

# **KERALA ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON**

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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# **ABOUT THIS REPORT**

The 2024 Annual Report of the Kerala Association of Washington (KAW) has been prepared by Secretary Rishiraj Rajan on behalf of the Executive Committee (EC) for review during the General Body meeting on February 22, 2025.

This Annual General Body (AGB) report provides a comprehensive overview of KAW's activities, achievements, and key learnings from the past year. It also highlights various initiatives undertaken under KAW Charity.

For any questions or feedback, please contact the KAW Secretary at secretary@kaow.org.

#### Notes:

- The financial figures in this report are approximate. Exact amounts for each project/event can be found in the \*\*Financial Report 2024\*\* (Pages 22-26).
- KAW Charity is a nonprofit community organization registered under Washington State law and holds \*\*501(c)(3) tax-exempt status\*\* under the Internal Revenue Code.

#### Link to KAW Bylaws

# **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2024**

## Kerala Association of Washington Executive Committee 2024



President Shibu Baby



Secretary Rishiraj Rajan



Treasurer Santhosh P. Narayanan



VicePresident Remys Rajan Nair



Joint Secretary Nithin Thampi



Joint Treasurer Rajesh Narayanan



ECMember Aneesh Divakarakurup



EC Member Nitin Madhavanpillai



EC Member Rechmi Namboothiry



ECMember Seema Surai



EC Member Subin Sankar



Ex-officio |yothish Fair



Youth EC Member Verna Vijay



Youth EC Member Vinceth Ruesh

Following the General Body meeting on February 24, 2024, the 2024-25 Executive Committee (EC) assumed office on March 1, 2024. Soon after, the EC established its vision for the year:

"We aim to bring Malayalees together and empower them by creating a platform to exchange ideas, celebrate traditional values and talents, and nurture young leaders within the community—all while fostering a sense of joy and camaraderie."

After taking charge, the EC presented its annual plan, followed by an inaugural event. Working as a unified team, we successfully delivered multiple events, each dedicated to enriching our community and fostering cultural exposure.

This year was another exciting milestone for KAW, with 766 members. We organized 35 events, including new initiatives, engaged numerous volunteers, expanded our WhatsApp community to 1,400+ members, and established dedicated clubs to cater to growing community requests for specialized activities. Additionally, we hosted fundraisers for KAW Charity and celebrated another record year for Aksharakalari.

The EC actively worked to enhance community participation, offer diverse platforms for members to display their talents in arts and sports, and foster meaningful opportunities for social interaction.

A heartfelt thank you to our sponsors, whose generous support was instrumental in making this year a success, and to our community members for their unwavering encouragement.

The full details of all events conducted by this EC can be found in this report.

# 2024 - 25 SPONSORS

# Premier Partner



# **Gold Sponsor**







# Thank You for the Support!!



## KAW 2024 - 25 Events Calendar



#### MARCH

Women's Day

#### APRIL

- KAW EC Inaugural Event
- Malayalam School Competition
- Math Webinar
- · Aksharakalari Annual Day

#### MAY

Mother's Day

#### JUNE

- Father's Day
- Cricket Tournament (Men)
- GYRA Youth Research Program

#### JULY

- Cricket Tournament (Men)
- Hike and Camp Club
- Badminton Tournament
- Soccer Tournament
- · Garden Chit Chat

#### AUGUST

- · Cricket Tournament (Men)
- Wayanad Landslide Flood Relief Fundraiser
- BasketBall Tournament
- · India Day Parade
- Summer Picnic and Thattukada Fest
- Mega Thiruvathira

#### SEPTEMBER

- Number Sense Math
- Competition Aksharakalari
- പ്രവേശനോത്സവം (Malayalam School 2024 – 2025 Admissions)
- SKI Club
- Onam Celebrations & Cultural Events

#### OCTOBER

- Robotics Club
- AI / ML For Programmers
- Cricket Tournament (Women)

