Note from the Managing Trustee:

Dear Friends,

As we welcome the new year, we are also excited to be celebrating 25 years of the work of the Foundation For Excellence (FFE) in India. The mission of FFE, to make a transformational impact on a talented students’ life through financial assistance, as envisioned by the Founders, Dr. Prabhu and Mrs. Poonam Goel, has been an exciting 25-year journey so far. Thank you for believing in, and supporting us through your contributions to the Foundation in numerous ways - through monetary donations, through volunteerism (as Facilitators/mentors), through opportunities for FFE scholars at companies through internships/workshops/trainings and by participating in our numerous events. Please remember that your interactions with our student and alumni community leaves a lasting impact - so your involvement and contribution matters to us, however big or small.

FFE India Trust set out to reach out to as many students and alumni as possible, through our Open House events, elaborated in this edition as well as other opportunities for FFE scholars through our corporate partners. We are indeed happy to see the record participation of FFE Engineering scholars in the Skills Training Program, made possible through a generous grant by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF). We are also proud of the recognition of FFE’s work at the National level during 2018 (though we are not one to rest on our laurels), while we continue to strive to prepare FFE scholars for the rapidly changing technological landscape.

Today, FFE India Trust, under the able leadership of Sandhya Manoj, COO, is handling more scholarship awardees, new applications and programs than ever before. While we have a committed team and technology to handle this growth, I am looking to your support to fund more qualifying students this year (at least 1700 first year students). FFE’s alumni continue to make us proud through their “giving” – your generosity at this time will have a lasting impact on a talented, young person’s life.

We will be approaching the challenges that 2019 brings with the same focus, determination and willingness to innovate that has served us well in the past. Thank you for your support and being an integral part of our journey so far.

It is with gratitude and much joy that I would like to wish you a wonderful new year!

Best Wishes,

Sudha Kidao
Managing Trustee, FFE India Trust
News & Events

I. Open House

Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore

FFE held its first Open House event in Hyderabad on 10th October 2018 at Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Hyderabad (JNTUH). The event was attended by 87 participants where 40 FFE scholarship cheques worth over Rs. 12.4 lakhs were awarded.

Testimonials from current scholars Gannamaneni Ajay Kumar (top) and Shirisha Medaboina

FFE alumnus and donor Ramachandran Chidambaram

FFE Student Coordinator Saiteja Katta (3rd Year, Electronics and Communication Engineering, JNTUH) receiving a leadership certificate from Sandhya Manoj, COO, FFE India Trust

Current scholars Shirisha Medaboina (3rd Year, Civil Engineering) and Gannamaneni Ajay Kumar (3rd Year, Electronics and Communication Engineering), both from JNTUH shared their testimonials. FFE alumnus and donor Ramachan-

Sandhya Manoj, COO, FFE India Trust, awarding a scholarship cheque to an FFE scholar

Sandhya Manoj, COO-FFE India Trust, awarding a Certificate of Appreciation to FFE Volunteer Facilitator Mr. Rajeswara Rao
Chennai Open House: FFE’s Chennai Open House, held on 23rd October 2018 at MIT Campus, Chennai drew more than 300 participants including scholars, alumni, volunteer facilitators, donors and guests. Mr. Gopal Srinivasan, Chairman & MD, TVS Capital Funds (P) Limited, was the Guest of Honour. Scholarship cheques amounting to Rs. 29.97 lakhs were awarded to 84 new and renewal FFE scholars.

Dr. Sudha Kidao, Managing Trustee – FFE India Trust awarding a scholarship cheque to FFE scholar R Ahish Sabthiga

Mr. Madhavan Sadagopan, CEO, Cognizant Foundation awarding a scholarship cheque to FFE scholar T. Mohana

Student Speaker Ulagammal Subramanian

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nal Year, MBBS, Stanley Medical College) and alumnus donor Srivathsan Raghavan. Leadership certificates were awarded to outstanding FFE Student Coordinators while Certificates of Appreciation were presented to dedicated FFE Volunteer Facilitators.

