Note from the Managing Trustee:

FFE’s Scholarship Program saw a new beginning this year with two new impactful additions - a skills training program for all current second year students and a newly launched mentoring program for third year scholars. This makes FFE’s Scholarship unique and sought after, and we are proud of each FFE scholar who has excelled academically to earn this Scholarship. A generous grant from the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF) has enabled the roll out of the Skills Training program to over 1000 scholars—with continuing skill programs to be added in each succeeding year until graduation. FFE’s plan to prepare students for employability and career readiness through these enrichment programs — skills training combined with mentoring by industry experts - is becoming a reality.

We look forward to welcoming new family members - our new, first year scholarship awardees in the next 2 months. We are excited that each one of you – donors, alumni, volunteers and students have made this FFE community unique - through your support, participation and contributions. FFE’s founders- Dr. Prabhu and Mrs. Poonam Goel’s vision of transforming lives and making FFE a self-sustaining organization is possible only through your continued support. Our dynamic team, headed by FFE’s COO Sandhya Manoj, has worked relentlessly to execute our programs to make this an action packed and fulfilling year!

It is with thanks, gratitude and much joy that I would like to wish you a wonderful new year. We look to your continued support in 2018 and beyond as we seek to make a positive difference in the lives of young scholars!

With best wishes
Sudha Kidao
Managing Trustee
**Open House Events – Bangalore, Pune, Uttarakhand, Dhanbad and Hyderabad**

FFE’s Bangalore Open House was held on 15th October 2017 at PES University, Bangalore. The event drew 400 participants that included our current scholars, alumni, volunteer facilitators, mentors, donors and other FFE supporters. Mr. Jacob Kurian, Partner, New Silk Route Advisors Private Limited, presided as the Guest of Honour. In his inspirational address to the students, Mr. Kurian shared instances from his life and encouraged them to pursue their passion, to set ambitious goals and to never give up. Ms. Minoo Gupta, President- FFE USA and Ms. Anu Sethuram, FFE-USA Board member, participated in the Open House. 39 FFE scholars were awarded scholarships worth over Rs. 13.49 lakhs and 16 outstanding Student Co-ordinators were awarded Leadership Certificates.

FFE scholars, Anjappa Narayanappa (4th Year, Mechanical Engineering, Dayananda Sagar College of Engineering, Bangalore) and B R Naveen (4th Year, Computer Science and Engineering, PES College of Engineering, Bangalore) shared their stories and journey with FFE. Ms. Harshitha Shetty, FFE alumnus, currently working as a Software Engineer at IBM-Bangalore, shared her journey and the life changing scholarship that she won from FFE.
Interactive sessions by FFE’s partners, Oracle Solution Services India, Bangalore and Robert Bosch Engineering and Business Solutions Limited, Bangalore were held for Engineering scholars. About 25 of FFE’s Bangalore based alumni also met to discuss FFE Alumni discussed strategy and plans for the FY with FFE’s alumni team.

Ms. Anita George, Senior Practice Director, Oracle Solution Services India, Bangalore, conducted a session for FFE Engineering scholars on “Core Competencies at the Workplace” focusing on five major competencies including leadership skills, analysis and problem solving, and business ethics. The session highlighted the importance of these qualities in a person’s personal and social life.

Volunteers from Robert Bosch conducted a session on “Millennials @ Workplace” for the second and third year Engineering students. Insights on soft skills and various aspects of communication were shared with students.
FFE’s Pune Open House was held on 5th November 2017 at the College of Engineering, Pune. The Open House was attended by 155 participants. Dr. Anand Deshpande, Founder, Managing Director and CEO of Persistent Systems, Guest of Honour, highlighted the importance of leadership and entrepreneurship skills for self-development. 47 FFE scholars were awarded scholarships worth over Rs. 18.48 lakhs.

FFE scholars, Priti Shinde (3rd Year, Civil Engineering, College of Engineering, Pune) and Saket Komawar (4th Year, Information Technology, College of Engineering, Pune) shared their stories and journey with FFE. Ms. Ankita Jha, FFE alumnus, currently working as a Mechanical Engineer at Cumins India-Pune, spoke about her journey from hardship as a student to her transition as a professional.
Mr. Gaurang Shah, FFE alumnus, currently working as a Manager at NVidia, Pune was felicitated for his outstanding contribution to FFE. Gaurang took the initiative to bring awareness about FFE within NVidia. This has led to new employee donors from Nvidia contributing to FFE. Through their matching grant and CSR program, NVidia matched their employee contributions to FFE and helped fund scholarships to many more deserving students.

