NOTE FROM MANAGING TRUSTEE, FFE INDIA TRUST

Dear Friends,

This edition comes at a difficult time - when the COVID-19 pandemic and its fury has taken centre stage and is deciding the trajectory of the way we live, work and our future. I hope you are well, safe and taking precautionary measures for your own health and of those around you. During these unprecedented times, when the long-term impact of this pandemic remains unknown, FFE is striving to help those in need within the FFE family and beyond, to help ease their economic, personal and emotional trauma. We understand that several of our students and their families have been impacted at this time - our efforts are to help directly or to refer them to alternate resources to meet their needs. We hope that our efforts will bring some relief at this time. While the economic fall out of this pandemic, which by recent estimates is $1 trillion in 2020, the hope is that we will recover and survive as we always have, just stronger, more resilient and globally united.

In the midst of this pandemic gloom, FFE has had a record-breaking year on multiple fronts and much to celebrate. FFE awarded a total of 6383 scholarships amounting to Rs. 27.2 Crores during FY 2019-20. Of these, 4756 scholarships were awarded to Engineering students and 1565 to Medical students. FFE also launched scholarships supporting 2 new disciplines in FY 2019-20, awarding 17 LLB scholarships to students pursuing law, and 45 scholarships to students pursuing BPharm degrees in India. FY 2019-20 saw the largest and most involved alumni participation in the “Circle of Giving”, with more than 1500 alumni contributing in excess of Rs. 1 Crore to FFE, another milestone that was achieved in close collaboration with FFE’s alumni. More details on the new programs are in this newsletter.

I am also pleased to announce that Sandhya Manoj is now the CEO of FFE India Trust, having assumed this role in February 2020. In her previous role as COO of FFE, Sandhya’s strong leadership skills along with her commitment to the cause have been instrumental in helping FFE’s expansion and in achieving the milestones stated above, along with ensuring the success of the skills training and mentoring programs that are continuing to impact scholars and their future in positive ways. Hearty congratulations to Sandhya and the FFE team for the success of our programs!

Ms. Sandhya Manoj, CEO FFEIT

We are also encouraged and proud of several of FFE’s medical interns and doctors who are at the forefront of the COVID-19 pandemic, battling the disease on the front lines and trying to solve life-threatening problems to contain COVID-19, often putting themselves at risk to disease exposure. The selfless service of these healthcare professionals at this critical time of need is truly commendable! This issue highlights a few of them.

I would like to thank you for your unwavering support to FFE that has made these programs possible - including FFE’s donors, NGO partners, mentors, FFE’s alumni and our valued volunteer Facilitators who are our steady and faithful collaborators. Congratulations to our students on being awarded scholarships - and a hearty welcome to our newest family members - the first year and first-time scholarship awardees! My thanks to the Trustees for their support in our journey. My heartfelt thank you to FFE’s dynamic and dedicated team who have worked diligently despite the COVID-19 crises to ensure our commitment to students and donors continue to be met during these difficult times.

While the future of this new FY remains largely unknown, as is the academic year for students and the job prospects of the graduating class of Engineers and doctors, FFE remains committed to making a positive difference. We will remain agile and alert to the changes that unfold before us, stepping up wherever possible to be a dependable agent of change. We can look to the future with a stronger purpose and hope, as we count on you to participate in our journey of impact. We look to your involved participation, support and contributions in the new FY in order to collectively create and make a positive impact during these troubled times.

Sudha Kidao
Managing Trustee
FFE India Trust
News & Events

I. Sneak Peak at COVID-19 Relief Work By FFE Doctors

It is heartening that FFE’s Medical scholars and alumni are today directly working in the COVID-19 frontlines making a difference to communities throughout India. Today, over 90 of FFE’s medical scholars are directly involved in COVID-19 relief work, working in hospitals in 30 cities in 11 States, bringing their medical training to the fore.

