





### THE SHINING STARS

VOLUME 05

### THE SHINING STARS VOL. 5

EDITORS

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Neha Creations



## FOREWORD



Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies, Pune, popularly known as SIMS, is a 30-yearold B-school with a rich heritage and a renowned lineage. Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies is a constituent of Symbiosis International Deemed University, a well-known name in providing higher education and supporting international education, as the brainchild of its honourable founder Dr. S. B. Majumdar.

Conceptualized for the noble cause of serving the defence personnel and their dependents, SIMS came into existence on February 8, 1993. Since then, SIMS has been moving with deftness and dedication on its journey to 'Make a Difference' as is its motto.

SIMS is the only successful example of a public-private partnership existing in higher education between Symbiosis International University and the Ministry of Defence.

Today, SIMS is one of the top-ranked B-Schools in the country. SIMS is UGC approved, and ISO certified (ISO 9001:2015). SIMS is a constituent of the prestigious Symbiosis International (Deemed University). Symbiosis International (Deemed University) has been accredited with A++ by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). CSR GHRDC B-school Survey 2022 ranked SIMS as No.1 among the Top Leading B-Schools of Super Excellence in India. CSR GHRDC B-school Survey 2023 ranked SIMS as No. 2 in the state of Maharashtra amongst private institutes in India and No.6 in Top Private Bschools in India.

SIMS is committed to the larger purpose of its existence, namely 'Make A Difference'. SIMS transforms the lives of its students by focusing on their holistic development.

Brig. (Dr.) Rajiv Divekar Director, Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies, Pune Dean, Faculty of Management, Symbiosis International (Deemed University)



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- 6. Amol Gupta
- 7. Dinkar Devgan
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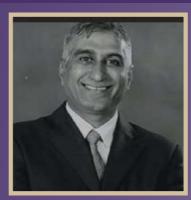
**SPECIAL MENTION** 

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

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### <u>SECTION I</u> THE MOMENTS OF <u>PRIDE</u>





The following section is an attempt to put up the alumni achievements of the last year (January 2023 -December 2023). We as an institution take immense pride in celebrating the achievements of our alumni.

Our reverent alumni keep advising their young juniors, through their life journeys, to inculcate certain qualities and habits before joining the corporate world. These are-risk-taking, learning agility, never panicking, resilience, adaptability, finding the purpose, creating short-term and long-term goals, sharing learning, going the extra mile, keep learning, learning and unlearning, up-skilling, mastering industry skills, putting in hard work, building a never-say-die attitude, taking once career in one's own hands, learning to have the right attitude, staying up-to-date, hands-on experience, continuous learning, mastering social skills, grabbing opportunities and challenges, learning to 'stay hungry-stay foolish', be authentic, be prepared for uncertainties, be prepared for change, practicing multi-tasking, working across teams, networking, practicing patience and the like.

Dear students, once you go through the journeys of our alumni compiled in the book, you will come across a wealth of advice based on their life journeys. This advice will guide you through the thick and thin of your corporate journeys.

We hope you will keep making us proud in times to come and keep SIMS' flag high forever....

Brig (Dr.) Rajiv Divekar Director, Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies, Pune Dean, Faculty of Management, Symbiosis International (Deemed University)

### **AN ACHIEVEMENT PAR EXCELLENCE**

### <u>ANUPAMA RAO SINGH</u> (Batch 1999-2001)



<u>Company - Dr. Reddy's Laboratories</u> <u>Designation - Vice President, Latin America Region; Head,</u> <u>Centre of Excellence-Oncology & Hospital Business</u>

#### Featuring in the coveted list of Top 29 Women Leaders of India, 2023

"Oct 12 2023 will be super special, as I wake up to read the Economic Times and be featured in the Top 29 Women Leaders of India Inc. - truly humbled to be among the Women Leaders to watch out for along with 28 other super-duper Women Achievers !! As I complete 2 decades in the Pharma Industry, it feels like yesterday when I joined as a starry-eyed management trainee straight out of MBA college, the thing that kept me going is the purpose that the pharma industry serves of impacting patients and that is something that continues to be the key driver for me even today!

This milestone is dedicated to my family, friends, leaders, mentors, team, and colleagues who have supported, challenged, partnered, disagreed, and agreed, ultimately enabling my growth!! Gratitude!!"



Ms. Anupama Rao Singh is part of the League of Top 29 Women Leaders of India, 2023

#### Advice to Aspiring Women Leaders

"I was asked what's that one thing I would suggest to aspiring Women Leaders : Among many other aspects, I emphasized developing a strong ability to "have and articulate" your point of view"

#### Definition of an Amateur and a Professional

"Amateurs have a goal. Professionals have a system Amateurs are kinda-in. Professionals are all-in

Amateurs rely on willpower. Professionals focus on creating an environment that turns desired behaviors into default behaviors."

#### **Preferred Learning Style**

"I find 'deconstruction' a pretty nice way of learning! Go beyond just a superficial view Observe patterns, cues Connect the dots, and then Make your own !"

# ALUMNI ACHIVEMENTS 01/23 TO 12/23



Mr. Subeer Bakshi (Batch of 2001) has been appointed as Head of People & Culture by Pocket FM.

With 20+ years of global HR expertise, his leadership will shape an engaging culture for our ambitious growth journey.