FFE’s corporate partners AMDOCS and Capgemini India Pvt. Ltd. conducted workshops for scholars. Ms. Priti Khare, CSR Head, AMDOCS-India conducted a session titled “Who am I?” – an interactive session for second and third year Engineering students. The fourth year Engineering students attended a session on “Expectations of Industry,” conducted by Vinay Kumar Shetty, FS India Operations, Financial Services, Capgemini India Pvt. Ltd. Mr. Sanjyot Khare, Head of Technical Training, Zensar Technology Limited facilitated a session where he discussed various soft skills required for job-readiness.

FFE’s medical scholars attended an informative workshop about career possibilities in the healthcare sector. This was led by Dr. Padmakar Pandit, Professor of Pharmacology, B.J. Medical College, Pune, Dr. Nilanjan Banerjee, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Bharati Vidyapeeth’s Dental College, Pune and FFE alumnus Dr. Somnath Salgar.

Dr. Sudha Kidao, Managing Trustee, FFE and Ms. Sandhya Manoj, COO - FFE India Trust, had a discussion session with the FFE Facilitators. Mr. Gaurang Shah led a short interactive session with the FFE Alumni.

In association with The Hans Foundation, FFE’s Open House at Uttarakhand was held on 16th November 2017 at National Institute of Technology (NIT), Uttarakhand. The event drew 130 FFE scholars, guests and faculty members of NIT, Uttarakhand. Professor Shyam Lal Soni, Director of NIT Uttarakhand, presided as the Chief Guest at the event.

Among other dignitaries who attended the event were Col. Sukhpal Singh, Registrar of NIT Uttarakhand and Dr. Jagdeep Singh, Assistant Registrar, NIT Uttarakhand. Speaking on the occasion, Professor Soni emphasized the need of introducing soft skills in the academic curriculum to ensure the
overall personality development of the students. Registrar, Col. Sukhpal Singh also shared his views on the need for skill development and mentorship programs and encouraged FFE scholars to actively participate whenever such opportunities arose.

Ms. Chavi Vohra, Manager - Fellows & Advisor - partnerships & Social Media, 1M1B highlighted the ongoing projects at 1M1B and motivated the students to join the program. The mission of 1M1B is to empower a million young leaders who will impact a billion more for a better future.

Mr. Ajay Sharma, CEO and Executive Director of TPC Global, a motivational speaker and career counselor, conducted a workshop on Life Skills. He shared with students his journey as an Engineering graduate and how he shaped his dreams of becoming an entrepreneur.

Pooja Panwar (3rd Year, Computer Science and Engineering, NIT, Uttarakhand) Pawan Gaur (4th Year, Computer Science and Engineering, NIT, Uttarakhand) shared their stories with fellow scholars.

Ms. Chavi Vohra shares her story of triumph

Mr. Pawan Gaur sharing his journey as a FFE Scholar
FFE held its Open House at Birsa Institute of Technology (BIT) - Sindri on 18th November 2017. 38 participants including scholars and facilitators attended the program. Dr. D K Singh, Director of BIT Sindri presided as the Guest of Honour. Mr. Ramesh Yadav, Executive Director-FFE-USA also participated in the event. Scholarships amounting to Rs. 7.60 lakhs were awarded to 19 new FFE scholars. A Certificate of Appreciation was also awarded to outstanding FFE Student Coordinator, Prachi Gupta, from BIT Sindri.

FFE held its first Meet Up in Hyderabad on 29th November 2017 at the Whiteboard Café, Hyderabad. 32 participants - including current FFE scholars, alumni, and volunteer Facilitators attended the event. Venktesh Shukla, Founding President and Board Member, FFE-USA presided over the event. In his address to the FFE scholars, Mr. Shukla shared experiences from his life, and his association with FFE. Ms. Sandhya Manoj, COO, FFE-India Trust highlighted the new initiatives for career readiness that FFE has launched for its scholars. 6 FFE scholars were awarded scholarships worth over Rs. 2.15 lakhs and Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to FFE Alumni, Ramachandran Chidambaram and Meenakshi Sundaram Gurunatham for their outstanding contribution to FFE’s mission.

FFE scholars, Rianshu Kumari (4th Year, Electronics and Communication Engineering, BIT, Sindri) and Mausam Kumar Khandelwal (4th Year, Mechanical Engineering, BIT, Sindri) shared their stories and journey with FFE. Rianshu Kumari will join Tata Consultancy Services, Hyderabad while Mausam Kumar Khandelwal will join Hafele India Private Limited, Mumbai.