Abhay Shivaji Gupta, FFE medical intern is working with COVID-19 patients as part of his internship at the H.B.T. Medical College & Dr. R.N. Cooper Municipal General Hospital, in Mumbai.

Abhay is careful to follow all safety precautions and has been provided adequate Personal Protective Equipment.

FFE’s experienced medical alumni also are involved in screening and treatment related to the Corona virus pandemic.

FFE Alumnus, Dr. Manish Barvaliya, Assistant Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Government Medical College, Bhavnagar, Gujarat has been actively involved in screening, isolation, treatment and follow-up of COVID-19 patients accessing the Government Hospital, Bhavnagar.

Dr. Manish Barvaliya (left) attending to patients at the hospital

A 2014 FFE alumnus, Dr. Barvaliya is also involved in creating awareness in the local community about precautions, symptoms and measures to follow regarding corona virus infection.

Dr. Vasantpuri C Gosai, Assistant Professor and Clinical Biochemist, Government GMERS Medical College and Hospital in Dharpur, Patan, Gujarat is an FFE alumnus from 2014. Dr. Gosai is actively involved in COVID-19 relief work, particularly with treatment of positive cases (14 until date) in Patan district, Gujarat.

As an active researcher, Dr. Gosai is also involved in clinical investigations related to COVID-19 patients, their treatment and reporting.

FFE is proud of the numerous scholars, particularly our doctors and interns, who are caring for COVID patients, and to the researchers among them, who are working to find effective treatments and testing methodologies to help flatten the curve.

FFE is grateful for their untiiring work, while also putting themselves at risk being in the front line. We remain grateful for their services to local communities to ease the burden of this crises. Their collective efforts we know can make a positive difference, particularly their tireless service in this hour of need.

II. FFE–Kanu Patel BPharm Scholarship Program

FFE launched a new scholarship program “The FFE-Kanu Patel Scholarship”, through a grant from Amneal Pharmaceuticals supporting students pursuing BPharm. The new pilot program launched in February 2020 currently supports 45 BPharm students through scholarships and training each year, until graduation.

This Scholarship Program will address an important and long felt need in the pharmaceutical industry to identify talented students interested in pursuing the profession but with the requisite skills required for career success. At the launch held at LM College of Pharmacy, Ahmedabad, on 29th February 2020, Mr. Kanu Bhai Patel, Chairman, Amneal Pharmaceuticals (India) Pvt. Ltd., addressed the gathering and shared insights of his
journey, emphasizing hard work, integrity and honesty as pillars for success. Mr. and Mrs. Kanu Patel jointly awarded scholarships to 23 BPharm students studying in various colleges across Gujarat. Mr. Sanjay Jain, President Amneal Pharmaceuticals India Operations, conducted an informative session with students, along with senior leadership from Amneal Pharmaceuticals. Dr. Mahesh T Chhabria, Principal LM College of Pharmacy, Ahmedabad also addressed the gathering and emphasized the role of scholarships and how it can motivate and help in improving the overall performance of the students.

Wrapping up the event, Dr. Sudha Kidao, Managing Trustee FFEIT and Ms. Sandhya Manoj, CEO FFEIT, felicitated the volunteer Facilitators for their role in identifying and verifying students’ credentials and awarded Leadership Certificates to Student Coordinators for their role in helping in event logistics and coordination.

II. FFE’s Law (LLB) Scholarship Program

The pilot LLB scholarship program was launched in FY 2019-20 to support students pursing the law degree in India with a view to expand the scope of the current all India Scholarship program. Currently, talented students from lower socio-economic backgrounds struggle to pursue law because of financial constraints, limited access to mentors and role models, and poor access to suitable employment after graduation. Even those that overcome these barriers find it challenging to building a career in litigation. Bringing the life experiences of such students to the profession and the court room is expected to broaden access to justice and strengthen the rule of law in India.

