MONTHLY EDITION · VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1 · FALL 2026 GREATER CAROLINA KERALA ASSOCIATION

കേരള പാരമ്പര്യത്തിൽ · കരോലൈന ഹൃദയത്തിൽ

GCKA Newsletter

A new chapter begins.

Meet your 2026–27 Board of Directors, see what's coming up, and find out how you can be part of it all.

IN THIS ISSUE · Editor's Desk · President's Message · Meet the Board · Malayalam Kalari · Upcoming Events · Sports & Youth · Kerala Corner · Volunteer · New Website · Community Board · Sponsors · We're Listening

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Welcome to the next chapter

As we turn the page, we begin with a heartfelt **thank you to our outgoing Board of Directors** for their time, commitment and service — and warm congratulations to our **new flag bearers** as they step forward to lead.

This chapter carries a simple mission: **bring our community closer together.** A GCKA that connects generations, celebrates our roots, creates more ways to belong, and runs with purpose, transparency and sustainability.

There's a lot to look forward to — new ideas, new experiences, and plenty of reasons to come together.

— **Das Radhakrishnan**
Web & Media Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Namaskaram, GCKA family!



It is an honor to serve as your President for 2026-27. Since 1987, GCKA has been the place where Malayali families across the Carolinas celebrate together, raise our children to be proud of their roots, and show up for one another.

This year, our board is focused on more ways for every generation to take part, a stronger voice for our youth, and an association that is open, transparent and easy to reach.

Onam, Kerala Piravi, Christmas, our tournaments and Malayalam Kalari belong to all of us. Come, bring a friend, and help shape what comes next.

Stronger Together,
Manaz Kuriyedath
President, GCKA 2026-27

A word from your Leadership

Our four commitments for 2026–27

Connect generations
Programs where grandparents, parents and kids all have a seat at the table.

Celebrate our roots
Keeping Kerala's language, art, food and festivals alive in the Carolinas.

Room to belong
More ways to participate, volunteer and lead — for newcomers and old friends.

Run with purpose
Transparent decisions and a sustainable GCKA for the next generation.

GCKA AT A GLANCE

400+ Families across the Triangle, Greensboro, Charlotte and beyond

1987 Serving since when the Kerala Association was formally born

26 Volunteer boards on record since 1998–2008

13 Magazine editions of Carolina Malayali since 2011

THIS ISSUE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY OUR DIAMOND SPONSOR
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ഭരണസമിതി 2026-27

Get to know your new Board

OFFICERS



PRESIDENT
Manaz Kuriyedath
Sullivan Battery, Wayanad · RTP area for 20 years
A technology professional who has called the RTP area home for the past 20 years. GCKA has been part of our family's journey — from soccer tournaments to my kids' cultural activities. After years of great memories and meaningful connections, I'm committed to giving back and helping our community grow stronger and stay connected.



VICE PRESIDENT
Laiby Boban
Angamaly, Kerala · North Carolina for 10 years
A Nurse Practitioner by profession, in my free time I enjoy floral and event décor, baking, dancing and fitness. I'm excited to give back to the community that has brought us so many wonderful memories and celebrations — and to bring creativity and enthusiasm to make our future events more memorable.



SECRETARY
Dhanya Narayanan
Tripunithura, Ernakulam · Also chairs Malayalam Kalari
Lawyer by profession, born-and-raised Malayali, happiest when surrounded by good people. I love celebrating our culture, building meaningful connections and creating beautiful memories together. Excited to be part of this wonderful community and looking forward to an amazing journey ahead!