Interactive student sessions were conducted by representatives from FFE corporate partners Firstsource Solutions Limited and KLA Tencor. Mr. Ramanathan Nachiappan (HR Lead-Chennai, Firstsource Solutions Limited) led the session ‘From Campus to Corporate’ Mr. Alagarsamy Chinnathambi, Mr. Richu Philip and Ms. Vara from KLA Tencor Software India Private Limited covered Ethics & Environmental Impact for Engineers - Fast Forward by 10 years. Dr. Rakhal Gaitonde and Dr. Arjun Rajagopalan (Trustee and Advisor, Sundaram Medical Foundation) addressed the MBBS scholars; this session addressed careers in the medical profession and the need to follow one’s passion.

Open House Bangalore: FFE hosted its Bangalore Open House at PES University on 25th November, 2018, the last event for the year. Attended by 432 participants, scholarship cheques were awarded to 89 FFE scholars amounting to Rs. 32.7 lakhs. Lalitha In-

Dedicated FFE Volunteer Facilitator Mrs. Jaya Krishnaswamy receiving a Certificate of Appreciation from Dr. Sudha Kidao, Managing Trustee, FFE India Trust

Facilitator Meet with FFE Scholarship Team

Student Session with Mr. Ramanathan Nachiappan (HR Lead-Chennai, Firstsource Solutions Limited)

KLA Tencor team with FFE Engineering scholars

MBBS Session with Dr. Gaitonde and Dr. Arjun Rajagopalan
drakanti (Managing Director & Country Leader, Cargill Business Services India Pvt. Ltd.) and Dr. Meenakshi Bhat (Professor, Clinical Genetics & Mazumdar Shaw Research Chair, Centre for Human Genetics, Bangalore) were the Guests of Honour at the event.

Student speakers at the Open House were Tejaswini DR (4th Year, Computer Science and Engineering, University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering), Shridhar Hegde (3rd Year, Computer Science and Engineering, MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology) and alumnus Sandhya Manoj, COO, FFE India Trust.

FFE Scholar Indumati Vastrad receiving a scholarship cheque from Guest of Honour, Lalitha Indrakanti, Managing Director & Country Leader, Cargill Business Services India Pvt. Ltd.

Guest of Honour Dr. Meenakshi Bhat (Professor, Clinical Genetics & Mazumdar Shaw Research Chair, Centre for Human Genetics, Bangalore) awarding a scholarship cheque to FFE scholar Manasa S K

FFE Facilitator Mrs. Hema Deshpande presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by Dr. Sudha Kidao, Managing Trustee, FFE India Trust

Student Coordinator Manav Bhat receiving a certificate for outstanding leadership from Sandhya Manoj, COO, FFE India Trust

Dr. Sudha Kidao, Managing Trustee – FFE India Trust awarding a scholarship cheque to FFE scholar Rakshak B M

Student Speaker Shridhar Hegde
Akkole who currently works at Tech Mahindra. Leadership certificates were awarded to FFE Student Coordinators and Certificates of Appreciation were also presented to FFE Volunteer facilitators. Interactive workshops for Engineering students were held by FFE corporate partners TransUnion CIBIL Limited (CIBIL) and Oracle India Pvt. Ltd. during the afternoon session. Shayantee Das (DVP, Operation, CIBIL) discussed Crafting a Successful Career for 3rd and Final year Engineering students while Ms. Madhurya Surampudi (Manager, Corporate Citizenship Programs, Oracle) addressed ‘Corporate Etiquette’ attended by 2nd year students.

**MBBS session with Dr. Thelma Narayan from SOCHARA**

**FFE alumni network from Bangalore**

**FFE’s Scholarship Team with some of the volunteer Facilitators from Bangalore**

Dr. Thelma Narayan, Senior Advisor - Academics and Health Policy Action at SOCHARA (Soci-
II. Community Outreach

**Mentoring Program**

FFE’s in-house mentoring program, designed to provide work-skills through a curriculum framework for the mentoring session has seen over 200 mentor-mentee pairs enroll. Launched in October 2017, the program has employee mentors from many of FFE’s corporate partners including Amazon India, Amdocs India, HP India Pvt. Ltd, Intel India and Robert Bosch Pvt. Ltd. FFE continues to seek new mentors for FFE scholars and are very encouraged by over 40+ mentors from Boeing India Pvt. Ltd enrolling into the program. We encourage corporates and individuals to enlist as mentors so that FFE scholars and mentors can benefit from this initiative.

