



April 2021



Newsletter & Magazine

NIT Warangal

Americas Alumni Association

Alumni Success Stories
Technical & Literary Articles

College Day Memories
Meet Executive Committee



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President's Inaugural Message



To all my fellow NIT Warangal alumni, I would like to convey you the spring greetings and well wishes, on behalf of the executive committee of the NIT Warangal Americas alumni chapter.

For about 20 years, we made steady progress in organizing the NITW alumni primarily in the San Francisco bay area on the west coast of the USA. With increasing numbers of the alumni, as a natural corollary, the alumni started organizing in various cities like Seattle, Dallas, Austin, Houston, New York/New Jersey, the Carolinas, and Atlanta giving us a wider representation.

We are now well connected to the NIT Warangal institution and the various alumni chapters through out the world. It is exciting time for all of us. The increasing numbers of alumni across various age groups and the breadth of presence across the world gives us immense leverage and tap into our alumni's great strengths.

We are embarking on new initiatives like a new design for our website – nitwamericas.org for the alumni to interact and get to know the news about the institution and the fellow alumni's activities. We are bringing out a quarterly magazine going forward, to offer a platform for our alumni to showcase their literary, professional, and family related talents. I urge everyone to take advantage of this platform and contribute content in a big way.

The task of organizing alumni activities is always a work in progress. So, your ideas to enhance our image and reputation are always welcome.

We are now having an unprecedented crisis due to the COVID-19 hitting many of our alumni families and NITW America's is eager to step forward and raise funds to support the alumni.

**SRINIVAS ATLURI
PRESIDENT**

NIT WARANGAL AMERICAS ALUMNI CHAPTER

From the NITW Director's Desk

My dear distinguished Alumni of NITW(RECW) in the USA,

It is my honor and privilege to address you all on the occasion of the release of the America Newsletter. NITW fraternity joins me in congratulating you all for bringing out the Newsletter.

While the Institute was making multipronged strides, it had to cope with the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021 has become still more challenging because of the surge of second wave of COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic has raised lot of issues and concerns. This outbreak has brought about enormous changes in the way we interact in an educational Institution. We had to ensure physical, mental and economic well-being of faculty, staff and students.



Major setback of COVID-19 in 2020 was the loss of our dear colleague Prof. E. Venkataratnam from the Civil Engineering Department. Notwithstanding this, our faculty, staff and students had to gear up to meet the unparalleled situation. The pandemic has thrown many challenges to teaching and learning community and we have devised and evolved effective ways to address the same. We had to lock-down the Institute, arrange to send majority of students to their homes in India and abroad and make the stay of around 400 students mostly DASA students, who were forced to stay back in the campus, comfortable. We have ensured availability of mess, housekeeping, medical and sports facilities to them. The Institute developed protocols for the safety of the faculty, staff and students in the campus. The faculty were in regular touch with the students at their home towns, checking their well-being and motivating them to keep up their interests in academic and extra-curricular activities.

In order to ensure that the students' learning is not affected by the pandemic, our faculty have developed and standardized Learning Management System (LMS). Our faculty were involved in content creation, digital repository and dissemination to students. All of our faculty have gone through digital and online training for conducting online classes and examinations. We have been conducting online classes after successful pilot studies adopting synchronous, asynchronous and blended modes of teaching. Our faculty are well equipped with digital infrastructure and gadgets for conducting online classes, funded from the Institute and Cumulative Professional Development Allowance (CPDA). We are also devising ways and means to carry out the labs virtually.

We have tried to address the digital divide, especially for students who cannot afford to have the laptops/smart phones and no access to the internet. We are happy that on our call, our alumni have spontaneously came forward to donate new and refurbished laptops, which have been handed over to the financially weaker students. The students owe their gratitude to the Alumni for this generous help.

The new online semester started on the 3rd of September 2020. I addressed all the students at the beginning of the semester regarding the responsibilities and precautions to be taken to keep themselves safe and healthy. My senior colleagues including Deans, Advisers and Registrar joined me in preparing the students to adapt themselves to the new norm of learning. The Institute has conducted an Awareness Program for JOSSA Counselling on 4th October, 2020 wherein the aspiring engineering students were given an orientation on the life in the NIT, process involved in selecting right Institute and right Course. More than 50,000 students have viewed the Program on YouTube and benefitted.

18th Convocation of the Institute was held virtually on 22nd October, 2020. Hon'ble Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' was the Chief Guest and Shri N.R. Narayana Murthy, Founder of INFOSYS was the Guest of Honour. 112 scholars received PhD degree, 633 students post-graduation degrees, which include M.Tech. M.Sc (Tech), M.Sc, M.B.A, M.C.A. and 848 students got their B.Tech degrees. This is a substantial number from the NIT, Warangal.

The Hon'ble Minister has also inaugurated new buildings, viz. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Teaching Learning Centre, Vishveswarayya Centre for Skill Development and Vallabhbhai Patel Athithi Grih and laid Foundation Stone for the Rudrama Devi Ladies' Hostels Complex, on the day of Convocation, in virtual mode.

The Institute has an excellent placement record and top-notch firms and organizations have shown keen interest in selecting students from this Institute. Nearly 100% students who have CGPA 7 and above by the end of 3rd Year get campus placements with high CTC. 95% of circuit and 85% of non-circuit students get on-campus placements in the final year. 30-40% of students do summer internship after 3rd Year. The students from the Institute also get top ranks in GATE, CAT, GRE etc.

The Institute has largest faculty strength among all NITs, with the addition of around 140 faculty recruited during the last three years, from reputed Institutes from India and abroad, following stringent recruitment process. The faculty are involved in research and consultancy, in addition to teaching. Some of our Faculty members were sanctioned prestigious projects with National and International collaboration:

- A team of our faculty were awarded a project "to study the effect of atmospheric condition on the structure of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome causing Coronavirus (SARS-COV-2) that originated in 2019". The proposal was accepted on 11th of April, 2020 by the COVID-19 High Performance Computing (HPC) Consortium that was formed by an amalgam of White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, the U.S. Department of Energy, MIT, NASA and other prestigious Institutions.
- A team of our faculty in collaboration with a team at the National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NIAB), Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) were sanctioned a project entitled "Hunt for Pan-CoV for the Coronaviruses of the past, present and future" by DBT-BIRAC COVID-19 Research Consortium with an estimated budget of Rs. 2.3 Crores.
- A research team of our faculty in collaboration with Indian Institute of Technology Delhi and Sastra Deemed University have developed a TMA sensor fabric using sequential molecular self-assembly technique, which display a transient response for 1-500 ppm and stable response towards 100 ppm. This study is financially supported by the SERB (DST) and SPARC (MHRD)
- Faculty from the Department of Physical Education produced four videos on Physical Fitness and Health for the health and well-being during COVID conditions and uploaded them on YOUTUBE channel.
- A team of our faculty and research scholars developed a multipurpose and chemical free sterilization system which can sterilize fruits, vegetables and a number of house-hold items. Efforts are being made to commercialize it.
- We have been sanctioned a project titled "Computational structure-based drug design: Identifying antivirals from natural products targeting SARS-CoV-2", in collaboration XSEDE and Microsoft Azure, USA and Fluid Numerics, USA.

