SRM
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
(Deemed to be University u/s 3 of UGC Act, 1956)

Reflections

WELCOME!

Dr Sandeep Sancheti is the new Vice Chancellor of SRMIST. Dr. Sancheti holds a PhD from Queens University of Belfast UK. He completed B.Tech (ECE) from Regional Engineering College, Warangal (now NITW) and M.Sc (Engg) from Delhi College of Engineering (now DTU). Prior to this, he was President of Manipal University, Jaipur, Director, National Institute of Technology Delhi (NITD) and Director, NITK Surathkal. (*Contd on page 2*)

L to R: Guruprakash Sivabalan, Prabhu Natarajan, Kuzhali Nandagopal, Daniel Nath, Ayush Srivastava, Madhan Shanmugasundaram, Abdul Sayeed, Rachit Gulati

SRM Achievers Connect '18

The second edition of SAC was successfully held on 20 Jan, 2018 at the Biotechnology Seminar Hall, SRMIST, Kattankulathur. More than 100 students attended the event. (*Contd on page 2*)

He has also served as Director in-charge, NIT Tiruchirapally, NIT Calicut, School of Planning & Architecture (SPA) Delhi and Mentor Director, NIT Goa, NIT Puducherry and NIT Sikkim.

Dr. Sancheti is a recipient of the Commonwealth Scholarship & Fellowship under Colombo Plan for 1992-95. He was awarded the SERC Fellowship by DST, Government of India in 1998 and UKISTRF Award by the British Council in 1999-2000. He is a Life Fellow of Institution of Electronics & Telecommunication Engineers (FIETE), Institution of Engineers (India) (FIE), Broadcast Engineering Society (BES), Indian Society for Technical Education (FISTE) and a Member of Institution of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (MIEEE), USA. He has published more than 75 research papers in national & international journals and conferences. He was also the member of Microsoft India Academic Advisory Board, Member of Kakodkar Committee for review of NITs, Member (Visitor's nominee) on Distance Education Council (DEC) and is currently the Vice President of Association of Indian Universities (AIU) New Delhi.

SAC '18 (...*Contd*)

The chief guest was Madhan Shanmugasundaram (1993 Civil, Director, Infosys). The panel speakers were Kuzali Nandagopal (BE Bio-info, 2009, Manager, Catholic Syrian Bank), Prabhu Natarajan (M.Tech Embedded Systems 2009, Analyst, TCS), Chandan Jaiswal (B.Tech Info & Telecom, 2012, Lead, Travel Markplace, Paytm), Abdul Sayeed (B.Tech Aero, 2013, Senior Engineer, Honeywell), Ayush Srivastava (B.Tech EEE, 2017, Creative Content Head, Wittyfeed), Rachit Gulati (B.Tech EEE, 2014, Author of Affairs Life & Love Something), Guru Prakaksh (B.Tech CSE 2015, Founder & CEO, Xobin), Daniel Nath (B.Tech CSE, 2017, Partner, inFeedo).

The speakers touched on a range of topics including experiences in life before and after graduation, facing failures, importance of hard work and persistence, and experience in the work place. Mr. Chandan Jaiswal sponsored Paytm coupons to the registered attendees. The event was well received by the students who said that they learnt a lot from the talks.

SAC '18

Christy Rayan (1991 Civil) initiated a blood donation camp, which was conducted on 10 Jan, 2018 by the Rotary Club of Besant Nagar and the NSS Cell of SRMIST.

On 26th January 2018, the 2nd Alumni meet of Vadapalani campus was held. Dean (E&T) and HoDs graced the occasion and shared their memories with the Alumni. Mr. Akilan, of 2016 batch working with Nissan Chennai, spoke about smart work and promised to train the students to prepare themselves in surviving the competitive environment. Many alumni expressed their gratitude towards teachers for their untiring contribution in developing and grooming the students.

Mr. Shubham Vyas (B.Tech. 2015, Aerospace Engineering) gave a technical talk on January 29, 2018. He has completed his M.S. in Space Systems Engineering and Space Robotics from TU Delft.

A talk on Entrepreneurship & Innovation titled "A seed sown by Dr. Kalam" was presented on 10th Jan, 2018 by Ms. Masha Nazeem (2016 MTech). She is a national (2018) and state (2016) level youth award winner. She was felicitated by the HOD of EEE department Dr. Vijaykumar. Her website is www.mashanazeem.in.

Abhignya Grandhi, an architect from SRM, spoke at the International Women Entrepreneurs Conference about urban design to be more sustainable and disaster-free. Abhignya has completed a semester abroad, worked in the city of Manhattan and obtained her Master's degree from Spain.

In Profile

Mr. Pushkar Venkat Narayanan (B.Tech Automobile Engineering, 2011) visited the Institute on 4.1.2018 and had a brief interaction with the students. The session started with a brief introduction of the alumnus by Dr. Leenus Jesu Martin, Professor and Head, Department of Automobile Engineering.

