

## CHESS / NBCC BIOGRAPHY OF SUHAS KODALI

The NBCC kicked off its new season with an honorary tournament for its spiritual leader, USCF NM Suhas Kodali. Suhas started chess in high school. A schoolmate in his karate class encouraged him to join the school's chess club. Suhas was interested in math, and his friend thought that he would make a good fit, so Suhas went to the club with no expectations and came out with an addiction to chess. In the first tournament that Suhas played in, he lost all of his games and yet won the unrated prize! Starting with a rating of 800, it was only going up! His high school, Madison West High School in Wisconsin, had a rich history in chess. They were the state scholastic team champions for many years running, and they had FM Alex Betaneli and Neil Gleason as their coaches. They were volunteers who promoted chess, helped organize tournaments, and even mentored Suhas and his team. In his freshmen year, Suhas played board 4 out of 5 in the state scholastic team championship and barely squeaked out a first-place prize. In the last round, everything depended on Suhas' game. A draw or a loss would hand the championship to his opponents. He had a bishop, a knight, and a pawn vs. his opponent's rook and a pawn. In the midst of chaos, Suhas pulled out a win! Luckily, he didn't have to demonstrate a knight and bishop checkmate, but he made sure that would never happen again! Suhas' team continued to win the state scholastic team championship in each of Suhas' high school years, having played board 2 with a rating of 1800 in his senior year. Also in his senior year, Suhas tied for first place in his state's scholastic championship. Suhas' chess had been on and off over the next few years until he joined the club in late 2014. He had been fluctuating between class A and expert, and the club was fertile ground to make the next climb. He became good friends with USCF NM Derek Meredith, and they studied chess regularly over the next five years, which helped push Suhas' rating to 2200, having made master in November 2020. Meanwhile, the club's previous president, Norman Burtness, pulled Suhas into the happenings at the club. Norman encouraged Suhas to become vice president in 2018 and taught him all of the work it takes to run the NBCC. The club has been an incredible social outlet for Suhas. He has made many friends and has gotten to play great chess. In 2020, Suhas became the youngest president of the club, giving back to it for all that it has given him. Suhas is truly an amazing and inspiring chess contributor, coach, and leader. He is a very kind and affable person with such zeal and energy. He truly has an innate passion for the club and cares deeply about its members. We love you, Suhas! Together, with your steadfast leadership and drive for success, we look forward to the future of the greatest chess club in the United States of America – the NBCC. For his tournament, Suhas proposed the Basque format, where each player played two games, one with the white pieces and one with the black pieces. Because of the format, the tournament could not be rated. FMs Nelson Castaneda and Richard Bauer tied for first place in this exciting event.