President's Message

We are at the beginning of year 2018-2019 scholarship season, renewing and selecting deserving students for the new cohort. As we build this momentum, elevating the commitment to organization's mission becomes front center for our entire team, working hard to ensure students get the best experience they deserve and are fully successful in achieving their dreams! Our 3rd annual Gala in New York was a big success as we celebrated forming, norming and storming of a new local team, leading us to raise over $250K. We are in the thick of planning the 12th Gala here in Silicon Valley with big plans for elevating our event on Sept 30th and looking forward to meeting and greeting many of you. With your continued and generous support we aim to elevate our number of supported scholars to a new high! Sincerely, Minoo.

The 3rd New York Gala theme was ‘ELEVATE’, FFE team spoke to a few people about what the word means to them.

Designer Vaishali Shadangule, whose garments were showcased at the gala, feels ELEVATE refers to Inclusiveness and is how the world was conceived and created. Vaishali believes achieving inclusiveness is an inherent and core purpose of everything we do, whether we know it or not. Given her background and subsequent success story, Vaishali connected with the theme instantly. Vaishali supports FFE because the foundation works to elevate needy students. Not only was she happy to be a part of the gala, but she felt a sense of obligation to do her bit too.

A guest at the gala felt ELEVATE means to bring out the innate and powerful potential in everyone and not just in a chosen few. Some people are blessed to be in born into circumstances where their potential is carefully cultivated and fully realized. Others lack family wealth, support and opportunity, thus stifling their inherent talents. Not giving people the opportunity to use the gifts and talents they were born with, does them a disservice and a great mind is wasted. FFE’s mission gives credence to the deep rooted belief we are each other’s keeper and its takes a village to self-actualize.

One of the models at the gala corroborated the above beliefs, adding ELEVATE to her is to rise above and was an apt theme for FFE’s cause. The idea of helping needy children pursue an education is fantastic and laudable.

In coming months, FFE proposes to continue engaging with people about what ELEVATE means to them and how the concept fits perfectly with our ethos.

Events and More

Past Events

March 25th - FFE's first networking/informational Mixer of the year was hosted by the Young Professional Advisory Group (YPAG), a youth wing of FFE. The event was held on the rooftop of 1 Hawthorne Building in San Francisco.

Rahul Sethuram, YPAG’s leader thanked the attendees for making the event a success. He acknowledged the good time everyone had and was particularly grateful to FFE alumni, Ranjith and Bismay, for sharing their stories. Stories such as theirs, makes people passionate about FFE, which is why Rahul knew the importance of the planned interaction. He confirmed Ranjith’s and FFE alumni, Asha’s comments, about the difficulty of getting people together and was pleased he managed a cost effective event with a decent turnout. Rahul concluded with the hope that together they could brainstorm and experiment different types of events to broaden YPAG’s reach and make the group a success.

March 26th - FFE Awareness Event at Oracle - The FFE event held at Oracle spread awareness of FFE’s work and gave Oracle employees a chance to interact with the FFE team. Neha and Sushil spent considerable time planning the event, which turned out to be a huge success and sets a bar for the next quarter Oracle event in Building 600.

Akshay and Smita were extremely helpful and were acknowledged. The hope is Oracle support will grow in the future and help in making a difference to FFE scholars.

May 4-5th - TIE Inflect 2018 - Sixty attendees at the TIE Inflect event showed interest in FFE, of which ten were keen on volunteering at future events. FFE also benefited with two new donors. As a follow-up, FFE has shared an introductory email with informative video and newsletter, thanking those who expressed interest.

June 10th - 3rd New York Gala at The Pierre - Organized by FFE's New York team of Anita Balaji, Ruyintan Mehta, Darshan Bhatt, Ashutosh Aman and Monika Patel, the gala raised over $250K.
FFE alumni, Sathish Chittibabu, Ranjith Kagathi, Asha Hegde and Bismay Mishra shared their stories during the event. Apart from the scholars, Dr. Sudhir Jain, Director IIT, Gandhinagar, gave the keynote address. He talked about the systems he has implemented at IIT and about his commitment and support to his students. The evening saw an aesthetic display of handloom garments designed by Indian fashion designer, Vaishali Shadangule, whose success story resonates with the FFE story. The famous sand artist from India, Nilish Bharti, wowed the audience with his deft finger work and amazing artistry, which he synced with the FFE cause. The elegant Pierre was a perfect backdrop to an unforgettable evening that merged heart with art.

