

AN EXTRAORDINARY VOLUNTEER AND LEADER

Weston Resident Kamala Anandam's Remarkable Journey

By Joy Rodenberg

Kamala was born and grew up in India. She went to school and college in the city of Chennai. Besides earning an undergraduate degree in Chemistry, Kamala learned to play tennis there and became an avid player up until 2023.

After college graduation, she worked for two years as a social worker. Circumstances took her away from her job to take care of her older siblings' kids, a very customary practice in India in those years. During that period, she eloped, marrying Ernest Anandam and thus avoiding an arranged wedding. She gave birth to two daughters. After being a stay-at-home mom for several years, she resumed working as a teacher and a social service agent helping women in villages under the auspices of a university. She was selected then to do her Master's Degree in Child Development at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. After graduation, she went back to India and established the Department of Child Development for the University.

Meanwhile, her husband also did his Master's Degree in Microbiology at UT and was hired by the university hospital right away. That allowed Kamala and her daughters to move to the US permanently in 1967. Kamala then obtained her Doctorate Degree in Educational Psychology. She taught two years each at Maryville College, Tennessee and Bethune-Cookman College, Florida. She then joined Miami Dade College as a research specialist for its Open College. After a few years, she established a new department of Educational Technology and led the department until she retired in 1998. During those years, she led two multi-institutional projects in developing computer systems basic skills courses.

In 1985, she lost her beloved husband, Ernest. She felt that the whole world was closing in on her until IBM selected her as a consulting scholar for two years. When she was back at Miami Dade College, she was asked by her colleagues, "So, what did you find out in those two years?" Her response was, "There is more to me than I thought there was."

The best compliment she received for all her accomplishments at Miami Dade College was from her college President, who said, "If only we could clone Kamala, we could do a great deal more."

After retiring in 1998, she bought a home in Weston in 1999 and began her retirement life. By joining the Weston Friends Club, Weston Tennis Club, and Weston Philharmonic Society (now Weston Music Society), she formed her circle of friends.

As a member of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) since 1995, Kamala established a branch in Weston in 2007 and served as its president for 18 years. Under her leadership, numerous projects were undertaken to advance equity for women and girls.

Kamala is a charter member of the Women's History Museum, a member of the Broward League of Women Voters, the Broward Sierra Club, Broward International Women's Club, Weston Music Society and Weston Friends Club. She serves on the advisory Council for the Area Agency on Aging Broward County. She was inducted into the Broward County Women's Hall of Fame and

Senior Hall of Fame. She also received the Achievement Award from the Florida Commission on the Status of Women and the Platinum Circle Award from the Weston Music Society.

She is fond of saying her motto is, "Live and Learn and hopefully, I do both."

