

## “Gurupurnima Celebrations at Arsha Vijnana Gurukulam, Washington DC: by Chris Almond”



Pujya Sri Swamiji Dayanandaji inaugurates

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We are happy to announce  
that Pujya Swamiji will be formally inaugurating the new Gurukulam  
in the D.C. Metro area  
on Saturday 11th September  
from 10:30am-1.30 pm

## Program

**10-10:30 am Ceremonial Welcome of Pujya Swamiji and Pada Puja**

**10:30-11:00 am Chanting of Avahanti Mantra and other Shlokas**

**followed by Arati of Lord Dakshinamurti**

**by Pujya Swamiji**

**11am-12.00 pm Talk by Pujya Swamiji**

**12-12.30 pm Q and A Session and Prasadam Distribution**

**12.30-1.30 pm Lunch and Farewells**

On Guru Purnima day, we saluted and honored the unbroken lineage of knowledge, where the presence of Sage Vyasa, whose birthday falls on Guru Purnima, is the oldest link. We offered *abhishekam* and chanting the Sri Rudram to Lord Dakshinamurti, the symbol of the highest truth and knowledge. Those assembled then chanted the 108 names of the Lord. This ritualistic bathing and chanting of a *murthi* of the Lord, represented a beautiful connection to everything wonderful in our tradition: devotion, prayer, the *guru-shishya parampara*, and self-knowledge.

We then offered our worship to Pujya Swamiji's *padukas* through the traditional chanting of Gurupadukastotram and the newer 108 names of His Holiness. The group shared in the excitement of having this new form of prayer available to us, and having a beautiful English translation for each of the names.

Finally, our Guru, Sadhviji, whose glories could file 08 names other own, sat before us and spoke of the meaning and significance of Guru Purnima. This day celebrates the living lineage of teachers today. Sadhviji quoted the second verse of Guru Stotram and translated it to show the significance of the guru and the teaching tradition. The guru removes the cataracts of ignorance with the ointment of knowledge to awaken one to the understanding that one is the whole.

On this day, and in this way we worshiped the tradition, the *parampara*, and all the teachers became an altar for worship. In her concluding remarks, Sadhviji said that without this knowledge, life is really not worth leading. Such a true statement; with the knowledge born from the removal of the cataracts of ignorance by the hand of the guru, we can live a life of peace and limitless.

*by Chris Almond*