Note from the Managing Trustee:

Dear Friends and Supporters,

FFE will celebrate its 25th Anniversary in 2019. As we move towards this important milestone, it is also a time to reflect on what we have accomplished thus far and what is being planned in the year ahead. FFE has accomplished much—we have awarded scholarships to more than 18,000 students in India, amounting to an excess of Rs. 115 Crores. Over time, we have also augmented the scholarship with programs that will help students move closer to realizing their own personal dreams and aspirations, through the launch of the Skills Training Program and the Mentoring Program.

Our goal for the upcoming FY is to stay focused in fulfilling the mission of FFE, as envisioned by the Founders Dr. Prabhu and Mrs. Poonam Goel, to transform the lives of gifted individuals who have succeeded despite the odds they have faced, through the flagship merit cum means scholarship. We hope we can bring in more students into our fold this year so that many more unrealized dreams and voices of hope will be provided an opportunity to succeed. We have put in place processes and systems to allow us to scale, including our new technology platform. FFE’s COO Sandhya Manoj has streamlined operations for better efficiency and productivity. We now need more of you to participate in this exciting journey to make a difference—as donors, volunteers and/or connecting us to those who can help FFE/students.

All our programs are made possible through contributions from donors; the Skills Training is funded in full through a generous grant from the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation. While donors provide much needed financial and related support (mentors, workshops, training and facility tours, internships, employment), it is our very own scholars and alumni who inspire us to stay committed to creating lasting change together and to a brighter future for scholars and their families. I am thankful to FFE’s leadership team (including Trustees in India and the FFE –USA Board) for their strong support of our programs. As we move to the next fiscal and beyond, I feel humbled and proud of what FFE accomplished in FY 2017-18 and am excited about the future.

While I look forward to an exciting year ahead, I am also counting on each of you to participate in this journey. Because together, we can inspire hope and create opportunities for many young talented individuals to succeed for a better tomorrow.

Best Wishes,

Sudha Kidao
Managing Trustee
FFE India Trust
News & Events

I. Community Outreach

Mentoring Program

FFE launched its pilot in-house remote mentoring program for third year Engineering FFE scholars in October 2017. In its first phase, 44 students were paired with individual corporate mentors across 30 colleges in 32 cities. Participating students were matched with mentors based on their course of study, language, gender and general interests.

Currently, the mentorship program has 149 active mentor-mentee pairs of which 17 pairs will be completing the course by July 2018. The program continues to grow with financial and human resource support from Axtria India Private Limited, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Intel Technology India Private Limited and Robert Bosch Engineering & Business Solutions Private Limited. FFE mentors also include employee volunteers from Amdocs Development Centre India LLP and Amazon while Sundaram Mutual Fund provides financial support towards the mentoring program.

Voice of Mentors

“FFE’s Mentoring program has been a good experience overall. The main idea behind joining this program was to be able to provide college students with some guidelines, things that we have learnt on the job and after college. Some of those ‘habits’ can really help. FFE allowed that opportunity in the right way. The set-up and the content provided were always on point. It was also very easy to reach out to the FFE team for any help, issue resolution, etc.”

Prakash Singh
Senior Associate, Axtria India Private Limited

“Mentor matching was done very well with respect to need of the candidate and my area of expertise. It was easy to make one on one connect with the mentee using various modes like phone, WhatsApp, E-mail & Skype calls. Further, Connect can be scheduled any time of the week as per mutual convenience. A very good program and very satisfying experience from my perspective as I could help the mentee in all aspects. A subject like summer internship with regular interaction helped in building the mentee’s confidence as well.”

Karuna Shankar Pande
Director-Operations, Amazon

Voice of Mentees

Gudipalli Sai Sravani
3rd Year, Computer Science Engineering
Narasaraopet Engineering College

“The main highlight of the mentoring program is that mentors utilized good videos to explain the purpose of specific sessions and we liked all the assignments provided in time management session. Mentoring sessions like etiquette, time management and non-verbal communication really helped me a lot.”

Mohanchandar S
3rd Year, Computer Science Engineering
Coimbatore Institute of Technology

“This is an amazing platform where you can share knowledge, where you can help and mentor someone in need. The learning materials and videos provided were to the point and beneficial. As a mentor, this helped me a lot to conduct sessions for my mentee and it was also a good learning for me as well. Another plus point of FFE is their prompt follow up and response to our requests. Loved to be a part of this program.”