Multipurpose and chemical free sterilization system, Programmable Electronic Jacquard Machine for complex designs in Handloom sector, Low cost sanitizer dispensing machine, Low cost hand sanitizer to meet the standards of WHO and CDC are some of the innovations / products developed in the Institute during the last year.

It is gratifying to note that our efforts in overall improvement have helped us in improving our NIRF ranking considerably from 26 to 19.

As you are aware, the Government of India have formulated the National Educational Policy, 2020. As the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India said during the inaugural session of Conclave on NEP2020 conducted by UGC on 7th August, every country reform its education system according to its national values and goals. The end goal is to make sure its youth is future ready. The NEP2020 aims to overhaul and revamp the education system in India of the 21st Century. Implementation of this policy can shape the dream of a new India by transforming into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high quality education to all in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). It also envisages development of ethical and constitutional values, intellectual curiosity, scientific temper, creativity, spirit of service across the range of disciplines including sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, languages as well as professional, technical and vocational subjects. We are formulating strategies to implement in Policy in our Institute.

Alumni play a vital role in Institution's development and advancement. Their support and guidance in terms of resources, placements and encouragement keep the public perception about the Institute in high stead. One of our distinguished alumnus Shri Sudhakar Rao from Gemini group, Dubai, has promised a Rs.1 crore for Tinkering lab to be set up at NITW. We believe alumni are often in a position to engage with Institute in their professional life too since they, being the ambassadors of the Institute, radiate knowledge to where they are associated - be it in professional & social networks as the Institute perception is being created by their efforts. We are looking forward for the alumni in further improving the developmental efforts of the Institute towards improving the quality of education and research. We hope to see the construction work of the Convention Centre promised by the Alumni Association, whose foundation stone was laid by the Hon'ble Vice-President of India on 8th October, 2018 commencing sooner.

We will keep you posted of the developments of the Institute from time to time and hope that the America Newsletter will disseminate the efforts of the Institute to all the alumni in the USA. Success of any venture depends on its sustainability. I am sure you will ensure the release of the Newsletter timely with the right information.

Wish you all great success. Stay safe and healthy.

Dr. N.V. RAMANA RAO
Director NIT Warangal

NEW YEAR GREETINGS FACULTY INCHARGE



Faculty-in-Charge, NITWAA
Prof. N. Selvaraj
Dean IR&AA

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Dear esteemed Students, Parents, my Colleagues and all the NITW Association Members, Happy New Year to you all and a very warm welcome to 2021, which I believe will be a year of increased blessing for all of us.

As we enter a new year, and a new term, January is always about fresh beginnings and positive change. I love the promise of the New Year and all the possibilities that it offers for our Students here at the institute and the potential for great achievement that each New Year holds for the future of National Institute of Technology Warangal and NITW Alumni Association.

So once again, it is with the newed hope and optimism of the New Year and the new season that I wish you all a very happy, healthy, successful and prosperous 2021, on behave of the Administrators, faculty, technical staff, non-technical staff and others of the institute.

Thank you for your continued support and Cooperation.

THE EXECUTIVE BODY (OCT 2020 – OCT 2022)

Position	Name	Degree at NITW	Graduation Year
President	Srinivas V Atluri	B.Tech	1983
Vice-President	Sridhar Kummam	B.Tech	2003
Treasurer	Sunil Sabat	B.Tech	1986
Secretary	Balaraj Pudota	B.Tech	1993
Joint Secretary	Jags Porandla	M.Tech	1993
Website Coordinator	Sreerag Mandakathil Sreenath	B.Tech	2017
Student Coordinator	Srikanth Bangaru	B.Tech	2015
Strategic Enhancer	Dr. Durga N. Rao Mittinti	B.Tech	1971
Executive Member	Sridhar Kunisetty	B.Tech	1989
Executive Member	Muppalla Sridhar	B.Tech	1993
Executive Member	Chandra Ilindra	B.Tech	1989
Executive Member	Sai Lakshmi Sarath Tamarana	B.Tech	2012
Executive Member	Anirudh Kolla	B.Tech	2018
Executive Member	Rahul Raj	B.Tech	2016
Executive Member	Gayathri Kalyana sundaram	B.Tech	2011
Regional Coordinator (DC/Virginia/Maryland)	Sridhar Kanugula	B.Tech	1989
Regional Coordinator (Seattle)	Rohan Vardhan	B.Tech	2016
Regional Coordinator (Atlanta, GA)	Ram Gangaraju	Other	1993
Regional Coordinator (Charlotte, NC)	Srinivas Gadudasu	B.Tech	1988
Regional Coordinator (Seattle)	Ravi kiran Nety	B.Tech	2010
Regional Coordinator (Austin)	Sridhar Sanisetty	B.Tech	2011
Regional Coordinator (Dallas)	Madhu Kona	B.Tech	1996

THE EXECUTIVE BODY (OCT 2017 – OCT 2020)

Position	Name	Degree at NITW	Graduation Year
President	Sridhar Kunisetty	B.Tech	1989
Vice-President	Srinivas Tagirisa	B.Tech	1989
Secretary	Sridhar Kummam	B.Tech	2003
Treasurer	Sowmya Kotha	B.Tech	2012
Joint Secretary	Ram Gangaraju	M.Sc (Tech)	1993
Exec. Member & Regional Coordinator for Atlanta	Vijay Nenmeni	B.Tech	2000
Exec. Member & Regional Coordinator for Seattle	Vinay Sura	B.Tech	1995
Exec. Member & Community Outreach Coordinator	Jayaprakash Ammu	M.Sc (Tech)	1993
Exec. Member & Social Media coordinator	Raghottam Bommareddy	B.Tech	1993
Exec. Member & Student Coordinator	Srikanth Bangaru	B.Tech	2015
Exec. Member (Ex-President)	Subba Rao Padmanabhuni	B.tech	1978
Exec. Member(Ex-President)	Sridhar Muppalla	B.Tech	1993
Exec. Member	Ramesh Oruganti	M.Tech	2000
Exec. Member	Rohan Vardhan	B.Tech	2016
Exec. Member & Regional Coordinator for Houston	Balraj Pudota	B.Tech	1993
Exec. Member & Regional Coordinator for Austin	Chandra Ilindra	B.Tech	1989
Exec. Member	Rao Charagondla	B.tech	1994
Regional Coordinator for Dallas	Jags Porandla	M.Tech	1993
Website Coordinator	Sreerag Mandakathil	B.Tech	2017



HOW A TECHNOCRAT GOT INTO THE HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

BY JAGS PORANDLA

My name is Jags Porandla, though I wasn't always the man that you all know today. I have experienced highs and lows, witnessed successes and defeats, and ultimately learned the secret to rising from humble beginnings. You may be asking how I did this, how I was able to overcome all the difficulties that life presented me with and proceeded to use my experience to enrich the youth and others around me. Well, this is my story.

