

Candidate Statement

Please email this statement to SSSC_Election@armaninoLLP.com by midnight Pacific Time on Friday, August 26, 2022. Please include a recent photo of yourself to be displayed to voters.

Instructions

1. Please respond to each question individually in the boxes provided.
2. Please answer each individual question. A general narrative/essay/story/letter will not be accepted.
3. Armanino will review your statement. If your statement is found to contain incomplete and/or inappropriate content, you will be asked to remove, revise, or update the content. "Inappropriate content" includes, but is not limited to, derogatory and/or inflammatory statements.
4. Several of the questions are identical to those asked of Candidates in previous elections. If you also submitted a statement in a different election, it is permissible to reuse your previous answers to those particular questions.

Personal Information

Name:	Amrit Singh Khalsa
City & State/Country:	Plaistow, NH, USA
Email:	amritphd@gmail.com
Name of Spouse:	Esther Shilo
Occupation:	CEO of KRI
Length of Participation in 3HO/Sikh Dharma:	33 years
Length of time as an Ordained Minister of Sikh Dharma:	About 20

Are you a KRI certified teacher or trainer? If so, what is your certification level and when did you acquire your certification?	I have been a KRI lead trainer since 2011.
Ashram Communities lived in:	Eugene, OR; Espanola, NM; Los Angeles, CA; Millis, MA.
3HO/Sikh Dharma Community Positions:	<p>I was the IT manager with Golden Temple Natural Products starting in 1996. I stayed with our family of businesses, working at Sun & Son and Akal Security and then the various Corporate Management teams that oversaw all the businesses and non-profits.</p> <p>I was in that corporate management role until 2007. Between then and 2017, I volunteered on the KRI board of directors, the Yoga for Youth board of directors, and the Guru Ram Das Center for Medicine and Humanology board of directors. I was a teacher and a trainer for Yoga West in Los Angeles, and a trainer with Seventh Chakra Yoga in Huntington Beach.</p> <p>In 2017, I was hired by KRI as the Executive Director for Teacher Training, and become the CEO in 2020.</p>

Questionnaire

1. Why do you feel called to serve on the SSSC Board?

I have been working my entire career for this community - some as a

volunteer and some as an employee. I care deeply about our community. I am passionate and driven to help as many people as possible with the techniques and teachings that Yogi Bhajan shared.

2. What relevant areas of experience and expertise qualify you for this position and will make you an asset to the board?

- I spent more than 7 years performing an equivalent role to what the SSSC does now in our family of organization (1999-2007),
- I have extensive non-profit and for-profit board experience
- I would come in with a deep and long-term understanding of our organizations.
- Executive level experience in both non-profits and for-profit businesses, both within our family of companies and outside
- As a member of the KRI staff, I'd bring a much more detailed perspective on this specific constituent organization to the deliberations of the SSSC. Which is a perspective that I think all of the SSSC should have - it would be less top-down and more supportive and more in tune with the real needs of the organizations it oversees if each constituent org collaborated to run the SSSC.

3. Please summarize your prior and current service to the Dharma. If you have served in leadership positions please note them.

I became a certified Kundalini Yoga teacher in 1991 and began teaching classes immediately.

As soon as I graduated from university in 1996, I became the IT manager with Golden Temple Natural Products. I stayed with our family of businesses, working at Sun & Son and Akal Security and then the various Corporate Management teams that oversaw all the businesses and non-profits.

I was in that corporate management role until 2007. Between then and 2017, I volunteered on the KRI board of directors, the Yoga for Youth board of directors, and the Guru Ram Das Center for Medicine and Humanology board of directors. I was a teacher and a trainer for Yoga West in Los Angeles, and a trainer with Seventh Chakra Yoga in

Huntington Beach.

In 2017, I was hired by KRI as the Executive Director for Teacher Training, and become the CEO in 2020.

4. Please describe your experience of the Siri Singh Sahib as a teacher and your experience of his teachings.

Yogi Bhajan gave me my various work roles from 1996 to 2004. He arranged both of my marriages. I have found in my own life, and in the lives of hundreds if not thousands of students that I've taught, that what he taught has made a huge and positive contribution.

5. Please describe what the Siri Singh Sahib's saying means to you: "If you cannot see God in all, you cannot see God at all." In practical terms:

- a) How would you apply this saying in your day to day service on the board?
- b) How would apply this perspective to help our community and organizations move forward together?

God is not a thing, God is not an idea, God is not found in some place and not others. God is not separate from us. God is not separate from any person on the planet. God is reflected in every person, every animal, every rock, every atom but cannot be contained in any of them. God is the entirety of the known AND the unknown.

Unfortunately, our human minds find that concept challenging to grasp, so we continue to judge, and to separate, and to act as if some people, some things, some ideas, some actions are more "Godly" than others.

I would hope that myself, and the entire SSSC board, would endeavor to embody the lived reality that God is only found in the entirety, not the separate pieces. Because just parroting the quote is not enough. Intellectually understanding it is not enough. The real challenge is

to be living it all the time.

6. What do you understand the Role of the SSSC to be? How do you see the SSSC carrying out that role on a:

- a) Practical level
- b) Spiritual level

I think that the fundamental role of the SSSC is to serve and help as many people as possible with the teachings that Yogi Bajan shared. On a practical level, I am not so attached to the specific structures we would use to achieve that. The goal is to pass on a spark of consciousness, of awakened awareness, and the many, many amazing tools to help do that. As times change, the ways to do that need to adapt as well.

