

Using Her Talents and Gifts for Good

Spirit of Generosity

Anjali Chandra '08

Anjali has many talents. She is the principal violist in Girls Preparatory School's orchestra, collaborative honors orchestra with McCallie School in its elite string ensemble, Tango. She was selected to play viola for the All State orchestra in April (after a tough, state level audition). Even after a decade of studying the arts, however, Anjali said her greatest drive is to use her gifts to connect with and help others. Her dream, she said, is to play music and dance in healing sessions for victims of human trafficking, prostitution and other abuses through Maiti Nepal, an organization founded to support Nepali women.

At age 5, she began volunteering with her mother at nursing homes and has been helping her parents at community kitchens "since she was old enough to splash peanut butter and jelly on bread," her mother said.

When Anjali turned 8, her mother, Lotika Chandra said, she asked friends attending her birthday party to bring paper towels, toothpaste and other donations for the Ronald McDonald House instead of presents. In sixth grade, after years of visiting India with her family and seeing underprivileged children in threadbare clothing, to help support their families Anjali started GlobalEXCEL, a charitable nonprofit to extend educational opportunities to them. She used her birthday party that year as an impromptu fundraiser, resulting in more than \$2,000 in donations to the organization.

In the last couple of years, Anjali has contributed her time, energy and artistic talents to many programs at home and abroad.

During other trips to India, she has taught classes in English and basic computer skills at schools set up through government funding and by various organizations. She has helped teach piano and recorder lessons to students at The Salvation Army School of Music & Art and taught a cultural education class to students in the East Lake community.

In addition to her performing acumen, Anjali also is a good student. In 2012 her science project on the ties between aluminum compounds and birth defects in brine shrimp won second place in the regional science fair, earning her a trip to the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Pittsburgh. This year (2013) she finished third in the Sweepstakes, receiving a \$200 academic scholarship, and placed second in the UTC Scholarship Award competition. She also received the Army Award for Life Sciences. Her project involved an investigation of potential therapies for pancreatic cancer, specifically seeing which Garlic Derivative, Diallyl Disulfide or Diallyl Trisulfide, would demonstrate the greatest anti-cancer effect on pancreatic cancer. She learned basic laboratory techniques at UTC and at the University of Minnesota Department of Surgery.

Anjali has been selected to be the editor for the GPS School magazine "Spectrum" for this year. She will also be the president of "Amnesty International, GPS Chapter." She received three activity awards at GPS for 2013: Red Cross Youth Volunteer Award, GPS Director's Award for Music, and the Science Activity Award for High School. She won "honorable mention" for the State of Tennessee in the National Peace Essay contest. (Each state chooses 2 students for awards; one is the first place winner and the second one gets an honorable mention.)

Most recently Anjali organized a successful bone marrow drive on June 8 for a doctor from Stanford University who has leukemia. She said she will measure her future success on her ability to help others, whether as a doctor – a goal shared by her physician parents – a dancer, a musician or some combination of the three.

Included are excerpts from story by Casey Phillips at the [Times Free Press](#), Sept. 25, 2012

