



# ZANC MONTHLY BUZZ



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We invite you to share your life updates for inclusion in future newsletters.

[Email us](#) your news so we can celebrate these milestones together with the community.

**All content must be received by the 20th of the month to be included in next month's edition. Thank you! We look forward to hearing from you.**

## Editor's Note

Dear ZANC Community,


As we move into the winter months, it's comforting to know that both of this month's events will be indoors! First up is a cooking demo with Mrs. Jokhi, who will be teaching a class of 45 students how to make Dar-ni-Pori (and hoping to create some experts). Later this month, our popular Halloween Costume Contest makes its return - and this year it's extra special. Thanks to a generous anonymous donation covering prizes and food, the event is completely FREE. Looking forward to seeing some creative outfits!

October is National Book Month, so it is only fitting that we highlight a highly accomplished Parsi author, Thrity Umrigar, whose works have touched readers with their rich storytelling and cultural insight. Also in this month, we congratulate three local ladies who are the recipients of the FEZANA scholarships. Finally, in our spotlight section, we bid a fond farewell to a very beloved Bay Area couple Roshan and Khushrow Mistry. They have lovingly catered numerous ZANC events and we wish them all the best as they begin their new chapter in Missouri. 🎃 Happy Reading 🎃





## ATTENTION ALL YOUTH!! SAVE THE DATE

**The Zoroastrian Youth of North America Annual Retreat is heading to Chicago in 2026**

 Feb 13–16, 2026

 Ages 15–35

 Get ready to celebrate a weekend of friendship, culture, and moments you'll cherish forever.

 More details coming soon - stay updated via the [ZYNA Instagram Page](#).

## FUTURE EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

DATE / TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
Sun, Oct 5th, 2 - 5 pm	Dar-ni-Pori Cooking Class	Dar-e-Mehr
Sat, Oct 25th, 5:30 pm	Halloween Costume Contest & Movie Night	Dar-e-Mehr
Sat, Nov 8th, 5 pm	Bingo and Biryani	Dar-e-Mehr
Sun, Dec 7th, 11 am	Something-per-eeedu Contest	Dar-e-Mehr



**GET INVOLVED!** ZANC events rely heavily on volunteer support to run smoothly, and every helping hand makes a difference. Whether it's setting up, helping during an event, or cleaning up after, your time and efforts are always appreciated. Volunteering is a great way to stay connected, give back, and help create meaningful experiences for the whole community.

**To volunteer, please contact Events Coordinator at [events@zanc.org](mailto:events@zanc.org)**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## HALLOWEEN COSTUME PARTY AND MOVIE NIGHT



IT'S A FREE EVENT THIS YEAR!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Come join us for a festive evening of:

- 👻 A Spook-tacular Costume Contest
- 🎬 A Magical Movie Night
- 🍕 Pizza & 🍦 Ice Cream Treats

**Date:** Saturday, October 25th

**Time:** 5:30 PM

**Location:** Dar-e-Mehr

**Note:** This event is for members only. Registration is required and limited to the first 60 members

## BINGO, BANTER & BIG WINS

**Date:** Saturday, Nov 8th

**Time:** Bingo 5 - 7 pm (followed by dinner)

**Place:** Dar-e-Mehr

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER BY NOV 3rd](#)

### **Ticket Prices:**

Adults (10+) - \$15

Children (5-10) - \$10

Kids under 5 - Free

**Space is Limited**

**Buy your tickets  
soon to claim a spot!**

**NOTE:** This is a members only event. (Members may register visiting family who reside outside the Bay Area at member rates)





# RECENT EVENTS



The ever popular Ghambar, held on Sept 27th, drew a crowd of 200+ people who came together to feast and enjoy the evening. A heartfelt thanks to the **ZANC BOARD**, the generous **donors** who provided the raw materials, and the dedicated **volunteers** who worked tirelessly to purchase and prepare the food. And a special shout out to our rocking DJ, **Sarosh Patel**, for adding that extra zing to the night!

