This is an exciting time for the Foundation as we embark on our annual scholarship journey with new initiatives added to the mix. Our scholarship season for renewal scholars which began in July 2017 has just ended with the vast majority of scholars seeking renewal of their scholarships. We are processing applications and wait to welcome new scholarship awardees to the FFE family in due course (about 1500 new scholars). Our new initiatives will be launched (mentoring and skills training) in October 2017 to further enrich our scholarship program. FFE’s team, ably led by COO Sandhya Manoj, has made these programs possible.

FFE’s Annual Gala in California held on 24 September 2017 brought together supporters contributing almost USD 1 Million to FFE in one evening. We are thankful to our donors worldwide who continue to support and help expand our programs.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to invite you to participate in one or more of FFE’s events when we come to the city closest you- to meet you- as a student, alumnus, donor, volunteer or someone curious to find out more. We welcome your participation and support- we hope to meet you at events in Bangalore, Pune, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Shrinagar (Uttarakhand), Kolkata, Jamshedpur and Coimbatore (and 1-2 additional locations). For donors, it is a great opportunity to meet and interact with the students they support and for scholars to meet their sponsors and well-wishers. We are looking forward to meeting many of you in the coming months.

Based on student interest and feedback, FFE would like to organize special sessions (technical and soft skills), workshops, and interactions with industry experts, laboratory and industrial tours and general exposure to careers choices for our Engineering and Medical scholars. Please help us make these opportunities available for our scholars through your professional and personal networks, so that we can use all opportunities to further enrich our scholarship program and make many more dreams become true.

With best wishes,
Sudha Kidao
Managing Trustee
FFE launched a new technology platform in July 2017 to support the growing Scholarship Program and streamline processes and increase efficiency. This helped launch FFE’s scholarship season for 2017-18 on 17th July 2017 when renewal students began submitting their applications. While applications for renewal scholars is now closed, all first year students applying for FFE’s scholarships can submit their applications until 31 December 2017.

Open House Event - Mysore

FFE hosted its inaugural Open House for FY - 2017-18 on 24th September 2017 at the National Institute of Engineering, Mysore. The event drew 103 participants - including current FFE scholars, alumni, volunteer facilitators and other FFE supporters. Mr. Shankar Kotuli, FFE Alumnus, Founder and CEO of Paisa Wapas, was the featured speaker. In his address, he emphasized and encouraged students to pursue their passion, by giving examples from his own life. Ms. Sandhya Manoj, Chief Operating Officer- FFE, shared FFE’s journey from it’s inception in 1994 with the audience and presented certificates to the FFE Student coordinators for demonstrating leadership skills within the FFE community.
FFE scholars, Vadiraj S.P (4th Year, Civil Engineering, NIE, Mysore) and Rakshitha M (4th Year, Electronics and Communications, SJCE, Mysore) shared their stories and journey with FFE. Vadiraj is keen to pursue a career in the Indian Navy while Rakshitha will soon join Deloitte, Bangalore.

Mr. Nandan R, an FFE Alumnus from NIE, Mysore spoke about his initiative, the “FFE- Alumni-Scholar Placement Assistance Group” which is helping FFE scholars from NIE, Mysore with placement training - including mock interviews, group discussion pointers and resume preparation. This new initiative by FFE’s alumni in Mysore is commendable and an impactful way to help other FFE scholars prepare for their careers.

Ms. Rakshitha delivering student testimonial

Mr. Vadiraj delivering student testimonial

Mr. Nandan R, sharing information about the Alumni-Scholar Placement Assistance Group

Ms. Kousalya Ramakrishna, FFE alumnus, currently Assistant Engineer - Mysore City Corporation, shared her journey and the life changing scholarship that she won from FFE.

Ms. Kousalya Ramakrishna, sharing her journey

Corporate Workshops

FFE’s longtime supporter and donor, Cisco Systems India Private Limited initiated the first, in a series of five workshops entitled, “The Project Connect Exposure Program for Engineering Scholars - A Deep Dive into Hardware Engineering” for FFE’s engineering scholars in Bangalore. The first workshop was conducted on ‘Hardware and FPGA (Field Programmable Gate Array)’ on 24th August 2017 and focussed on introducing the industry element of various components of hardware engineering. Attended by 30 FFE Engineering scholars, the all day workshops were facilitated by six Cisco employee volunteers; the sessions included presentations and participatory discussion with students concluding with a tour of Cisco Labs.

