

Early learning specialist Rennu Dhillon wins Hind Rattan Award



Rennu Dhillon of Genius Kids with Karan Singh and NRI Welfare Society officials.

SAM RAO

Fremont, Calif.

WELL-KNOWN early learning specialist and educator Rennu Dhillon of Genius Kids has been given the 2010 Hind Rattan award, also known as the Jewel of India award. It is presented by the Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Welfare Society of India, a prestigious global non-profit organization.

The award recognizes the economic and philanthropic achievements of the Indian Diaspora. Now in its 29th year, the "Hind Rattan" is presented each year to 30 leading expatriates from around the world.

The five-day awards program

was held in New Delhi along with a dinner reception and cultural extravaganza at Lalit Intercontinental Hotel. The awards were handed over by former diplomat and politician Karan Singh and other guests at the event, included Members of Parliament Oscar Fernandes, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, former Election Commissioner GVG Krishnamurthy, former CBI Director Joginder Singh, AICC Secretary Major Ved Prakash and Union Minister of State for External Affairs Preneet Kaur.

"I am extremely honored to be part of this prestigious group and humbled to receive such recognition for my learning centers," said Dhillon. She dedicated the award to her family

for all their support and encouragement.

The Hind Rattan award is one more award for Dhillon, who was also one of the Outstanding 50 Asian Americans in Business in 2009 and a finalist in the America Business Awards 2009's Fastest Growing Woman Owned Company segment. Hers was voted the Best Preschool in Alameda County in 2009 by KRON 4 TV.

Mombassa-raised Rennu Dhillon is the daughter of former Mombassa Mayor Shamsher Singh Dhillon and Mohinder Kaur Dhillon, was educated in Kenya and in the UK, and later immigrated to the USA.

Genius Kids was founded in Fremont in 2001 and has proven

results for its unique educational methodology of interactive learning — with academics, personality and public speaking as the focus for young children. Dhillon plans to take Genius Kids global and is working on several learning modules as well as online learning methods.

Dhillon, who lives in Hayward in the East San Francisco Bay Area with her husband Badish Gill and children Shana and Sheena, joins an illustrious list of past awardees that include former diplomat and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Madan-jet Singh (US), Hotelier Nawab Gaur (UK), Justice Mota Singh (UK) and British Member of Parliament P. S. Khabra (UK).

California solar project gets \$1.4 billion US guarantee

REUTERS

San Francisco/Washington

THE United States on May 22 gave its biggest backing yet to a renewable energy project, guaranteeing \$1.37 billion in loans for a California development by BrightSource Energy Inc that uses the sun's heat to power a steam turbine. BrightSource's proposed solar thermal plants are expected to generate about 400 megawatts of electricity and power 140,000 California homes, giving it the heft to compete with plants fueled by coal and natural gas.

President Barack Obama's administration has touted green energy investments as a way to create jobs and increase international economic competitiveness. "We're not going to sit on the sidelines while other countries capture the jobs of the future — we're committed to becoming the global leader in the clean energy economy," Energy Secretary Steven Chu said in a statement. The sector has seen projects being launched and agreements being signed with utilities, who count on solar thermal to meet California clean energy goals, but construction has yet to start on a large scale for the solar thermal industry. Financing of projects has been a big challenge with the tightening of the credit markets as capital requirements of these green energy companies are very large.

Solar thermal technology is different from its better-known rival, rooftop photovoltaic. Solar thermal companies like BrightSource and rivals Abengoa Solar, eSolar Inc have technology that uses the sun's rays, reflected by thousands of small mirrors, to heat liquids to create steam in turbines and generate electricity. The conditional loan guarantees from the US Department of Energy, the largest federal loan commitment offered to a renewable energy firm, would help BrightSource build three utility-scale solar thermal plants for its Ivanpah project, which will be located on federally-owned land in the Mojave Desert in southeastern California.

"It's a good beginning for the industry," BrightSource CEO John Woolard said in an interview. "It really allows Ivanpah to be the first (solar thermal) project to be constructed in almost 20 years now" in California. California, and other parts of the world, are betting heavily on solar thermal. About a quarter of the clean energy contracts approved in 2009 in California by capacity was solar thermal, according to the Public Utilities Commission.

Construction on the first Ivanpah plant is expected to begin during the second half of this year, with commercial operations beginning in 2012. All three plants are expected to be on line by 2014. The loan guarantee is conditioned on BrightSource meeting financial and environmental requirements, including local, state and federal regulatory approvals.

BrightSource has run into trouble from environmental groups who are concerned that the construction would harm desert plants and wildlife, including the desert tortoise. The company earlier this month agreed to reduce the footprint for the Ivanpah project to minimize the environmental impact.

The company, which counts search giant Google and Silicon Valley fund VantagePoint Venture Partners among its investors, already has contracts to deliver more than 2,600 megawatts of power to California utilities PG&E Corp and Edison International's Southern California Edison (SCE). PG&E will purchase approximately two-thirds of the power generated at Ivanpah and SCE will purchase approximately one-third.

Asian Week Foundation calls on performers

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The AHSC will present numerous renowned and emerging artists, including performers such as hip hop artists Lyrics Born, Jin the Emcee and Apl.de.Ap of the Black Eyed Peas,

Also slated are former American Idol contestants Jasmine Trias and Jose "Sway" Penala, local favorites Native Elements and San Francisco Taiko Dojo, and community youth performers Chung Ngai Dance Troupe and Those Kids. Musicians, vocalists, dance groups and other enter-



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tainers will be encouraged to apply.

Community-based performers are being encouraged to apply. They must e-mail a brief biography/ resume, video and/or audio links, website/ facebook/ myspace or other applicable online supplementary material to Christine Padilla at AHSC.Artists@gmail.com.

Email subject line: Artists Submission/AHSC 2010

— Artist Name

Deadline: March 15, 2010

The reader can get more information and updates on AsianFairSF.com.