TREASURER
Faizal Ibrahim
Idukki → Trivandrum · 6th year with GCKA
Originally from Idukki, later settled in Trivandrum for work. A technology professional who enjoys family time, traveling, hiking and pickleball. Grateful for the opportunity to serve, and looking forward to working together to keep our community connected, united and vibrant.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS



CULTURAL
Soumya Pillai
Alleyasy — Ayers
A techie by profession with a passion for dance and travel, and I truly enjoy bringing people together. Excited to bring my creativity and energy to this role while contributing in our community.
Members: Dhanya, Laiby, Rekha & Vineeth



YOUTH
Rekha Divakaran
Born & raised in Chicago · North Carolina for 10 years
A pharmacist and bioinformatician by profession, raised in a large Malayalee family. My passion has always been connecting our community and culture across generations — I'm excited to serve on the GCKA board, lead the Youth Committee, and help preserve our heritage while inspiring the next generation.
Members: Das, Dhanya & Soumya



SPORTS
Vineeth Mohan
Rooted in Trivandrum · Now calling NC home
Techie by profession, sports enthusiast by passion, Malayali at heart. Leading GCKA's sports activities while supporting community events — bringing people together and making GCKA more active, connected and welcoming.
Members: Aju, Das, Faizal & Manaz



FOOD
Aju Nair
Kottayam → Morrisville
No fancy hobby — simply watching movies and doing absolutely nothing! I love food but I'm also diet-conscious, which probably explains why I'm in charge of food for GCKA. Excited to bring good food, good vibes and great memories!
Members: Faizal, Manaz & Vineeth



MALAYALAM KALARI
Dhanya Narayanan
Also GCKA Secretary
Helping the next generation read, write and speak Malayalam — and stay connected to their roots.
Members: Laiby & Soumya



WEB & MEDIA
Mohanthas Radhakrishnan
Born in Thrissur · Raised in Coimbatore
A techie at heart with a love for sports and bringing people together. Excited to use our digital platforms to make GCKA feel more connected, welcoming and truly yours.
Members: Aju, Faizal & Soumya

MALAYALAM KALARI · ANNOUNCEMENT

CLASSES HAVE STARTED

Malayalam Kalari gets a Vibrant new look

We're making exciting changes to Malayalam Kalari this year — a brand-new online learning portal, livelier classes, and room for the whole family. Classes are already underway, and it's not too late to join.

What's new this year

- **New Kalari web portal** — class schedules, lessons, practice worksheets and announcements in one place, so students and parents can keep learning between classes.
- **Level-based classes** — from first letters (ആ, ഇ, ഈ…) to reading stories and writing with confidence, so every learner starts at the right place.
- **Learning through culture** — songs, stories, rhymes and Kerala traditions woven into every class.
- **Family learning** — parents and adults are welcome to learn right alongside the kids.

Read & write Malayalam · Speak with confidence · Kerala's culture & heritage · Friendships for life

Weekly classes schedule, location and more details are shared at registration · Chaired by Dhanya Narayanan with Laiby & Soumya

Register your kids or family · Explore the Kalari portal · Class details

ഓർമ്മകൾ · Memories

Looking back: a summer to remember

SAT, AUG 15, 2026 · GREEN LEVEL HIGH SCHOOL

Onam 2026

Our biggest celebration of the year brought families together for the stage, the sadya and the community we love. Thank you to every performer, volunteer and family who made it shine.

Highlights: cultural performances by every age group, the traditional Onam sadya, and a hall full of Malayali pride. Photos are coming soon to the **GCKA gallery**.

FRI, JUN 5, 2026 · CHATHAM COUNTY AGRICULTURE & CONFERENCE CENTER

സമാഗമം Samanvayam — Silver Jubilee

Our Silver Jubilee honored the people who built GCKA — the "Founding Architects" and the "Future Builders" — with an evening of stories, dinner and live music by Tunes of Feathers, under the theme "Vinnath Mohan."

Read the story →

COMMUNITY EVENTS MADE POSSIBLE BY OUR PLATINUM SPONSOR **Real Carolina Properties Inc.**

വരാനിരിക്കുന്നവ · പരിപാടികൾ

Mark your calendar

Full calendar at gcka.com/events →

Oct 1 · MEMBERSHIP
2026–27 Membership Year Opens
Renew or join to keep member pricing for Onam, Christmas and every GCKA event.