As a student who was raised in various small towns in Warangal, India until the 10th grade, I always had big dreams during my childhood, although I didn't have much natural talent. Math was the only subject I excelled at. My dad noticed and began to send me to his friend and a Hindi teacher who loves to teach Math during his free time. Those extra classes helped me build a good foundation in math and problem-solving skills and allowed me to compete with the most mathematically-inclined students in the class.

After hearing of REC (the former name of NIT) Warangal from my uncle, Mr. Krishna Murthy, who formerly worked in the Chemical department when I was in 5th or 6th grade, my dad and I wanted to visit this school. My uncle gave us a tour of the university and, on that day, I decided that I would attend this school. My dream was made even more realistic due to the unwavering support of my parents, who were true motivators.

In a few years, I took my engineering entrance exam and spent a lot of time solving a tough problem, resulting in me getting very stressed during the exam even though I prepared very well. Unfortunately, I didn't get a good score on the exam, and therefore, I could not even apply to NIT Warangal. While I was doing my undergrad program, moving to the US was not appealing for me, so I decided to prepare for GATE. I received a good score in the 91st percentile, which allowed me to get into my dream school, REC/NIT Warangal.

My engineering schools, KITS and NIT Warangal, laid a good foundation for me to be involved in challenging businesses, including: my brother's wholesale general store, teaching students at an engineering college and competitive training centers, construction, an undergarment and computer institution company, and investing and trading in the stock/crypto market. One of my prominent accomplishments was that I was the 1st model manager out of 16 trading experts picked up by Covestor.com (a company which was later bought by Interactive Brokers).

After trying many domains, I realized that we succeed in some ventures and fail in some others. However as each day passes and as each hindrance is conquered, we are provided with learning opportunities that teach us to rise from a fall and do better than we did the previous day.

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MEET PRANATHY GANGARAJU

Meet PRANATHY GANGARAJU (her screen name is Pranthy Sharma), who, besides being a beauty queen who brought home to Atlanta and name to her parents Ram Gangaraju (Ram happens to be our NITW Startup Accelerator 3.0 chairman and Atlanta Area Representative for NITWAmericas) and Maitreyi Sharma this coveted national crown, is an inspiring and talented young woman with an eye on a film career.

How cool would it be to see an accomplished beauty from our local Indian community starring on the big screen in an Indian film, or perhaps even in a Hollywood flick? In most cases it may seem like a pipe dream, but not so in the case of the stunning and talented Pranathy Gangaraju. “Acting,” says Pranathy, “has been my ultimate priority, even before I came to know about participating in beauty pageants.” “I completely enjoy the atmosphere of the art form,” she elaborates.

Not surprisingly, the beauty pageant route was a natural outcome for someone of her interest and ambition. What was not so natural, and what has set Pran (as she is known amongst friends) apart, is the rapid progress and accomplishments she has put under her belt in the pageantry circuit. In 2013, she won Miss Prettiest Eyes and Miss Congeniality in the iLink Professionals Miss India Georgia contest. This was followed by the 1st runner up title in 2014 in the same forum.

“Resolve” and “application” are two qualities that come to mind seeing what went into Pran’s leap from a local pageant winner to the national title. “I made a decision to take it to the next level, and realized that everything needed to compete at the national level had to do with paying more attention to detail.” Having competed in Miss India USA 2013, Pran had a good idea of precisely what she needed to work on: the walk! “The walking style over there was not a traditional pageant walk, but more of a modern runway walk; and I am very weak at model walks, so that was the toughest part for me. Then I realized the key to having the perfect walk is filling your whole body with positive energy and a welcoming presence.”

The moment! An overwhelmed Pranathy when she was just declared Miss India USA 2014. (Photo: Ajith Lens)

Pran's diligence, along with her striking beauty and personality, paid off handsomely. In the over 30-year history of the Miss India USA title, she goes on to become the fourth Georgian to bring home the title [Prior Georgia winners were Icha Singh (1992), Ratna Kancharla (1993), and Meghna Nagarajan (2003)]. Edging out 20 other highly accomplished beauties who rose through their ranks in their respective states is reason enough for celebration and elation. Talking about her feelings at the time of the crowning, she says, "There are no words to describe the feeling of winning something so prestigious. I felt shocked and excited all at once. While I was on the stage I just had this rush of adrenaline, wondering if my name would be announced, until the audience repeatedly kept on screaming my name. I almost wanted to burst in tears. The feeling of winning the crown was the happiest moment in my life."

"Happiest moment in my life?" But what about the fact that this flagship pageant was in recent years cancelled by the India American Cultural Association (IACA) on the grounds that amongst other things, such beauty pageants were against Indian culture? (IACA has since restarted the pageants). It seemed like an important concern, and who better than the participants to answer to that? So we pressed Pranathy to check if there was anything about her pageant experience that made her feel exploited, or if it induced any feeling that she was selling out on her Indian culture. "Far from it. I never felt exploited in participating in Indian pageants. In fact it empowered me to speak about my opinions and values with full confidence, since there is so much history and depth on Indian culture in these pageants. It really gave me a lot of strength to showcase my culture, and that to me is empowering." Adding to what the pageant has done for her in general, she says, "The very reason I decided to take part in beauty pageants was mainly to build my self-esteem and explore the best qualities in myself—which come through during the training process of the pageants."



With jubilant parents Ram Gangaraju and Maitreyi Sharma Gangaraju. (Photo: Ajith Lens)

Pran feels that the purpose behind a pageant is to justify the quote, “beauty with brains.” On this note, she is happy that the Miss World pageant recently announced it will eliminate the swimwear round. “I feel that these days internal beauty is being neglected and while it’s great for women to be confident of their healthy bodies, it’s really crucial to showcase the inner beauty and talents of each contestant, rather than mainly focusing on the external beauty.”

This is also a reason why former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen is one of Pranathy’s main role models. “When I was watching videos of Miss Universe 1994, I could really relate to Sushmita as she was walking with such grace and elegance during every round. The more I watched her, the more I was able to realize that participating in any beauty pageant is really about presenting internal beauty and talent in a unique way.”

(Left) For her talent round, Pranathy made a bold choice: a fusion of Kathak dance to “Mere Dholna,” a popular film song which has classical beats based on Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi forms. (Photo: Ajith Lens)

So what was Pran’s talent that was showcased? A Kathak dance to the popular film song “Mere Dholna.” “During the five years I was training in Kathak, my dance teacher choreographed “Mere Dholna” in Kathak form. The classical beats of this song are based on Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi dance, and to incorporate Kathak elements made the dance quite unique. It showcased my joy as a classical dancer, and really boosted my confidence while I was performing it on the main stage at the Royal Albert Palace in New Jersey.” Like most contestants, for Pran, deciding which dance to perform for a national pageant was tough. She thanks her mother for encouraging her to take the risk on her bold selection.