Garima Sangwan (Batch of 2014) was selected to be a part of the elite club BusinessWorld HR 40, under 40 by BusinessWorld.

She is a dynamic professional, blending expertise in HR management with a fervent interest in dog training. Her dedication to fostering learning, exploring new destinations, and delving into the world of literature underscores her multifaceted approach to life.



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Mr. Shahid Nizami (Batch of 2001) has been appointed as APAC Vice President of Sales at Braze.



Mr. Shahid is a senior leader with rich experience in Tech Sales Leadership and General Management with an excellent track record in overachieving targets, leading highly motivated teams and innovative approaches with a deep understanding of the APAC market. He is passionate about helping businesses grow and scale efficiently. Sir has worked with large enterprise customers, SMBs, and start-ups to help them realize their vision and achieve their goals.



Mr. Mayank Rautela (Batch of 1999) makes it to the list of Top 60 CHROs in India by StartUpLanes.

Mr. Mayank is an expert at leading teams and cross-functional projects to drive Business strategy. He is currently heading Strategic HR functions in a global healthcare organization. He also has experience in heading HR in European Emerging Markets and the Middle East. He is an Inclusion and diversity enthusiast and has experience in HR leadership roles in various industries including Hospitality, Healthcare, and Financial Services.





Ms. Preemita Singh (Batch of 2000) makes it to the list of Top 60 CHROs in India by StartUpLanes.

Ms. Preemita has experience in managing people and business objectives and has a successful track record of delivering results. She has led HR functions in domestic as well as global settings, managing a diverse set of stakeholders. She has worked extensively on HR Transformation; unleashing human capital, nurturing capabilities, building leadership, enabling a learning culture, and driving transformation through effective use of HR technology.



Mr. Anish Aravind (Batch of 1999) became an International umpire for Visually Impaired Cricket.

He officiated the IBSA World Games Gold medal match between India and Australia (women) this August at Birmingham. He has over 24 years of experience in human capital management (HCM) and organization effectiveness (OE) across various industries. He is passionate about solving business problems by weaving people interventions that align with the purpose and strategy of the organization.





Mr. Rakesh Kaul (Batch of 2004) was appointed as Chief Business Officer at SBI General Insurance.

Mr. Kaul is an experienced professional with almost 2 decades of experience in the Insurance Sector. He has led key sales positions in reputed companies in the sector and, has been instrumental in building teams, creating distribution networks, and adding value across various verticals.



Mr. Gaurav Chopra (Batch of 2007) has been appointed as Head of HR Operations and Transformation at Paytm.

He is an accomplished CHRO & and an HR Leader with a distinguished career spanning over 18+ years. He is a resultsdriven professional who brings a strategic mindset and unwavering commitment to bringing excellence to his organization. Over the years, he has led Human Resources and HR Transformation with top Multinational Organizations across India, Europe, Germany, UAE, Africa, Asia Pacific, and Egypt.



Mr. Prateek Mehta (Batch of 1998) raised a fund of \$2M for Contiinex.

A digital transformational leader, He had spent more than 2 decades accelerating disruption and growth for the top brands in the technology industry. He is rapidly bringing in changes in Customer Experience Management in the insurance and healthcare sector by addressing the sector's core for enhanced data privacy and audit compliance.



Ms. Geeta Singh (Batch of 1999) was a part of the Learning and Development Asia Conference, in Singapore.

A passionate and mission-driven HR leader with an enriching experience of more than 20 years in regional and global leadership roles, Ms. Singh is an apt example of the SIMS term 'Transformational Leader'. She is credited with transforming various cultures, leaders, teams, and businesses.





Mr. Pramod Singh (Batch of 2012) has been promoted to Expert Associate Partner, Data Science at Bain and Company.

He is a seasoned technology expert with years of experience in solving business challenges across domains through his expertise in various areas like large-scale data processing, machine learning, and deep learning.



Mr. Sourabh Lohtia (Batch of 2003) has been appointed as Head of Marketing at PNB MetLife India Insurance Co. Ltd.

Through the course of his illustrious career spanning over two decades, Mr. Lohtia has created significant value for various businesses through his capabilities around solving problems and collaborating with all stakeholders.





Ms. Ekta Gulati (Batch of 2008) has been promoted to Category Head - CV Marketing at Apollo Tyres Limited.

She has 15+ years of experience spanning Product Management, Business Strategy, Category Management, Key Accounts, Modern trade, Channel management, and Trade Marketing. She is also a Growth Strategist having a track record of delivering superior business results and driving products/categories to leadership.



Mr. Jagpreet Brar (Batch of 1997) has been appointed as Director at KPMG India.

He is a passionate business leader, Facilitator, and Coach. Sir has over twenty years of insightful experience in Client Acquisition, HR Operations and technology, Organization Development, Leadership Development, and Coaching.





Mr. Varun Ahlawat (Batch of 2009) has been appointed as Director - Partnerships at Korshine.

He has over 14+ years of experience in Business growth strategies, Bid Management, Strategic partnerships, and Public Policy.



Ms. Smriti Mehra (Batch of 2003) started a new position as CEO - English and Business News at Network18 Media and Investments Limited.

An Experienced Revenue head with a demonstrated history of working in the media industry across mediums. she is a Strong sales professional skilled in Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Market Research, Management, Marketing, and Business Development, team management.