**Mentor-Mentee Speak**

“I enjoyed the program a lot and learnt too from our interactions. The elevator pitch was a great example; my mentee is a great student, but he had to understand himself well to answer this question. We talked about a variety of topics and even though my mentee may not have thought about them initially, they became a part of his identity later. These sessions were useful for self-discovery and helped bring lots of ideas to the open. Initially, he was apprehensive but as we progressed, he became comfortable and began to ask a lot of questions as well as discuss personal problems which I think was very important to create a bond between us.

The whole program is facilitated really well. The website and the courses which have been designed are very nice; the content is also top notch.”

Navpreet Singh, FFE Mentor Associate, Axtria India Pvt. Ltd

“I completed my mentoring program recently and I have learnt a lot of things from the program and my mentor. I learnt how to introduce myself...”
to others which is a very basic requirement today, how to communicate with others verbally as well as non-verbally, how to manage my time and plan my career and much more. Before the mentoring program, I knew about all these things but I didn’t know how to apply them in the real world. I acquired this skill with the help of my mentor. I now have gained confidence and I feel less worried about communicating with people. I had difficulties communicating in English, but during the mentoring program, I learnt how to speak fluently while talking to my mentor. I also learnt the importance of gestures and postures. Overall, the program was a great learning experience for me.

Deepak Kumar Goyal
4th Year, Civil Engineering
Dr. B R Ambedkar National Institute of Technology, Jalandhar
Placement: Larsen & Toubro Engineering and Constructions Company (L&T ECC)

Skill Development and Job Readiness Program 2018

In partnership with the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF), FFE launched a Skills Training Program in September 2017 where 1000 2nd year Engineering scholars underwent English and Aptitude training. Scholars from this first cohort completed their training and were directed to either a high-touch English Program, based on their end line score or an aspirational course this year (Coursera). 415 scholars qualified for the Aspirational Program - the prestigious Coursera Online Courses which commenced in October 2018. The courses offered to FFE scholars includes 16 Specializations with more than 5 certification courses within each Specialization. This is expected to directly impact and improve student employment opportunities when students seek placements.

The high-touch (intense) English program commenced on 20th September 2018 through a phone-based platform, conducted by eAge Tutors which aims at improving communication skills, corporate readiness and interview skills of the scholars. A new cohort (FY 2018-19) of scholars (900) in their second year of Engineering began their English training programs under Hello English and Kings Learning in August 2018.

III. Summer Research Internship for FFE Scholars at IIT-Gandhinagar, Gujarat

Three FFE scholars were selected to be part of the IIT-Gandhinagar’s sixth edition of the Summer Research Internship Program (SRIP) at IIT-Gandhinagar, Gujarat during May-July 2018. The program aims at building strong ties and partnerships between IIT Gandhi and other institutions, bringing students and faculty from top institutes across the country to participate in ongoing research projects and receive mentoring from the Institute’s faculty. FFE thanks IIT-Gandhinagar for their continued support to FFE scholars and their outstanding contribution to the underprivileged community.

“I would like to convey my gratitude to FFE for providing me this opportunity to get training at IIT-Gandhinagar. I worked on a project named, “Solar Energy in India: Past, Present and 2022”. In this topic, my subtopic was Mathematical mode-

“The Coursera Certification Program has proven to be very helpful for me. Through this program I can get access to quality study materials on various topics of my interest and get certified for completing the course. I also find the assignments very good as it tests our abilities. I have chosen the IBM Data Science Professional certificate which is very good to get started with Data Science. Overall this program is successful at enhancing the skills of students.”

Shridhar Nagesh Hegde
3rd Year, Computer Science and Engineering
MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology
Chinna Bhusaraddi  
4th Year, Electronics and Electrical Communication Engineering, BMS College of Engineering  
Bangalore, Karnataka

“I completed my internship under Prof. Kasivisvanathan Chelvakumar on Utilization of Solar Energy as the Alternative Power Resource to Automobiles. I received a lot of support from Prof. Chelvakumar which played an important role in the completion of the internship. Despite his ill health at the end of the first month of internship, he would correspond via Skype and helped me progress with the project.

