

# Woman with a Heart for Bakersfield

## Naina Patel



Naina Patel has a heart of lavish generosity and deep compassion for the needs of others. With a gentle, selfless spirit, Naina freely gives of herself to those who are in greatest need in Kern County and around the world. Passionate about improving the quality of life of all people and providing tools to reduce stress, Naina liberally offers both her time and resources.

As co-founder of the Ravi and Naina Patel Foundation, Naina translates her passion into unflagging commitment to affect positive change. Through the foundation, Naina provides education, clean and sanitary environments, mind and body stress reduction, and monetary assistance for numerous charitable causes both locally and internationally. The philanthropic support of the foundation has enabled other charitable organizations to offer a myriad of essential services to meet health, education, and human needs.

Relentless in her efforts for the betterment of her community, Naina serves on the board of Kern County Cancer Fund which assists individuals with limited resources to get cancer treatment. She conducts free educational classes on wellness and stress reduction, as well as provides financial support for the Comprehensive Blood & Cancer Center Foundation for Wellness, Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault, and CSUB Guardian Scholars serving emancipating and emancipated foster youth.

A grassroots leader, Naina actively invests in the local community. She promotes religious education and harmony as a board member of Chinmaya Mission Bakersfield, a founding member of Gandhi Interfaith Conference, and a founding member of Season for Nonviolence which advocates for nonviolence through the teachings of Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Naina's current benevolent efforts also include supporting twenty children annually in developing countries through Plan USA, providing sanitation, clean drinking water for students of poor rural schools in India, and supporting a broad range of foundations and charities.

Dr. Patel is head of Comprehensive Blood and Cancer Center's Mind & Body Medicine Department. She is a Board Certified physician graduating from Government Medical College in Surat India. It was there that she met her husband Ravi, fell in love and married him. Naina and Ravi moved to South Africa for a year where they both worked in a rural missionary hospital. They then relocated to Chicago where she completed her residency in cardiac anesthesiology at Illinois Masonic Medical School and her internship at Christ Community Hospital. Naina brings her extensive understanding of medicine to a profound awareness of the inner-relationship of the entire person—spirit, mind, and body. She volunteers her expertise to all cancer patients regardless of where they seek treatment.

Born and raised in India by loving and pious parents, Naina has called Bakersfield her home since 1985. Naina's personal joys are her wonderful boys Rishi and Amar. Rishi recently finished medical school and is aspiring to be an oncologist. Amar is pursuing a PhD in biology.

Naina delights in long, solitary nature walks. She enjoys playing cards, especially bridge with her friends.

Naina's husband daily observes first-hand how Naina channels her heart for others. "You cannot think of Naina without thinking about qualities other than kindness, compassion, gentleness, and sharing. These are the necessary tools to be a leader. Naina embodies them with her actions every day. Her efforts are always selfless and without hesitation. There is not a worthy cause that she won't get behind."