The Law Scholarship Program was launched through a generous donation from a recent Government Law College-Mumbai graduate, Mr. Mahesh Krishnamurthy, together with a matching grant from Omidyar Network India. The pilot program is supporting 17 students attending recognized Law Institutes/Universities in India. The Law Scholarship program also aims to support recent law graduates, from financially constrained backgrounds, pursuing litigation, with a monthly stipend for up to 2 years. A mentoring program, where students are mentored on one on one by experienced lawyers is also expected to be launched, to augment the financial program.

III. Community Outreach

Mentorship Program

FFE is committed to helping its scholars achieve their full potential and bring about a transformation in their lives. The Mentoring Program, designed and implemented by FFE, is targeted to better prepare 3rd year Engineering student mentees for their professional careers. Under this program, over 350 scholars have been mentored by professionals from many of FFE’s corporate partners including Axtria India Pvt. Ltd., Intel Technology India Pvt. Ltd., Capgemini Technology Services India Pvt Ltd, Cargill Business Services India Pvt Ltd., Randstad India Pvt Ltd., Robert Bosch Engineering and Business Solutions Private Limited (RBEI) and Boeing India. Being guided by an experienced industry mentor at this critical time in a student’s life can have positive, impactful and far-reaching consequences.

Here is a Mentor-Mentee perspective:

Mentor:
Ms. Lenita Jenifer Menezes
Solutions Quality Analyst,
Intel Technology India Pvt Ltd., Bengaluru

"My mentee was very proactive and showed an active interest to learn and upskill herself. This was a big motivation for me to conduct mentoring sessions. By the end of the program, I felt my mentee had improved in her confidence, communication skills and become more focused and goal oriented. If I must recount a particular session that I enjoyed, it would be the one on communication skills. The mentee wanted to work on her communication the most and I enjoyed guiding her with all the tips I could. She enjoyed the sessions and was very enthusiastic. The day she got placed, she called to inform me as a token of gratitude. It was the best feeling and it gave me an enormous sense of satisfaction."
Mentee:
Ms. Chatakonda Navyasree
Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology, Nagpur.
Graduated in June 2019.

“This program is very useful for all the students who are at the threshold of entering the corporate world to develop their confidence, be better prepared to attend interviews and to understand the nuances of working. This program helped me during my placement interviews and my mentor also gave me an outlook of the corporate world which I needed the most. I got to learn a lot of new things from my mentor like time management and prioritising tasks to be done, which helped me a great deal. My Mentor and I were committed to the program - while I was very prompt in submitting the assignments provided, she went the extra mile to encourage and help me in all the sessions. I can confidently say that my mentor helped me a lot personally and professionally. I hope many other students would benefit from this wonderful program, the same way I did.”

Navyashree has joined Larsen and Toubro (L&T), Mysore

Skills Training: Scholar Testimonials

Of the 909 Engineering scholars who graduated in June 2019, 663 (72%) students have gained employment while 150 (17%) students have opted to pursue their higher education. 96 (11%) scholars continue to seek employment opportunities.

Of the 1023 Engineering scholars who will graduate in June 2020, 563 (55%) have gained employment and 88 (9%) are interested in pursuing their higher education. 372 (36%) scholars are currently attending campus interviews and seeking employment opportunities.

Skills Development Program

The FFE Skills Training Program funded by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF) is in its third year of implementation and has helped students by up-skilling through technical and soft skills training.

Students stayed committed to completing their skills training with 1238 second year Engineering scholars completing the English program conducted by FFE’s vendor partners, Hello English and Kings Learning. Upon course completion, students began an app-based Aptitude training with 514 students being trained through FFE’s vendor partner FACE (Focus Academy for Career Enhancement) and 512 students under Pariksha.

Amongst the 909 third year Engineering scholars, 550 are pursuing technical courses through Coursera’s Online program while 346 students are undergoing an additional round of English training - Hi-Touch English implemented by eAge Tutors.

319 fourth year engineering students completed their training in Mock Interviews offered by Ethnus. An additional 107 students are undergoing the Mock Interview training program, that began in March 2020.