My work included utilizing solar energy for powering major automobile accessories such as air conditioners thus increasing the fuel efficiency of such automobiles while also reducing pollution. Not only did I learn technical aspects but the summer internship introduced me to new students and friends. I was sad to leave them at the end of the program especially having enjoyed the campus, management and infrastructure of IIT Gandhinagar. I collaborated with my solar group mates to complete the project without whose help I could not have completed it. I would like to thank FFE for giving me such a wonderful opportunity to take part in such a significant program.”
Joshua Sathish M  
4th Year, Automobile Engineering  
Madras Institute of Technology

Chennai, Tamil Nadu

“I underwent 8 weeks of the internship program at IIT Gandhinagar during May to July 2018. The aim of my project “Prediction of Crater Degradation Degree” was to design an algorithm which include the automatic delineation and prediction of the degree of degradation over time using ArcGIS and Python tools. We also categorized the craters assigning their profile as Round or Flat Craters which helps to determine their age. The overall experience of my internship was good. I had exposure to new ideas while working on this interesting project as well.”
Nitesh Kumar Shaw  
4th Year, Electronics and Communication Engineering  
National Institute of Technology  
Jamshedpur, Jharkhand

IV. Workshop With Corporates

Microsoft Workshop with FFE Scholars, Bangalore

On account of Daan Utsaav or the Festival of Giving, Microsoft India Global Technical Support Center (GTSC) held a workshop for FFE engineering scholars on 11th October 2018 at their Bangalore office. The workshop was attended by 50 FFE Engineering scholars attending different colleges in Bangalore.

Topics covered at the workshop included basics of cloud computing, introduction to machine learning and introduction to IOT. Microsoft also held a special session which focused on what IT companies look for during job interviews beyond academic qualifications.

Workshop with Arcesium, Hyderabad

FFE corporate partner Arcesium India Pvt. Ltd. organized a workshop for FFE engineering scholars studying in and around Hyderabad at their office in Hyderabad. The workshop was held on 4th October, 2018 and attended by 16 scholars. Mr. Shriram SR, Director of HR at Arce-
sium, led the workshop on Interview Readiness.

FFE is thankful to our corporate partners for their strong support towards FFE scholars and look forward to more engagement opportunities such as these in the future.

V. Voice of Scholars

Current Scholar

Chandan Gajanana Bhatta
3rd Year, Computer Science Engineering
PES University, Bangalore

"My family lives in Ankola, a small town in Karnataka. My father’s profession is farming while my mother is a homemaker. My brother just completed Class 12.

When I was in Class 7, I expressed my desire to attend Alva’s High school in Moodbidri which is 300 kilometers away from home. My parents agreed despite having only minimum education themselves. The school had a provision for merit and sports-based sponsorship which I readily qualified for. My brother attended the same school under the adoption program.

I made up my mind to be an engineer, but when I joined PES University in Bangalore, I learnt the annual fees was close to a lakh. We thought of applying for a student loan but fortunately I availed the FFE scholarship which immensely reduced our financial burden. For the rest of my fees, we applied for a bank loan.

I have had a great experience with FFE. We receive not only the scholarship, but have skills training programs and even got an opportunity to visit CISCO and had a tour of the office and lab. After graduation, my priority is to find a good job and work or pursue higher studies. As my father is a farmer, I would like to do something for the agricultural community.

I attribute my success so far to my family, teachers, well-wishers, Alva’s Education Foundation, FFE and my donor TransUnion CIBIL. I would like to donate as soon as I can stand on my own feet. My donor has made a difference to disadvantaged people like me through their contribution; and I would like to thank them as it has made a big difference to me and my family."

Alumnus

Guruprasad Bhat
Bangalore, Karnataka

"My name is Guruprasad, currently working at Cisco Systems India Pvt. Ltd. as an IT Engineer. I come from a village called Adalli, near Sirsi in Karnataka.

