years of research trials, he figured out that he was right. “This was groundbreaking for me.” Dash said.

Six years after becoming South Dakota's director of food and drug, he founded a probiotic manufacturing and distributing company in Minneapolis called USA Laboratories. which would later become the leading manufacturer and distributor of probiotics in the US and Canada.

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