Lenita Menezes
Solutions Quality Analyst
Intel Technology India Private Limited
mentor has been very helpful in making me understand the topics provided within this course. I feel the main challenge is time constraint as the mentors have only weekends for their family and at the same time students have no time except weekends. In my case, I had classes even on Saturdays throughout this semester.”

Satya Krishna Tellakula
3rd Year, Computer Science Engineering
NIT Rourkela
“FFE’s Mentoring program is very helpful and I have learnt good communication skills by interacting with my mentor who is always available and ready to help. The program is a good initiative on the part of FFE.”

FFE is thankful to both corporate partners and individuals for their support in making this initiative a success for our scholars.

Skill Development and Job Readiness Program 2018

FFE launched a Skill Development program for over 1000 second year engineering scholars in September 2017 through a generous grant from the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF). The program consists of two components – English training and Aptitude training. Both modules are app-based, launched in partnership with e-learning platforms Hello English and Kings Learning (English Program), and Focus Academy for Career Enhancement (FACE) and Pariksha (Aptitude Program). This first cohort of students completed their English training in December 2017 while the Aptitude training was completed in May 2018.

As a baseline skill test, students completed the AMCAT (Aspiring Minds Computer Adaptive Test) and this same group will complete their post assessment AMCAT test by July 2018. Based on post-assessment results, students will transition into aspirational courses from August 2018. A new cohort of Engineering scholars (900) entering the second year will begin their English training programs in August 2018.

II. Workshops With Corporates

Project Connect Inauguration at CISCO Bangalore

During FY 2017-18, Cisco Systems India Private Limited- Bangalore initiated a series of one-day workshops for FFE’s engineering scholars in Bangalore. Titled, “The Project Connect Exposure Program for Engineering Scholars - A Deep Dive into Hardware Engineering”, CISCO conducted a series of 5 workshops covering various topics relevant to Engineering students.

CISCO organized a Concept Launch presentation on 24th April 2018 for a new series of workshops under “Project Connect” scheduled to begin in August 2018. The event was held at CISCO Bangalore Office, attended by Sudha Kidao (Managing Trustee), Sandhya Manoj (FFE - COO) and FFE Donor Relations Team representative Minu Joseph. The workshops are based on a unique STEM Mentoring model that provides a hands-on learning environment for the students while leveraging the mentorship of Cisco employees. CISCO’s Volunteer team, in partnership with third party vendor Li2 Innovations, will be conducting these sessions.

Voice of Scholars

Current Scholar

Ashwini V
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Ashwini is a brilliant student from Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu. She studies Chemical Engineering, second year, at Alagappa College of Technology, Chennai. Ashwini’s father is an agriculturist who grows sugarcane on the family’s small plot of land which is the only source of th family’s income. Her
mother is a homemaker while her brother is in pre-university college. Scanty rainfall is a constant bane for the agricultural community in this area and affects the livelihood of the farmers to a great extent, including Ashwini’s parents. Being a diligent student, Ashwini scored 97.4% in Grade 10 and 96.7% in Class 12. Her Engineering Rank of 2922 in the Tamil Nadu Engineering Admissions (TNEA) helped Ashwini gain admission to the Engineering program. To support Ashwini’s education, her parents took agricultural loans from banks and personal loans from relatives. Her college seniors first introduced her to FFE; being awarded FFE’s scholarship has reduced the financial burden on her family to a considerable extent.

While an avid reader, Ashwini’s interests also include music and drawing. She believes that her ability to adapt to new surroundings is her biggest strength. She is an active member of the YRC Club (Youth Red Cross Club) in college and has participated in campus cleaning initiatives. Ashwini aspires to become a successful Chemical Engineer employed by a reputed company and wishes to specialize in Management Skills when she gains enough work experience. She is grateful to FFE and her donor TransUnion CIBIL Ltd. for the support.