#### NOVEMBER

- VolleyBall Tournament
- ThrowBall Tournament
- Kalopasana
- Card Game Rummy
- Card Game Poker
- Card Game 28 & 56

#### DECEMBER

- Youth & Charity Food Drive for Seniors
- Association With Care & Share - Kozhutha Kalakkutty

#### JANUARY

- Christmas & New Year Celebrations
- Election for EC 2025
- · Mentorship Program
- · Entrepreneurs Club

#### **FEBRUARY**

· Annual General Body



# COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL EVENTS

#### NIRAKKOOTTU

The grand KAW 2024 inauguration event, "Nirakkoottu," was a lively and engaging celebration featuring a variety of exciting programs.

The evening kicked off with complimentary snacks, a reels contest, karaoke, and face painting, creating a fun and interactive atmosphere. It concluded with a high-energy dance fusion performance by UW Kahaani, which captivated the audience and encouraged enthusiastic participation.

The event was officially inaugurated by James Lopes, Deputy City Manager of Kirkland, alongside President Shibu Baby, Secretary Rishiraj Rajan, and all EC members.



#### MOTHER'S DAY CRUISE TOUR



In May, mothers enjoyed a scenic two-hour boat tour on Lake Washington, embracing the crisp weather with delicious food, dancing, and joyful moments. This special event was designed to offer moms a memorable and relaxing experience in celebration of their special day.

The atmosphere was filled with laughter, music, and heartfelt connections, making it a truly unforgettable outing. Attendees cherished the opportunity to unwind, enjoy the breathtaking views, and celebrate motherhood in a unique way. The event was warmly received, with participants expressing appreciation for the thoughtful planning and the joyful experience shared with fellow mothers.

#### AKSHARA KALARI MALAYALAM SCHOOL ANNUAL DAY

KAW Malayalam School celebrated its annual day on April 28th at the Wagner Performing Arts Center, with vibrant performances by students showcasing their talents and cultural heritage. Around 700 community members attended the event and were served a variety of delicious snacks and food.





#### GARDENING FAO SESSION

KAW hosted an interactive Gardening FAQ Session in collaboration with Bhumi Garden Designs, offering community members expert guidance on gardening challenges.

The session featured certified horticulturist Anju Neilju and award-winning designer Tony Fajarillo, who shared valuable insights on plant care, landscape design, and sustainable gardening practices. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions, receive personalized advice, and learn practical tips to enhance their home gardens.

The event provided a unique platform for gardening enthusiasts to gain knowledge and connect with experts, making it an informative and engaging experience that was highly appreciated by the community.







#### FATHER'S DAY ADVENTURE











On a chilly, windy morning on June 15th, KAW celebrated Father's Day at Central Park, Issaquah. The day was filled with adventure, starting with an early morning hike to Poo Poo Point, followed by an exhilarating paragliding experience and a group cooking session at Issaquah Highlands Park. Over 50 participants came together to enjoy breakfast, lunch, and engaging team activities. The event was warmly received, with fathers expressing their appreciation for the thoughtful organization and the opportunity to connect with the community.



#### INDIA DAY PARADE

KAW proudly participated in the India Day Parade organized by the Consulate General of India in Seattle, presenting a float titled "Wayanadinoppam," symbolizing solidarity with the victims of the Wayanad landslides and floods. The float featured a traditional Theyyam performance, representing both cultural pride and support for the affected communities. Around 30 community members dedication and teamwork showcased KAW's commitment to standing with those in need while celebrating and preserving our cultural heritage.





#### SUMMER PICNIC AND THATTUKADA



The KAW Summer Family Picnic was a vibrant celebration of food, fun, and community bonding. The event featured 12 Kerala food vendors, including live cooking stations, offering a delightful culinary experience.

Attendees enjoyed a variety of exciting activities, such as tug-of-war, raffles, and more, creating a lively and engaging atmosphere.

With over 400 participants, the picnic brought together community members to celebrate and welcome summer in the Northwest, making it a memorable and joyous gathering for all.