I am not saying we should change the teachings (despite some rumors to the contrary, KRI is still maintaining the complete Library of Teachings, so Yogi Bajan's exact words and videos are maintained. And our trainings and manuals are still about Yogi Bajan's teachings - not changing them or dropping them). I am saying that, just like Akal Security was a great community asset for many years, and then circumstances changed and its role as a security company came to an end, HOW we share the teachings needs to adapt to the times.

On a more practical level, I think the SSSC should not be a top down organizing setting the direction for the constituent organizations. I think it should be a support organization, helping each of the constituent organizations achieve their missions.

7. As an SSSC Trustee you are accountable to the Sangat.

- a) How would you build and enhance the relationship between the Sangat and the SSSC?
- b) The SSSC is part of a close knit community. Given that board members are likely to have strong connections to that community, explain how you will be able to adhere to the SSSC confidentiality policies that apply to board members?

I don't know enough about how the SSSC is working now to give very specific responses, but in my time at KRI, I've increased transparency, increased dialogue and communication with the trainers, opened up participation in working groups and voting on teacher training policies. I would bring that same spirit to the SSSC to increase transparency, openness, and participation.

About confidentiality, I have years of experience in keeping confidentiality, and I don't have concerns about keeping with SSSC policies. I think I also have enough experience that if I feel that current policies are unfair, or stifling our organization and community's flourishing, I'd not be shy about pushing for a policy change (while sticking with the existing ones until there was a change of course).

8. The SSSC strives to practice diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- a) What experience do you have incorporating these practices into your personal and professional life?
- b) How would you incorporate them into our Organizations?
- c) How will you advance the organizational goals of diversity, equity and inclusion?

Under my guidance, KRI has adopted a set of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals - which boil down to the desire to have our teachers, trainers, staff, and board reflect the broader communities that we serve. I don't think we can really fulfill our mission (to help as many people as possible with the teachings that Yogi Bajan shared) if we don't achieve this.

The exact role between SSSC and the individual organizations needs to be examined before I could answer the question about how the SSSC board would advance DEI objectives within each organization. While I personally think that this work is very important, I don't know if the responsibility for the DEI work of each organization sits with SSSC.

The SSSC itself does need to focus on the areas in which it operates - like the composition of the SSSC board of trustees itself. It remains very much NOT diverse. I would work to examine which are the important dimensions of diversity to address first (geographic representation for example seems to me to be one of the biggest areas - to make the SSSC board less US-centric).

9. How do you see the 3HO/Sikh Dharma family of Nonprofit and For-profit organizations serving humanity in these times?

a) What do you see as the three (3) greatest challenges facing the Sikh Dharma/3HO Community and the family of For-profit and Nonprofit entities?

b) What would you do as a Trustee to overcome these challenges?

c) What skills, tools, and techniques will you bring to the SSSC Board of Trustees to help it move toward the vision you described above?

The schisms being caused in our community by the 2020 allegations, and the many implications that is causing, are our biggest challenges. Adapting to today's world (post-COVID, more yoga online, rampant uncertainty all across the world) so that the teachings we are trying to share reach and impact as many people as possible is another huge challenge.

I think the biggest things I would bring to these challenges are my commitments to dialogue and inclusivity. I don't think anyone in our community should be shunned or shamed or made to not feel welcome - not matter what they practice and no matter what they believe Yogi Bhanjan did or did not do. I don't believe that this election will either save or destroy "the dharma." Not everyone will choose to relate to our organizations or our community -and that is fine. We don't need to vilify anyone for staying or leaving or relating in the way that they want.

I am looking towards the future. I think we will never all agree on a single narrative about Yogi Bhanjan (what he did or did not do) - and

I'm fine with that! I don't think this election is about saving the dharma or one group of candidates destroying it if they win. I think it boils down to, "Are we centering the person of Yogi Bhajan, or are we centering his teachings?" I am for centering his teachings. I am running with a group of other candidates who think similarly (of course we disagree on many things, and each of our own unique priorities!).

I think we can begin to move forward together by focusing on what we do agree on - a love of Kundalini Yoga and the Shabd Guru, a desire to serve and uplift people with those tools, etc. We don't all have to agree on everything in order to come together in the spirit of service.

I would be working to build a community where everyone who wants to be part of it feels safe and welcome. We would focus on promoting Yogi Bhajan's teachings, and allow each individual to relate to him as they want.

10. Board service regularly requires 20 to 40 hours per month (or more) in evening and weekend board and committee meetings. These meetings are generally held at 8:00 pm Eastern time (20:00 hours). In addition, there may be multiple Face-to-Face meetings per year.

- a. Can you fulfill these requirements?
- b. If so, how will you balance these requirements with your other personal and professional responsibilities?
- c. What do you anticipate being the most difficult part of serving as a Trustee on the SSSC Board?

Yes, I can. I have the support of the KRI board to balance this work with my KRI work. Though I do believe that the role and scope of the SSSC board can be examined and such a huge amount of volunteer time should be able to be reduced. Doing this will be critical to expanding the pool of people even willing to serve on the board.

It seems like there are so many challenges, it is hard to say what the most difficult part would be! Wrestling with very challenging issues, with a very large board that probably will have very different visions

for how to move forward would be organizationally and personally challenging on many levels.

11. Are you related by blood or marriage to an officer, director, employee, or paid contractor of any of the constituent organizations (nonprofit or for-profit) including all subsidiaries?

a. If yes, to whom are you related, how are you related to them, and what is their position?

No.