## ZANC ANNUAL GHAMBAR



**Behind the Scenes: our volunteers prepping and cooking all the food**







## 2025 ZANC CAR RALLY: Engines, Eats & Excitement

Engines were revved and brain cells put to the test at the ZANC Car Rally on Saturday, August 30th. This adrenaline-pumping, family-friendly adventure took 55 participants in 12 cars through the streets of Danville in search of cleverly hidden clues, each one hoping to win the coveted first place trophy and, of course, bragging rights!! To top it off, everyone enjoyed tons of yummy food to fuel the fun. **A huge THANK YOU to Zara, Zenia and Andy Minwalla for bringing the community together for an unforgettable afternoon of spirited competition.**



 **The Parakh Family won 2nd place while the Wadia & Doctor Families claimed 3rd Place**  

 **1st Place:**  **Engineer & Mistry Families** 



**More pics on the ZANC Facebook page**

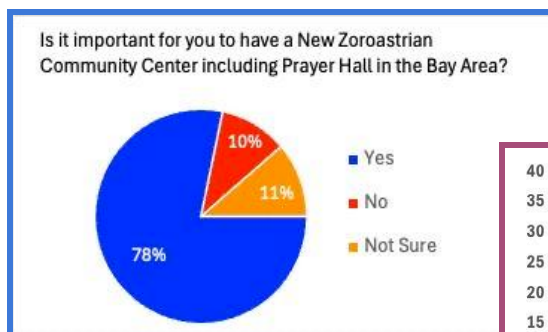


# NCZC (Northern CA Zoroastrian Center) UPDATE

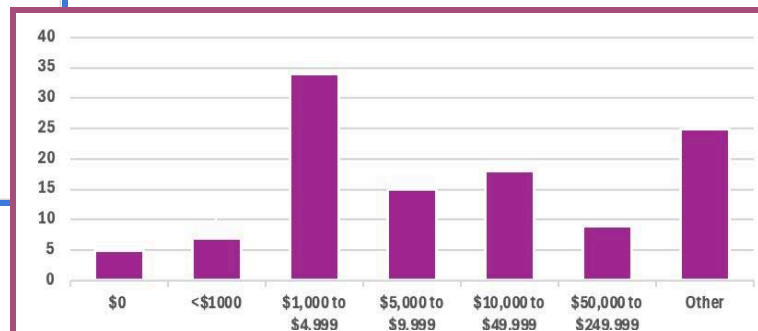


We're excited to share some wonderful fundraising news! Back in August 2025, a longtime couple from our ZANC community generously pledged to match donations of up to \$50,000 through the end of September. Thanks to the giving spirit of our community, we were able to meet the challenge. Every dollar that was donated was doubled, and together we unlocked the full match!

**NCZC SURVEY RESULTS:** In July, the NCZC Committee sent out a survey to gauge the community's interest in finding and purchasing a new center. Nearly 80% of respondents agreed that having a dedicated center is important, and most expressed a willingness to contribute financially to help make this vision a reality.



Breakdown of the survey results by Community Support and Contribution Levels



**SURVEY FAQs:** We received many thoughtful comments and suggestions, which will be addressed in upcoming newsletters.

**Questions:** please reach out to [Erin Press](#).

## 🔔 Pledge or Donate Today for our New Community Center 🔔

PERSONAL DONATIONS: Donate Online, Send in a Check, Direct Bank Transfer

COMPANY PROGRAMS: Corporate Matching, Stock Donations, RMDs

Have questions about bank or stock transfers, pledge forms, or anything else?

Simply email us at [nczc@googlegroups.com](mailto:nczc@googlegroups.com)

Specific donation details can be found on the [ZANC website](#).



## COMMUNITY NEWS

### Donation of Chairs at the Dar-e-Mehr by an Anonymous Donor



A huge thank you to the ZANC member(s) who generously made an anonymous donation of over 80 brand-new, beautifully crafted, chairs to the Dar-e-Mehr. The entire community benefits from this kind gesture. 🙏



### Young Voice, Deep Roots: Fifth Grader Speaks on his Parsi Heritage

A young member of our community, Jahan V. (10), recently wrote a short speech for his humanities class on identity and its impact on the community. He chose to highlight his Parsi roots and his love of food, and how the two connect. We thank his mom, Dilnavaz Bamboat, for sharing his beautiful work with us below:

Could you imagine that two of my identities converge at an interesting point in history more than 1,300 years ago? I am the descendant of the Persians that arrived in India, called the Parsis. Parsis are historically great lovers of the culinary arts, so these are my two main identities. Parsi cuisine is frequently called "magpie cooking". Just as a magpie brings various items to feather its nest, this cuisine blends multiple cultures and histories to form its unique taste. In loving and appreciating my history and culture, I am brought closer to my roots and community. Enjoying our traditional meals brings the community together in joy and belonging, so far away from our home countries of India and Iran. As a food lover with a diverse palate, I hope to encourage other children to be adventurous and try out new foods and culinary traditions and experiences. At the end of this month, the community in the Bay Area will organize an entirely free and volunteer-run feast, and I can't wait to attend and enjoy both my identities!