“Hello English is a great English learning platform. Every time I practice on the app, I learn something new. The modules are clear and informative. I enjoy playing the vocabulary games on the app, as I can learn the meanings and spellings of difficult words, very easily. I know this program will help prepare me for the future, especially during placements interviews. Devoting an hour every day towards this training program has helped me improve my vocabulary and hence has made me a confident speaker. I am really thankful to the Foundation For Excellence for providing this wonderful opportunity for improving my English skills”.

Nalajala Jagurthi
2nd year B. Tech
National Institute of Technology Calicut
Deepak Pathak  
4th year B.Tech  
College of Technology, Pantnagar

V. Corporate Workshops

NetApp WIT Workshop

NetApp conducted a "Women In Technology (WIT)" workshop on 21st January 2020, at their Bangalore office. 27 of FFE’s women Engineering scholars attended the informative workshop where discussions covered the following topics: Leading in a Data - Driven world, Interviewing skills, Power of Communication, Public Speaking and Personality Development.

Ms. Madhu B M, Director – Engineering, NetApp addressed the scholars and had an interactive session with them. In the words of Ms. Priyanka Rao, of The NetApp WIT team "It was a pleasure to have the scholars here with us at NetApp and was overwhelming to see their keen interest and interaction at the workshop. We look forward to many more such interactions in the future as well".

A few attendee remarks:

“There are many things that I have learnt from the workshop. The most important were public speaking, personality development and opportunities in the IT company. Thank you so much NetApp and FFE for giving me this opportunity”  
Shivani Rajesh Shendge, 4th Year B. Tech  
Bangalore Institute of Technology, Bangalore

“The first thing I noticed when I entered the office was the infrastructure - it was breath taking! The meeting rooms gave me an idea of where the interviews and meetings are conducted. The whole environment was amazing. The communication and attitude of the employees was also so inspiring. I request the NetApp team to give scholars like us more opportunities to understand the corporate world. There is a need to learn a lot. Heartfelt gratitude to the NetApp team”. 
Thrupthi H M, 2nd Year B. Tech,  
PES University, Bangalore

“Some of the key take-aways from the workshop were - how to write a good resume, how to present ourselves in an interview, which are the different departments in a company where we can work and how we should explore opportunities in different fields. Through this workshop we also got an understanding of what is expected from us. I look forward to many more interactions like this to help mould me and make me job ready”. 
Shwetha P Hegde, 2nd Year B. Tech,  
PES University, Bangalore

Cognizant Design Thinking Workshop

Cognizant’s “Outreach” team conducted a workshop on “Design Thinking” for its NGO partners on 24th January 2020, in Bangalore. The workshop addressed techniques for “Out of the box thinking”, which could be applied to various processes. From empathising, to defining, ideating, prototyping and testing, the program effectively explained how techniques pertaining to business processes could be effectively applied to the social sector. With its hands-on learning approach, this workshop added much value to the FFE team who participated in this workshop.

Voice of Scholars

I. Current Scholar

Shriharsha M  
4th Year B. Tech  
The National Institute of Engineering, Mysore

Shriharsha who hails from Kasargod district, Kerala is a talented student. His father, a matriculate, is a farmer while his mother, who has studied up to PUC is a housewife. Shriharsha enjoys coding and calls himself a ‘Computer Geek’. He has attended numerous competitions and hackathons in his college and various online platforms. A brilliant scholar, Shriharsha has successfully secured a job with CISCO systems Bangalore, through campus placements.

“I completed my primary education from a local Kannada medium school, 3 kms from my house. Every day I used to walk to school unless some neighbour gave me a ride in their vehicle. My house is in a
remote place in the Kerala – Karnataka border with no bus service. I studied 6th to 12th in JNV school at Mudipu, Karnataka. After securing 10 CGPA in my tenth standard, I applied for Indian Oil scholarship which helped in paying my fees for 2 years of PUC. Navodaya School made me an all-rounder and being in a hostel at an early age, taught me a lot.

