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- [Dharma Life Project](#)
- [NetSeva \(Service\) Project](#)
- [Samskar Newsletter](#)
- [NetOHM](#)
- [Global Dharma Conference](#)
- [Hindu Women Project](#)
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- [Savants and Scholars on HSC](#)
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Password :

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Content

- [Festivals](#)
- [Philosophy](#)
- [Prayer](#)

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Press Release Note.

HSC-NetOHM 15th Annual Camp inspires Hindu youth to follow a spiritual lifestyle

Press Release – For Immediate Release

For more information:

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Photographs:

1. [Group Photo of all the camp attendees](#)
2. [A fun sports session](#)
3. [An enchanting talk by Jeffery Armstrong](#)

HSC-NetOHM 15th Annual Camp inspires Hindu youth to follow a spiritual lifestyle

"One should not work towards making a life, one should work towards perfect living."

This was amongst the messages expressed by Jeffrey Armstrong, the keynote speaker at the 15th Annual Hindu Students Council (HSC) National Camp in Yorkville, Illinois. The camp was co-sponsored by HSC and the Network of Hindu Minds (NetOHM) over this past Memorial Day Weekend (May 27th through May 30th, 2005) at the beautiful Hoover Outdoor Education Center campsite in the suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. The 80 camp participants represented over 25 HSC and NetOHM chapters all over the United States. The three-day camp began informally on Friday night with conversations over dinner and singing by a campfire. The majority of the weekend included morning yoga and meditation sessions, seminars on various aspects of Hindu Dharma, discussions, team building activities, satsangs, a community dinner, campfires, a cultural show, and a garba/bhangra program. The camp concluded three days later on Monday afternoon with a trip to the newly constructed BAPS Swaminarayan Hindu temple in Bartlett, Illinois.

Samir Rawal, HSC National President, warmly welcomed the attendees and set the stage for the camp by stating that as we all strive to better ourselves via education and personal growth, we must also make

positive and selfless contributions to others and the society in which we live. All of the attendees gained knowledge about Hindu Dharma through a three-hour module presented at the camp called "A Youth's Guide to Hindu Dharma". This new program's mission is to introduce the basics of Hindu heritage to both a beginner and intermediate level learner. The principle tenets, practices, and philosophies of Hindu Dharma were discussed as well as the organization of the main religious texts. Other topics included Hindu society in ancient times, goals of life according to Hindu dharma, and symbolism and vocabulary in Hindu Dharma. In addition to learning the basics of Hindu Dharma, the participants discovered how to relate the teachings of Hindu Dharma to their personal lives.

HSC was fortunate to have Jeffrey Armstrong, a charismatic international speaker and an author, among them for the entire weekend. Jeffrey Armstrong's three formal sessions included "Jyotisha (Astrology) and Relationships", "The United Hindu Dharma and Vedic Identity", and "Hindu, Bindu and Sindhu: Issues in Global Hindu Dharma". Along with his formal sessions, he engaged the participants in lively and informal conversations throughout the camp. Mr. Armstrong challenged today's Hindu youth to 'walk the talk' in terms of practicing Hindu Dharma and being assertive representatives and speakers for the Hindu society. Jeffrey Armstrong was a true motivational force for the youth – a testament that the knowledge of the Vedas is not just for those who devote their lives to it, but for each and every person, regardless of cultural background, age, or ethnicity. "Lovingly known as Kavindra Rishi, his beautiful and entertaining poems truly lived up to his name," said Vishaal Gupta from Orlando, Florida, one of the camp organizers.

Some of the other highlights of the camp were presentations done by HSC Leaders on various topics such as "Contributions of Hindus to Human Civilization" by Nikunj Trivedi, "6 Heroic Epochs of Hindu History" by Ravi Raghavan and "Hinduism in American Classrooms" by Harshavardhan Vellanki. The HSC camp participants were not only educated, energized, and inspired to grow on a spiritual level, but were also given the opportunity to develop leadership skills and enhance teamwork. Attendees were divided into different "Hindu kingdoms" and were expected to use their listening, management, and cooperation skills to work together at various team games.

In order to enhance the knowledge imparted regarding Hindu basics and relation to personal growth, a request was made to the students and young professionals to use the knowledge to make positive contributions to society. Participants had the unique opportunity to hear the first hand experiences of people struggling to overcome the suppression and genocide of minority religious groups internationally. The students were asked to appeal to local government officials to increase international awareness regarding these issues and provide support to the minority religious groups being affected in areas such as Bangladesh.

"In the end, all the camp participants left with a great deal of camaraderie amongst themselves, a thirst for more knowledge about Hindu Dharma and heritage, and a spark to bring about positive change in the world. It was fabulous to have a highly spiritual group of people come together as a family for the entire weekend," concluded Pooja M Jain, a local camp organizer from Chicago, Illinois.

HSC is an international forum providing opportunities for college students and young professionals to learn about Hindu heritage through various activities, events and projects. HSC presents ample

opportunities for self-development at the spiritual and professional level via campus study groups, seminars, lectures, workshops, conferences and camps. With 77 chapters in North America and several inspired chapters around the world, HSC is the largest Hindu youth movement outside of India. For more information, please visit www.hscnet.org or email us at hsc@hscnet.org

NetOHM is an organization of young professionals of every religion, caste or creed who wants to mould their life according to the tenets of Hindu philosophy and Ayurveda for a wholesome and lively existence. NetOHM is centered on different cities with branches where members congregate to have social gathering, practice meditation and discuss various philosophical attributes of Vedic style of existence and their implications in our day-to-day existence. For more information, please visit www.netohm.org

"HSC is an international forum providing opportunities for students and youth to learn about Hindu heritage and culture."

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