

Rennu Dhillon a finalist for The Stevie Awards

SAM RAO

Fremont, Calif.

LONG-time Bay Area resident and founder and owner of Genius Kids Inc. Rennu Dhillon has been named a finalist in the Most Creative Professional category in the 2009 *American Business Awards*.

The *American Business Awards (ABA)*, also known as *The Stevies*, are the nation's premier business awards program. All organizations operating in the US are eligible to submit entries to the ABAs — public and private, for-profit and non-profit, large and small. The seventh annual Stevie® Awards will be presented on June 22 in New York City.

"To be nominated itself is a great honor," said an excited Dhillon, whose teaching methods and results for pre-schoolers have received acclaim by educators and parents alike.

More than 2,600 entries from companies of all sizes and in virtually every industry were submitted for consideration in more than 40 categories, including Most Innovative Company, Best Management Team, Best New Product or Service, Best Corporate Social Responsibility Program, Best Corporate Environmental Responsibility Program. Dhillon's Reading Recipes, a multimedia interactive reading lesson developed at Genius Kids Inc. will be competing in the Most Creative Pro-



fessional category. Stevie Award winners will be announced during the annual gala on June 22 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York City. Six-hundred executives from across the US are expected to attend. The ceremonies will be broadcast on radio nationwide by the *Business TalkRadio Network* and hosted by Cheryl Casone of *Fox Business Network*.

Dhillon, DSc., has been described as "a woman of many talents". A wellknown Bay Area resident and community activist, she has been in the United States since 1986. Genius Kids was started by Dhillon in the San Francisco Bay Area, its first center in Fremont in 2001. Today it boasts five centers in Fremont, and is growing with every passing day. Dhillon believes that everyone is born a "genius" and as educators and parents, it is our responsibility to "awaken" the "inner genius" in our kids.

Dhillon's unique instructional methods and stimulating curriculum, with the high energy paced classrooms filled with laughter, dance and fun learning has resulted in amazing personalities emerging, winning several district young author competitions, promotions to next grade levels and children as young as five years of age passing the Stanford University Gifted and Talented Education Grade 3 Math programs.

Genius Kid's Reading, Math & Science Programs have children as young as two or three, mastering fluent reading and speaking skills with the confidence and the ability to think for themselves. Parents are astounded at the results and difference in their children within a short period of time of enrolling at Genius Kids.

Her curriculum is unique to Genius Kids Learning Center and will be available online in September 2009 with the launch of her next new site www.missrennuonline.com.

Genius Kids was rated "Best of the East Bay" in Services by East Bay Express Publication and was awarded "Most Likely Place to find a Silicon Valley Inventor" in 2004 and recently was Nominated Best Preschool In Alameda County for 2009 by KRON 4 "Best of the Bay".

Members of the Awards' Board of Distinguished Judges and Advisors and their staffs will select Stevie Award winners from among

finalists in final judging that will continue through June 3. Finalists were chosen by business professionals nationwide during preliminary judging in April through early May 2009.

"Despite very tough economic conditions, many organizations and individuals continue to perform well," said Michael Gallagher, founder and president of The Stevie Awards. "The results of the 2009 ABAs thus far are a testament to the resilience, creativity, and hard work of American organizations, executives, and workers."

Dhillon of Genius Kids strongly endorses the fact that in order to survive in today's fast paced world, we need to create confident, happy and successful citizens who will become future leaders. "Our children are our future and their brains are like fire waiting to be ignited. Genius Kids is the instrument of ignition and inspiration, which has to be applied at the right time, between birth and age six." She is confident that with her recent nomination as a finalist by the American Business Award as the Most Creative Professional, Genius Kids curriculum will become a household name accessible globally.

Supporting sponsors of the 2009 *American Business Awards* include High Performance Technologies Inc., John Hancock, Lifelock, RCN Corporation, Softpro and Ultimate Software.

Maharashtra Mandal ushers in spring with music festival

SAM RAO

Sunnyvale, Calif.

MAHARASHTRA Mandal Bay Area (MMBA), an SF Bay area-based cultural organization, organized *Chaitradhoon*, a Marathi spring fest-like event on May 10 at the Sunnyvale temple auditorium to celebrate the arrival of spring season.

Over the past few years, this event has become an annual attraction that is organized by MMBA. "Like every year, the event turned out to be highly successful. The day-long celebration that started from 9 a.m. and continued till 9.30 p.m. was attended by more than 200 music

lovers. Children as well as adults participated with equal enthusiasm in the celebration of *Chaitra*, the first month of the Marathi year.

"The lighting of *diya* and the sitar performance that followed set a very festive tone to the program," said participants Satish and Aarsh Tare.

The program was organized in two main sections. In the morning section, the final competitions were arranged in light vocal, classical vocal and instrumental music categories. For each of the above mentioned category, there were further age-wise subgroups that included Kids (below 6 years), Junior A (7-11 years), Junior B (12-17) and



Participants at the Maharashtra Mandal *Chaitradhoon* concert. Sam Rao

adults (17 years and above).

From the preliminary rounds that were conducted on April 18, around 40 participants were selected from a pool of 70. The finals were judged by well known Bay Area musicians Shubhangi Sakhalkar, Abhay Mannur, Prasad Joglekar, Mrunal Dharmadhikari, Ustad Surinder Mann and Vijay Ghaskadvi. All of these judges are well known and respected in the

Bay Area for their expertise in Indian classical and light music and instrumental music.

Event program manager Naren Nagtode and the judges said that the participants presented advanced level of performances. Even those kids who did not win awards showed a lot of potential.

For the final competition section, much of the appreciation should go to the young participants and their supportive parents who were present there throughout the day. It was a delight for the audience to listen to kids solo and group performances of tabla with *peshkars*, *kayadas* and *tukada* compositions directed by renowned tabla player Satish Tare.

The evening section was made more memorable by a performance of Indian Marathi light vocal singer, Ravindra Sathe. He mesmerized the audience with an excellent performance in his musical concert,

Onjaleeta Swar Tujhech. Some of the Bay Area artistes who accompanied Ravindra Sathe were Satish Tare on tabla; Satish Gadagkar on violin; Vivek Datar on harmonium and Manoj Tamhankar on taal-vadya. Old Marathi songs sung by Sathe made many Maharastrians nostalgic as he recounted his anecdotes and paid tribute to his inspirations of the music world.

At the end, the winners of the final competitions were rewarded with trophies. All the participants and their parents were delighted as Sathe himself did the honors and handed over the trophies to the winners. It being Mother's Day made the occasion even more special for the mothers of the young participants as well as winners.

The successful completion of the event was seen as one more remarkable achievement by the Maharashtra Mandal committee members.