Gokul Swaminathan, a Biotechnology alumnus, is an emerging scientific leader whose research in infectious diseases is driving important advances in the field of infectious diseases & vaccines. The 2008 SRM graduate is currently employed as a scientist in the Immuno-Biology group at the Merck Exploratory Science Center, Merck Research Laboratories, Merck & Co Inc, Kenilworth, NJ USA (known as MSD outside the United States and Canada).

He fondly remembers his time at SRM University. As a successful scientist in a major pharmaceutical company, one would expect him to have done well in academics in college? "Quite the contrary", he admits; "I knew I was interested in biotechnology, but, I was unsure what I wanted to do during my first two years. I didn't get a great GPA and was quite concerned about my future". Going through personal struggles, including losing his father during the second year of college was an awakening moment in his life. He says, "I don't know what I would have done without my SRM friends, and the strong support system I was fortunate to have. My elder brother was in a Ph.D. program in the USA during that time, and he was incredibly helpful in motivating me to get serious and focus on my studies". He went on to do well in his exams during his 5th-7th semesters, but his path was still unclear. The biggest inspiration came to him during the last semester when he got a unique opportunity

to be an exchange research scholar at Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where he completed his final year thesis research work. "By the end of my 5 months stay at Georgetown, I knew I wanted to be a become a scientist and do this for a lifetime". Even though his hard work in the last two years helped his final GPA, his overall profile including research experiences needed to be bolstered to pursue a Ph.D. program. So, after his SRM stint, he took up a senior research fellow position at the International Center for Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology, New Delhi, India. At ICGEB, he worked on the development of small molecule inhibitors and vaccines against dengue viruses. His tenure at ICGEB helped him become a better candidate for the graduate program, and helped him secure admission in a Ph.D. program (with full

scholarship & monthly stipend) at the Drexel University College of Medicine's (DUCOM) Microbiology & Immunology graduate program in Philadelphia, PA, USA. At DUCOM, his overarching research work was focused on uncovering the inter-influential roles of innate immune receptors, non-coding RNAs, HIV-1 & HCV infections in cells from human donors. His Ph.D. thesis work led to the publication of 3 primary research articles & 4 expert review articles in reputed, peer-reviewed scientific journals in prestigious journals such as PLoS Pathogens. For his post-doctoral research work, Gokul joined the Merck Research Laboratories, working on understanding immune responses to novel vaccine formulations. After 2 years of post-doc work, he accepted a senior scientist position within the same group. In 2016, Gokul transitioned into a new role at the new Merck Exploratory Science Center in Cambridge. His research is aimed at uncovering the underlying human biology of disease susceptibility and vaccine responses to help develop new ways to treat/prevent infectious diseases.

Gokul has consistently applied his passion and scientific creativity towards significantly advancing our understanding of diseases of extreme unmet need. Today, he is in a position to give back to society by sponsoring the education of Bittu Shaw, an underprivileged boy from rural Kolkata. Shaw attends a Bengali-medium school and wants to pursue hotel management as a career. Through Children International, a non-profit child sponsorship organization, he particularly chose to sponsor Bittu because he saw a little bit of himself in the child. "When I look back at my own life, I realize that I've been helped all along my journey by family and friends, both morally and financially. And I wanted to do that for someone too," he says. He even donates to his friend's NGO Miriam Sei Education in Kenya, which focuses on eradicating illiteracy and poverty from rural Kenya. "I don't want to be a role model, I just want to convey the message that one must study hard, work hard and find a job for oneself. And when we are in the position to give back, we must", he says, passionately.

About his overall experience at SRM: "to me, SRM University is what you want it to be.. you have all the facilities, the curriculum and opportunities, if you want to make something of it for a successful professional career. But some of my favorite memories at SRM were truly outside the classroom...the SRM bus ride everyday, the train rides from Kattankulathur, the hours spent in the cafeteria; all of which was responsible for the lifelong friendships I've made...friends I still talk to every other day almost 14 years later. I look forward to being back in SRM someday soon", he concludes.

Want to be featured here?
Write to us!

Keep an eye for the new alumni website to be rolled out in Mar/Apr 2018!
Mr. Jithesh Thasari (2007 Biotech) is spearheading the design of a new website for the Directorate of Alumni Affairs.

BY ALUMNI, FOR ALUMNI!

WANT TO BE A MENTOR?

A new program started by the Directorate is linking current students with alumni. The alumni will be mentors to the students and help them improve professionally - it can be giving inputs on latest industry details, advising on courses to focus on, preparing for interviews, etc.

If you are interested to be a mentor, write to us at feedback.alumni@srmuniv.ac.in

BACK WITH A BANG!

Internship Fair
for Students

March 23-25, 2018
at
SRMIST,
Kattankulathur

If interested, contact
us.
feedback.alumni@srm
univ.ac.in

We invite contributions for articles/quotes/remi-niscences from alumni for the newsletter. Send to feedback.alumni@ srmuniv.ac.in

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