My parents were determined that their children must be able to pursue good education, irrespective of the cost. Thanks to the Indus AWOO – FFE scholarship, this was possible

With children and grandparents to look after there was always shortage of money in my family. Most of what was earned was utilized towards pesticides and fertilizers. However, my parents were determined that their children must be able to pursue good education, irrespective of the cost. When I secured admission to NIE with a rank of 3,201 in the Karnataka CET, the joy of my family knew no bounds. We visited many banks to secure financial help and finally succeeded in getting a loan. Fortunately, the Indus AWOO – FFE scholarship sponsored by Indus Towers Limited and AWOO Foundation and facilitated by FFE, helped my family meet my educational expenses and reduced our financial burden.

Difficulties, especially financial struggles, have been a way of life for my family. From health issues of my grandparents to other requirements, we have regularly faced crisis situations because of financial constraints. However, the end is finally in sight. My family is proud of my achievements, especially with me gaining employment in a reputed corporate such as CISCO Systems. Now that I have arrived at my destination, I will provide my family the much-needed support and bring about a transformation in their lives”.

II. Alumnus
Tharanggany K. M.
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

FFE Alumnus Tharanggany Krishnamurthy Meena is a Team Leader - ERP Development, at Lennox International, Chennai. She completed her B.Tech (Information Technology) in 2005 from Raja College of Engineering & Technology, Madurai. She has been donating to FFE since 2009, honouring her pledge of support as part of the “Circle of Giving”.

“I hope you will agree with me when I say scoring good marks in the Board exams isn’t adequate to continue one’s education; the financial condition of the family is also an important deciding factor. Mine was a similar situation! I was introduced to the FFE Scholarship program through one of my relatives who worked at BHEL, Trichy. My FFE Facilitator, who also worked there, helped me apply for the scholarship. This enabled me to complete my graduation in B. Tech - Information Technology from Raja College of Engineering & Technology, Madurai. My Facilitator was a kind and compassionate person who helped me throughout the 4 years of my education. I owe this degree to FFE, without which my higher education would have been just a dream.

As FFE Scholars & Alumni, our role does not end with just receiving financial help from FFE; we must continue this cycle and give others a chance to pursue their higher education dreams.

I would like to convey a message to all FFE scholars and Alumni - our role doesn’t end with just receiving financial help from FFE; we must continue this cycle and give others a chance to pursue their higher education dreams. It gives me immense joy and happiness to see other scholars grow in their career and move ahead in life. This will enable other eligible students to continue their education and contribute to their family and society.

It has been 13 years since I started my IT Corporate journey. I currently work with Lennox International, Chennai as a Team Leader - ERP Development. I take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt gratitude to FFE, who came forward to help me during the most crucial time of my life. Infact, Thank You is never enough”!

Volunteer Speak
R. K. Pant
FFE Facilitator
Uttarakhand

Mr. Pant, a law graduate, is an advocate in the courts of Uttarakhand. Apart from his professional duties and as a FFE facilitator, he is also a member of a NGO called Himwats, that works towards holistic development, environment conservation and healthcare in Uttarakhand. Mr. and Mrs. Pant together have referred over 50 eligible students to FFE till date.
“Dr. H. D. Bist (Retd. Prof. – IIT, Kanpur), the Founder member of Himwats, was a facilitator at FFE. In 2010, he introduced my wife, Late Mrs. Geeta Pant, to FFE India Trust. As a Facilitator, she forwarded many applications of deserving students. I used to help her in contacting the students, calling them and their parents for a meeting and helping her in verifying their documents. After her death in 2016, I decided to become a Facilitator myself and continue our association with FFE. In August 2017, I was honoured when I was appointed by FFE as a Facilitator. Being a part of the FFE family gives me immense pride.