Mr. Anuj Vohra (Batch of 2006) has been appointed as Head of Human Capital, Gurgaon at KKR.

He is an experienced professional with over a decade experience of working in the investment banking industry. A strong human resources professional skilled in Talent Acquisition, Branding, Analytical Skills, Employee Engagement, Retention, Performance Management and Compensation.



Ms. Arshia Singh (Batch of 2015) has been appointed as Associate Director - Talent Management and Learning at Tata Consumer Products.

She is a passionate, enthusiastic, and result-oriented HR professional with rich experience in various facets of HR. Ma'am firmly believes in building Human Capital as the key growth engine in an organization.





Ms. Karishma Prabhakar Woodman started a new position as MD, Head -HR at JPMorgan Chase & Co.

She is an HR leader with 20 years of extensive experience in Human Resource Management. She is an expert at managing human resources across sectors in reputed organizations.



Mr. Ashish Nene (Batch of 1999) had his start-up Websym Solutions Pvt. Ltd. acquired by Deloitte.

With over 2 decades of corporate wisdom, He has worked with various companies in key roles ranging from Sales and Account Management to Development. He Business has successfully led companies towards higher growth and has assisted in laying vision, out corporate market positioning, growth strategies, partnerships, marketing and branding.





Mr. Manish Verma started a new position as Global Chief Talent and Leadership Development Officer at Randstad.

A Strategic Global Talent Leader, he has more than 24 years of HR experience across the globe. His expertise spans different areas like Workforce strategy, Talent Management, Employee Engagement, and Stakeholder Management.



Mr. Amit Jamdade (Batch of 1999) started a new position as Partner FS consulting at EY.

He has successfully led and multimillion-dollar executed technology services programs over the course of his 24 year career, and has vast experience in the areas of **Business** Development, Entrepreneurship, and IT Consulting.





Ms. Rasika Mahajani Malhotra (Batch of 1996) has been appointed as HR - Director at L'Oréal

She is an HR Leader with over 20 years of diverse experience across several functions like Talent Management, HR Transformation, Organizational Effectiveness & Performance and Business Partnering.



Mr. Bhupendra Joshi (Batch of 1999) has been appointed as CHRO at VEE Technologies.

With more than 2 decades of extensive experience in managing a spectrum of human resource functions across diverse sectors and reputed organizations, he is a seasoned professional.





Ms. Shweta Srivastava (Batch of 2003) has received the Global Women Leader Title at World Women Leadership Congress.

She has a rich experience of 18 years in integrated Marketing and Digital profession. Her strong Digital and Technological background has enabled her to launch various successful Digital Transformation programs for her organizations.



Mr. Pranav Bakshi (Batch of 2003) has been appointed as Head of Partnerships and Video Strategy at Network18 Media and Investments Limited.

He is a seasoned expert in the Digital Content space with around 2 decades of experience. His expertise extends to a wide range of imperative skills like Strategy, Marketing, Business Operations, and Organizational Development.





Ms. Aastha Verma (Batch of 2007) had been a part of Aero India 2023, representing TARDID Technologies Pvt Ltd.

She is a seasoned sales professional who holds over a decade of experience in multi-disciplinary projects and has expertise in practice with management, a focus on technology, people, consulting, presales, and solution development.



Ms. Shaan Vats (Batch of 2010) received the Global HR Excellence Award at the World HRD Congress, in 2023.

She is a Senior Practice Leader at Infosys with over a decade's worth of experience. Not only is she adept at recruiting, talent management, and talent acquisition, but she is also an Employer Branding & Engagement Specialist and a D&I Committee member.





Ms. Avantika Susan Nigam (Batch of 2002) has been awarded the Most Iconic HR Leaders Award at the World HRD Conference.

With over 2 decades of experience, she is an HR leader who has successfully led high-impact talent agendas throughout her career in start-ups and larger business units. Her ability to create a compelling talent vision and strategy has led to the delivery of sustained results across the talent value chain.



Mr. Saral Talwar (Batch of 1999) was One of the Speakers at ET - Auto Retail Forum 2023.

He is currently the Director and Co-Founder of Bikewo. He has accumulated crucial skills over the course of his 2 decades of experience, such as Business Development, Team Management, and Key Account Management amongst many others.





Mr. Sachin Gupte (Batch of 1997) has been appointed as MD & Global Head HR at Standard Chartered Bank.

He is a seasoned expert with over 2 decades of experience and possesses key skills in personnel management, employee engagement, organizational effectiveness, and many others.



Mr. Anish Aravind (Batch of 1999) was named as one of the HR Influencers 2023 by ETHRWorld.

He is a Human Capital Management Professional with over 02 decades of experience, in the fields of Manufacturing, FMCG, IT Products, and ITES Industry segments.





Mr. Vijay Kumar Jamwal (Batch of 2003) has been appointed as Head HR at Biz2X.

He has over 17 years of diverse industry experience and is a seasoned HR professional with a humane first approach.



Ms. Preemita Singh (Batch of 2000) has been appointed as the Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer at Havells India.

She has led the HR function in domestic as well as global settings, while also delivering assignments successfully outside the HR function.





Mr. Karan Seth (Batch of 2008) has been appointed as the Executive Director at JP Morgan.

