

## **United Punjabis of America (UPA) to Host Punjabi Mela on Sunday, June 12**

June is the official start of the summer season and the United Punjabis of America (UPA) is set to get this season off to a sizzling start with a Punjabi Mela to be held at Ashton Place in Willowbrook, IL on Sunday, June 12, 2016. The Mela will begin at 11 AM and the curtain will come down on the festivities at 4 PM. With delicious Punjabi food available for purchase, booths offering the latest in fashion and style, this afternoon will feature two very exciting competitions, Ms. UPA and Ms. UPA, the first such competitions to be held in the Chicago area.

“These competitions are an opportunity to showcase the immense talent and style that young people have,” notes Sureeta Trikha, a UPA board member and the point person for these competitions. “In the spirit of inclusiveness that is a hallmark of UPA, the competitions are open to any woman who meets the age criteria and registers by the registration deadline of May 19. The application form as well as contest rules are posted on the UPA website, [www.unitedpunjabisofamerica.com](http://www.unitedpunjabisofamerica.com), Sureeta explains.

“The beginning of the spring season in India is observed in every part of the country with much singing and dancing,” explains Pratibha Jairath, VP of UPA. “And we will be recreating that same sense of joy and gratitude for nature’s bounty by having folk dances celebrating the diverse cultures of India. We are excited that so many organizations will be sending their representatives to participate in the Mela.”

“Ashton proved to be an excellent location for last year’s Vaisakhi celebration and we decided to hold the Punjabi Mela at the same venue,” Sharan Walia said as he explained the choice of the venue. “The attendees as well as our vendors last year were very pleased with the arrangements and we look forward to an equally successful event this year,” he added.

Dharam Punwani, a member of the Board, explained that the mission of UPA, an IRS approved 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable

community service organization, is to preserve the rich Punjabi heritage, serve and become a positive force for enhancing and strengthening the Punjabi community and the communities in which Punjabis live. "UPA is not just for Punjabis. It is for everyone interested in the Punjabi culture and the Punjabi community. That is why we are so excited about the upcoming Mela and the cooperation with so many cultural organizations, " he explained.

Vendor spots are limited and all interested vendors are encouraged to contact Sureeta Trikha at 630-802-1233, Pratibha Jairath at 620-222-1248 or Shammi Wahi at 630-674-2883 . For information about the Miss UPA and Ms UPA competitions, the competitors are advised to contact Sureeta Trikha at 630- 802-1233. For all other questions, Sharan Walia can be contacted at 510-551-8505.