



IISc AANA Newsletter

SPECIAL ISSUE

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Indian Institute of Science Alumni Association of North America, Mountain View, CA, www.iiscaana.org

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Genesis of the IISc AANA Newsletter

The recent IISc AANA Global Conference held in Chicago in July 19-21, 2013 has generated an outpouring of enthusiasm and interest in getting connected to the alma mater by the IIScians. Many alumnae/alumni (we will sometimes use the gender neutral word 'alums' in place of alumni/alumnae in this newsletter) expressed that a newsletter would help them to keep in touch with the activities of IIScAANA as well as give a platform to present their activities. Subsequently the IIScAANA Board of Directors (BOD) recommended sending out a periodic newsletter and charged Gaj Birur and Murthy Gudipati to take up this responsibility. We look forward for active participation from all the alumnae/alumni. Please send your thoughts, comments, activities, ambitions, and dreams that you want to realize through IIScAANA, IIScAA, and IISc - with a focus on "giving back" to the society where you live and where you came from (newsletter@iiscaana.org).

Gaj Birur and Murthy Gudipati, IISc AANA So. California

IISc AANA Global Conference 2013, Chicago

By Gaj Birur, IIScAANA SoCal

The recently held Second Global Conference of IISc AANA in Chicago on July 19-21, 2013 was a grand success. Over 250 attendees took part in this conference and they came from all over North America and India. Over twenty-five IISc faculty members and four IISc students actively participated in various sessions and panels.



Prof. P. Balaram, Director of IISc, addressing conference attendees through a video



Dr. N. Balakrishnan, Associate Director, IISc on the opening day



The Opening Session at the conference on July 20, 2013

The conference was chaired by Dr. Sunil Kumar, Dean, Booth School of Business, University of Chicago, and Co-Chaired by Dr. Swaminathan Ramesh, and Dr. Muralidhar K. Ghantasala of the IISc AANA Midwest Chapter. IISc AANA congratulates them and their team for organizing a very successful conference. The cooperation and support of the IISc administration, IISc faculty & students, IISc alums, from all over the world was a key to the success of the conference. IISc AANA especially thanks all those -- IISc administrators, faculty/students, IISc alumni/alumnae, IISc AANA and IISc AA members and invited guests -- who attended, participated, and contributed to the conference. The feedback from those that attended has been very positive.

IISc AANA and IISc AA (alumni/alumnae organization in India) agreed to interact in a significant way going forward. Details will be forthcoming in future newsletters. The conference agenda and details of the conference are available at www.iiscaana.org. The theme for the conference was 'Building Bridges between IISc, Alumni, and the World'. In this regard, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between IISc and University of Toronto was signed - a successful event with respect to the theme of the conference. Further, IISc AANA Northeast Chapter was formed during the conference.

"We would like to hold the next Alumni/Alumnae Global Conference on IISc campus in Bangalore."

-- IISc AANA and IISc AA
July 21, 2013, Chicago

IISc AANA thanks the following Conference sponsors: Argonne National Laboratory, University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, Applied Materials Inc., Intellisense Inc., and Tokyo Electron Ltd.

New Initiative for Building Bridges with IISc by its Alums

One of the highlights of this Global Conference was the interest among the IISc alums on building bridges with their alma mater. A panel on this topic was chaired by Dr. Balakrishnan and various activities in which the alums can collaborate with the on-going activities at IISc were discussed. The speakers at the panel outlined various areas of interest-- from technical collaboration with University of Toronto to educational outreach activities by the student organization (Note Book Drive) at IISc. Prof. Rao Tummala of Georgia Tech and Prof. Sunil Kumar of University of Chicago are coordinating the development of mission statements on topics that were recommended to IISc at the panel.

Recommended Topics	Contributors
Philanthropy for endowed and visiting professorships	Sunil Kumar/ Channa Reddy/Ravi Anupindi
Research collaborations between: a) IISc and U.S. faculties and b) National Labs & IISc Faculty	Muralidhar Ghantasala/Rekha Pillai
Educational collaborations between: a) IISc faculty and U.S. faculty & b) National Labs and IISc Faculty	Muralidhar Ghantasala/Rekha Pillai/Rao Tummala
Funding for effective collaborations: a) Inter-govt. funding opportunities & b) Indian Govt funds to add critical value to India's needs	Venkat Venkataramanan/ Rao Tummala
Entrepreneurship opportunities between IISc faculty and alumni	Swaminathan Ramesh
Graduate student education	Rakesh Kapania/ Guneet Walia
Undergraduate internships at U.S. universities and at IISc	Channa Reddy
Educational outreach to primary and secondary schools	Gaj Birur/ Rakesh Kapania/ Murthy Gudipati



Dr. R. Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Advisor, Govt. of India



Dr. Eric Issacs, Director Argonne National Lab.