# Z-CLASS UPDATES

## The 2025-26 School Year is off to a great start!



The new school year of [Z Class](#) kicked off on **September 14, 2025**, with contagious excitement and joy. Open to all Zarathushti children from TK through high school, this year's program is designed to inspire, connect, and encourage growth.

A warm welcome goes out to the **71 students and 10 teachers**, along with

returning educators and parents who continue to support our community. Their commitment ensures the smooth running of our classrooms and helps keep the spirit of the community thriving.



**This year's theme, “Houdanoosh,”** reflects the belief that true nourishment comes from living in harmony with *asha*—truth, order, and righteousness. Throughout the year, lessons and activities will highlight how good thoughts, good words, and good deeds shape life in a joyful, nurturing and safe environment.



**The Z Class teachers would like to thank all the volunteers** whose hard work and generosity keeps the program thriving and look forward to a year filled with purposeful learning, heartfelt connection, and the continued celebration of our shared heritage.

**Days/Time:** Classes meet at the Dar-e-Mehr every 2nd & 4th Sunday from 10-11:30 am



# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

## Bay Area Students Honored with FEZANA Academic Scholarships

ZANC and the Bay Area Z Community are proud to congratulate three bright young women on receiving the 2025 FEZANA Scholarships. This honor recognizes their hard work, dedication, and commitment to excellence in their chosen fields of study. We celebrate their success, wish them continued growth, and look forward to all the wonderful accomplishments that lie ahead!



**NATASHA PATEL** - Performing and Creative Arts Scholarship (\$2000) - Virtual Reality Development, Ringling College of Arts & Design, Florida

**AVA RATHENBERG** - Villy & Homi Gandhi Endowed Scholarship (\$2000) - Computer Science and Arts, University of Southern California



**DIANA COMMISSARIAT** - Dhunmai & Dosabhai Gandhi Endowed Scholarship (\$2000) - Molecular Biology & Neuroscience, Chapman University, California

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## September's Youth Event: Ocean Beach Bonfire



Z Youth lit up September with a fun day at the beach. From laughter around the fire and toasted marshmallows to games on the sand and waves at sunset, it was a wonderful way for Parsi and Persian Zoroastrians to meet, mingle and make new friends in the community.

To join the Bay Area youth group email [Zara Minwalla](mailto:Zara.Minwalla@zanc.org)



## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### Roshan and Khushrow Mistry



### A Fond Farewell to the Mistrys!

After 25 years in the San Francisco Bay Area, Roshan and Khushrow Mistry will be moving to Columbia, Missouri this October to be closer to their daughter. While we are incredibly happy for them as they embark on this new chapter, the Bay Area Zoroastrian Community will deeply miss their kindness, helpfulness, and generosity.

This enterprising couple began their journey in the U.S. in 2000 at the Indian Consulate in San Francisco, where they assisted countless Zoroastrians and members of the Bay Area Indian Community with visas, passports, OCIs and many other challenges.

While working full-time, they raised two accomplished children: daughter Sherezad, an entrepreneur, and son Eric, an executive chef. Over the years, the Mistrys established a thriving catering business that brought delectable Parsi cuisine to private homes, celebrations and community events alike. Their generosity extended far beyond business, as they selflessly volunteered their time and culinary talents for numerous ZANC events. The entire community always enjoyed and looked forward to the delectable Dhansak prepared and donated by them at several Ghambars.

In 2014, they were instrumental in preparing and donating the scrumptious Lagan-nu-Bhonu for a fundraiser which was a resounding success and raised funds for a new community center. This was followed by a second fundraiser in 2016 where they volunteered to prepare the entire banquet again for the NCZC funds. In recognition of their unwavering service, they were honored with the “Volunteer of the Year” Award that same year. Now retired from their corporate careers at Williams Sonoma, they are preparing for their big move to begin an exciting new chapter in a new community.

**Thank you Mistrys for your tireless support for the ZANC Community. As you turn the page to a new chapter, know that your legacy here will always be cherished!**



## IN OTHER NEWS



### **FEZANA Welcomes Natalie Kanga as the new incoming Co-Chair of ZYNA**

Another ZANC member making the community proud! [Natalie Kanga](#) shall be stepping into her new role at FEZANA as the incoming Co-Chair (along with Fravash Chothia and Anaheez Karbhari) of the Zoroastrian Youth of North America (ZYNA).