I attended a government school which was far from home and cycled 14 kilometres back and forth every day. Our school taught in vernacular medium, so although I scored 96% in Class 10, I had difficulties communicating in English. Even after joining Poorna Prajna PU College, I focused on my studies and avoided extra-curricular activities as I had no confidence speaking in English. Even after joining Poorna Prajna PU College, I focused on my studies and avoided extra-curricular activities as I had no confidence speaking in English.

I stayed in a hostel called Sri Ramakrishna Students Home. I was fortunate to be part of the FFE family through which I received support..."
from my donor Sonus Networks India Private Limited. The FFE scholarship program has been instrumental in helping me complete my education. Apart from taking care of my fees and other expenses, the scholarship program gave me the opportunity to access technical tools (software and hardware) for my projects as well as online learning resources. I am really grateful to FFE and my donor Sonus Networks for taking complete responsibility of my financial expenses which was by far the most challenging part of my Engineering education.

Thank you FFE. Thank you Sonus Networks.”

VI. Volunteer Speak

Dinabandhu Nanda
FFE Facilitator
Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Mr. Dinabandhu Nanda has been associated with FFE for over 16 years. He became an FFE Volunteer Facilitator a few years after his retirement from government service 20 years ago. Mr. Dinabandhu currently lives in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

“I was born on 2nd April 1940. In 1964, I received my Bachelor’s degree in Engineering from University college of Engineering, Burla (now known as Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology) in Sambalpur, Odisha. After graduation, I joined the Water Resource Department under the State Government of Odisha. After more than three decades of dedicated service in the government, I retired in 1998.

While serving in the government, I often involved myself in community service initiatives such as construction of local temples and helping economically disadvantaged students for their education. In May 2002, I became a Volunteer Facilitator for FFE. Ever since that day, I have dedicated myself to FFE’s cause and mission. We have had a couple of Open House events in Bhubaneswar where I had the opportunity to meet FFE Founder Dr. Prabhu Goel and FFE India Trust Managing Trustee Dr. Sudha Kidao. It was a good platform where FFE scholars and other facilitators from Odisha came together to interact and this was how I became acquainted with most of the other facilitators in Odisha.

Besides involving myself in FFE, I am also the State Coordinator of North South Foundation, USA, and Director of Vikash Educational Charitable Trust, Odisha. All these organizations have a common mission which is to help economically disadvantaged and meritorious students for their further development.

Personally, it is my aim to help as many underprivileged, meritorious students as I can. To identify really needy students, I make it a point to visit various Engineering and Medical colleges and schools in and around Odisha. It is my desire and ambition to continue this work and help needy students as long as I am able to work.”

VII. Employee Feature

Tanvi Rawat
Manager, Special Donor Projects

Tanvi joined FFE India Trust as Manager, Special Donor Projects for the Uttarakhand scholars in February 2017 and is based in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. In her role, she serves as a liaison between the donor; The Hans Foundation (THF) and FFE and manages all aspects of the program.
for students sponsored by THF. Tanvi ensures appropriate level of engagement with the donor and manages work plans, budgets, case studies and progress reports. One of her key responsibilities is to maintain close contact with the students and facilitators via various channels (telephone, email, social media, events, personal visits etc.). Tanvi is responsible for managing and monitoring the program in Uttarakhand, conducting local events that involve the donor and students, and reporting activities to the donor.

Tanvi holds a Bachelor’s degree in Journalism and Mass Communication from Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi and has obtained her professional diploma in Image Consulting and Soft Skills Training from the Image Consulting Business Institute, New Delhi.

Tanvi enjoys participating in community development programs. A fitness enthusiast, she practices yoga and meditation, and enjoys hiking in the mountains.

FFE in the News

The FFE Scholarship Program and Mentoring Program were featured by three leading newspapers - Deccan Chronicle, The Hindu and The New Indian Express in December:

FFE: Giving Poor, Bright Students Manna of Scholarship, Mentoring - Deccan Chronicle, Bangalore; 17th December 2018

The Circle of Giving - The Hindu; Bangalore; 18th December 2018

Bengaluru-based NGO supports 18,500 students globally for higher education - The New Indian Express, Bangalore; 19th December 2018

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