Mr. Karan Seth has been in the innovative banking and financial technology profession for the last 15 years, which deals with product management and <u>development</u>.



Mr. Mohit Bedi (Batch of 2000) has raised \$6 million in a Pre-Seed Round for his new venture Kiwi.

He has 2 decades of noteworthy experience in product strategy, digital payments, and credit cards which has been instrumental in bringing success to various organizations he has been associated with.



## SECTION II THE INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEYS



On behalf of SIMS and our Director, I want to extend our deepest appreciation to the alumni who contributed their inspirational stories for the college book "The Shining Stars".

Your stories are a beacon of inspiration and a testament to your diverse and impactful journeys undertaken over the years. The depth of your experiences and the sincerity with which you shared them will undoubtedly resonate with readers, providing a source of motivation for current and future members of the SIMS community.

Your willingness to contribute your stories reflects not only your commitment to your alma mater but also your belief in the power of shared narratives to connect and inspire. Your story adds a unique and invaluable dimension to the book, showcasing the depth and breadth of achievements of our alumni.

I also thank you all for your unwavering support of the institute's corporate engagement & placement activities over the years. We continuously look forward to your support and guidance.

Thank you once again for sharing your stories and contributing to the rich tapestry of SIMS alumni experiences. Your support strengthens the bonds within our community and highlights the incredible achievements of our graduates.

Ms. Shweta Mehrotra Head Placements, SIMS

### Ashok Kumar Year: 1997-1999



<u>Company - Marsh India Ltd</u> <u>Designation - Senior Vice President</u>

My career since graduating from SIMS...

SIMS transformed me from a raw Mining Engineer from IIT to a seasoned professional. I have worked with 7 different organizations all in different industries (NMDC, Voltas, ACC Cement, Birla Sun Life Asset Management, ICICI Securities, ICICI Bank, Marsh India Insurance Broking). In addition to professional assignments, I am also the President of the IIT(ISM) Dhanbad Alumni Association and an Executive Council Member of "Pan IIT Alumni".

Some key lessons I have learned in my professional journey...

Apart from hard work and skills, relationships with stakeholders are very important. Furthermore, I have experienced that changes make one agile and bring new energy. So, let's keep reinventing ourselves!

#### Advice for recent graduates entering the workforce...

The world is dynamic and ever-changing; be prepared to embrace changes with ease. Attitude towards work is important for success.

My experience at SIMS in preparing me for my current career...

SIMS made me a complete corporate warrior and helped me in navigating the most challenging situations.

I have stayed connected with my alma mater since graduating by...

Meeting SIMSites is always rejuvenating, so I keep in touch through personal meetings, professional meetings, and Alumni get-togethers. Whenever I travel to a city, I try to catch up with my alma mater.

A memorable experience or favorite class from my time at SIMS...

We had two language papers, French and German, in one semester. I somehow managed to get the highest marks in a French Class Test. The teacher appreciated and called me in front of the class. She asked me some questions in French, to which I replied in German. The entire class burst out laughing and for a moment I had no clue why. It was quite an embarrassing moment for me but fun for the class. French was the most difficult subject for me at SIMS.

Networking with fellow alumni has benefited me in my career by...

I could win one of the largest business deals for my organization and more.

Balancing work and personal life, and several effective strategies to achieve this equilibrium...

I have been lucky. For me, my personal and professional lives are in perfect balance as I love both of them. It's about how we see our work.

I stay updated on industry trends and developments by...

Reading, traveling, meeting people, and social media.

A challenging situation in my career and how I navigated through it...

Nothing was more challenging than the SIMS life with only 2 holidays in a year, the 15th of August and the 26th Jan. We faced 16 papers in one semester. So, after the SIMS journey, everything feels easy and less challenging.

Changes in the industry landscape since I entered and the way I have adapted to them...

The industry landscape and business have been ever-changing for good. I am lucky to work with 7 different organisations all in different industries. In today's world, one can change Industry/Business, provided one is ready to embrace changes and adapt.

Specific resources or tools I recommend for career growth...

The biggest tool is discipline and attitude towards work. I do regular self-evaluations and work on areas that need improvement. I also run which gives me energy. So, one should choose a sport for good health and mind.

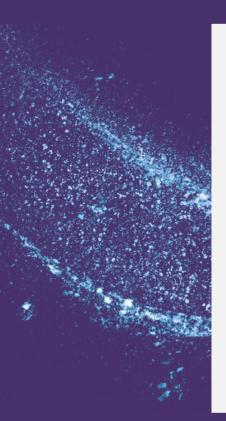
If I could go back and give advice to my college self, I would tell myself...

None, it was a perfect journey for me at SIMS. Thank you "SIMS" for everything.

My favourite quote is...

#HumanEngineering. (The most complex machine in the world is Human. Let's learn to deal with it.)

## Priyanka Bhatnagar Year: 1999-2001





<u>Company - Accenture</u> <u>Designation - MD -HR</u>

#### My career since graduating from SIMS...

It's been 23 years since I graduated from SIMS - my career has had a strong mix of breadth and depth of experience working with different functions within HR. While I am in a leadership role, my learnings and growth are defined by the practitioner role I play.