FFE Bangalore Engineering Scholars at the Cisco workshop
FFE is set to launch its own in-house mentoring program for FFE’s third year Engineering scholars in October 2017. FFE’s mentoring program has been specially developed for third year scholars to help them acquire essential career readiness skills that are necessary for building a strong foundation for their careers ahead. To ensure better employability, this mentoring program will enable FFE’s scholars to interact in one-on-one sessions with experienced mentors from industry- including engineers, scientists and technologists.

Participating students are matched with mentors based on their shared interests, course of study, language, gender and area of specialization. Mentoring by experienced individuals using the curriculum specifically designed and developed by FFE for third year Engineering students, is expected to better equip students with soft skills necessary for their success, both in the short and long term.

The mentoring program will occur in 2 phases of 4-6 months duration each, with each mentoring session of 1.5 hour duration.

**Cisco Lab tour**

Axtria India Private Limited, FFE’s donor, conducted a workshop on Communication Skills with a focus on personal interviews on 2nd September 2017 in Delhi. Attended by 12 FFE Engineering scholars in Delhi, the interactive session led by Axtria’s employees, included discussions and presentations. More such sessions are expected in the coming months.

**Skill Development and Job Readiness Program**

Mock Interviews

With the single-minded objective of bringing about a qualitative change in the performance of FFE scholars during campus recruitment drives, FFE is conducting Mock Interview sessions through a vendor, for all interested fourth-year (final) Engineering students.

As part of the mock interview, students were evaluated across five critical parameters - Subject matter/Content, Problem Solving, Resume writing, Communication skills, and Etiquette on a five-point scale. At the conclusion of this training, 71% of FFE scholars demonstrated a marked increase in interview scores from the first to second mock interview.

**English App-based Course**

FFE is currently conducting a 3-month-App-based English program that began in September 2017 for all second year Engineering scholars.

This program aims to help sharpen both verbal and written English communication skills. Students were shortlisted to attend this English course, based on their baseline diagnostic AMCAT (Aspiring Minds’ Computer Adaptive Test) assessment and SVAR - automated spoken English assessment scores. This baseline assessment evaluated FFE scholars for Aptitude (Logical, Quantitative, and Verbal), English Comprehension, Personality, and Domain / Technical knowledge. Students will be awarded a certificate on completion of this course. FFE is thankful to the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF) for generously funding this training.

**FFE Mentoring Program for Career Readiness**

FFE is set to launch its own in-house mentoring program for FFE’s third year Engineering scholars in October 2017. FFE’s mentoring program has been specially developed for third year scholars to help them acquire essential career readiness skills that are necessary for building a strong foundation for their careers ahead. To ensure better employability, this mentoring program will enable FFE’s scholars to interact in one-on-one sessions with experienced mentors from industry- including engineers, scientists and technologists.
The pilot mentoring program is expected to include upto 100 mentor-mentee pairs.

Voice of Scholars
Current Scholar
Chirag Arvindbhai- II year, Automobile Engineering –LD College of Engineering, Ahmedabad

Chirag is a resident of Surat, Gujarat, where his family has settled for decades. His father is a textile worker who stitches artificial gems on sarees while his mother is a homemaker. Chirag’s father strives hard to fund the education of his two children.

Having completed schooling from Gyandeep Vidhyalay, Surat, Chirag secured 83% in Grade 10. He pursued his Higher Secondary schooling from the Tapovan Vidhyalay, Surat, securing 89% in Grade 12 and secured a rank of 39064 that allowed him to enroll in L. D. College of Engineering – Ahmedabad.

Chirag remarks, “With financial support and encouragement from FFE, I have been able to pursue my education. I am now confident of repaying the debts my parents have borrowed for our family. It is only due to their motivation and perseverance that I am going to be an engineer soon”. Chirag is thankful to his donor, Mr. Srinivasan Raghavan for sponsoring his Engineering education. His facilitator, Mrs. Vasuben P. Shah, has been a source of immense help guiding him with the FFE scholarship application process.

Chirag is an avid reader and loves sightseeing. Among his peers, Chirag is known for his math problem solving skills; he enjoys playing cricket and watching movies when he can.

Chirag intends to help the underprivileged when he is financially self-reliant. He wants to set aside a part of his income, however small, for the education of bright and talented students.

