



Press Release

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Global Volunteering Initiative Sewa Day Appoints Deputy Chair

Digital Media Entrepreneur, Founder & CEO of Redhotcurry.com, Mrs Lopa Patel MBE has been appointed Deputy Chair of global volunteering initiative Sewa Day to help spearhead the project's marketing strategy and primary schools programme. Sewa is the Sanskrit word for "selfless service" and since its launch in 2010 Sewa Day has exceeded all expectations with tens of thousands of people rendering their service to others. Last year, an estimated 50,000 people took part in over 20 countries under the three guiding principles of Sewa Day which are to alleviate human hardship, improve the environment and bring a little joy.

Arup Ganguly, Chairman of Sewa Day, said "we are delighted to welcome Lopa onboard to help support our ambitious plans to extend the universal concept of Sewa in schools. Head teachers have told us that the principles of Sewa Day fit well into the PSHE curriculum and augment the idea of citizenship in young minds. Sewa Day can also improve the liaison between the local community and the school and we hope that many more schools will join in this October". Sewa Day has partnered with the Guardian Teacher Network and is endorsed by UNESCO, the United Nations body for education, who stated that 'Sewa Day demonstrates a shared ethos with UNESCO - a common desire to foster stronger global community cohesiveness and the promotion of the ideal of selflessness.'

Lopa Patel, who is a Fellow of both the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM), the Institute of Direct Marketing (IDM), highlighted the positive impact of digital marketing stating that "social media platforms are vital to collaborative initiatives like Sewa Day. They provide the communications tools needed by individuals and voluntary groups trying to find us and each other. Part of fostering community cohesiveness is creating the support networks we all need and I hope that we can further extend our reach online with the fantastic team of volunteers who give their time and service so selflessly. Having been involved with Sewa Day since 2010, I look forward to working with the trustees, the team and army of volunteers and know that I will personally learn many new things along the way."

Sewa Day takes place on **Sunday 6th October 2013**



Notes for Editors:

About Lopa Patel MBE FCIM FIDM FRSA

Lopa Patel is a digital media entrepreneur and founder of the online South Asian Lifestyle portal Redhotcurry.com and ecommerce website TheRedhotshop.com. She is an experienced marketing consultant who previously set up the direct marketing services company DMS Direct Ltd, where she worked with international companies, charities and not-for-profit organisations, marketing agencies and SMEs in a broad range of industry sectors. She is a Chartered Marketer and Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM), the Institute of Direct Marketing (IDM) and the Royal Society for the Arts (RSA).

Lopa is currently a Non-Executive Director of EMBG (Ethnic Minority Business Group); a Trustee of educational charity Raha International and a Trustee of Diversity UK, an equality and inclusion think tank. She is also a Technology Ambassador for STEMNET, helping to encourage girls to take up Science careers. She was previously a Non-Executive Director of Becta (British Education Communications and Technology Agency); a Board Member of social enterprise venture TSBC (The Small Business Consultancy); a Board Member & Trustee of Tamasha Theatre Company and a Mentor for Young Enterprise UK, assisting girls on the national entrepreneurship programme.

Her strong record of achievement has been recognised throughout the industry via numerous accolades and she was recognised with an MBE for services to the creative industries in 2009.

Further details and images of Lopa can be found at www.lopapatel.com

About Sewa Day

The aim of Sewa Day is to provide people with a chance to give back to the community through volunteering on a single day to make a difference. As such each event organised must be based on at least one of the guiding principles: to relieve hardship and poverty, help the environment and to bring a little joy.

All the events take place on the same day or for schools during the week and do not include any fund-raising activities. Community groups, local councils, schools, temples, mosques and businesses have enlisted their support for this initiative. This year, **Sewa Day** takes place on **Sunday 6th October 2013** and individuals can volunteer for local projects through local partner organisations.

Sewa Day has been endorsed by HRH The Prince of Wales, the Prime Minister David Cameron, London Mayor Boris Johnson and former Prime Minister Tony Blair. It is actively supported by several UK Members of Parliament, including: Gavin Barwell MP, Bob Blackman MP, Mike Freer MP, Barry Gardiner MP, Steve Pound MP, Virendra Sharma MP, Gareth Thomas MP and Baroness Sandip Verma. Representatives from Councils already committed to Sewa Day include Cllr Vidhi Mohan (Croydon), Cllr Julian Bell (Ealing), Cllr Muhammad Butt (Brent) and Cllr David Parry (Harrow). Partners include Amnesty International, UNESCO, The Big Issue, Guardian Teacher Network, Gems Education Foundation, BT, Lloyds Banking Group and The Woodland Trust, among many others.

Sewa Day is a registered charity (no: 1146848). For further information visit www.sewaday.org | info@sewaday.org