

Dr. Balu Natarajan to succeed Dr. Ratnam Chitturi as the New President of North South Foundation



Dr. Balu Natarajan



Dr. Ratnam Chitturi
Founder & President

The Board of Directors recently announced the appointment of Dr. Balu Natarajan as the President of North South Foundation (NorthSouth), effective July 4, 2020. Dr. Natarajan, a second-generation Indian American, will take over from the foundation's iconic Founder & President Dr. Ratnam Chitturi.

“This announcement is indeed historic, the first in 30 years. It is also a measure of continuity with laser focus,” said NorthSouth Chairman Rao Chalasani as he shared the Board's unanimous decision to appoint Dr. Natarajan as the next President.

Bill Gates said “The best and the brightest students shouldn't be denied access to higher education, simply because they can't afford it.”

Dr. Chitturi established North South Foundation in 1989 and has navigated the organization for over 30 years with singular focus and dedication. With a mission to encourage excellence in education, NorthSouth has been providing scholarships to bright underprivileged kids in India, changing the lives of thousands of kids and their families who would otherwise have continued life in poverty.

The organization has since grown substantially both in the US and in India with various offerings promoting excellence, always rooted in empathy. Dr. Chitturi's inspiring energy has been key in building a strong 100% volunteer driven organization to what it is today.

Over 3,000 volunteers across 90 chapters in the US are involved in conducting educational contests, workshops and coaching. NorthSouth has brought immeasurable knowledge and laurels on both national and international stages to its kids in the United States. Many have continued their educational journeys in some of the top colleges and have gone on to have quite successful careers.

Balu Natarajan, M.D is the Chief Medical Officer of Seasons Hospice that serves 5,300 patients in 31 cities across the US. He manages a huge fleet of physicians, hospice aides, social workers, nurses and other support staff across the US. Dr. Natarajan is board-certified in internal medicine, hospice care & sports medicine. He was also the first Indian American ever to win the Scripps National Spelling Bee in 1985.

Dr. Natarajan loves helping people and has been supporting NorthSouth since he was in medical school when he served as the pronouncer of the first National NorthSouth Spelling Bee back in 1993. More recently he served on the Advisory Board before joining the NorthSouth board in 2017.

As the foundation makes this historic transition of leadership from a first-generation immigrant to a second generation Indian American, it is a symbol of maturity of the organization.

“I have been observing Balu since 1993 when he was a pronouncer. He is an amazing individual and very dedicated & committed to be part of NorthSouth”, said Dr. Chitturi of the incoming leader. “When he commits, he delivers! He is a wonderful choice and I am in 7th heaven that he accepted this position.”

As Dr. Chitturi steps back from his 16-hour days working on NorthSouth activities, he will assume the role of Chief Mentor and continue as a Director on the Board. This involvement will ensure that his wisdom, knowledge and experience remain with the organization as NorthSouth continues its journey under the new leadership.

“Many positive things are happening. The board and leadership have intentionally engaged in strategy to navigate NorthSouth to higher heights for decades to come,” said Rao Chalasani. “We are on a perpetual journey from peak to peak”.

Dr. Natarajan is excited and looking forward to taking on his new role in July. He said: “The North South Foundation has achieved amazing things in its first 30 years, funding 25,000 scholarships for the underserved while producing dozens of champions on the national stage. We are ready to take the Foundation's original tenets of Empathy, Excellence and Education to the next level.”

Education is not only a ladder of opportunity, but it is also an investment in our future.” – Ed Markey

The organization is witnessing a groundswell of enthusiasm from the third generation Young Changemakers. This is not a coincidence but a deliberate trend and it clearly demonstrates the adaptability of the organization to serve the underserved communities in the US extending its capabilities. As we transition leadership for the first time, we look forward to attaining even higher achievements in the decades to come.

For more information about NorthSouth, please visit us at: nouthsouth.org or email us at: info@nouthsouth.org