#### MEGA THIRUVATHIRA

As part of the summer picnic festivities, KAW organized a vibrant and exhilarating Mega Thiruvathira performance that became a highlight of the day. The graceful performance by over 70 talented dancers captivated the audience and added a special charm to the celebrations. The participants' dedication and synchronized display brought cultural richness to the event, making it a truly memorable experience for everyone present.



#### ONAM CELEBRATIONS 2024

The **KAW Grand Onam Celebrations** took place on September 21, 2024, at Auburn High School. This year's Chief Guest, Mr. Prakash Gupta, Consulate General of India – Seattle, highlighted the significance of preserving and celebrating Indian culture and traditions while living away from home. Other esteemed guests included FOMAA General Secretary Sri. Ojus John and KAW Premier Partner Smt. Lincy Mathew.



KAW EC Members and Malayalam School Teachers beautifully decorated the Performing Arts Center Lobby with a stunning Pookkalam and a photo booth that perfectly captured the spirit of Onam, accompanied by a delightful Malveli performance by Jomi.

The Onam Sadya was catered by KGF Restaurant, Kirkland, with over 1,200 Sadyas served. The coordination was led by Sri. Ojus John and Sri. Santhosh Nair, supported by a dedicated team of 40+ volunteers.

Cultural programs were held at Auburn Performing Arts Center (PAC), featuring 60+ performances with over 300 participants from the community showcasing their diverse talents. A team of seven enthusiastic emcees, a perfect blend of newcomers and seasoned hosts, kept the audience engaged and guided them through the exciting lineup of performances.









#### KALOPASANA 2024

Building on the success of the previous year's efforts to promote and raise awareness about India's traditional art forms, KAW organized Kalopasana, a tribute to the rich cultural heritage of Kerala and India. Held as part of the Kerala Day Celebrations on November 16, 2024, at Snohomish PUD, the event was a vibrant showcase of rhythm, melody, and grace.













With over 60 participants, the program featured 27 captivating performances representing 8 classical and traditional art forms, including Mohiniyattam, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Battu-Nritya, Carnatic Music, Hindustani Music, and Instrumental Music, celebrating the diversity of our artistic legacy.





#### CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

KAW's Christmas and New Year Celebrations took place on January 22, 2025, at Snohomish High School Performing Arts Center. The event featured a holiday-themed booth that added charm to the atmosphere, complemented by delicious food catered by our event partner, KGF Restaurant.



Over 200 participants took part in 50 cultural performances, showcasing the diverse talents of the community. The emcees kept the audience engaged throughout the event, ensuring an enjoyable and festive experience for all attendees.





The Election Office, consisting of Sri. Baby Parayil, Sri. Raj Margessery, and Sri. Rahul Nair, announced the KAW Executive Committee for 2025-26 during the event.

The Christmas and New Year Celebrations were hosted by six enthusiastic emcees who kept the audience engaged throughout the entire program.





# **SPORTS & GAMES**

We organized multiple sports and games events this year and attracted many members to participate. Overall, we organized 8 events this year:

- Badminton
- o Men's and Women's Cricket
- Soccer
- o Volleyball
- o Throwball
- o Basketball
- o Card Games including Poker, Rummy , 28 and 56

The sports committee was led by Aneesh Divakarakurup, Nithin Thampi and Nithin MadhavanPillai and supported by Subin Sankar and Rajesh Narayanan.

#### BADMINTON TOURNAMENT

KAW organized a badminton tournament for women, men, and juniors, featuring thrilling matches and enthusiastic participation across all age groups.

The day-long event was held at the Mukilteo Badminton Club in Lynnwood, with over 50 community members competing in various categories.







#### CRICKET TOURNAMENT - MEN AND WOMEN

KAW Men's and Women's Cricket tournaments were held during summer across multiple parks in Redmond and Bellevue.