There are legions of jokes about the kind of questions asked in beauty pageants, and worse, about the answers given by actual contestants. And yet no other round of the pageant is perhaps as significant as the question round. With her emphasis on beauty with brains, it was also personally important to Pran that she do well in this round. She was asked, “If you were to have a famous person as a dinner guest, who would you choose and why?” Her answer, which came without skipping a beat: Malala Yousafzai. Part of her answer included, “Since this has been a year where women have gotten the opportunity to speak up about their opinions, I believe Malala has really been the leader in helping women having their own voice. And I would love to get tips and learn how to be brave and courageous from her as well.”

No sooner had the answer flowed from her, she had a gut feeling she had a good chance at winning. “...[F]or the first time I finally managed to confidently answer my Q&A. That moment was one of the best moments ever in my life,” says a jubilant Pranathy.

So what’s next for Pranathy after moments of such highs? As one with a diverse set of interests and hobbies— traveling, learning different languages, dancing, singing, reading, and swimming—she has enough to keep her engaged. Like other young pageant participants, she displays a healthy idealism when she shares earnestly, “As pageant winners we are also role models, and as a role model I want to help the Indian community by spreading awareness of major issues such as crimes against women, domestic violence, and children with special needs.” She notes that Miss America Nina Davuluri made a huge impact on the Indian community. “I look up to her not only for her gorgeous personality, but also for embracing her natural Indian beauty.”

Doing what she loves: acting, with fellow students at the Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute in West Hollywood, near Los Angeles.

As to acting? Well, that is more than a passing interest or hobby to Pranathy. Of the many goals she says she wants to accomplish, acting in films is a major one. She has done majoring in film acting and production at The Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute in Los Angeles. With role models such as Audrey Hepburn and Meryl Streep, she says she really would like to “dig into the craft.”

Bollywood and other regional Indian film industries are known to court Miss India title winners from all over the diaspora. If such an interest came her way, would she go for it? “Yes!” she says, while adding the following qualification to it: “Before taking up a project, it’s really important for me to know what my importance in the film is, and could it really bring out my potential as a newcomer. Often, women entering into this profession are mainly about glamour, but really it’s about being able to have the capability of doing any role that you have been chosen to portray. If there were a script that captures my attention, I would definitely take it up”. She has already given some auditions to some well-known production houses and some more on the way.

Who knows, it may just be a matter of time until you see Pranathy Gangaraju in a “theater near you”! Thanks to her pretty eyes, congeniality, striking looks, talents, and brains, it may not be a far stretch.

Archith Seshadri is an American Reporter wrote this article with the inputs provided by Pranathy Gangaraju and modified for other publications for Ram Gangaraju.



Electric Car – THE NEW APPLIANCE

– Ram Gangaraju

When you say appliances, what comes to your mind? Washer/Dryer, Fridge, Dishwasher....and now an electric car.

Diesel and gasoline-powered vehicles officially are an endangered species in Germany, and possibly all of the EU. This after Germany's Bundesrat has passed a resolution to ban the internal combustion engine (ICE) starting in 2030, Germany's Spiegel Magazine writes.

Why has it taken so long to ban IC engines?

ICEs have been around for almost 2 centuries and caused major climatic catastrophes across the globe. And the loss from it has come at a price that caused many ailments to living organisms on this '#BluePlanet' earth. Well, OPEC and other Gas as well automotive giants have their SIGs and lobbyists are the roadblocks to ban ICEs.

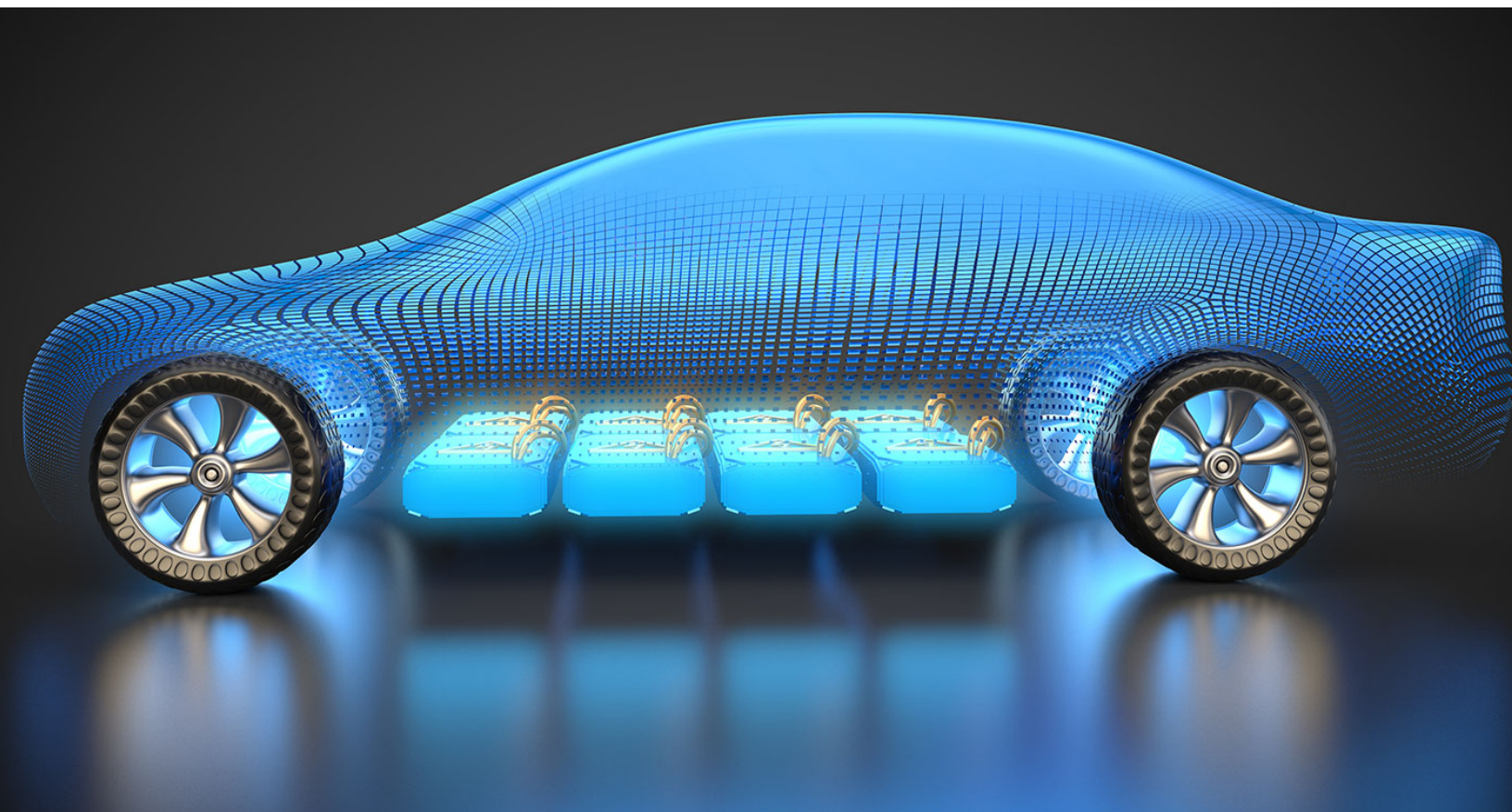
Banning it now, is it justifiable?

