

Meera Teresa Gandhi

"We are to the universe only as much as we give back to it."

**Meera Gandhi, founder of the Giving Back Foundation,
with operations in New York, London and Hong Kong.**

Mrs. Gandhi is a well known humanitarian and philanthropist dedicated to solutions for human suffering and deprivation around the globe. She is of Irish and Indian ancestry.

In the summer of 2010, she completed a film entitled "Giving Back," that shows how several of her well known friends are giving back to humanity in different ways. She produced, directed and hosted the documentary. The film, set in four continents, is a global journey that begins with the words of former U.S. first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, "*When we cease to give, we begin to die.*"

Quest Magazine hosted the premier screening of the film for a VIP audience of 150 at the Disney Screening Room on Park Avenue in New York City in July of 2010. The film is scheduled for a Fall 2010 release with DVD roll outs in New York, London, Mumbai, Delhi, Istanbul, Paris and Hong Kong.

Meera's "Giving Back" film features singer and global rights activist Bono; lawyer and human rights champion Cherie Blair, wife of former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair; human rights activist and daughter of Ethel and Robert Kennedy, Kerry Kennedy; Hillary Clinton, through the Eleanor Roosevelt Val Kill photo journey, and a host of well known faces from around the world.

Meera Gandhi will bring out a coffee table book in 2011. The "Giving Back" book will showcase the works of many more charities and people with whom she has been involved for the past 25 years. She works with several key women's and children's causes around the world.

She is noted for her life motto, "*We are to the universe only as much as we give back to it.*"

AFFILIATIONS AND HONORS

Meera Gandhi has served on the boards of several global organizations:

RNID. Appointed as Centennial Councillor for the Royal National Institute for the Deaf, UK, in February of 2010, under the Royal Patronage of His Highness Prince Philip.

Cherie Blair Foundation. Associated with this foundation for the advancement of women. Moderated their "Giving Back" Panel at global conference in Mumbai in December, 2009.

- Global Advisory Board of the Loomba Trust for widows since 2008.
- Association with the AUW- Asian University for Women in Bangladesh. Hosted event for founder Kamal Ahmed at Hong Kong home in 2009. (Featured in Tatler Magazine August issue, HK)
- Association with CRY children's rights, and Pratham program for street children in India, 2007.
- Board of FERI, The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute at Hyde Park, NY, 2002-2007.
- Board of ERVK - Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val Kill, Hyde Park, NY January 2002-2007.
- Appointed co-chairman of the United World Colleges based in USA. HRH Prince Pavlos of Greece chaired and HRH Queen Noor of Jordan is current patron. April 2005-2006.
- Trustee of the United World Colleges US Board since 2000.
- The United World Colleges in Pearson, Canada, 2003
- Digital Partners/Grameen Board since 2000 - 2007. Seattle-based organization that looks to close the digital divide between the developed and underdeveloped countries through entrepreneurial projects in India and other countries.
- Trustee of the board of I-Create, a nonprofit organization that creates jobs for Women in 22 villages of India. 2003 - 2004.
- Has worked closely with Mother Teresa's Asha Dan since 1978.
- Received Fulbright Humanitarian Award, June, 2007 in NYC.
- Honored by Wayuu Taya Foundation,
- co- honoree with CNN'S Soledad O'Brien in June, 2010.
- Named to Quest Magazine's Top 400 list, 2010.
- Humanitarian Award in Morocco, 2007, from King Muhammed VI presented by Dr. F Siddiqui.
- Hosted a Satsang at her residence for Swami Parthasathy 2006.
- Recipient of the SASA (South Asian Students Alliance) Humanitarian Award in Los Angeles in 2005.
- Former Goodwill Ambassador, CSRI, United Nations 2006-2007.
- Co-chair of the New York City Ballet Annual Luncheon February, 2006.
- Owner and founder of the International Play School of Mumbai 1997-2000.
- She spoke at the Fourth Annual Media, IT and Latin American Tele Conference at New York University on "Broadband: Leave No Child behind."
- Co-chair for Asia Society NY's "Asia On My Mind" event that raised over a quarter of a million dollars in June 2004.
- Hosted a fund raiser to help the Craft Center of Washington. This organization ensures the livelihood of artisans and crafts from developing countries, especially India, in 2003.

- Hosted fundraiser ERVK Girls Leadership with Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton 2003

ACADEMICS

Meera Gandhi completed the Executive Education Program from the Harvard Business School in December of 2007. She has an MBA from Boston University (1987-89), where she graduated in the top 5% of her MBA class with Beta Gamma Sigma honors. She has a Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Delhi (1982-85) where Meera was Student Body President in her final year 1984-85, and Vice President the previous year at the Jesus and Mary College. She is a graduate of the Lester B. Pearson, United World College (1982), Canada. There she obtained the International Baccalaureate diploma with honors.

In 1980, she finished her HSC exam (High School Certificate) from the Cathedral and John Connon School in Mumbai, India, with distinction. She was Head Girl (Student Body President) of the school and House Prefect. Meera Gandhi was an office Bearer of the Interact Club (a subsidiary of the Rotary Club) and acted as Director of Community Services. In that capacity, she visited and worked every weekend at 'Asha Dan' (Mother Teresa's home for the orphaned), The Blind Home and the Lepers' Home. Meera was awarded the PTA Medal for Leadership and The Jardine Shield for Head- Girl of the year 1979-80 from The Cathedral and John Connon School, Mumbai.

PERSONAL

Meera Teresa Gandhi was born in Mumbai, India, the daughter of an Irish mother, Ellen Mary McCarthy, and an Indian father, Admiral Perbodh Nath Agarwal. Teresa is Meera's Baptism name, after her Irish grandmother, Teresa Hogan McCarthy of Dublin, Ireland.

Raised mostly in India in the cities of Mumbai, Pune and Delhi, Mrs. Gandhi also spent childhood years in London and Dublin. She spent two years of her youth at school in Canada.

Meera has been married for the last 24 years to her high school sweetheart, Vikram Gandhi, a successful investment banker, Global Head of FIG at Credit Suisse Bank. After they were married, Meera and her husband Vikram came to the USA to do their MBA's together. They have three children: daughters Kiran 21, and Kanika, 17, and son Kabir, 13. Their children are currently full-time students in Wales, the USA and England.

In 2000, the Gandhi's purchased the former home of Eleanor Roosevelt on Park Avenue in New York City. They have hosted a long list of world leaders at their

historic residence, including: The Hon. Cherie Blair, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Rahul Gandhi, Kerry Kennedy, Robert Kennedy Jr., Gabriel Byrne, Glenn Close, Mira Nair, the late Ismail Merchant, Dr. Ruth Westheimer, CNN's Anderson Cooper, the late historian Arthur Schlesinger and many more.

The Gandhi's currently live in New York, Hong Kong and London.

Her hobbies and leisure activities include yoga, meditation, jogging and studying history, especially the writings of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. "History teaches one many lessons," said Mrs. Gandhi.

In the words of Kerry Kennedy, "Meera Gandhi is one of those remarkable women whom the angels must have sent to teach us a lesson on how to lead a fruitful life."

###

Updated September, 2010