A record high 13 teams participated in Men's Cricket Tournament. After fierce competitions, Pulikkoottam Titans were crowned this year's champions, defeating the Dream Vision team who finished as Runner-Up.

2 teams participated in Women's Cricket tournament. Team Pulikkoottam Mermaids were the Champions, and Pulikkoottam Queens finished as Runner-up.









### SOCCER TOURNAMENT

The KAW Soccer tournament was conducted in August in Perrigo Park.

Among 3 teams that participated DKFC emerged as Champions, and Chempada FC as Runner-Up.











### **VOLLEYBALL & THROWBALL TOURNAMENT**

KAW Volleyball and Women's Throwball Tournaments were held on Nov 9th, 2023 at Academy Sports Center, Lynwood.

Machani Phoenix won the Women's Throwball Championship and Blackhawks were Runner-Up.

Pathirakallans won the Volleyball Tournament and Kavalachattambis were the Runner-Up.











### BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

We hosted our first-ever 3x3 basketball tournament, receiving an overwhelming response from players within the community. The event was filled with excitement, fun, and high energy throughout the day.



## CARD GAMES

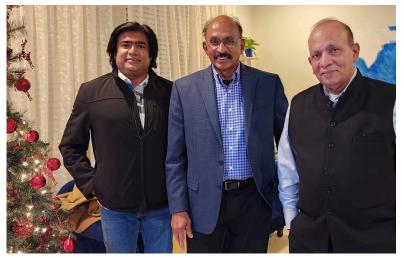
Card Games were conducted in December and January across 4 categories – Rummy, Poker, 56, and 28 at Sammamish Bluff Condominiums.













# **CLUBS**

To meet the evolving needs of our growing community, the EC introduced an independent network of clubs, each focusing on specific interests such as entertainment, education, sports, and fitness. This initiative successfully launched seven dedicated clubs, providing members with opportunities to connect with like-minded individuals and engage in meaningful activities.

#### HIKE AND CAMP CLUB

The KAW Hike and Camp Club, launched as a flagship initiative of the year, has been a remarkable success. With over 200 active members, the club organized 18 hikes, including family-friendly treks, and completed 3 prestigious mountain climbs. Under the expert guidance of Coach Muralee Raghavan, beginners and seasoned hikers alike received valuable training, fostering a spirit of adventure and fitness within the community. The club's achievements have made a significant positive impact, encouraging outdoor engagement and strengthening community bonds.









#### SKI CLUB



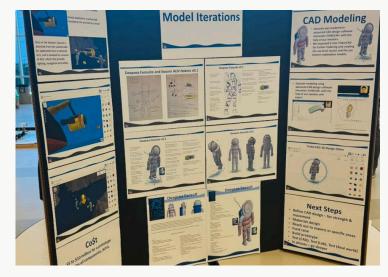
The Ski Club was formed to bring together ski enthusiasts and provide opportunities to learn and practice on the scenic slopes of Seattle. Led by Sri Akhil Somanathan, the club has grown to over 120 active members and successfully conducted two ski practice sessions, fostering a shared passion for the sport within the community.

#### ROBOTICS CLUB

The Robotics Club was launched for children aged 9 to 16, serving as a platform to foster creativity, teamwork, and critical thinking through hands-on robotics projects.

With over 20 active participants, and supported by dedicated parent and community volunteers, the club has successfully engaged young minds, challenging their potential and sparking interest in the rapidly growing fields of AI and robotics.







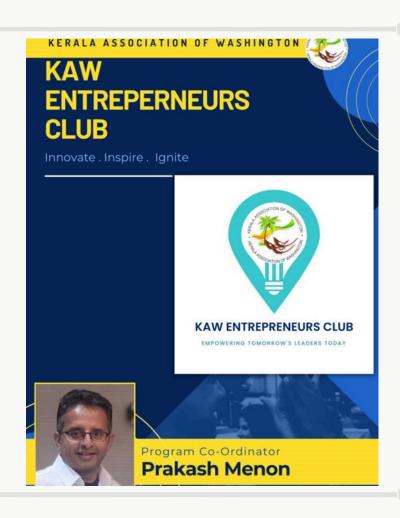
#### ENTREPRENEURS CLUB

Another notable club we introduced is the Entrepreneurship Club, aimed at nurturing entrepreneurial spirit and encouraging the younger generation to explore the realms of finance, business, and startups. The club's mission is to inspire creativity, drive innovation, and foster collaboration within the KAW community.