Subba Rao G



Yash B



Ram A



Dinesh T



Mohan S



Murthy G

IISc AANA Honorees at Chicago

By Gaj Birur, IISc AANA SoCal

With the IISc Global Conference in Chicago, for the first time IIScAANA honored alumnae/alumni for their service to and through IISc AANA. Criteria include “service that made a significant difference to IISc AANA or to the society through IISc AANA”. Alums presently holding any official position within IIScAANA are not considered. A brief citation of each of their contributions is given here and further details will be posted at the IISc AANA website. The honorees of the first round are:

*Dr. Subba Rao Gunupudi
Dr. Yashraj Bhatnagar
Dr. Ram Akella
Prof. Mohan Sangeneni
Mr. Dinesh Thirumurthy (Sai Sivam)
Dr. Murthy S. Gudipati*

IIScAANA greatly appreciates these and other alums for their support and service to the organization. Thank you all!!

Dr. Subba Rao Gunupudi has given exceptional service to the IIScAANA by establishing it as a non-profit organization. He also provided office space to IISc AANA in Mountain View, CA and was a driving force of the first IISc Global Conference in 2007.

Dr. Yash Bhatnagar as the Co-Chair of IISc AANA re-energized it in the post Global Conference 2007 Crisis. In his tenure, many new chapters were established and IIScAANA became a national organization

Dr. Ram Akella served the organization from the early days. He was a Co-Chair of the first IISc Global Conference in 2007

Prof. Mohan Sangeneni was a strong influence in the organization of IISc Alums in the USA during the early days (2004-2005). His outstanding contribution to IISc AANA has been in building bridges between IISc AANA and IISc/IISc AA. He was a co-chair of the first Global Conference in 2007.

Dinesh Thirumurthy worked relentlessly to increase the membership in the unincorporated IISc Alumnae/Alumni Association during 2004-2005, from a dozen to several hundreds. His key effort contributed to IISc AANA's current membership of over 1500 members.

Dr. Murthy S. Gudipati transformed "yearly food and fun gatherings" of IISc Alums in Silicon Valley into an organized association in 2004-2005, as the founding president of the unincorporated IISc Alumnae/Alumni Association. He continues to inspire alums to take active part in the association with the goal of "giving back".

Life on the IISc Campus - 60 Years Apart

This is a shorter version of a much longer article by L.K. Das and Guneet Walia. During the annual get together of IIScAANA Southern California chapter in August 2012, they were encouraged to write an article on their campus lives. The full article will appear on the IIScAANA website in the near future – Editors

L.K.Das* (1949-51): In late 1940s there were no competitive entrance exams, students were selected according to their ranks in the different universities, spread all over India. Yearly intake was about 100 in the Engineering disciplines like E.T, ECE, Ch.Eng, Metallurgy, Aeronautics and 15 to 20 students in pure sciences including physics, chemistry, biochemistry. It was a great feeling to see students from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, and from Assam to Gujarat. India had just become independent in 1947 and Pandit Nehru was the Prime minister, who had a special passion for Science and Engineering and making India self sufficient in Science and Technology. Dr. C.V Raman, who was earlier Director of IISc, was a colossal figure and he came almost every day to the campus, from Raman Research Institute, which is very close by. Almost every week he came to preside over technical lectures, bringing with him Nobel Laureates, who were visiting India, at the invitation of the Govt. of India. In the 1950s IISc was the venue of Indian Science Congress (if my memory serves me right) and Pandit Nehru presided over the opening session. We were asked to be volunteers to guide the foreign visitors to the venue and sightseeing trips to Mysore, Krishnarajsagar Dam with beautiful lights at night, and other places of interest nearby.

