

# Vistakon workers help make CASH a hit

The Vision Is Priceless Council participated in the Rita Foundation CASH Walk & 5K Nov. 19 in Metropolitan Park. The event raised nearly \$10,000 for the non-profit organization due to the extensive efforts of Vistakon employees, particularly those who are members of SAPNA, the Southeast Asian Professional Network Association.

SAPNA members, led by Abe Alangadan, created a number of teams, which consisted of walking members and pledging members. Employees of Vistakon, a Johnson & Johnson company, who pledged \$25 or more were matched two-to-one by Johnson & Johnson. More than 40 employees, family and friends completed the one-mile fun run.

"This was a great opportunity to help a non-profit organization that does good work in the community," said Alangadan. "Employees pitched in from all across the company and helped us reach a meaningful goal."

"We are so grateful for the assistance of Vistakon and especially SAPNA members," said Carol Baumer, executive director of VIP. "SAPNA did a beautiful job of raising awareness within Vistakon and ensuring all of the paperwork was completed prior to the event."

The Vision Is Priceless Council provides free vision screenings to children and adults in the community. The screenings are held at multiple locations including private and parochial schools, day care centers, libraries, fire stations, health fairs and many other places in Northeast Florida.

The screenings seek to identify those at risk for eye conditions or diseases. Anyone who needs further attention after a screening is referred to an eye care professional for a complete examination.

"VIP is a worthwhile organization," said Vandana Srinivas. "As current chair of SAPNA, I am pleased to be a part of such a great fund-raising event and I'm very happy with the commitment shown by Vistakon employees."

The event increased aware-



Special  
Vistakon employees, including members of the Southeast Asian Professional Network Association, join the Vision Is Priceless staff, family and friends for the CASH Walk & 5K.

## Vision Is Priceless VOICES

*Voices is a column by people and organizations that focuses on the activities and accomplishments of residents in their communities. If you would like to contribute, contact editor Phillip J. Milano at [phillip.milano@jacksonville.com](mailto:phillip.milano@jacksonville.com) or (904) 359-4483*

ness of the programs and services of VIP, especially within the Vistakon community.

"We created posters and T-shirts to get people motivated and excited about this event," said Alangadan. The result was participation by more than 200 people, either by pledging or walking.

Each Vistakon employee who donated \$25 or more received a

specially designed T-shirt with both the Vistakon and Vision Is Priceless logos on the back.

"The commemorative T-shirt enabled our group to stand out from the rest of the crowd," said Srinivas. "It also added to the camaraderie and enthusiasm of the walkers that day."

"Vision screening is very important for the health of our community, and this event helped raise needed funds to continue our work in the community," said Baumer said. "Vision health is vital to achievements in the workplace and in school. Best of all, most vision conditions and diseases may be successfully treated if they are identified early."

"It was a lot of hard work, but the end result was worth it," Alangadan said. "It just goes to show what a committed group of people are able to accomplish when they set their mind

to a goal and break it down into reasonable steps."

Alangadan and other SAPNA members demonstrated the power of group dynamics and the spirit of community service with a commitment that will have far-reaching effects in the community.

For more information on becoming a volunteer for the Vision Is Priceless Council or to schedule a free vision screening, call the council or visit its Web site.

**The non-profit Vision Is Priceless Council works to preserve the vision of Northeast Florida residents through programs such as free screening and early detection of potential eye disease. All VIP programs are funded through donations of individuals, corporations and organizations. For more information, call 308-2020 or visit [Jacksonville.com](http://Jacksonville.com), keywords: vision is priceless.**