FFE NY Gala 2018 News India Times press release

Aug 18th - FFE 25th Year Planning and awareness event was hosted by FFE Board member Sanjaya Kumar at his home. In 2019, FFE reaches the 25th year milestone of giving and transforming lives. To kick start the celebrations, an event was held at the home of FFE board member, Sanjaya Kumar, on Sat, Aug 18th. The idea behind this event was for YPAG members, alumni, volunteers, board members and donors to come together and discuss ideas on making 2019 be a signature year. One of the top suggestion was to see how FFE can do things differently, to widen its scope in the US, India and globally. It was heartwarming that FFE supporters and invitees, managed a few hours from their busy schedule, to participate in the event along with their family and children. It was an an enjoyable and fruitful afternoon for all. Click here for event photos.

Aug 19th - ICC Sevathon 2018 at the San Jose park, is the largest social service platform of its kind. It recognizes, supports, and nurtures a spirit of giving by empowering individuals of diverse backgrounds to unite and strengthen their communities. The Sevathon family includes walkers, runners, non-profits, sponsors, family members and friends. Sevathon enables non-profit organization partners to deliver their message and further their cause. FFE participated in the 10th Sevathon hosted by ICC. Our champion, Surendra Bhargava, led the effort and signed 39 participants to run for FFE. He also recruited 7 volunteers to help FFE manage a water station for runners. Click here for event photos.

Upcoming Events

Aug 30th - Bonfare Golf Tournament - The event has been organized by long time dedicated FFE donor, Mr. Jag Kapoor, in support of FFE, with over $50K in scholarship contributions yearly. This year, FFE Staff and Alumni will volunteer at the event.

Sep 30th - 12th FFE Silicon Valley Gala - FFE Silicon Valley Gala SV18, will be held at Crowne Plaza, Palo Alto on September 30th, 2018, at 5:30 PM. Our Keynote speaker, Vinod Bhuradwaj, the “Pioneer of Ethernet Network Switch”, truly representing our theme, “Elevate”. In 1990, Vinod Bharadwaj founded the first Ethernet network switch, Kalpana Inc. (computer networking equipment manufacturing company in Silicon Valley). The entertainment will be a 30 minute performance presented by EnActe Arts. It will be a A Story and A Song, an interpretive dance theatre by Navrasa Dance Company, showcasing the ancient martial art form of Kakarippayettu (originated in Kerala and called the “mother of martial arts”). This performance has also been presented at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.
For inquiries about any event, please email eventregistration@ffe.org or call us at 408.985.2001.

How to get Involved

In addition to being a donor, we have lots of opportunities for volunteers in a variety of roles ranging from marketing, operations, event development and coordination. You can become a part of FFE's mission to make an impact in the lives of deserving students in India, enabling them to pursue their dreams. This would not be possible without the assistance of FFE's huge volunteer network. Please Visit www.ffe.org to learn more or send us an email at vishala@ffe.org

FFE Management Team

Reach Out:

*As part of FFE's ongoing effort in spreading, we have participated in several events. One of them was at ICC Cupertino and Milpitas in June and July. Later, in August, we collaborated with ICA "Indian for Collective Actions" where Sonam Wangchuk spoke about FFE. The event was hosted by FFE Board Member, Raj Shah.

*FFE is fortunate to have Jayashree Patil leading our social media digital campaign, "FFE-Connect", where our Donors, Volunteers and Scholars will have an opportunity to share their experiences about FFE, and to be connected to know what is going on at FFE.

We request you to join FFE CONNECT.

*Board member, Sarosh Kumana, initiated a thought process to celebrate FFE’s 25th year. He emphasized the need for awareness among scholars, alumni and board members about the changing global climate and how individuals can be a part of the solution.

*President, Minoo Gupta, led an ideation exercise to collect ideas for making 25th year celebrations a hallmark. She encourages everyone to send ideas that you may have via email to us.

Editor's Note

The quote, “Volunteers don’t necessarily have the time, they have the heart.” was proved in abundance at the NYC FFE gala on June 10th. This was my first gala as a part of the team and my interactions with volunteers, management, donors, alumni and guests was heart-warming. It also re-emphasized how FFE is making a difference and the regard with which people hold FFE. Putting together the event was a lesson in logistics and management. The teams in NYC and SFO worked together in a coherent manner and this was possible because everyone cares for the FFE cause. The gala was a success and even though we may have not reached our desired target, we have begun making waves and people sat up and took note. All the guests had positive things to say and left with a promise to do more. This was the first gala for the new team and hopefully, the coming years will help establish FFE in the minds of New Yorkers just as FFE is entrenched in the minds of San Francisco residents. In the meantime, this will be the 25th year since FFE started supporting needy students so there is much on the anvil. We look forward to the continued support of all our well-wishers.