FFE Alumnus
Vishal Navale

Alumnus Donor Vishal Navale is currently working as a SAP consultant with Cognizant Technologies Solution, Bangalore.

“I am from Kasari, Shirur in Pune district, Maharashtra. We are a family of five. Both my parents are farmers. I have two sisters, my older sister is married and younger sister is pursuing MA in Economics. Having known the hardships of poverty and farming, my parents encouraged me to focus on my education to ensure that I had a comfortable life. I always take pride in saying that I am a son of farmers - this has been my motivation to perform well in every aspect of life.

I was a hard-working student since my primary school. Living in a modest house made of wood and stones, I went on to secure a scholarship from the Maharashtra State Government to complete my schooling. With a lot of struggle, my parents funded my education in 11th and 12th standard. I would study under a kerosene lamp and managed to secure distinction in my board exams. This gave me an opportunity to consider Engineering in Pune.

I was introduced to the Student Welfare Associa-
A valued member of our volunteer network in Chattisgarh, Mr. Gupta has been associated with FFE for over 4 years as a Facilitator and through his recommendation, over 47 students have been awarded FFE’s scholarship.

Mr. Gupta was born in Buxwaha, Chhatarpur District in Madhya Pradesh. Mr. Gupta received his Bachelor’s degree in Electrical Engineering in 1970 from Government Engineering College, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh. After graduation, he joined Bhilai Steel Plant as a Technical Assistant. During his career spanning over almost three decades, he has commissioned various projects including the upgradation and capacity enhancement of the power plants. He is proud of his family - his daughter has earned her doctorate and is a Professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering at Bhilai Institute of Technology, Durg and his son is working as Associate Manager in Accenture, Dallas, USA.

“My father and school Principal have been great inspirations in my life. In high school, I was the only student who opted for mathematics and yet the school Principal arranged for a teacher to

Donor Profile
Mr. Subramanian Manjeri Ramanathan

Mr. Subramanian Manjeri Ramanathan is a Chartered Accountant. He has diverse experience in the corporate sector both in India and abroad spanning over three decades. Having worked in a variety of businesses ranging from manufacturing, trading, shipping and services he has an in-depth experience in accounting, audit, treasury, supply chain, insurance and other commercial aspects pertaining to industries. Currently, Mr. Subramanian serves as a Trustee at Unnati, an NGO where he oversees accounting, statutory filing and donor management activities.

Mr. Ramanathan has been generously donating to FFE for the past 4 years and is supporting the Medical education of many meritorious, needy students.

Volunteer Speak
Shyam Lal Gupta

“FFE nourished my talent and enabled me to achieve my dream of becoming an engineer. Throughout my professional career, I have received multiple awards for being the best performer. I have been a happy engineer for more than 5 years now!”

I believe each one of us owes it to society to give back. By contributing to FFE, we can certainly create a significant impact. I am now a proud FFE Alumnus Donor and I urge my fellow scholars to join me. I will always be grateful to the FFE family and will continue to be part of it.”

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to conduct classes only for me for three years. This incident changed my life and thereafter I decided to help the talented and needy students in any possible way.

After retirement, I took a keen interest in volunteering with social sector organizations. I was involved with Chattisgarh Gahoi Vaishya Sabha for 5 years around which time, I was introduced to FFE. I have been associated with FFE as a facilitator for more than four years now. I am very happy to be a part of the FFE family and grateful to the organization for giving me an opportunity to interact with meritorious students.”

**Employee Feature**

**Sharadha Kishore**  
Manager – Donor Relations

Sharadha joined FFE as part of the Donor Relations team and has been employed with the Trust for about two years.

As a Manager, Sharadha’s main role is establishing, engaging and deepening the relationship between the Trust and FFE donors-including corporates and individuals. Sharadha actively engages with donors for project reports, organizing various donor engagement activities, student outreach and student engagement.

Sharadha started her career in Housing Finance and then moved to the Telecom sector. She has worked with Telecom majors, Airtel and Vodafone, in their risk management and fraud control teams. With a keen interest to give back to society, Sharadha crossed over to the social sector 4 years ago starting with Give India, Mumbai before joining FFE India Trust in Bangalore.

Sharadha earned her B.Com and a postgraduate degree in investment studies from Mumbai University. Sharadha enjoys music and reading; she is a wildlife enthusiast and enjoys safaris hoping to catch a glimpse of the big cats.