#### Some key lessons I have learned in my professional journey...

- 1. Pace your career along with your life and other priorities
- 2. Consistency is key to success
- 3. Build teams that have voices
- 4. Pick up new skills
- 5. Change roles every few years to add new dimensions to your career portfolio

Advice for recent graduates entering the workforce...

- 1. God is in the details don't hold back from rolling your sleeves
- 2. The badge of your institute doesn't matter after a point make your mark with your skills, hard work and attitude
- 3. Be known for something and be a team player

#### My experience at SIMS in preparing me for my current career...

SIMS had a characteristic of 'hustling' even before it became a word in corporate terminology. It prepared me for multi-tasking, networking, and working across diverse teams and my experience as the Training coordinator gave me early insight into companies and what they look for in entry-level talent. All good lessons for someone starting their career.

#### I have stayed connected with my alma mater since graduating by...

I visit the institute from time to time - I would love to work more closely with the student batches and share my experiences.

#### A memorable experience or favourite class from my time at SIMS

Admittedly I was a frontbencher and attended all classes with great enthusiasmwhether it was Industrial Relations, Labour Law, cases in PM, or OD. I recall preparing for projects with plastic sheets on which we used to write our content and project on the overhead projectors. Another memory is my notes used to be heavily borrowed by other classmates for photocopying and I was left with notebooks falling apart. But that's how I made many of my friends at SIMS.

#### Networking with fellow alumni has benefited me in my career by...

My strongest friendships are with some of our alumni. My paths crossed with many of them due to work but SIMS gave me a lot of common ground. One of our first batch alum Manish Verma hired me from campus and later when I moved to Accenture I referred him there. He's been one of my strongest mentors and guides through these 20-plus years.

Balancing work and personal life, and several effective strategies to achieve this equilibrium...

Maintaining balance is tough - I have finally allowed one part to be dominant depending on the priority of the time. I don't strive for perfection in the area I am not prioritizing. And always build a support network either through family, friends, or paid help.

#### I stay updated on industry trends and developments by...

I enjoy browsing through various HR reads, the company I work for also has a lot of thought leadership across industries. I set aside time every day to read/ view about 1 topic at a minimum.

#### A challenging situation in my career and how I navigated through it...

There have been multiple challenging situations either due to external or personal factors.

My mantra has been to acknowledge the situation - that's the first step to solving it. Reach out to closed circle for help/ guidance. I have seen it is easier to navigate once you are transparent about the situation.

Changes in the industry landscape since I entered and the way I have adapted to them...

Significant industry transformation has occurred in the last 2 decades. Today we operate seamlessly with technology across our personal and professional lives. Digital literacy is critical, knowing how to use the various technology but it's critical to be self-disciplined to not be consumed by technology.

Specific resources or tools I recommend for career growth...

No tools and resources will help till we take charge. My recommendation is to believe in 3 Cs - confidence, communication, collaboration With a strong dose of hard work and patience.

If I could go back and give advice to my college self, I would tell myself...

Get comfortable in trying out new things, and doing things the first time. However, do at your pace and don't be dictated by others' plans or pace.

My favourite quote is...

Nothing will work unless you do. - Maya Angelou

## Rajesh Chakraborty Year: 1999-2001



<u>Company - Barclays</u> <u>Designation -VP and Head - FP&A, Treasury Finance</u>

My career since graduating from SIMS...

After starting with the manufacturing industry (Murugappa Group) from campus, I moved into the banking sector pretty early. Have worked with MNC banks for 2 decades now (Citibank -13 yrs & Barclays 7 yrs) in various roles & geographies. In my current role, I lead the FP&A team for Treasury at Barclays.

#### Some key lessons I have learned in my professional journey...

- Resilience Tough times don't last, tough people do
- Adaptability stay nimble and flexible, the industry is changing very fast.....keep upskilling
- Stay balanced and grounded very imp to be a good human being & and have empathy/compassion

Advice for recent graduates entering the workforce...

- Stay hungry stay foolish it is ok to not know certain things, instead of pretending
- Be authentic stay true to your inner self and follow your instincts
- There's no one winning formula you can succeed in whichever industry/direction you get into, with self-belief. passion & authenticity

My experience at SIMS in preparing me for my current career...

Yes indeed, particularly the following:

- Resilience –

   a. The grind of writing exams for 20 subjects in 10 days...it was crazy
   b. 9 mth internship (from 7 am to 2 pm), followed by classes (from 3 pm to 8.30 pm)
- 2. Public speaking The welcome (new joiner) presentation with Prof. Dilip Bam

I have stayed connected with my alma mater since graduating by...

Regular connects/updates with the institute

A memorable experience or favourite class from my time at SIMS

The hard-fought volleyball finals with SIBM, where we emerged victorious after a nailbiting finish

Networking with fellow alumni has benefited me in my career by...

Networking is extremely important as we progress in our careers. Staying in touch with SIMSites has helped me get important updates, industry developments & and other relevant info from time to time.

Balancing work and personal life, and several effective strategies to achieve this equilibrium...

I try to stick to a fixed start and stop work timing and do not carry work back home. My Strategy - is spend quality time with family/kids, focus on physical fitness & keep hobbies alive.....all this will energize you to work harder with a smile

#### I stay updated on industry trends and developments by...

Newspapers, magazines, web articles, networking & industry conclaves/seminars

#### A challenging situation in my career and how I navigated through it...

My dad was quite unwell (needed prolonged hospitalization). leading to my relocation back to India with a new job (from Citibank UAE to Barclays India) that too in a different domain (from Sales/Marketing to Finance). Could navigate by focusing on learning (completed CFA level 1) and going back to basics

Changes in the industry landscape since I entered and the way I have adapted to them...