Now coming to day to day life, the mess was well managed by a supervisor, and the menu was prepared, month by month with full participation of students, representing south Indian Vegetarian, North Indian Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian Sections. The monthly bill for food varied from Rs 60 – 70 per month and the quality of food was the best available in South/North India. The Gymkhana was the social and cultural and sports hub. The old hostel had original four wings A, B, C, D with two students per room and in 1950 double storied E Block was added, which had single rooms.

What impressed me more, was the spirit, the inquiring mind, and discussion with fellow students. We prepared technical lectures and wrote articles for technical journals published by the Institute. Even some of our friends appeared in the recently formed IAS, IPS and other central services within the central Government. Many were absorbed by the Tatas and other big industrial firms, and they rose very high in their professions. Our alums who came to USA in 1960-90, have occupied top positions in research, teaching and multinational companies- thanks to the foresight of J.N.Tata who is considered one of the top five makers of modern India during 20th century.

Guneet Walia* (2003-2010): I joined IISc in 2003 as an Integrated PhD (MS+PhD) student in the division of Biological Sciences. My experiences at the institute were vastly different from those described by Dr. Das above but I believe the essence of the experience is just the same. The education imparted, the values instilled, the relationships fostered and the memories made at IISc will, always in every IIScian's mind be incomparable to any experience elsewhere.

On the first day upon reaching IISc all new students were made to pick their hostel room by a lottery system. Ashwini Hostel as I later learnt was the oldest women's hostel on campus, one of now five ladies' hostels: Ashwini, Bharini, Krithika, Mrigasira and Rohini. There were nine men's hostels at IISc in 2010. The C-Mess has remained where it has always been and serves a mix of north and south Indian food. A-Mess serves purely vegetarian food with a tilt towards southern Indian cuisine, while B-Mess serves a mix of both veg and non-veg options, with I would say a tilt towards Bengali cuisine. Though I spent a few months in each Mess, for the most part of my stay at IISc, I was a C-Mess person, an ardent fan of the breakfast served; very healthy, nutritious and of excellent quality.

Among the first few things that struck me about IISc were the excellent facilities that were made available to the students, such as the JN Tata Library, where I spent a great part of my MS days (comprehending coursework, getting acquainted with journal publications for the first time and then writing some of my own) and a major part of my PhD thesis writing was done there. After my experience at JN Tata Library, I think I will carry the bias for the rest of my life that no library anywhere in the world, will ever match up; some might come close but no place will ever give me the kind of scholarly environment of learning that JN Tata Library did. The IISc library has a permanent position in my 'All Time Top 5 Favorite Places' list.

While I was at IISc, the Institute celebrated its centenary year of establishment. IISc organized a grand conference to celebrate 100 years of research, during Dec 13-16, 2008 to mark one hundred illustrious years of leadership in science, technology, and innovation. The materials from the conference, which I still treasure, contain an invitation from Dr. P. Balaram to all past faculty and alumni to participate in the conference. Dr. Balaram summed it up very nicely, "The Institute's growth over a century is intimately intertwined with the development of science and technology in India. The Institute has contributed in a phenomenal way to the building and growth of many public institutions and has been an active participant in the spectacular advancement of private industry over the recent years."

As I write about that time, I think back fondly about the intellectually stimulating environment, the carefree abandon, and the shared curiosity and enthusiasm with which we all worked and enjoyed our time at IISc. I grew a lot as a person and my thinking matured and evolved because of the time spent at the Institute, interacting and learning from some of the best brains in the world. The 20 year old that joined in 2003 left the ever-welcoming, --- home at 27 with a mind open and ready to imbibe new ideas and cultures, new thoughts and opinions, armed with the confidence that a holistic education (and not just literacy) provides, ready to face the challenges of the real world. This bond with the place that crystallized thoughts and ideas will forever remain strong, and I shall remain forever indebted.



* Dr. L.K Das (1951) and Dr. Guneet Walia (2010) are members of the IISc AANA Southern California chapter

Awareness towards Woman in Society

By Dr. Mallika Mallavarapu*

The list of atrocities committed against womankind is never ending. Woman, without whom a life does not take shape, is mistreated at every step of her life - Why? I ask myself why? And I ask you why? Why should we stop and think about it at this juncture? Recent events including enormous media coverage of the Delhi rape case, a recent article in the CNN web site about a foreign exchange student's experience in India and innumerable cases of violence against women, which seldom reach the front page of any news outlet, have brought women's stature in this society to the forefront. The truth is that this issue is persistent in all walks of life, all aspects of society, in almost all countries of our world, no matter what religion and which political system is in place. Ashamed is what we should all feel about living in the 21st century where advancements in science and technology are unprecedented, incomparable with the status of women.