Moving forward, the club plans to host hackathons, networking sessions with business leaders, startup showcases, and mentorship programs, empowering aspiring entrepreneurs and supporting their growth journeys.

#### MENTORSHIP PROGRAM





With the next generation of our community stepping into higher education and professional careers, the need for guidance and mentorship has become increasingly important. This club aims to support their journey by connecting college students with high schoolers and professionals with college students, fostering personal and career growth.

It cultivates a culture of sharing knowledge and nurturing young talent, helping them succeed in their academic and professional pursuits.

#### CARDS CLUB

One of the most popular activities among the older generation in our community has been card games. We have seen members travel over 50 miles to participate in KAW-hosted card game sessions. Recognizing this enthusiasm, we launched the Card Club to bring together card game enthusiasts, provide a space for them to connect, and encourage the sharing of their knowledge and strategies with younger generations. The club offers a fun and engaging environment where members of all ages can bond over the timeless joy of card games.



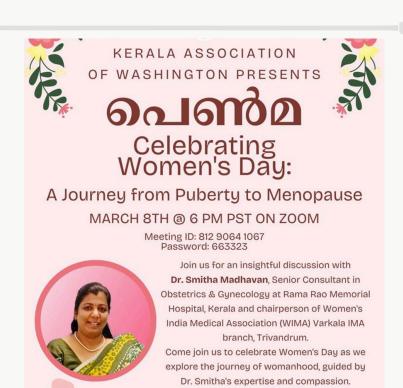
## **ONLINE EVENTS**

At KAW, we have leveraged online platforms to host a variety of events, enabling our community to connect with global talents and access diverse resources. This section provides an overview of the virtual events organized by KAW throughout the year.

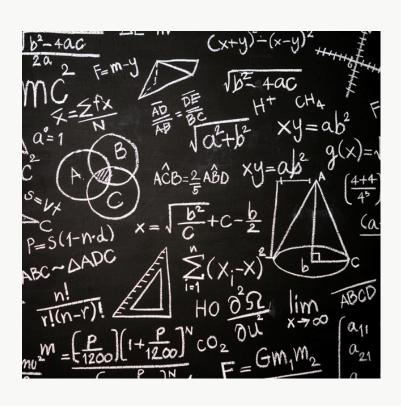
#### WOMEN'S DAY: PENMA

The term commenced with the celebration of Women's Day through the program "Penma," which featured an engaging discussion on the journey from puberty to menopause, led by Dr. Smitha Madhavan, senior consultant at Rama Rao Memorial Hospital and chairperson of WIMA.

Despite being held online, the event saw active participation from over 25 attendees.



#### MATH WEBINAR



To empower young talents within the community, we organized a Math webinar featuring Mr. Neelakantha Bhanu Prakash, the world's fastest human calculator. The session was designed for students from 1st grade and above.

The overwhelming response exceeded expectations, leading to registrations being closed after reaching the maximum capacity.

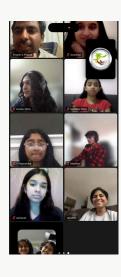
The event was highly appreciated by the community, especially by students with a passion for mathematics.

#### GYRA YOUTH RESEARCH PROGRAM

The GYRA Youth Research Program is a unique initiative designed to introduce and engage young minds in scientific research from an early age. Led by Mr. Mathew and supported by several dedicated community members, the program has been conducted weekly on Wednesdays through a dedicated online classroom, facilitated by a team of researchers. Both parents and students have expressed their appreciation for this valuable learning opportunity.







