

Three Quick Questions for the Kaura Family

DEB founding member Rebecca Quigley sat down with Kenilworth's own Kaura family to honor local Sears' voices on the occasion of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

Varsha and Ashish Kaura moved to the Chicago area in 1999 from New Delhi and have two children, Arjun (19) and Aanchal (13), who is an eighth-grader at Sears. Next year, Ashish will serve on the Sears School Board as a New Member.



Among the many insights they offered, here is one that stands out: “While we have formed a few strong relationships in the community, we also find it harder to establish a connection in many cases — perhaps the unconscious bias of seeking the company of one’s own kind gets in the way.”

1. Tell us about the Kaura Family (Parents: Varsha and Ashish, Arjun, 19 and Aanchal, 13)

We moved to Chicago from New Delhi, India, in 1999 so Ashish could attend the University of Chicago’s Booth School for his MBA. After business school, Ashish worked for Booz and BCG, most recently landing at Oliver Wyman as a partner in the healthcare practice. Varsha has built a 25-year career in advertising and is now leading the Mars client partnership as the Global Business Director for DDB; she leads teams in London, Chicago, Guangzhou, India, Mexico, and New York. We moved to Wilmette when we had our first child, Arjun, who is a New Trier graduate and a freshman at NYU studying economics. We moved to Kenilworth in 2016 on the recommendation of friends when our daughter, Aanchal, was starting third grade. It’s hard to believe Aanchal only has one more year at Sears!

2. How do you define “belonging?”

We believe belonging is when you feel comfortable in your community — when you can bring your authentic self and feel anchored to the neighborhood. A community where you do not have to work too hard to be accepted as social and cultural peers by your neighbors.

3. How can Sears increase belonging in the school community?

Aanchal has had a wonderful experience at Sears. We are grateful for the Sears school, and Ashish is excited to serve the community as a new School Board Member.

As individuals (and parents) who have grown up in a different country and a different culture, we look forward to contributing from a varied vantage point. While we have formed a few strong relationships in the community, we also find it harder to establish a connection in many cases - perhaps the unconscious bias of seeking the company of one’s own kind gets in the way. We are encouraged by the Sears school efforts over the past two years to improve a sense of equity and belonging in the community, and in turn, preparing our children better for an ever-evolving diverse world.



Kenilworth’s Kaura Family: From left to right, Arjun, Varsha, Ashish, and Aanchal.