Better now than later, right. Believe so, at least starting from the country that has the roots for the human mobility, is a noble and very profound gesture. Well, the reality is, the damage has already been done to some extent, more damage than that takes to be repaired in like 100 to 250 years or maybe more! Ask AlGore, he will have more accurate numbers. If one country bans it, does it have an impact on other countries? My assessment is that Germany is a major player in EU and 3 (BMW, MBZ and VW) of top 10 luxury car maker groups of from Germany, it will make it a point across EU and dependent nations from EMEA and Asia Pacific as well both Americas regions (First in California from USA and Brazil from South America).

ICE are from dinosaur age as per Kerdashav scale!

Burning fossil fuels to move from point A to point B is a billion years old idea. It sounds very rudimentary and very un-futuristic as per #Kerdashav scale, we are below Type 1 civilization! We are stuck in the same mindset that has been pushed by these oil companies supporting and lobbying groups across the globe, who have billions or maybe trillions of dollars to crush the uprising, which they have done it successfully. Don't believe it, google 'Who killed the electric car?', you will find the answers. Anyway, let's get to the point, filling up the gas in your car tank will take at least 5-10 minutes, when it runs out is more convenient right! How about this, while you are sleeping your car charges, just like how your cell phone gets charged up and it gives 200 to 300 miles per charge. We can be better if the battery life can be extended, maybe by 2020, we will have a 1000 miles range per fully charged battery and by 2030 it might get to 5000 miles range, wouldn't that make you more comfortable. Get out of your fixed mindset, shake up your lifestyle and embrace the NEW and BEST technology for you and your children as well for the planet.

Germany's Bundesrat(their government's name) has just passed the law that they will be banning Internal Combustion engines in any format of transportation on roads from 2030. Now, other European nations are following the trend. Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland. Change is coming....in a big way :) Now, North America is following the trend...!



So, what happens to this big automotive industry?

What is the American way? Get the new technology invented, make it available in an affordable manner, and spread it across the world for profit (Just look at Tesla, they shook up everyone with their roadster (with additional Model S, 3, X, Y and Cyber Truck) and it's a wake-up call for the automotive industry). In fact, it is a jolt! Now, comes the supply chain in automotive industry! What happens to these tier-1, tier-2 and third party manufacturers? Components for electric cars are batteries and small magnets based dynamos that rotates the wheels. All the moving component manufacturers in ICE engines have to find alternatives. Drive-train guys need to find a new model as each axle will have a motor in electric cars. Radiator manufacturers need to transition to battery cooling systems. Tires technology, bearings, brakes, rotors, seats, electronic items, dashboards need to be modified or enhanced to cater the electric car styling and needs. More gadgets (like cameras, radars, lasers for autonomous driving) get into cars, trucks, and semi-trucks. Some lose, some gain and some sustain with little modifications to their business model.

The bottom line is Automotive industry will be here, it will go through a transition, A BIG TRANSITION. And in 10 to 15 years' time is good for it to make it happen, which will decide about the next 50-100 years or may be more of automotive industry.

Tesla has already shown the way, whose cars gets charged from renewable energy through solar panels and wind turbines at their SuperCharger Network all across North America. Others like VW, Nissan, BMW, Mercedes Benz, Toyota/Lexus, Honda/Acura to follow the suite!

Way to go!



NETWORKING

WHAT, WHY, AND HOW

By Sridhar Muppalla

What is “Networking”?

We interact with a lot of people everyday and networking is nothing but a conscious interaction with someone. Networking is not about short-term gains and is all about developing long-term genuine relationships. Most importantly, networking is neither dirty nor evil.

Why “Network”?

Your Network is your extended family and can be very powerful at times of need. Please remember, you can't create a network when you need one, but your network will be there when the need arises. Your network is your insurance policy and it is worth every second you put into it. Your network can help you achieve your personal and professional goals.

How to “Network”?

Networking is all about active listening and good communication. Pay close attention to what your contact is saying. Don't judge her or him. Genuinely think about ways to help the contact and convert the contact into an ally. When asking for help, be precise and honest and clearly state what you are looking for.

Always thank your contact for her/his time irrespective of the outcome. Some of us are introverts and not comfortable interacting in a group setting. NITW alumni events provide an excellent opportunity for the shy to communicate and get out of the shell. If you are not sure about how to start a conversation, ask your contact about his/her location. Remember, Alumni are located in some of the most beautiful and historic locations in India. Learn about these cities and start your conversation with something specific about your contact's location.

NITW Pledge: Please make a pledge that you will respond to your fellow NITWians within 48 hours of receiving an inquiry.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE NETWORKING AT SILICON VALLEY NITW MONTHLY EVENTS

Linkedin

RSVP on LinkedIn events. Research on attendees who RSVP'd. Send a linkedin message to your contacts indicating that you would like to meet them at the event. Exchange information that will help you identify easily at the event.

Join Silicon Valley LinkedIn Group and you can see all the NITWians profiles who are part of the group here: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/46650/>

Remember, professional relationships are critical to career growth.

Giving First

Networking is about building relationships. Be willing to give something before you receive. Giving something could be as simple as recommending a great book, suggesting a website, sharing an article, making a valuable introduction, or becoming a lead in powerconnect sessions.

Make an attempt to meet new people

Don't spend all of your time with your close friends and colleagues and please don't talk shop (i.e., vent work related issues with your colleagues at the networking events).

But no need to talk to everyone in the event: Focus on making a few meaningful contacts. Quality of your conversations is more valuable than getting business cards from all the attendees.

Be approachable

Make eye contact and be in a relaxed mode. Please don't look away when someone is trying to make an eye contact with you.

Be a good listener

Listen to what your contact is saying in a genuine way. Always think of ways to show that you are interested and willing to help. Don't argue with your contact if you disagree with his/her point of view. Make a graceful exit.

Be sincere

Make the conversation count and make a good impression. Never look around the room for someone "better" to talk. Be completely present and engaged in your conversation.

Know how to make a graceful exit

Don't feel obligated to spend your entire evening with just one person. You can excuse yourself by saying that you would like to continue the discussion in depth at a later time or invite him/her to join another discussion group with you.

Always plan for a follow up

In order to develop a meaningful connection, your small talk should end with a linkedin invitation and/or a personal email exchange to meet again. Compliment your contact on some shared interests and establish a verbal agreement to meet again, even if it is not about business. This one is extremely important and yet frequently gets ignored. If you promise to do something (call, send an article, or make an introduction) do it!

Be a resource to others and genuinely care about people

People respond to authenticity. They are more likely to provide you with referrals if they know that you care about them and their business. After all, they don't want their clients and friends to be embarrassed by a bad experience. Remember it is not always about you. It is about us! Understand the difference between competitiveness and jealousy. Compete for your fair share but always help your contact in need.

Don't be a pest

Respect your contacts' constraints. Don't ask for favors that will put your contacts in an inconvenient position. Remember your goal is to build a long lasting relationship. Not every encounter will result in your favor.

Follow concert rules

Be on time for meetings, don't leave early, and respect the host and other attendees. If you arrive late, you disrupt the flow of the meeting. If you leave early, you miss the opportunity to interact with your potential contacts.

Have fun: Networking is fun and just enjoy the process. Not everyone understands the concept of networking and don't be discouraged if you don't make much progress in making new contacts initially. Remember, networking is a lifelong process. Treat your contacts with respect and treat them the way you want to be treated.

How I became a Humanist!

Humanist - not Atheist!



What do the words Humanist and Humanism mean? Let's talk about Humanism first. It is an outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems - check the Oxford Dictionary. So, a person who fits this definition is Humanist. A Humanist works for Human freedoms, advocates Reason over Faith, works to spread a scientific understanding of the Universe, takes responsibility for his own life and lives a morally autonomous life.

So, how did I - one who comes from a traditional orthodox Hindu family which follows the rituals of piety and devotion, and believes and made me believe in all this and in auspicious things during all the early part of my life - become a Humanist?

It started with questioning, like every child does. In most orthodox households the questioning spirit is suppressed, but it somehow survived in me. And when I grew up, I realized that is what our nation needs, what our Constitution demands. Spirit of Inquiry is part of our Indian Constitution, Article 51(A) (h). I just started putting that one into action.

My early interest in astronomy and physics solidified as I was growing up. That is when I realized that there was so much to discover and know: to look into the heavens beyond the earth to know more about what makes our Milky way Galaxy. The immensity of the Universe, and the wonders of it made me reexamine my then understanding of life and of the Universe. And of my place in it.

This introspection and reflection shook my faith, shook my belief, and shook my trust in religious texts and hymns. As I realized that these books and revelations had no connection with reality, it rocked my boat of belief system.

Then came the duo Richard Dawkins and Lawrence Krauss and their world tour of Lectures - especially the ones they gave together in Australian National University and Arizona State University. I watched their videos and did a deep study by going through my Physics books and latest books on astronomy, evolution and that led me to Atheism. Years passed as I got busy with life and work but my new interests and understanding meant that discussions with friends around the world led to issues of belief and non belief.

At that juncture, a close friend, who is another alumni from our very own NITW, said that there is a man Babu Gogineni who talks like you - why don't you watch his videos. I watch his OpenHeart Interview on ABN channel and reached out to him on FB. We connected quickly and I started collaborating with him, soon I was organising a 'Human Angle' lecture tour for him in USA in 2016 where he toured 10 cities, gave 25+ lectures (Including one for NITWA Atlanta meet where he spoke on 'The Culture of Science'), organized two conferences and plenty of TV shows. Then I went on to organise the Humanist Horizons conference in 2017 at TANA conference in St. Louis, MO. This was all a roaring success and along with new friends also interested in the Humanist ideas that he was lecturing on - Humanism is so much more than Atheism; it adds a moral dimension, a sense of responsibility and human solidarity to the simple disbelief in God - we established the South Asian Humanist Association and later Science for Society whose Secretary I became.



I and Babu Gogineni went on to appear in radio shows together starting December 2017 on Telugu One Radio On Internet, ie TORI, where we both featured in Humanist Hour and Science Hour talk shows. We together did 50+ shows and I conducted and hosted 200+ shows involving other Humanists. Following his call, I initiated a project to create Science Soldiers aimed to train young activists in communicating Science. We hope to collaborate on some exciting projects including a Humanist University and Humanism Factory as we explore possibilities. We organized a 'How I became a Humanist' video competition and the huge response from all over the world tells us that the time is ripe for these initiatives.

Looking back, I have been a Humanist for almost 12 years and looking forward, I will remain one for the remainder of my life.

- Ram Gangaraju



Next Step: Venture!

Innovators have been the torchbearers for human progress. They create wealth for everyone while solving problems that we all commonly face. No field of science or human experience is untouched by innovation including politics. These pioneers need capital for their dreams to see the light of day and touch lives of common day you and me. There is something novel about getting excited about solving everyone's problems in an innovative way and being able to support these dreamers with your sweat, mind and money.

I hail from a small town - what has brought me to this medium talking to you through it is grit and opportunities that I got or created till date. This journey has made me stumble upon my professional purpose which is to be part of this novel innovating machinery. And so was "Summit Works - An early stage venture capital fund", came into light recently. My vision is to be part of current and future innovations in education, finance, agriculture and essential services aided by technology. Let's talk Ideas!

- Sridhar Kummam

REMOTE

WORKING

is it here to stay?

BY JAYATHRI SUNDARAM

Let me paint a picture of the future workplace – is it going to be in cubicles sitting upright on ergonomic chairs, is it lounging on beanbags laid out haphazardly in large rooms or is it going to be from our living rooms or makeshift garages or gardens or on a beach in Hawaii? The world is our oyster, right? This question looms large perhaps for anyone who has been working from a kitchen counter in the previous year.

Before the industrial revolution, people used to labor in the fields, in their homes and sell goods and services in a common marketplace. With industrialization, heavy machinery and the assembly line created the need for workers to commute daily to their designated “office spaces”. Then came the rise of corporate headquarters, downtown offices, drab cubicles and the 8-hour workday. Remote working wasn’t born overnight with the pandemic. The seeds were sown back in the 1980’s with the advent of internet and personal computers.

A decade ago, employers balked at the idea of employees working regularly from home. They feared loss of productivity and collaboration. Remote options were offered as programs to accommodate specific needs of families. A remote posting was far from ideal. A dream job was envisioned as working in a skyscraper with large screens, multiple phones, glass doors and meeting rooms bustling with people.

Nevertheless, remote working has won the hearts of quite a few people over the years. Academic studies have provided evidence of higher retention rates, better work life balance, lower real estate costs and reduction in stress levels due to commuter hell. Businesses that can quickly make the switch to remote work during a pandemic have reaped economic benefits too. No wonder, the Tech industry was primed to be the guinea pig of this anxious experiment of remote working at a grand scale. Others in careers such as education, medicine, travel and food have stumbled along during the pandemic. There is a long road ahead for businesses in these fields to innovate and support a distributed workforce.

So, has the experiment concluded and is the verdict in? Data suggests higher productivity, better mental and physical health among employees, lower cost overhead and better talent pool for businesses and eliminating commute makes it an ecofriendly option. However, humans being the social animals, the single biggest complaint has been loneliness.



Blurring of home and work life has led to longer workdays and lesser downtime. Our future work might mean no commute, no in-person interaction, no small talk and spending every day before a spreadsheet. This cannot be an ideal setting for people who see the office as a social hub, a place for friendly banter with co-workers. Reading visual and verbal cues are essential people skills that help build social bonds among teammates. It will be worthwhile to see if some sort of hybrid model can solve this issue. Or perhaps human beings will learn to communicate better digitally than in person aka human cyborgs!

The modern workforce is increasingly mobile, collaborative and comprises multi-generations, all with differing communication preferences. These workers span multiple industries all who represent unique challenges when it comes to staying connected while on the job. It seems like the idea of remote working is in its infancy and who knows if technologies like 5G and virtual reality can fast forward its adoption.

Are you planning for your Silver Jubilee meet? A sample template that was shared by the 1993 batch..

REC Warangal gave us a rich campus life and a solid foundation for our professional career. The campus life provided us with several nostalgic moments of mid exam fevers, SAC activities, those wonderful special lunches, the exciting sport and Audi events, the friendships that were built for life time and the joy of sharing a cup of tea or a smoke or a pillion ride to the movie theater. The Silver Jubilee year presents us with a wonderful opportunity to cherish the campus life and rekindle the friendship for another few decades. In the ongoing tradition of several batches, the 1993 batch had their Silver Jubilee reunion event this year on August 4th, 5th and 6th at the campus in Warangal, 2018. The event was nothing short of a spectacular success with flawless execution from the time teams landed in Hyderabad to the time they were left at the airport. Every single detail went according to the plan including the weather gods that smiled on the event without causing any disruption. About 140 Alumni and about 165 total participating members including families gathered in a 2.5 day celebration event of pure friendship, camaraderie and a total recollection of nostalgic moments. Rich tributes were paid to the current and retired teachers, student interactions were conducted through panel discussions and the Alumni networked and enjoyed the rest of campus offerings to the full extent.

The event planning started about 2 years prior to the tentative dates. An Organizing committee (OC) was formed with representation across countries. Different pieces of information was collated from prior events and a forecast of both the number of attendees and the budget was arrived at. A high level template to kick off at a resort in Hyderabad followed by the visit to campus was laid out. The target attendance was estimated at 125 out of 300 based on prior events. Teleconferences, and discussions were had for months on detailed agenda, wide spread communications, attendance requests on different forums and honing on the dates. The OC committee had different workstreams and leads that effectively played out their roles. Various OC teams were formed on ground to detail out logistics, boarding and lodging, college event scheduling and coordination with retired professors. Miscellaneous items related to souvenirs etc., were sorted out and T-shirt designs worked out. The telecons were conducted throughout the 2 year period with increased frequency towards the end to facilitate on the ground operations.





On August 4th, teams arrived at Hyderabad were routed to Ramoji Film City (RFC), Hotel Sitara for a grand gala Dinner and a kick off event. A very detailed multi course menu was served at RFC with cocktails. There were thrilling moments as team members welcomed each other with multiple hugs and exciting recollection of college times. A registration desk that gave out T-shirts and souvenirs was manned at the event and each attendee was provided with an identification badge. This badge was extremely useful in recognizing the person by name and branch. A kick off event with various members taking on to the stage followed by a DJ led rocking music and dance show. On Day 2 (August 5th) the teams left Hyderabad to Warangal in luxury coach buses (3 including a few personal cars) that reached Warangal on Sunday afternoon by 11:30 -12 noon. Members were checked into hotels at Vaishnavi, Haritha and a the college Punnamu Guest house.. After dropping the luggage, teams were ferried around in Autos/buses as appropriate for a welcome lunch at the campus guest house. A warm and cheerful reception awaited the Alumni from the Director, Professors and supporting staff at the campus . The campus was awash with a sea of Blue t-shirts that were adorned with a college logo during the group pictures and campus tours. At about 4 pm on August 5th a felicitation ceremony of retired and current active teachers and professors was conducted. This was followed by an exciting and nostalgic moment of the 90s collection of songs that brought back memories of the legacy Audi movie screenings. A mixing dinner event and gathering in local restaurant was the evening conclusion.

Day 3 (August 6th) was kick started with a panel discussion with current students at the Audi. Thanks to the homework done prior by the OC leads, there was an outstanding student turnout that filled up the Audi for a well received panel discussion on various topics. Distinguished Alumni from India and abroad shared their experiences and clarified several questions from the students. The supporting staff was felicitated at the old cafeteria with a gift and great hugs. Who can forget the special lunch and mouth watering deserts and pans ? The special lunch was an icing on the cake that drew loud cheers :) Teams were seen actively interacting with the mess staff that ever served us with a smile and affection ! The ever famous chicken leg and kheema at Mess #1 was followed by another round of picture taking . The buses ferried back the Alumni to Hyd Airport and railway stations.

Key Takeaways for planning the event :

Start planning about 2 years in advance. Many international Alumni has to plan in advance.

Conduct consensus at least 1 year in advance on the dates. August is the most favorable month from a college standpoint. December is also a likely month but the travel costs might sky rocket.

Ensure all bookings are made at Hyderabad and Warangal at least 3 months in advance to avoid conflicts.

Inform College campus and NITWAA Cells for better local support.

We leveraged the buses to commute us around in Warangal. However, individual teams can visit local sites using other modes of transports that has to be arranged in advance.

Based on the expense outlay a 3 day event from Hyderabad back to Hyderabad could be about INR 30,000 per head. This includes gifts, dinners and other events as per the 2018 expenses that 1993 batch incurred.

Thanks to the NITW management that helped us conduct the event on campus and all the permissions and support to leverage college facilities.



HEART BEATS

*While the rhythm of the heartbeat,
Is probably evident as we feel it all the time*

*There are a few times when it flutters
With unusual energy.*

*Like when you visit your native place
And meet with near and dear family and friends*

*When you see new inventions likely to
Change our lifestyle forever in unknown ways*

*When you retrace your footsteps and go back in time
But knowing in vain that the past can never be relived.*

*While the mind goes around in its own wandering ways
The heart really beats and puts it in check*

*That is what the life is all about
Checks and balances keep our life humming.*

*Enabling us to focus on the tasks
In the unique agenda prepared by God, for each and
everyone.*

-Srinivas Atluri

FALL FOR ONE ANOTHER

*With the Fall season in full swing
The Sunshine lights up the blue sky.
The blue sky spawns an agile white cloud.
The white cloud surrounds the lean tree.
The lean tree itself seem to blush in pink
and red.*

*The Sunshine, the sky, the cloud and the
tree seem to
Fall for one another*

-Srinivas Atluri



Letters to the Past

BY RISHIKA PORANDLA

June 17, 2019

"Faith, no!" my little brother, Eddie, cries from the backseat of our old 2006 Volvo. I ignore his complaints as I shove the controller he spent the last half hour yelling at in the slim crack between my leather seat and the car door. I finally grow sick of his high-pitched shrieking, and let out an exasperated sigh as I whirl angrily around to face him.

"You're giving me a headache, be quiet!" I say, my voice rising higher in intensity as Eddie pipes up, attempting to subdue my words with his.

"Faith, Eddie, Please!" My mom says suddenly, directing our attention to her. She sits beside Eddie in the backseat and tiredly meets my eyes, a silent plea hidden in hers. "If you two can't settle down, I'll have no choice but to call off Faith's birthday dinner tomorrow, and cancel Eddie's sleepover."