Natalie brings a wealth of experience from her years of service in the Bay Area Zoroastrian community, her academic research in counseling psychology, and her passion for empowering youth. In her new role as ZYNA Co-Chair, Natalie's goals are to help foster stronger bonds across the Parsi and Persian youth in North America, establish civic-mindedness underlying youth activities, and encourage young Zarathushtis to think about the reputation they would like for Zoroastrians to cultivate.

FEZANA is happy to welcome Natalie into this new role and would like to congratulate her on stepping up and taking leadership responsibility.

### **Monthly Women's Gathering At The San Jose Dar-e-Mehr**

The Mehr-e-Mitra Fellowship offers a welcoming space for women in the Zoroastrian community to connect, grow, and uplift one another. Come and enjoy a morning of music, art, and fun conversations to uplift your soul.




**Join us on the third Sunday of each month from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm**

**Next Meeting: Sunday, October 19th  
(the 1st anniversary of the fellowship)**



**Note:** Please reach out to [Armita Pishdadi](#) to confirm the meeting schedule.

# ARTS AND EDUCATION



**NAMC  
INSTITUTE OF  
ZOROASTRIAN STUDIES**

For application form  
use QR code or link:  
<https://www.namcstudies.org/namc-is-course-registration>  
or [namc-is-course-registration](https://www.namcstudies.org/namc-is-course-registration)


**UNDERSTANDING THE YASHTS** ↑  
(HYMNS OF PRAISE TO ZOROASTRIAN DIVINITIES)

By Ervad Zerkhis Bhandara, PhD Student  
Department of Religious Studies, UC Santa Barbara

**Saturdays 11 am Eastern**  
**October 11 to November 8, 2025**

**DATES**  
October 11 - Haptan Yasht (7 Amesha Spands - Archangels)  
October 18 - Ardibehesht Yasht (Divinity of Fire)  
October 25 - Avan Yasht (Divinity of Water)  
November 1 - Sarosh Yasht Vadi (Divinity of Righteousness)  
November 8 - Behram Yasht (Divinity of Victory)

Explore the structure and meaning of key Zoroastrian hymns dedicated to various divinities, fostering a deeper connection with the divine. Gain insight into their historical and theological significance while understanding their role in personal devotion and daily life. Through guided study and discussion, this course will offer a meaningful exploration of essential Zoroastrian worship practices. Please note: This course does not include prayer recitation.



## NAMC INSTITUTE OF ZOROASTRIAN STUDIES

**Understanding the Yashts** - This course will explore the structure and meaning of key Zoroastrian hymns dedicated to various Zoroastrian divinities. Through guided study and discussion, this course will offer a meaningful exploration of essential Zoroastrian worship practices.

**Oct 11th to Nov 8th at 8 am (PST)**

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

## THE ZAH LIBRARY AND FEZANA FIRES PRESENT

**From Scroll to Screen:  
Archiving Zoroastrian Manuscripts  
in the Digital World**

**Saturday, Oct 11th at 9 am (PST)**

Join in for this engaging online webinar that honors our past, celebrates our present, and inspires our future.

**Zoom Meeting ID: 898 9456 0684**

**Passcode: FEZANA**

**Details:** Click [HERE](#) for full event details



**THE SILVER MILESTONE**  
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF  
ZAH LIBRARY & FIRES



**FROM SCROLL TO SCREEN:  
ARCHIVING ZOROASTRIAN  
MANUSCRIPTS IN THE DIGITAL WORLD**



**Dr. Daniel Sheffield**  
Princeton University



**Dr. Afshin Marashi**  
University of Oklahoma

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10TH, 2025,**  
Evening Gala Dinner @ 6:30 PM at  
Zoroastrian Association of Houston  
An evening of celebration, memories, and community spirit

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11TH, 2025,**  
Lecture Series  
Zoroastrian Association of Houston  
(In person & ZOOM)

