

# Fifth Annual Convention

*Saturday July 26, 2003 Greater Washington D. C.*



Nearly 300 people gathered from several parts of North America on July 26th, 2003 in Greater Washington D. C. to participate in the 5th UANA annual convention.

The day started with a Seminar on “Transforming Ideas into Action”. Sourabh Naithani a graduate student at School of International Service in Washington D.C. started with the proceedings with a presentation on “ Developing an Evaluative Framework for Outside Funding Proposals”. Sourabh studied at the Doon School in Dehradun and completed a Bachelor’s degree with Honors from University of London. At present he is involved with the US-India Political Action Committee (USINPAC) at Capitol Hill and is covering defense and security issues relating to South Asia.

Sourabh’s presentation was followed by a proposal from Mrs. Vidya Rawat a noted social activist and retired vice Principal for “Enhancing Quality Performance of Meritorious but Financially Weak Students”

Smita Malpani nicknamed “pahari marwari” presented a very interactive presentation on “Technological Interventions for Agricultural Development in Pindar Valley of Garwhal Himalayas”. Smita after completing her Masters in Environmental Studies from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies was awarded a foreign residence fellowship to work with the central Himalayan Rural Action Group (Chirag). Chirag is located in the village of Sitla, just down the hill from Mukteshwar in Uttarakhand. There she spent a total of year and a half working at the grass root level on issues of natural resource management and community development.

Dr. Dhara Dhaulakhandi presented a proposal on “Resettlement and Restoration of Villages in Milam Valley” Dr. Dhaulakhandi is currently affiliated with University of Massachusetts Medical School. He completed his Ph.D. from AIIMS, New Delhi and was a post doctoral fellow at Harvard Medical School. Next presentation was from Dr. Ajay Adhikari on “Supporting Library Collections of Uttarakhandi Colleges”. Dr. Adhikari is an associate professor of business at American University, Washington D.C. He completed his Ph.D. from Virginia Commonwealth University and teaches and researches in the area of International accounting. A pilot project in this regard

with Computer Science Department of Garhwal University has already started. The seminar ended with a very touching address from Sh. Dharam Singh Rawat, retired IAS and a renowned social activist. Mr. Rawat served in many important posts during his career including Director, Urban Land Ceilings under the U.P. government and as a consultant to the United Nations Development program. In his address, Mr. Rawat through a series of public facts raised the issues of ‘accountability’ to the forefront of public discourse.

Noted dignitaries present in the seminar included Dr. Basant Tariyal, Dr. Roop Singh Bhakuni, Dr. P D S Negi, Sh. L. S. Adhikari and Mr. Ajay Rawat. The evening session included an exhibition, cultural program followed by dinner. The enthusiasm shown by young Non Resident Uttarakhandis in the cultural program was tremendous and the ambiance created a home away from home.

- *Vijay Sharma*