Banking now is highly tech-enabled with real-time exchange of data/informationbased transactions. Also, the regulations have tightened significantly with a heightened focus on Controls and compliance. Had to regularly upskill myself with data analytics tools, real-time decision-making, Courses on AML/Compliance, etc.

Specific resources or tools I recommend for career growth...

LinkedIn learning, Course-era, etc have a plethora of good courses that can be done at one's own pace.

If I could go back and give advice to my college self, I would tell myself...

Enjoy the time (it won't come back), have lots of fun, and make friends for life

*My favourite quote is...* 

Keep things simple and keep doing the basics right, the level of everything you do will rise

# Geetanjali Malshe Year: 2000-2002



<u>Company - Eaton Technologies Pvt Ltd</u> <u>Designation - Learning and Development Manager</u>

#### My career since graduating from SIMS...

Mine has been a journey with a lot of career plateaus. I worked as a Generalist in HR in my early days. I took a break from full-time work when the children came along. I restarted but then again, my career took a back seat when my elder son was diagnosed with learning disabilities and I needed more time for his special education and therapy sessions. However, I continued to work on short-term assignments in Learning and Development, learning and Consulting for SME organizations to set up HR. I made a comeback to full-time work after a gap of 9.5 years.

Learn to prioritize and manage time. If you can tame Time, you will feel in control of things.

Start investing and saving early. A SIP is a higher priority than a Swiggy or Zomato take away:) It's a good thing these apps were not there when I started to work.

#### Advice for recent graduates entering the workforce...

Have an open mind to learning experiences, not every career move will be upward, so look at enriching your experiences. whatever you do, do it as best as you can.

My experience at SIMS in preparing me for my current career...

Absolutely, we had enough exposure to real work life through our projects and internships.

I have stayed connected with my alma mater since graduating by...

Yes, for some time when I was on a break, I was even teaching at SIMS. I visit the campus once in a while.

A memorable experience or favourite class from my time at SIMS...

Late Prof. Deven Dhanak's classes were my favorite. He used to teach us Organizational Behavior. I think at 22, I was too young to understand this intense subject but the way he taught us through case studies it didn't feel like we were studying and it was really enjoyable.

#### Networking with fellow alumni has benefited me in my career by...

There have been many occasions when the SIMS network has helped. the most recent one was last year I was looking for my son's admission in the UK and it turned out that my roommate's son was also going through a similar process in the UK. I got connected to her through a few other SIMS alumni. It was very good to discuss the process of admission and his stay later on.

### Balancing work and personal life, and several effective strategies to achieve this equilibrium...

Honestly - my balance is skewed! But, a few years back I was diagnosed with a brain tumor and I went through a major brain surgery called Awake Craniatomy to remove the tumor. I recovered well from the surgery but, there were two side effects, one, I had gained a lot of weight due to steroids, and second, I developed Epilepsy. To manage my weight and epilepsy, I had to do something. I took the help of professionals and got my weight to the recommended limits. For epilepsy, I just need to have my medicines on time every day. So a simple routine I need to follow - sleep on time, eat healthy, monitor portion control, take my medicines on time, and drink lots of fluids.

#### I stay updated on industry trends and developments by...

I read a lot on LinkedIn, follow the threads that I like through the posts on LinkedIn, the e-newsletters that I subscribe and books I love listening to Ted Talks and Podcasts

#### A challenging situation in my career and how I navigated through it...

The challenging situation was to make a comeback to full-time work again. I always had a plan to come back to work and probably that's why I kept picking up assignments as they came along. I was fortunate to have got work from large organizations and got an opportunity to re-enter the workforce,

Changes in the industry landscape since I entered and the way I have adapted to them...

The change is must faster and complex. Work has become specialized with the shared services approach. Technology penetration is higher, people understand technology more and how to integrate with it.

Specific resources or tools I recommend for career growth...

LinkedIn - build your network

If I could go back and give advice to my college self, I would tell myself...

Learn to nurture the relationships that you build in your professional network. - learn to get more organized, it helps in achieving more and it gives a great sense of fulfillment

*My favourite quote is...* 

Circumstances don't define you, it is how you choose to respond to them

# Kinjal Pande Year: 2001-2003



My career since graduating from SIMS...

I joined Shipping Line P&O Nedlloyd from Campus and since then have continued building my career in this fascinating Industry.

- 1. Take your career into your own hands. Don't wait to be asked.
- 2. Raise your hands for the impactful, exciting roles; not necessarily growth or money. This will go a long way in a long-drawn career.

Advice for recent graduates entering the workforce...

Be patient and give it time in each role before jumping to the next. Getting hands-on ground experience in the first decade has a huge impact on the second decade of your career,

My experience at SIMS in preparing me for my current career...

Definitely, the experience at SIMs shapes you to be more resilient and open to change which is critical to any industry today. These are life skills that are relevant anywhere.