Register for  
IN-PERSON  
ATTENDANCE AT  
ZAH.ORG



**JOIN ZOOM MEETING**  
MEETING ID: 898 9456 0684  
PASSCODE: FEZANA

9AM PACIFIC | 11AM CENTRAL | 12PM  
EASTERN | 5PM LONDON | 9PM KARACHI |  
9:30PM MUMBAI

**MORE DETAILS AT  
FIRES-FEZANA.ORG/25-YEARS/**

JOIN US AS WE HONOR OUR PAST, CELEBRATE OUR PRESENT, AND INSPIRE OUR FUTURE.  
CO-SPONSORED BY THE ANDREW W. MELLON SOCIETY OF FELLOWS IN CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY AT RARE BOOK SCHOOL





## Showcasing Award Winning Author Thrity Umrigar

October is celebrated as National Book Month - a time to honor the joy of reading and the power of storytelling. We take this opportunity to shine a light on a Parsi author whose works have inspired, educated and connected readers across generations.

[Thrity Umrigar](#) is an Indian-American journalist, critic, and a best-selling author of eleven [novels](#), three [children's books](#), and a [memoir](#).

Thrity was born in Bombay into a Parsi family and received a BSc from Bombay University. She came to the US when she was 21 for graduate studies. In 1983, she earned a MA in journalism from Ohio State University, after which worked for 17 years as a reporter, columnist and magazine writer. She also earned her Ph.D in English from Kent State University in 1997 and in 2001 she wrote her first novel, *Bombay Time*.

*Bombay Time* (2001)  
*First Darling of the Morning* (2004)  
*The Space Between Us* (2006)  
*If Today Be Sweet* (2007)  
*The Weight of Heaven* (2009)  
*The World We Found* (2012)  
*The Story Hour* (2014)  
*Everybody's Son* (2017)  
*When I Carried You in My Belly* (2017)  
*The Secrets Between Us* (2018)  
*Binny's Diwali* (2020)  
*Sugar in Milk* (2020)  
*Honor* (2022)  
*The Museum of Failures* (2023)  
*Missing Sam* (2026)

In 2002, she accepted a teaching position as Professor of English at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, where she still teaches today, all while continuing her love of writing novels. Her books have been translated into several languages and published in over fifteen countries while her articles have been published in prestigious publications such as *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Boston Globe*.

Thrity is an active presence on the national lecture circuit, speaking at book festivals, literary societies and public libraries all across the country. In her in-depth [interviews](#) and engaging [book chat](#) with fellow authors, she often highlights the Parsi influences that shape her works.

**Editor's Note:** I recently had the pleasure of hearing Thrity on a panel at the SALA 2025 event at Menlo College, CA, last month, where she spoke eloquently about how her Parsi upbringing in Bombay shaped her life and how that unique culture continues to be reflected in her books (holding her book *Sugar in Milk*).



# CONNECT AND CONTACT

## Join ZANC WhatsApp Groups, Facebook and Instagram



- WhatsApp: [CLICK HERE](#) to join WhatsApp
- Facebook: [CLICK HERE](#) to join Facebook
- Instagram: [CLICK HERE](#) to follow Instagram



Stay engaged with other Zs, post pictures, and strengthen our community connections.

**NOTE:** You will still continue to get the ZANC monthly newsletter and event notices via email.

**Maintain Active Membership:** Active memberships are vital to ensuring the continued growth and success of our community here in Northern CA. Your membership dues go toward maintaining our Dar-e-Mehr, sustaining ZANC's operations, and funding valuable programs that benefit all members. [CLICK HERE](#) to join or renew your membership.



**All feedback & suggestions are welcome & encouraged:**

**General questions:** email the [ZANC BOARD](#)

**Membership:** email the [ZANC SECRETARY](#)

**Volunteering:** email the [EVENTS COORDINATOR](#)



### THE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

Stay connected with the ZANC Newsletter — your source for community news, announcements, and upcoming events. Please [EMAIL](#) us your personal milestones so we can celebrate and acknowledge them with the community. **All content must be received by the 20th of the month.**

