



Jyoti Sinha

Founder and President, South Asian Workers' Center

Dr. Jyoti Sinha is faculty with the Sociology Department/Honors College at the University of Massachusetts-Boston.

She is the Founder and President of the South Asian Workers' Center-Boston (SAWC-Boston), a resource and home for the South Asian diaspora within New England.

Her current work at SAWC-Boston is inspired by her own journey as a South Asian Immigrant. When she arrived in the US, she was eager to forward her career, but one of the most challenging things was feeling so divided from her community back home and feeling the pain of her old identity and new identity pulling within her. To her, SAWC means a celebration of both home cultures and new identity—we do not just provide food with our food bank; we provide food that can be used for South Asian cooking. We do not just provide mental health awareness sessions; we provide it with an understanding of cultures where mental health is a topic we typically do not discuss. She believes the immigrant story can be a very shared experience, but that a space is needed for individuals to feel supported in their own unique journey. Her academic writing takes a feminist approach to explore immigrant and racial minority experience, typically using 1 on 1 interview and narrative presentation methods to report the complexity and uniqueness due to human lives. Her current projects focus on her past research on the women coalminers from Jharkhand state in India. She is also working on her ongoing work with South Asian women developing their home economic skills into business ventures in Greater Boston, and the fight for nannies rights in the New England region.

Jyoti was born in India and lived there for most of her life until moving to the US, where she has now lived for 14 years. She bounces between the two countries often to visit family and to conduct research. She is a mother of two young kids, a ten-year-old son, Kuvam, and a four year old daughter, Dakshita. Kids are her strength and reason to do everything she does in life, both professional and personal. She loves singing Bollywood music as it is a great stressbuster for her. Her partner is a MIT grad who is working with UK-based *QS World University Rankings* and often bounces between India and Boston.

- **Leadership Superpower:** “My leadership superpower is my ability to start at the ground level, do the work myself, and in that way get a thorough understanding of the needs, before translating an understanding of those needs to others and thus facilitating the building up of a community.”

- **What brings her joy:** Being with her children brings her joy, as well as cooking, singing and reading.
- **Theme Song:** “At the risk of sounding silly, I will choose the Pokémon theme song. I chuckle at myself for this suggestion, but I can’t help feeling that the lyrics resonate with my experience. *‘I have traveled across the land, searching far and wide....to understand the power that’s inside...you teach me, and I’ll teach you...’* It is a very feminist song if you think about it.”