My wife and I together have referred over 50 eligible scholars. Being a part of the FFE family gives me immense pride. There is no retirement when it comes to helping Society. If there are any needy student(s) who have benefitted from my effort, this is an achievement for me and gives me a sense of satisfaction. If we can put a smile on the faces of people without wishing for anything in return, this I believe is truly invaluable”.

Donor Feature

Robert Bosch Engineering and Business Solutions Private Limited (RBEI)
Ms. Shilpa Deodhar
CSR Head

“Bosch as an organization has always reposed faith in the power of education and the transformation that knowledge brings forth to the individuals who ultimately contribute to the welfare of the community and society. True to its tagline of “Invented for life”, Bosch continuously upskills its Associates to gain new frontiers in research and sciences. Thus, the role of education has always topped the charts when it comes to Corporate Social Responsibility and is one of the key focus themes at RBEI/CSR. The Scholarship Program was carved out at RBEI/CSR to reach out to the meritorious students from economically challenged backgrounds in its efforts to promote education and career opportunities for the future. Scholarships provide a leeway for the students to pursue higher education and aspire to achieve their ambitions in life.

RBEI has been associated with Foundation For Excellence (FFE), close to a decade now, with the first cohort of 20 students from Bangalore and Coimbatore being supported in the 2011 to 2015 cycle. Subsequent cycles have benefitted 24 and 30 Engineering scholars, respectively. Over the years, 74 Engineering students have been impacted through the Bosch-FFE program. We feel immensely proud of the stories of transformation and the impact the scholarships have had on the lives of the beneficiaries.

We, at CSR, have always worked towards imbibing the quality of Personal Social Responsibility (PSR) amongst our volunteers through Social Leadership trainings. At Bosch, we are humbled at the testimonials that come in from the scholars who have all found respectable jobs in leading organizations and have vouched to help other deserving candidate(s) as the Circle of Giving continues. This resonates well with our PSR philosophy at RBEI/CSR and we are extremely happy to partner with FFE in bringing about a transformation in lives and a change in the behavior towards being compassionate and giving amongst our young populace”.

Employee Highlight

Sushma Nancy
Senior Executive – Alumni Relations

Sushma joined FFE in March 2018 as Senior Executive – Alumni Relations and Student Outreach. As part of the Alumni team, she has made significant contribution in alumni fundraising, building the alumni database and engaging with the student and alumni community. In addition to this, she is responsible for the monthly Student Newsletter and Quarterly Alumni Newsletter, that is published by FFE. Prior to working with FFE, Sushma worked at 24/7 Customer Pvt. Ltd (BPO sector) for 5 years. Here, she was part of the Learning and Development Team as a Process Trainer, for international clients such as Citi Bank, Adobe, Barclays, Sears etc. Sushma holds a Bachelor’s degree in Arts (Psychology, Literature and Economics) from Mount Carmel College, Bengaluru. She is a classical dancer and enjoys caricature painting and writing poems in her spare time.
A Glimpse of FFE Medical Alumni during COVID-19 Relief Work

Dr. Akash Gopal Mor (L), General Surgeon at TATA Memorial Hospital, Mumbai with his team, during the weekly screening for COVID-19 patients

Dr. Mahendra Varman, Assistant Surgeon Government Primary Health Centre, Tiruppur screening people for any COVID-19 symptoms, at the Tamil Nadu - Kerala border

Dr. Jasmin Uddin (R), House staff at Nil Ratan Sircar Medical College, Kolkata with a team member, attending to patients with COVID-19 symptoms

Dr. Mahesh B. Katariya (R), Medical Officer at Community Health Center, Jafarabad, Gujarat, examining Nagar Pulike Workers, as part of the COVID-19 special screening program, in Jafarabad

Dr. Samina Khatun, House Officer, Seth Sukhlal Karnani Memorial (SSKM) Hospital, Kolkata, checking medical records of COVID-19 suspect patients

Dr. Hitesh M Gangani (R), Assistant Professor in Shri Sayaji General Hospital and Medical College, Baroda, Gujarat attending to a patient suspected with COVID-19 symptoms

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