**Editor:** Dianne Patel ([newsletter@zanc.org](mailto:newsletter@zanc.org))

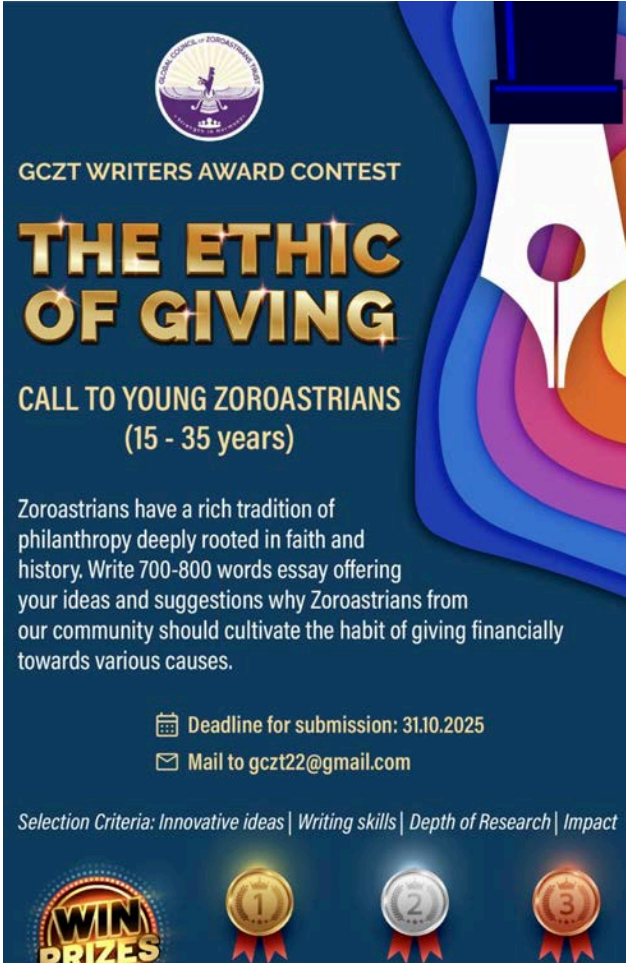
**Collaborators:** Delzin Choksey and Kathleen Chothia



## And Finally...

### GCZT WRITER'S CONTEST - Deadline Oct 30th, 2025

The Global Council for Zoroastrians Trust (GCZT) has announced The Ethic of Giving: A GCZT Writers Award Contest. Writers who are 15-35 years of age from the worldwide community are hereby invited to showcase their penmanship.



The poster features a dark blue background with a large, stylized fountain pen nib on the right side. The text is in white and gold. At the top left is the GCZT logo. The main title 'THE ETHIC OF GIVING' is in large, bold, gold letters. Below it, 'CALL TO YOUNG ZOROASTRIANS (15 - 35 years)' is in white. A paragraph describes the contest: 'Zoroastrians have a rich tradition of philanthropy deeply rooted in faith and history. Write 700-800 words essay offering your ideas and suggestions why Zoroastrians from our community should cultivate the habit of giving financially towards various causes.' Below this, the deadline 'Deadline for submission: 31.10.2025' and email 'Mail to gczt22@gmail.com' are listed. At the bottom, 'Selection Criteria: Innovative ideas | Writing skills | Depth of Research | Impact' is written. Four gold medals are shown at the bottom left, labeled 'WIN PRIZES'.

GCZT WRITERS AWARD CONTEST

# THE ETHIC OF GIVING

CALL TO YOUNG ZOROASTRIANS  
(15 - 35 years)

Zoroastrians have a rich tradition of philanthropy deeply rooted in faith and history. Write 700-800 words essay offering your ideas and suggestions why Zoroastrians from our community should cultivate the habit of giving financially towards various causes.

Deadline for submission: 31.10.2025  
Mail to [gczt22@gmail.com](mailto:gczt22@gmail.com)

Selection Criteria: Innovative ideas | Writing skills | Depth of Research | Impact

WIN PRIZES

This contest isn't just about winning a prize - it's about giving voice to our collective creativity, honoring the power of the written word, and encouraging both young and seasoned writers to take a leap. Whether you write essays, stories, reflections, or something entirely your own, this contest is the perfect platform to showcase your thoughts and talent.

It is a wonderful chance for our global Zoroastrian community to come together through words, celebrate our traditions, and inspire the next generation of writers.

**Age Group:** 15 to 35 years of age

**Deadline:** October 31, 2025

#### Prizes:

1st Prize: \$300

2nd Prize: \$200

3rd Prize: \$100

**Essay Topic:** Zoroastrians have a rich tradition of philanthropy deeply rooted in faith and history. Write a **700-800 word** essay offering ideas and suggestions on why Zoroastrians from our community should cultivate the habit of giving financially towards various community causes.

**Selection Criteria:** Innovative Ideas, Writing Skills, Depth of Research, and Impact

**Submission Guidelines:** Email your essay to [gczt22@gmail.com](mailto:gczt22@gmail.com)