FFE Alumnus

Chandragouda Annigeri
Nargund, Karnataka

Chandragouda is a Mechanical Engineering graduate (2017-18 batch) from University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering – Bangalore. He is currently employed as a Graduate Engineer Trainee at Vedanta Resources. This is his story:

Chandragouda understood the pain of unbearable loss from the young age of 14 when his father passed away from an illness. Unable to bear the loss, his mother too passed away soon after. But motivation for him came in the form of his brother Shivabasanagouda and his English teacher Mr. Mariswamy. Although burdened with enormous debts incurred from their parents’ illness, this did not deter Chandragouda’s 24 year old brother. He shouldered the responsibility of his two younger siblings and encouraged the academically bright Chandragouda to pursue his dreams. His brother works for a local NGO in the area of microfinance and draws a monthly salary of Rs. 7000/- which makes it almost impossible for him to pay even the interest on the loan taken by him for his parents’ treatment.

Chandragouda has been a brilliant student securing 9.8 CGPA in his 10th standard and 89% in his PUC exams. With a CET rank of 3641, he gained admission to Visvesvaraya College, Bangalore in the Mechanical Engineering stream. During his free time, he enjoys reading and is a volleyball player. In college, he was an active member of the Automotive Engineers Club and won the first prize at the technical fest.

Chandragouda has many dreams for himself including a career in the civil services. However, extremely conscious of his responsibility towards his family he says, “I want to clear all the debts first and then settle both my brothers in good businesses. After that I will focus towards achieving my aim”. Today Chandragouda is a proud employee at Vedanta Resources.
Volunteer Speak

Volunteer Facilitator

Dr. Roshan Ara
Srinagar
Jammu & Kashmir

FFE Facilitator
Dr. Roshan Ara is an academician working as Assistant Professor in University of Kashmir. She is also a social worker and women’s rights activist serving as President AIWC (All India Women’s Conference), Kashmir Branch. She has to her credit two books titled ‘Women, Work and Family - managing of Work and Family roles’ and ‘Dynamics of Women Empowerment and Development.’ Dr. Roshan has a PhD in Commerce, dual Masters degree in Gender Studies and Economics, Bachelors degree in Education and completed a one year diploma in Women’s Empowerment and Development.

“I was born and brought up in Kashmir and completed my education in the state. I started my career as a teacher. I have been a teacher by choice and worked with dedication, zeal and sincerity for the past twenty five years. My dedication and hard work has proved fruitful and inspirational for others for which I was conferred the Hon’ble President of India’s “Best Teacher Award” on 5th September, 2012, on the occasion of Teacher’s day.

I have been a researcher and have written almost thirty papers which were published in national as well as international journals. I have participated in Conferences and Seminars held in different parts of the country and also received the opportunity to participate in BRICS Summit held on 14th November, 2013 at the International University of Moscow.

My association with FFE began in 2011 and I have been part of this network for eight years. It was my teaching profession that brought me close to the spirit of social work because I have always tried to be a mentor to my students. My close association with my students helped me understand their problems so much so that I found myself fulfilling their needs, solving both academic and non-academic problems which gave me a lot of happiness and personal satisfaction. Rather than just stay a teacher, I also try to be a friend to my students which has helped them get close and attached to me. This is the secret of my success.”

FFE is thankful to Dr. Roshan Ara for her many years of dedicated service to FFE and her students.

Employee Feature

Padmashree Shetty
Senior Executive, Scholarship Program

Padmashree joined FFE India Trust as part of the Scholarship Program in May 2016.

In her role as Senior Executive, Padmashree’s role primarily includes review of student applications and recommendation of eligible applicants for FFE’s Scholarship. She ensures that each application is processed with due care and efficiency. She also handles scholarship and Salesforce related queries from scholars and facilitators. Padmashree is also responsible for student follow-up related to scholarship application process, populating scholarship data and submission of reports.

Prior to joining FFE, Padmashree worked as a...
lecturer in St. Francis PU College, Bangalore. Subsequently, she worked as an online Computer Science tutor for Class 11 and 12 with E-Tuitions, an online teaching platform with a pan-Indian presence. Padmashree completed B.Sc Computer Science from S K University in Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh. She completed her Masters in Computer Application from IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University).

Padmashree enjoys listening to music, watching travel shows, reading story books to her two children and spending quality time with her family.

**FFE Team Building Retreat**

FFE held its annual team building retreat on 8th June 2018 at Q Mango Retreat, Ankanahalli. The FFE India Trust team spent a fun-filled day in Ramanagara with employees and FFE leadership engaged in various team-bonding activities.

The retreat offered an opportunity for team members to interact outside of work, develop camaraderie, improve and build relationships between individuals and teams, stimulate creativity and practice teamwork and collaboration, besides explore cross-functional areas of interest.