Mr. Ramachandran Chidambaram, FFE alumnus, currently working as a Project Manager at Arecesium India Private Limited, Hyderabad and Mr. Meenakshi Sundaram Gurunatham currently working as RF Systems Engineer with Qualcomm, Hyderabad were felicitated for completing the “Adopt a Scholar” pledge and for their continuing support to FFE.
Mr. Meenakshi Sundaram Gurunatham, FFE alumnus, felicitated by Ms. Sandhya Manoj COO - FFE India Trust

All our events are made possible by the continued support from FFE’s scholars (student volunteers and student coordinators) and all Institutions that host FFE’s events. We are thankful to them and to our supporters for enriching each event and making it a success.

Corporate Workshops

Cisco Systems India Private Limited, conducted a second workshop 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 workshop was conducted on Embedded Systems on 25th October and focussed on introducing the students to the importance of embedded systems and career opportunities. They also discussed various job roles within Cisco and the “Do’s and Don’ts” while preparing for a job interview during the day long session. Attended by 19 third and fourth year FFE Engineering scholars, the all day workshops were facilitated by five Cisco employee volunteers. The workshop concluded with a tour of the CISCO labs.

FFE scholars participating at the CISCO workshop

FFE scholars listening attentively during the CISCO lab tour

FFE Mentoring Program for Career Readiness

FFE launched its in-house mentoring program for FFE’s third year Engineering scholars in October 2017. Currently, in the the pilot phase, 44 third year Engineering scholars from 30 colleges across 32 cities are being mentored by experienced mentors in interactive one-on-one sessions. FFE’s mentors include Engineers, Scientists and Technologists from Axtria India Private Limited (Gurgaon), Hewlett Packard Enterprise (Bangalore) and Intel Technology India Private Limited (Bangalore). Participating students were matched with mentors based on their course of study, language, gender, interests and language.

Skill Development and Job Readiness Program

The Hans Foundation (THF), Uttarakhand, is conducting a four month long web-development program for 24 fourth year FFE Engineering scholars in Uttarakhand as part of the THF Aspirational Program(IT).
The main objective of this program is to provide opportunities to both IT/non-IT students to explore options beyond their field of specialization and assist them in placement. The 82 hour program focuses on providing web-based, online training for basic courses in Java, Web and Android development.

FFE concluded a 3-month-App-based Aptitude (Logical Reasoning and Quantitative Aptitude and test taking strategies) and a phone based English program for 16 fourth year Engineering FFE scholars across Gujarat and Maharashtra.

A 3-month app-based English training program that began in September 2017 for all second year Engineering scholars is in its 2nd phase. 1000 2nd year FFE scholars are actively participating in this program. The post assessment for the program was held in December 2017 to evaluate the progress of the scholars.

**Voice of Scholars**

**Current Scholar**

**Pasupala Sasikala**

II year, Food Processing Engineering - Indian Institute of Crop Processing Technology (IICPT) - Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu

Pasupala hails from Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh where her family has been practicing farming for several decades. Her parents think highly of education and give their full support towards her studies, even though both of them have only completed secondary school level. Pasupala relies on her teachers and her brother who is currently studying in NIT - Trichy, Tamil Nadu for educational mentoring.

“I had an enjoyable school life filled with fond memories, life lessons and experiences. It was where I made good friends who went on to become lifelong friends. As a family we are close-knit and stayed together thus overcoming adversities. We always have trust and hope, believing that if one is pure at heart and kind to others, then God would surely help.

During our childhood, there was no proper transportation in our village; so it was difficult for us to attend school, go to the hospital or anywhere outside the village. We did not have regular electricity either. Having gone through this, I have always wanted to become an agricultural officer and help farmers. My parents toiled in the fields so they could pay our school fees. We managed as the fees were lower in the village and I used to receive merit scholarship as well. But college was a different matter altogether. Fortunately, I came across the FFE scholarship through my brother and applied for the program. Had I not received this scholarship, I would have had to apply for educational loan which would have been a huge financial burden on my parents.

After college and graduation, my priority is to get a job. My dream is to start a food company where farmers can supply raw materials directly. I am on my way to achieving this dream and see myself as the CEO of this food company 10 years from now. This is possible because of FFE and my donor TU CIBIL to whom I am extremely thankful. Once I am financially stable, I hope to help others as much as I can, including students like me and fulfil my other dream which is to bring my family happiness.”

**FFE Alumnus**

**Keerthikumar Yelmeli Nagaraja**

Keerthikumar Nagaraja is an ASP (Adopt A Scholar) donor and works as a Lead Engineer at Avaya India Private Limited, Bangalore.