#### A memorable experience or favourite class from my time at SIMS...

We were the last batch to operate from a school campus which would mean an intense morning Internship session with an organization and then classes through the evening. This translated to spending a lot of quality time together as batchmates. Operating like this had its charm.

Balancing work and personal life, and several effective strategies to achieve this equilibrium...

Not easy at first but with age and experience, it comes down to having a structure in your life to a large extent. Planning your week ahead, running/exercising to destress, and self-discipline to mentally switch off from work at home are all tactics that I try to use as much as possible.

#### A challenging situation in my career and how I navigated through it...

My career has spanned many transformations and crises. The most recent one was the Military Coup in Myanmar where I was heading the Country's Operations. Overnight, it became extremely unsafe in the country, leading to an eventual financial crisis. While every challenge shapes you differently, this one was the most extreme I have faced.

To start with, it is always important to take care of People First. Everything else will fall in place. In addition, Keeping calm and being seen on the ground in a challenging situation like this drives confidence, trust, and energy.

### Changes in the industry landscape since I entered and the way I have adapted to them...

There is never a dull moment in Logistics. Since I entered, Logistics has been deemed as one of the most critical pillars of an organization's success. This was not the case earlier. There is a stronger acknowledgment of the role Logistics plays in keeping the supply chain moving. In addition, it is great to see more and more women joining this exciting space which traditionally has been male-dominated.

#### Specific resources or tools I recommend for career growth...

No specific tool as such but it helps to have a mentor when the time is right. Building an external network plays a very important role in knowing what's happening outside your organization.

If I could go back and give advice to my college self, I would tell myself...

Be updated and make it a habit to read newspapers/journals every day.

#### *My favourite quote is...*

"The cost of being wrong is less than the cost of doing nothing"-Seth Godin

## Amol Gupta Year: 2002-2004



### <u>Company - FIS</u> <u>Designation - People Leader for COO / CTO</u>

My career since graduating from SIMS...

Continually evolving expertise and values recognize the need for a continuous development path that enables me to adapt to changing work and personal environments.

Worked in different sectors after my post-graduation from SIMS mainly in banking and financial services, Bio-Tech & pharma, IT, and ITES. Also worked in different countries between the USA and India

Currently, leading the People function for Technology and operations based in the corporate office in Jacksonville, Florida

- Risk-taking and pushing myself comfortably "out of my comfort zone" came naturally to me.
- Never hesitate to take on a new role, project, or geography, and the thought of change excites me.
- Never stop learning and be eager to learn.
- Do not panic during high-pressure times.
- Agility is key.
- Relationship building & and creating networks go a long way but never have expectations.
- Understand the overall vision and connect the dots.
- Finally, always find time for yourself.

#### Advice for recent graduates entering the workforce...

- Showing your right attitude is important.
- Focus on industry focus skills / 21st-century skills in addition to curriculum.
- Hands-on experience
- Staying up to date with Technology is a must in current times.
- Continuous learning to stay future-relevant. Nothing is permanent in the current scheme of things.
- Learn how to solve problems and take initiative.
- Practice social skills e.g. Introduce yourself to be authentic
- Stay focused on your own goals
- Build your credibility, be humble, open to feedback. and embrace mistakes as a learning opportunity.

#### My experience at SIMS in preparing me for my current career...

SIMS provided the environment, but I also believed that each person must understand how to nurture the environment according to their needs & and capabilities.

- On what it's like to be in SIMS: refer to the "Three S's": "School (Attend classes & spend time in library). Sleep. Social Life. Pick two out of three ."
- On the value of SIMS: As I see it, education, the career switch/advancement, and the network are the three core reasons. When I applied, I ordered those three reasons with the career switch at the top of the list, then the education, and then the network. What's paying off the most is the career switch, followed by the network, followed by the education as I hardly remember what I studied in SIMS
- On life after SIMS: you'll probably leave your post-SIMS job within a year or two. It's okay. It happens to the best of my SIMS friends and It happened to me. I turned out fine after 20 Years when I look back.

I have stayed connected with my alma mater since graduating by...

I have tried to participate in the SIMS selection process GEPI Panel, came as industry experts in seminars/panel member in different competitions as well as hiring students during the placement process.

#### A memorable experience or favourite class from my time at SIMS ....

I remember one project in Marketing in which we presented the strategy of Sony Vs Star ( they were at marketing & and branding war for viewership around 2002-03) and our faculty was very impressed that HR students had done such a good marketing project

#### Networking with fellow alumni has benefited me in my career by...

Many ways, from lifelong friendships, Sense of community, access to resources, Mentorship, Industry insights as well as career advancements.

Balancing work and personal life, and several effective strategies to achieve this equilibrium...

Enjoy the work itself first and the day you stop enjoying it, you start taking stress about the work and the balance starts to tilt. Apart from that taking time – off, using technology, setting boundaries, and practicing self-care are other things I have tried in the last few years.

#### A challenging situation in my career and how I navigated through it...

Had many situations but let me talk about when I was first time asked to present to the CEO about high attrition in a particular team. The company has never seen double-digit attrition and this new team was running at 3-digit attrition, unheard of in the organization.

As it was my first time, I was nervous but also had to be objective about the problem statement as well as the solutions which was put in place. The session went quite well and learned that listening, your instincts to respond after understanding the concerns of the top leaders, asking for help, thinking on your feet, prioritizing, and executive communication skills are equally important. I stay updated on industry trends and developments by...