#### MALAYALAM SCHOOL PRAVESANOLSAVAM

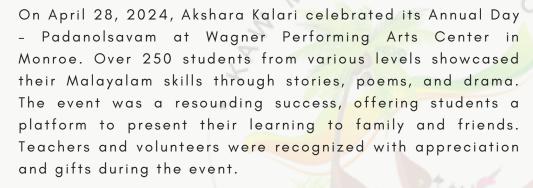
On September 9th, 2024, we inaugurated the new academic year of the Malayalam School with an online orientation session, welcoming parents to learn more about the program. The event received an overwhelmingly positive response, resulting in the registration of over 300 students eager to learn Malayalam for the academic year.



# **KAW CHARITY & EDUCATION**

#### MALAYALAM SCHOOL – AKSHARA KALARI

KAW Malayalam School - Akshara Kalari continued its commitment to serving the community by offering free\* Malayalam language classes to members. The school is registered under the Malayalam Mission initiative by the Government of Kerala. Students are placed in different levels based on age and proficiency, with the academic year running from September to June. The school is led by Principal Smt. Latha Santhosh, Vice Principal Smt. Vineetha Parammel, community representative Smt. Reshma Rajesh, Smt. Sruthi Sathees and 2024 EC Members Smt. Seema Suraj and Smt. Remya Rajan. The 2024-25 academic year is supported by over 60 volunteers, with more than 300 students enrolled.



The 2024-25 Praveshanolsavam was held online on September 9, 2024, featuring a detailed presentation on the curriculum, student expectations, guidelines, and a Q&A session. Malayalam Mission textbooks were distributed to all students and teachers, and classes commenced in September.

\*A fully refundable registration fee is collected at the time of enrollment. Students who meet the attendance requirements set by the school board will receive a full refund of the registration fee at the end of the academic year.













#### YOUTH & CHARITY FOOD DRIVE FOR SENIORS

KAW continues to uphold the spirit of giving back to the community. With this commitment, our young members, in collaboration with the EC and Sri. Ram Pranam, organized a food drive to support seniors at the Northshore Senior Center.

Community members generously contributed, and the team successfully collected and delivered the donations to the center. Thanks to your kindness and support, we were able to donate a remarkable 1,313 pounds of food to the pantry, making a meaningful difference in the lives of those in need.



#### ASSOCIATION WITH CARE & SHARE

In collaboration with Care and Share, KAW presented the drama "Kozhutha Kalakutty" in Chicago. The performance was highly appreciated by the Kerala community in Chicago and successfully helped raise funds amounting to \$120,000.

As part of this initiative, \$1,000 was donated to Mary's Place Seattle to support their efforts in providing shelter and aid to homeless individuals in the Seattle area.

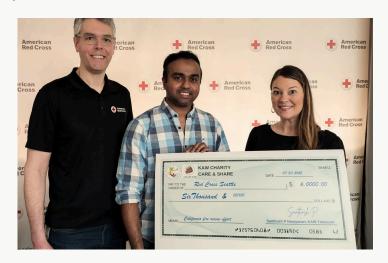






#### CALIFORNIA WILDFIRE SUPPORT

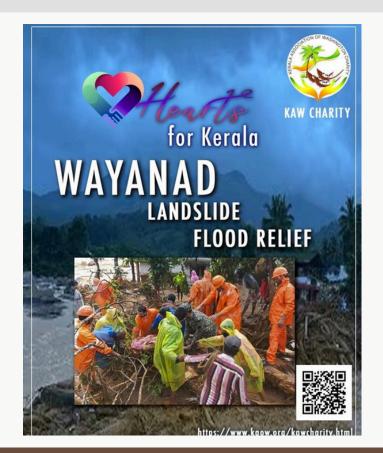
KAW collaborated with the Red Cross to support relief efforts for the California wildfires. Through the KAW Charity, we contributed \$6,000 to assist those affected, strengthening our partnership with the Red Cross and paving the way for future volunteer opportunities and joint initiatives.