“We are a family of 3 and hail from Bangalore. My father used to work as a daily wage worker while mother worked as a teacher with an NGO that was providing education for ragpickers. Given our poor financial situation, we often struggled to make ends meet.
I completed my primary education from Nivedita School, Bangalore. Teacher Anasuya waived my tuition fees so that I could complete at least my primary schooling. My parents funded the rest of my education by borrowing small loans from relatives. During my Pre-University, my mother, who was the breadwinner of our household lost her job, and we struggled to manage even a day’s meal. I lost hopes on continuing my education and started working toward joining a call centre as soon as I completed college.

Around the same time, I was introduced to lecture classes at Sri Uttaradhi Mutt, Bangalore that provides free coaching for meritorious and bright students. While studying here, the Mathematics lecturer introduced me to FFE volunteer Mr. S Vishwanathan and FFE Facilitator Ms. Vasanti Savanur who have been of immense support since then. From here on, my association with FFE started and I am extremely grateful to FFE for awarding me scholarships each year. I cannot imagine how difficult life would have been without FFE’s scholarship. It is only because of this and my parents perseverance that I am an Engineer today. I am now a proud FFE Alumnus Donor contributing towards FFE’s Scholarship Program and helping FFE make a significant impact.”

Mr. Navin Wadhwan is a generous donor and supporter of FFE. A committed and visionary donor, Mr. Wadhwan has explored all opportunities and supported extra courses and classes for his sponsored students to ensure that they will gain employment on graduation. Mr. Wadhwan has over 25 years of experience, working with some of the largest private sector companies. He has worked on numerous transactions (aggregating in excess of USD 40 billion worldwide) providing investment banking services to multinational companies, financial institutions, multilateral agencies etc. Mr. Wadhwan has worked closely with businesses across industries in devising corporate strategy, investor management; ideation and giving guidance in improving business performances.

Known for his hands-on approach, persistence, business acumen and deep connect with his teams and clients, Mr. Wadhwan’s leadership style inspires people around him and he is respected by his juniors, peers, senior colleagues and other industry stakeholders.

Navin is an avid runner and has completed more than 10 Marathons across the globe (including 5 Marathon Majors) and being a high endurance triathlete, he has participated and completed the Ironman Championship at South Africa’s Nelson Mandela Bay.
Volunteer Speak
Lakshmi Kameswari Chavali
Andhra Pradesh

A valued member of FFE’s volunteer network in Vishakapatnam, for over 18 years Ms. Lakshmi Kameswari has recommended, over 71 students have been awarded FFE’s scholarship.

Ms. Kameshvari was born in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. Ms. Kameswari received her Master of Science degree in Mathematics from Osmania University, Hyderabad and Bachelor of Education degree in Mathematics and Physical Sciences as Teaching Methodology from Andhra University, Visakhapatnam.

After graduation, she joined Zinc Smelter High School, Vishakapatnam where she has been working as a Mathematics teacher for the last 30 years; she also been serving as Captain for The Bharath Scouts and Guides for the past 28 years.

“My journey with FFE began in 1999 when one of my students introduced me to FFE. As a Facilitator, I identify potential FFE scholars who come from difficult socio-economic backgrounds. I am glad to be of service to society by recommending needy and meritorious students to FFE’s scholarship program. I will continue my association with FFE and serve the needy throughout my life.”

Employee Feature
Kirankumar Desai
Accounts Executive, FFE India Trust

Kirankumar Desai joined FFE as part of the Accounts team and has been associated with the Trust for two years.

As an Accounts Executive, Kirankumar maintains project account books, general program accounting and finalization of accounts.

Prior to joining FFE, Kirankumar worked with Mahila Samakhya - an organization that focused on education and women’s empowerment for 8 years. Kirankumar holds a B.Com degree from Gulbarga University.

Kirankumar enjoys traveling, playing chess, listening to music and reading books.

Connect With Us:

Scholarships: shekharsastri@ffe.org | 99000 76280  Donors: prathima@ffe.org | 98805 47390
Alumni: tejswini@ffe.org | 9886021861  Skill Development: agnes@ffe.org | 7022123088
Mentorship: mentoring@ffe.org | 9108521390  Editor: akshatha@ffe.org | 9108521391

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Foundation For Excellence India Trust
#840, MHT House, 1st Floor, 5th Main, Indiranagar 1st Stage
Bengaluru 560038
email: adr@ffe.org
Phone: +91 80 25201925