



Shefali Razdan Duggal

PRESS CLIPS



Second-generation desis shine in Charlotte

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The California delegation to the Democratic National Convention, led by the state's Attorney General Kamala Devi Harris, co-chair of the Rules Committee to the parley, had the largest contingent of South Asian Americans, numbering over 40. A majority of them were Indian American, including the likes of venture capitalist and major Democratic Party fund-raiser Kamil Hasan, Councilman Ash Kalra from San Jose, and more than 20 Sikh Americans.

Also in the California delegation were the only three Indian Americans — all second-generation — who were members of the policy-making Platform Committee and the Credentials Committee.

Attorney Pankit Doshi and Shalini 'Shelly' Kapoor Collins, founder and chief executive officer, Ensicent Corporation, were on the Platform Committee, while homemaker, soccer mom, and major fund-raiser and bundler for the Obama campaign, Shefali Razdan Duggal, was a member of the Credentials Committee.

Doshi told *India Abroad*, "I am very proud of the platform we put together and the issues we focused on, including rebuilding the middle class, Wall Street reform, protecting individual rights and civil liberties regardless of where someone is from and making sure the United States is stronger in the world and we're safer and more secure at home. The platform also reaffirms the President's commitment to a long-term strategic partnership with India, as the President understands the importance of India's role in the global economy."

He said, "I am proud that the Democratic platform includes a strong commitment to comprehensive immigration reform. The platform acknowledges that we need immigration reform that creates a system for allocating visas that meets our economic needs and keeps families together, and enforces the law."

Doshi added, "Despite obstacles, President Obama has made important progress in implementing immigration policies that reward hard work and demand personal responsibility. The platform also emphasizes how President Obama and the Democrats fought for the DREAM Act, which ensures that young people who want to contribute fully to our society and serve our country are able to become legal residents and ultimately citizens."

He spoke of how honored he was to represent California at the Democratic National Convention. He said, "There are people from across the country, from small towns to big cities, from the retired to the students, all of whom have different experiences but all of whom are united by a common goal of making this country better. It is inspirational to meet all of these people and work together to re-elect the President."

Duggal said, "I fondly remember the first National Convention which I participated in 12 years ago in Los Angeles. Though many things have changed — I was much younger and less experienced back then — the mission has been a consistent one — to support and elect a Democrat as President of the United States. The impact that the US President has both within the US and also throughout the world makes this a very important week for all of us who support fairness and equality."

"Back in 2000," she recalled, "I had just recently immersed myself deeply into politics and was fortunate to be chosen as an at-large delegate for the convention that year for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts... With my youth and inexperience, I was more in awe and excitement of the whole experience supporting Vice President Al Gore's candidacy for the Presidency. Though I was certain-



From left: Shefali Razdan Duggal, California Attorney General Kamala Harris and Pankit Doshi at the Democratic National Convention



Shalini Kapoor Collins, right, with DNC Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz

ly involved and committed, I was unable to participate as deeply as I have been fortunate to do thus far within this campaign."

She added, "I have been extremely privileged to reach the top tier fundraising level for President Obama's National Financial Committee — \$500,000 to \$1 million raised — and have been appointed as a co-chair for the Obama Victory Trustees. Both of these have provided me with the brilliant opportunity to be much more actively involved and connected throughout this campaign process."

Collins said, "I am beyond proud of the final platform the committee has presented. As Democrats, we are the inclusive, fair and just party and I feel we lived up to those standards via our platform."

She said, "As an Indian-American woman in technology, I had the up-close opportunity to impact the Democratic Party's platform, especially from the standpoint of job creation, education and work-force development, all of which tie directly to the Indian community. My contribution to the platform was specifically centered around developing

and retaining technology talent in the US, and this means that when talented workers come here from other countries, we give them the opportunity to continue to work here and achieve their goals as well as strengthen our economy."

She added, "I'm proud that our community has demonstrated success and entrepreneurial strength in technology and in Silicon Valley. As the CEO of a technology firm myself, and along with other business owners who have demonstrated such success, I feel we directly impact and support the President's top priority of creating more jobs and strengthening the economy, as well as creating a strong foundation for America through science and technology."

On Obama's chances of being re-elected, the trio was unanimous in their consensus that the President would return to serve a second term.

Doshi said, "I am confident President Obama will be re-elected because the President has focused on the struggling middle class, securing investments in education, research and development and bridging the equality gap. Despite being dealt a bad hand, the President saved the auto industry and brought Americans back to work. The economic policies that the President has implemented have led to improvements in the economy."

Duggal said, "We look forward to another four years of his visionary leadership. As became crystal clear at the Republican National Convention last week, the Romney/Ryan ticket is focused on resurrecting the failed policies of the Bush administration. The US electorate is well aware of the cost that the US economy continues to pay from the policies of greed and trickle down economics that always seem to only trickle up to the rich."

She said, "Their belligerent approach to foreign policy, which may work well at producing campaign slogans, does not incorporate the realities of navigating a complex world. President Barack Obama, with a much more balanced and thoughtful approach, has shown there is an ability to lead with strength where necessary, and also with diplomacy where appropriate."

Collins said, "I've had the honor of discussing important issues such as immigration, education and computer security with him (*Obama*). Having grown up in the US since the age of 3, in a family where education was king and the only sure way of getting ahead, I feel that I am aligned with his priorities from both a professional as well as ideological standpoint."

Saying, "I'll give you an example," she explained, "When I discussed education with the President his emphasis was that we need to expose our children at the earliest ages possible and get them interested in science, technology, education and math — the STEM subjects — regardless of the socioeconomic background or gender of the child, and this is how we will build an enduring foundation for our country. I agree with the President that education is the right of all children in this country, and this viewpoint really resonated with me, given that most South Asian families, including mine, moved to the US for better and equal opportunity, believing that with hard work anything is possible."

She added, "I feel that President Obama is aligned with our values in the South Asian community and will continue to pay attention to those issues which we care about. This alignment of values between the President and our community, and the fact that he really is an example that one can accomplish anything are just two reasons why the President deserves our support this November."