#### WAYANAD LANDSLIDE FUNDRAISER



Staying true to our roots, KAW swiftly organized a relief initiative to support those affected by the Wayanad landslides and floods. We launched a fundraiser, committing \$8,000 towards immediate relief and reconstruction efforts. In collaboration with FOMAA, we contributed to building homes for displaced families and extended long-term recovery support through donations to CMDRF.

The generosity of our community played a vital role in helping the people of Wayanad rebuild their lives and restore hope during this difficult time. Together, we made a difference, standing in solidarity with those in need.

#### HOMELESS SHELTER FOR CITY OF KIRKLAND

KAW Charity partnered with the City of Kirkland to support their homeless shelter initiatives. We contributed to meeting essential needs at the shelter, while the KAW Hiking Club generously pledged and donated \$10,000 toward the cause.

This partnership has fostered meaningful discussions with city officials, including the potential for KAW to lease or own property in Kirkland and the possibility of hosting future cultural events within the city. We have been actively following up with the city, and we encourage the next committee to continue progressing these efforts.





#### MICROSOFT POKER TOURNAMENT

On behalf of KAW, our friends at Microsoft, led by EC member Mr. Jyothish Nair, organized the annual KAW Microsoft Poker Tournament. The event saw participation from 60 Microsoft employees and successfully raised \$6,945. Prizes worth \$1,430 were awarded to the winners. The funds generated from this event will support various KAW charity initiatives.



# 2025 - 26 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Election Office comprising of Babu Parayil, Rajgopal Margeserry, Rahul Nair was appointed to conduct a smooth and fair election process for electing the office bearers of KAW for the year 2025–26.

The EO successfully executed their tasks by inviting nominations for all advertised posts, verifying individual eligibility, and ensuring the nominee's willingness to serve KAW for 2025 - 26. The election process was conducted as per the KAW Election process defined in ARTICLE X in the Kerala Association of Washington bylaw.





Vice President: Latha Chandran Secretary: Rajesh Narayanan

Treasurer: Aswathy Nair

Joint Secretary: Santhosh Raja

Joint Treasurer: Bijoy Nair

Executive Committee Member: Jithin Sreedharan

Executive Committee Member: Jomi Mathew Kalappura Executive Committee Member: Nisheedh Raveendran

Executive Committee Member: Reshmi Upreti Executive Committee Member: Roopa Nair

**Executive Committee Youth Member: Sharon Thomas** 

**Executive Committee Youth Member: Tom Jacob** 

Ex-Officio: Shibu P Baby

On behalf of the EC 2024, I wish you all the very best for 2025–26 and assure a smooth transition of activities from the current committee.



# Financial Report

# FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report is prepared and submitted by Santhosh Narayanan, Treasurer, Kerala Association of Washington.

An independent audit of all our financial accounts and transactions was conducted by KAW Member Sri. Joji Joseph. We would like to thank Sri. Joji Joseph for all his efforts in ensuring that our accounts are in order before we hand over the responsibilities to the next committee.

The financial reports are shared as a separate document.

# **CLOSING REMARKS**

The 2024–25 term was a remarkable year for KAW EC, as we successfully brought our vision and ideas to life. We extend our sincere gratitude to our community, sponsors, well-wishers, and volunteers for their unwavering support throughout the year. With over 35 events, 770 community members, 1200+ Onam sadhyas served, 300+ students enrolled in Malayalam School, 5+ charity contributions, and 5+ community clubs launched, it has been a truly exceptional year.

The positive feedback and overwhelming response from the community have been incredibly encouraging. Thank you once again for your support. Wishing the new EC a successful and rewarding year ahead.

Rishiraj Rajan Secretary, Kerala Association of Washington



# 2024 Annual Report

PREPARED AND SUBMITTED BY

Rishiraj Rajan SECRETARY, KERALA ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON

