

2019 – VOLUME 4
INSIDE THIS ISSUE**PAGE 2**

Interview of a celebrity couple, Mrs Ashwini Kadam Thamke along with her superbly supporting husband Mr Mandar Thamke. Ashwini is the first alumni mom and the first donor student of GEF

PAGE 3

The salient professional performances of GEF alumni

PAGE 4

Ninth Annual Day Summary

EDITORIAL DESK

After three successful releases and an overwhelming response, we are glad to release the fourth issue of “DISHA”, the Quarterly Newsletter of our Guruji Education Foundation.

We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please let us know if you would like to contribute to DISHA in any way. We apologize for the delay in releasing this issue of the newsletter.

We thank Mr. Abhay Joshi for the editorial help.

Editor: Amruta Raut

Contact us at gef3013@gmail.com

Website: gurujifoundation.in

ANNUAL DAY 2019**Visit to Dharashiv Caves by Super 30 of Osmanabad****Visit to Yeoor Hills by Super 30 of Thane**

Interaction with Mr. Mandar and Mrs. Ashwini Kadam Thamke

This is the first alumni mom and the first donor student of GEF. She has been through a huge struggle and has managed to achieve so much. We also have her life partner, Mandar, who has been supporting GEF as his own family. Ashwini has done her B.Sc. and is working as a Sr. Application Development Analyst at Accenture and Mandar is working as a Team Lead at Ness Technologies. They are an inspirational couple rather a celebrity couple. Let us know them better.

So, to start with, Ashwini, tell us how GEF happened to you? And Mandar, how did Ashwini happen to you?

Ashwini: My Aai works as a cook and used to go to one Shetty Bhabhi. Shetty Bhabhi knew that I was academically brilliant, but didn't have enough money to pursue further education. Bhabhi introduced us to one Smita ma'am, who introduced me to GEF.

Mandar: I saw Ashwini's picture on Bharat matrimony site. We had common relatives so I thought of using the opportunity and meeting her in person. We started talking regularly (I think it's called dating) and I was very sure of marrying this beautiful and hardworking Ashwini Kadam.

Ashwini, what is your biggest achievement to date, personal and/ or professional?

I have been given three professional awards from Accenture in 2017.

My biggest personal achievements to date are the house that we have bought together and of course, our baby Sharanya.

Mandar and Ashwini, you have bought a home with a huge EMI, have a baby to provide for. You are far from settled but still, you have started donating to GEF. What has been your thought process?

Yes, it was tough. Already, I had to pay off a marriage loan, a 2-wheeler loan, and GEF's education loan. After I had paid off my personal and education loans, the mission and practice of GEF - "Education for All" - motivated me to start donating to GEF. Education is very crucial for everyone. If a student is capable, money should not be a barrier for him or her.

If I have received support in difficult situations, I too must help at least one student to realize his dreams. So Mandar and I decided to cut down on seemingly necessary but actually unnecessary

expenses and donate to our own foundation. So on Shara's first birthday, instead of choosing a lavish outdoor celebration, we had a subdued celebration at our home and donated the saved amount to the foundation. In the future, even Shara will be proud to know that her birthday money was utilized in the best possible way. We have been doing such things on a regular basis.

For many of our students who are climbing up the social ladder, Ashwini, marriage can present some issues. Did you face any? How did you manage?

It's a long story with quite a few obstacles and hurdles after we met via Bharat matrimony. We liked each other and since we were related, we did not anticipate any problems getting married. Mandar lost his father during this phase and Mandar's family wanted us to marry within a year of his demise. However, my family had difficulties with such a quick marriage. There was a stand-off.

Finally, Waychal kaka helped diffuse the crisis. And here we are: strong, confident and made for each other. There were many such obstacles but together we have overcome them.

Mandar and Ashwini, How did Shara change your lives? You have been an inspiring couple, please tell us how you manage your professional lives and give time to your family (a small baby) and to GEF's activities?

Mandar: Shara is an angel for us. Our mothers had a tiff during our marriage phase and were not on talking terms. Shara stays with Ashwini's mother the whole day. Once, when my mother had visited us she had to visit Ashwini's



mother to meet Shara. We left them together with Shara which made them spend time together and settle their differences.

Ashwini: We stay in Thane just next to my mother's home. We go to work early and my parents take care of Shara until we are back from the office. Mandar and I work in IT firms at Airoli so we travel together. It is really

difficult to manage both motherhood and job. I feel terrible that we don't get to spend much time with our baby. We have to compromise just to build a brighter future for Shara.

Mandar: I have always been fond of Waychal kaka and his thoughts so I had to do something for GEF. I then thought of dedicating my Sundays for GEF's super 30 program to accomplish GEF's mission of "Education for All". We also were happy to organize the annual day including the SoBo outing.

How do you feel to be a part of GEF and also how would your life have been without GEF?

Ashwini : I give the entire credit to Waychal kaka and GEF for making me what I am today. I would have been nothing without GEF. I have always been a hardworking girl, I used to do part-time jobs since my 10th standard. I have worked part-time in factories, clinics, tuition classes to earn enough money to support my home and education. Waychal kaka has always stood by me, through thick and thin, from being a mentor and guiding me academically to being like a father and supporting me during my marriage. I can't imagine a life without GEF. For Arjuna there was Krishna, likewise for me, it's Waychal kaka.

Mandar : I am very fortunate to meet Ashwini as well as her GEF family. I feel so accomplished seeing Waychal kaka, the thoughts and the vision he has are impeccable.

What are your future plans?

Ashwini : My future plan is to manage and give as much time as possible for Shara

and for GEF activities, from being a mentor to a supporter. Also, my dream is to travel the whole world.

Mandar : My plans include doing something special for Ashwini and making her feel special and also support GEF as much as possible.

A piece of advice to all the students from us is to never forget where you came from and always be thankful to GEF for giving you this beautiful life, for letting you dream big and making you capable to fulfil those dreams.

SALIENT PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVERS



01. Paresh Dalvi - Abhinay Katta
02. Ashwini Kadam Thamke - Accenture
03. Ankita Raut - TechnipFMC
04. Saili Bakare - AIO Network
05. Pratiksha - Spectrum Pharmatech Consultant Pvt. Ltd.
06. Kalyan Garde - Youthcon
07. Rohit Adhav - Dassault systems
08. Malathi Gnanian - Infosys Pvt. Ltd
09. Pratik Hashilkar - TCS Japan

10. Ashish Jadhao - MBA aspirant, was in Hero
11. Chhaya - Apurva Service Consultants
12. Rahul Pawar - RDC Concrete India Pvt Ltd
13. Vrushali Shinde - Capgemini
14. Amruta Raut - TechnipFMC
15. Shraddha Panchal- Redingdon
16. Rahul Patil - Rishabh
17. Swarup Sawant - Apar
18. Uttam Madane - Prof at NM University
19. Rohit Khambe - L&T

NINTH ANNUAL DAY SUMMARY

This year's Annual Day was a distinctly different affair. It had many new ideas and was attended by an expanded GEF family. We started the first day with Mumbai Darshan orchestrated by Mandar and supported by Chavan sir, Neeraj, Omkar and Jay. The tour included places like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India), the very beautiful Jehangir Art Gallery and RBI monetary museum. The tour concluded with the Gateway of India to give the audience a feel of the relaxing beauty of the sea.

Then it was the main function - on 6th January 2019, the first Sunday of 2019. And I bet we started the year with full energy and enthusiasm. Ashwini was master of the ceremony and she kept everyone energetic throughout. For the first time since inception, the function was organized in a community hall instead of a residence, the reason clearly being the ever-expanding GEF family. It was an introduction for the students of Raja Shivaji school to our huge GEF family. Their happiness was clearly visible on their faces.

We started with prayers, with the students standing in 2 parallel lines bringing back memories of our school days.

We then moved to our first interview:

Komal and I chatted with none other than Dr Alka Mandke, an internationally acclaimed Anaesthetist, who has been working as a Chairperson of Anaesthesia Department in Mumbai and as a Consultant Cardiac Anesthetist in Kokilaben Hospital, Mumbai.

After the untimely demise of her husband, Dr. Nitu Mandke, she pursued with great courage and achieved his dream of building a hospital for the poor. We have all heard the saying "Where there is will there is a way". Have faith in yourself, never hesitate asking questions even if you think they are silly, always be curious as this is the way to reach the sky. This is what Dr. Alka Mandke taught us from her life story. She has published three books titled Hridayasth, Hridayband and Hridayasamvad in which she has penned down her life story (she has donated a copy of each to our library).

The second interview was with Mr Subhash Sawardekar, and was conducted by Kaajal and Amruta. Mr Sawardekar grew up as an orphan child and has now established "Vinimay", which takes care of holistic development of orphan children. By profession, he is an officer at BARC. His life story was emotional and touched our souls. He spoke about how hard work and will power can help you reach heights. The way he nourishes the students of Vinimay trust and supports them in every possible way, inspires us to never forget our roots. He also encourages his family and friends to get involved in social work.

Next was Mr. Rashmin Pulekar's interview, hosted by Chhaya and Ajay. Perhaps he needs no introduction as he is popular (with 8000+

followers on facebook !!!) among the young people for his unique way of lightening up people's worries with humour. He is an FIDE-rated chess player. At the young age of 20, he won the National Inter-University chess championships for two consecutive years. Currently, he works as a teacher at "The Art of Living Foundation". We learned from him that you should not let success go to your head and always share this beautiful gift of "SMILE" with all. Meditation and exercise can help you let go all the negativity and worries. He actually guided us into a peaceful meditation.

Next was Major Subhash Gawand's interview, hosted by Paresh and Nimisha. Major Gawand joined the Indian Army in 1961. He demonstrated bravery in the 1962 Indo-China war and the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pakistan wars. In his military career of 22 years, he received 21 annual merit and seven special medals. He started the Sunday Military School in 1985 to inspire and guide young boys and girls to join the Indian army.

"Learn to show off" (भाव खायला शिका) is what I learnt from him, of course in a positive way. By learning how to show off properly, you tend to nurture yourself and sharpen your skills. You are sure to achieve what you desire.

Next was Major Chaudhary's interview hosted by Kalyan and Apeksha. Major Chaudhary joined the Indian army after and due to the 1965 Indo-Pak war. His

contribution in the 1971 war earned him 4 Ribbon medals (war medals). He taught us to be light-hearted and joyful in life, and not worry about things that are not in your control.

Lastly, we had Mr. Prashant Kulkarni from Lakshya foundation, the foundation which takes care of our heroes on the border. The armed forces are always protecting the entire country and that's why we are safe. But this man showed us what true patriotism means and how much we owe to our heroes on the border. He enlightened us with stories of our heroes, who were involved in different wars and how they fought for our country. He asked us to pass on to the future generations the stories of sacrifices Jawaans have made.

There were (two sessions) informal interactive sessions for all of us to interact with the supporters and the guests. It helped students to develop a better understanding of the interest areas of the supporters.

Our younger students were very inquisitive and made sure they met all the people and collected information in their notebooks. It was their first Annual day and they had planned a surprise for all of us: a dance performance on Ganpati Bappa. It was beautifully choreographed by Jaya and very well performed by the students.

The Annual day was beautifully organized by Vrushali and Jay. At about 5:30 pm everyone dispersed marking an end to a beautiful day with so many memories and life experiences. The theme of "patriotism" was very well executed.

- Ankita Raut