Oct · COMMUNITY
Halloween Costume Contest
Costumes for all ages and prizes for the most creative · Date & venue announced soon

Nov · CULTURE
Kerala Piravi · Ruchimelam Food Festival
A celebration of Kerala's birthday with home-style food from across Kerala · Date & venue announced soon

Nov · YOUTH · SERVICE
Youth Adopt-A-Highway (Fall)
Roadside clean-up near Holly Road Park, Apex · Ages 12+, parents as chaperones · Date announced soon

Dec · CULTURE
Cake Baking & Christmas Tree Contests
Show off your best bakes and holiday décor · Entry details and dates in the December issue

Jan · CELEBRATION
Christmas & New Year Celebration
Carols, cultural programs and dinner to welcome 2027 together · Date & venue announced soon

കായികം · Sports Corner

Ten sports. Every age from 6 to Legends.

What a 2026 season it's been — thank you to every player, captain and cheering family.

- Volleyball Tournament 2026
- 5K Family Fun Run & Walk 2026
- Cricket Tournament 2026
- Legends, Youth & Kids Soccer 2026

Next up: Indoor Soccer this winter · Want a new sport added? Tell Vineeth's team.

All GCKA sports →

യുവജനം · Youth Corner

Connect. Serve. Lead. Belong.

Our youth are one of GCKA's proudest stories — and they run it themselves.

- The Youth Forum has elected its own Youth Board every year since 2011
- In 2024, our youth organized GCKA's first Youth Day entirely on their own
- Adopt-A-Highway every spring and fall — ages 12+, with volunteer hours recorded for every student

Youth spotlight: starting next month, we'll celebrate a young member's achievement in every issue — nominate a young one at **info@gcka.com!**

Join the Youth Forum →

DID YOU KNOW?

Kerala Piravi · November 1

Kerala was formed on November 1, 1956, uniting the Malayalam-speaking regions into one state. We celebrate it every year — with food, of course — at Ruchimelam.

MALAYALAM WORD OF THE MONTH

ഒരുമ

oruma · unity, togetherness
Try it this month: "നമ്മളെ ഒരുമയാണ് കരുത്ത്" — *our unity is our strength.*

CAROLINA MALAYALI

Calling writers & artists

Our annual magazine, written, illustrated and designed by our own community since 2011. Start working on your stories, poems, art and photos for the next edition — submission details are coming soon.

Read Nerkazhcha! (2024–25) →

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

GCKA is powered by you

Help at an event, share a skill, or bring a new idea — every contribution matters. And fix our youth. This is your community too. Volunteer, build friendships, and take the lead.

Get involved. Make a difference. Let's build GCKA together.

Volunteer with us — info@gcka.com

Coming to your inbox every month

The GCKA Newsletter is now **monthly** — board updates, event news, member spotlights, youth achievements and local businesses, all in one place.

Know a family who'd love this? Forward it on — every new reader makes our community stronger.

Get on the mailing list

Help us reach every Malayali family in the Carolinas

Welcome every newcomer
New to the Carolinas? A warm GCKA hello is waiting for you.

Reach beyond the Triangle
More families in Greensboro, Charlotte and beyond.

Lift up local businesses & events
Free community listings in every issue — see the Community Board.

Give our youth a bigger stage
More chances for young members to lead and shine.

Follow on Facebook · Subscribe on YouTube

WEB & MEDIA · SNEAK PEEK · WORK IN PROGRESS

A brand new gcka.com is on its way

We're revamping our website into a true community portal — one place for events, membership, Malayalam Kalari, youth, sports, our photo gallery and the Carolina Malayali archive. It isn't finished yet, but we'd love for you to take an early look and tell us what you think.

Events & calendar · Membership & member login · Malayalam Kalari registration · Photo gallery · Carolina Malayali archive

What would you like to see in the portal?
Features, pages, fixes, or anything that would make GCKA easier to follow and join — every idea helps shape what we build.