Unanimously we can agree that social and personal awareness is the only way that change can be surely achieved. Subconsciously all of us have a built in mechanism to identify right from wrong. We just have to follow that consciously, vocally, and by our deeds. Social awareness needs to be instilled from a very young age. Schools need to engage kids in overall development rather than in curriculum oriented education alone. Higher education institutes also have an obligation to promote social awareness through programs that highlight women's issues. Society as a whole needs to take tougher measures by passing stringent laws to curb atrocities against women.

Women also need to take appropriate actions to protect themselves. I am not saying everyone needs to learn karate or carry a pepper spray 24/7 (though that may be useful). There are simple steps that can make a huge difference. Be modest. Be aware. Have a friend who knows where you are going. This does not mean you are losing all your privacy. Informing someone could be the difference between life and death. If you are in an uncomfortable situation, have a friend on speed dial or 911 in USA and make lot of noise to attract attention. Don't attract unwanted attention by using your modern gadgets. Eve-teasing is a crime, so give a complaint. This may save another girl from a similar situation.

Public transportation is one of the breeding grounds for these terrible situations. Be aware of your surroundings, move to a subway car where there is a conductor or more people. Police and plain clothed officers need to patrol the stations and be on the busses / subway/ metro to deter potential trouble makers. Finally, I want to stress that every person, especially women, have a strong hunch about potential trouble. Please act on it. Take a stand! Make the difference! It all starts with each of us - to be aware and to spread the awareness - every day in every walk of our lives!

Gandhi wisely said "If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a (hu)man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him/her. ... We need not wait to see what others do."



* Mallika grew up on the IISc campus where her father was on the faculty. She completed her Ph.D. in Physiology, Biophysics and Systems Biology from the Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences, New York, NY (Cornell 2012)

NEWS FLASH

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) is the only Indian institution that figures between 300 and 400 as ranked by the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) for 2013.

The IISc has just about held on to its last year's slot but improved its performance in two departments. In the Chemistry, the Institute has jumped two ranks from 45 in 2012 to 43 this year and in Computer Science from a range of 101-150 in the past to 51-75 in 2013.

Forthcoming Events

PRAVEGA, the Annual Science, Technology and Cultural Fest of the Indian Institute of Science will be held on three professional nights have been planned from October 25th-27th, 2013 on the IISc campus.

A unique and unprecedented venture on a pan-India scale, Pravega aims to bring together the brightest young minds of India from the fields of sciences, engineering as well as the humanities by providing a common platform where they can interact, compete and share ideas.

CLASSIFIED

- 1 Student volunteers needed for IISc Note Book Drive. Please contact Pankaj Jain, NBD, IISc Campus, rmbtmp@gmail.com
- 2 Volunteers are welcome for a new educational outreach program to rural primary schools at IISc, please contact, Anil Kumar Jamithireddy, IISc Campus, anil.pcu@gmail.com
- 3 Alums interested in volunteering for LifeLab, an NGO co-founded by IISc alums in Pune which is involved with science outreach to primary schools in slum areas, please contact P. Sridhar in Pune, srichallap@gmail.com

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Photos from IISc AANA Global Conference 2013, Chicago



Sunil Kumar, Arkal Shenoy, and Balakrishnan



Arkal, Babu Sathian & Satish N



IISc and U of Toronto MOU



Attendees gathered outside the conference building and inside listening to a keynote talk



Dr. R Chidambaram at the opening session



Parminder Sawhney (Akshaya Patra) at the Education Panel



Mr. and Mrs. Sam Pitroda



Dinner Chat - Chidambaram & Pankaj



Coffee Chat -Balki, Ramesh, Sunil, Meena



Dinner time -Amrit, Krishna, Pankaj, Neeraj & Gaj



Arkal, Vasanthi, Das & Guneet



Sunil Kumar with IISc Students



Murali, Satish, & Brij Moudgil



IISc Computer Science & Automation Alumni



Rudra Pratap & Sarojini Deevi with U of Toronto Officials