I flick my eyes over to Eddie and stare at him for a moment longer, before letting out a humph and turning back around to face the dashboard. I push down the remnants of my anger at my little brother, and tilt my head as I admire the bright city night before us. The dozens of cars and motorcycles fill the freeway with the hum of engines, and the blurred traffic lights and light poles in the distance lunate the dark surroundings.

I feel a wave of relief come over me when I realize that at this time the next day I would be sixteen and enjoying my birthday dinner, free of my meddlesome parents and irritating brother for one perfect night. I break away from my thoughts when I hear my dad speak from beside me.

"Faith..." he says expectantly, nodding towards the controller shoved next to me. "Sorry." I mumble, reaching into the crevice where I'd stowed Eddie's controller and tossing it back towards him, making sure to throw it hard.

"Ow!" he grunts, as it collides with his shoulder. Ignoring my mom's hiss directed at me, I reach out and twist the radio knob, switching through stations until I feel my ears perk up. I land on an 80s music station after a moment, and I let my fingers fall from the knob, leaning back into my seat. I let my eyelids flutter closed and my mind haze to the rhythm of the music pouring out of the speakers. My lips curve into a small smile, relishing the serenity of the moment.

The moment ends just as quickly as it started when Eddie's shrill scream punctures the night, followed quickly by my father's yelp. I feel my father's arm fly out in front of me, and my eyes fly open just in time to witness a blinding crash.

Somehow the world seems to slow in that very moment. My vision fades to black and white as I watch the scene unfold frame-by-frame. The screeching of our brakes. The sight of our car crumpling into the truck in front of us. The flash of white filling my vision. The slow grind of metal meeting metal and the dashboard imploding, sending shards of glass to embed themselves in my skin. Blood filling my mouth, the sharp taste stark against the dryness of my throat. I lose my grip on the door handle and my body flings out of the seat, only the flimsy seatbelt keeping me from flying forward. The impact shudders through my body and my head abruptly flies back toward the side of the car, I feel my ruptured skin and tears streaking down my cheeks, but all I can do squeeze my seatbelt with white knuckles. I don't register the car flipping over as I lose the last threads of my consciousness and my body goes slack.

July 9, 2019

11:16 AM

"Her heartbeat is stable, Dr. Gores."

"Thank you, can you update the records on her vitals before your shift ends?" "Sure thing."

"Wait, Thomas, did you see that?"

"See what?"

"Her hand moved."

11:18 AM

Rubbing alcohol. Latex gloves. Paper fresh from the printer.

I take the slightest sniff, aware of the dull, aching pain running through my limbs from even the slightest movement. Scents I feel like I haven't smelled in ages enter my nose and provide almost a sense of reassurance and familiarity.

"Bring Dr. Fraser!" A muffled voice says, words fading in and out as I try to grasp onto them.

I force my lips to part and I take a small ragged breath, my body trembling vigorously with the simple action. I register how dry my throat is, and how the thing I am craving the most in the world is a mere sip of water. I

hear rustling papers and muffled voices all around me, and I feel the presence of others close to me,

featherlight touches on my skin to check if I'm responsive.

It's almost like I'm being forcefully drowned, but I can't do anything to fight it. My body groans with every slightest movement and breath, and I can't make sense of what I'm hearing and detecting around me. The pure frustration and weariness causes a single tear to fall out of my eye, and slowly make its way down my cheek, thinning into my skin.

I feel helpless.

July 14, 2019

The tears continue to fall from my tired eyes as the insurance officer sitting on the bed beside me hands me papers and offers words of comfort.

For the one sentence that he first said upon walking into my hospital room is still reverberating in my mind, my brain unable to make sense of it.

"I'm greatly sorry for the loss of your family."

The man's words fade from his clear, crisp speech to one that is too muffled for me to understand as I stare blankly at him, my eyesight blurred with boarded up tears.

Though what he is saying must be very important, all I can think of is my family. My dead family.

Funny how the night of the accident, I was sick of them and beyond ecstatic to be away from them for my 16th birthday dinner. Now I'm 16 and three weeks and I still haven't had that birthday dinner.

My dad was pronounced dead first. Mere hours after I woke up. I didn't have the chance to say goodbye. I could only watch as the somber doctors circling his bed unplugged his wires and looked down at him with remorseful expressions on their faces. I couldn't cry then, I couldn't even open my mouth to speak.

My brother was in a coma for a few days. They were unhopeful from the start. They said that even if he did survive, he would be crippled for life and unable to live the rest of his childhood normally. He took less of a hit from the accident than I did, but he wasn't strong enough to fight it. I held his limp hand, hunched over in my wheelchair beside him, as he took his last shuddering breath.

I was hopeful for my mother. She woke up from her coma four days ago. Her vitals were good, she was able to breathe on her own and speak legibly. And then her eyes fluttered close for what should've been an hour long nap, but they never opened again.

I think that incident gave me the strength to scream and cry at the doctors, yelling at them for not doing enough, not caring enough to save my family. I cried for three days straight, hating myself for not appreciating them when they were here, and hating the doctors and nurses for letting them die.

For letting them leave my life without a goodbye.

September 2, 2022

Dear Mom & Dad & Eddie,

It's been three years and I still think it's my fault.

I suppose that's normal. My new therapist says it's survivors' guilt. She's different than all the others. She listens to me and sends me reminders to eat, sleep, and drink water. She also loves that PlayStation game Eddie was obsessed with. I think you would like her, Ed.

Mom, I read that book you always wanted me to read. *The Giver*. I loved it. I could almost hear your voice reading it aloud to me. After I finished the book, I read it over and over again, just to hear your voice in my head one more time. I miss your cooking. When I walked around our old apartment the other day, I felt like I could smell your spices and the cakes you used to bake again.

I'm going to find that old cookbook you loved one day and I'm going to make every recipe in those pages just to make you happy. I really wish you were here. I miss you.

Dad, remember how you always used to love golfing? Well, for your birthday I bought a golf puck that Tiger Woods signed and laid it by your grave. I can almost feel you smiling down at me. I hate to say it, but I miss your jokes more than anything, even though all I would do was complain about them. They might have been dumb and hard to understand, but they always made me smile and I miss how we would laugh together for so long about one stupid joke. I hope your jokes have gotten better though. I love you and miss you.

Eddie, I miss you so much. I never realized how much something as simple as your presence meant to me. Even though all we ever did with argue, I feel like you understood me better than anyone else. You always knew what to say and how to make me laugh. And as crazy as it is, I miss you annoying me. Sometimes I still go to sleep laughing at some memory of us together, thinking it was from just the other day, when in reality, it occurred years ago. I'm so sorry I never got to see you grow up. I wanted to be the one to teach you everything and lead you through life. I hope you still think of me as your taller, smarter, older sister. :) I still think of all of you. Until next year.

Love,

Faith

Rishika Porandla is the daughter of our own alumnus, Jags Porandla. She is a budding writer in 9th grade with multiple awards in the arts.

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