Networking, Reading, Newsletters, participating in events, webinars, and podcasts, following a few influencers speaking to consultants & and asking them about the trends.

Changes in the industry landscape since I entered and the way I have adapted to them...

Multiple changes from market changes, Macro changes, Globalization, Government policies, Path-breaking Technological changes, Multiple MNCs setting up shops in India to start-up culture.

- Adopt an agile mindset and be open to learning new ways of doing things.
- Leverage technology and data-driven insights to gain valuable insights into decisions.
- Utilize digital tools to automate mundane tasks & and to improve productivity that can free up time for more important activities like networking and strategizing.
- Stay informed on the latest industry trends, news, and regulations so you can quickly take advantage of any new opportunities they present.
- Finally, don't be afraid to take risks—especially when it comes to experimenting.

#### Specific resources or tools I recommend for career growth...

- Experiment with the different concepts learned during post-graduation e.g. during our 2nd year in 2003 we tried to have sessions on how to use Defence strategy in the industry. We called experts from both fields as well as a few business leaders with NDA/IMA backgrounds to share.
- Do a self-personality assessment to know yourself better.
- Create a suitable Career Development Plan to reach the desired position.
- Find suitable mentors from the industry.

#### If I could go back and give advice to my college self, I would tell myself...

Should have had more fun in college, was very serious as came with many years of experience.

#### *My favourite quote is...*

"What goes down, must come up! what goes up, must come down! Nothing is constant"

## Dinkar Devgan Year: 2002-2004



<u>Company - Google</u> <u>Designation - Recruiting Lead</u>

#### My career since graduating from SIMS...

My career journey has been magical. My career started as a Jr. Executive and through the years, I have been fortunate enough to have been provided with the opportunity to work with some of the most esteemed organizations across the globe and have been in leadership roles within India and APAC over the years.

#### I have 3 lessons to share:

- 1. Find your purpose as early as possible- It is not easy and takes years to figure it out. Once you have, stick to it to be able to love what you do
- 2.Stay Humble The key to success is not knowing it all The secret lies in being open to learning each moment and from everyone around
- 3. Share your learnings This world is designed to prosper when we help light the path for others. It helps the world become a better place to live.

#### Advice for recent graduates entering the workforce...

Respect the opportunity - The life ahead of us is filled with a lot of unknowns. Let us accept it and respect what comes our way.

My experience at SIMS in preparing me for my current career...

Yes - It taught us how to navigate the unknown under constraints!

I have stayed connected with my alma mater since graduating by...

By hiring interns, providing full-time opportunities, visiting SIMS, and coaching the student community

A memorable experience or favourite class from my time at SIMS ...

In 2003, when the President of India Sh. Abdul Kalam was visiting the Symbiosis Campus, I was chosen to be the Emcee for the event. After closing, he walked up to me and my fellow Simsite Priya and patted our backs mentioning that this was the most professionally managed event he had attended ever. A comment like that coming from the First Citizen of the country I belong to, has been the most fond memory of my life. Networking with fellow alumni has benefited me in my career by...

We are a really strong community of Alumni. 1 of my jobs was cracked with the help of our fellow alumnus who is our senior. I also got positive recommendations for various roles that I had applied for from a bunch of them.

Balancing work and personal life, and several effective strategies to achieve this equilibrium...

Effective time management is the key. Being able to prioritize and take time to effectively identify and cut down noise from your life is the key to leading a balanced life.

I stay updated on industry trends and developments by...

I read and attend Industry Connect events. I regularly meet our alumni in Delhi NCR. These efforts help me stay relevant.

#### A challenging situation in my career and how I navigated through it...

There was a time when I was trying to figure out the next step in my career and was trying out a few things. I got tremendous support from our Alumnus - Nitin Sethi (98), Aditya Singh (00), Sandeep Das (00), Carson Dalton (03), Rohan Chopra (03), Varaprasad (04), Adi Chakravarty (04), Amit Tripathi (04), Sahil Gupta (04) to name a few from many are the ones who stood with me and supported me with their guidance. Truly indebted to them for how they were there for me when I needed moral and emotional support.

Changes in the industry landscape since I entered and the way I have adapted to them...

We have seen a tremendous shift in the industry. In the 20 years, ours is that fortunate generation that has seen the evolution from Feature Phones to GenAI. On one end there has been an explosion in social media with tech being a part of our daily lives and on the other end, we are a witness to the rapid shifting of demand in skills ranging from telecallers to Coding for Web3 to Software Scientists in AI. Accepting the change and defining our boundaries help us adapt and adopt seamlessly. Specific resources or tools I recommend for career growth...

Spending time with people who inspire you, focusing on mental wellness, and being eager to learn and adapt to the change. In addition to that reading (in any form) should be integral to staying relevant and up to date. There are a wide variety of tools available. Pick up what clicks or vibes well with you.

If I could go back and give advice to my college self, I would tell myself...

The bonds that you make here are there to stay forever. Build stronger bonds with SIMSites as this is your tribe.

*My favourite quote is...* 

I love what Steve Jobs said and try to imbibe in my life - Stay Hungry Stay Foolish

# Satbir Singh Multani Year: 2002-2004



<u>Company - PwC</u> <u>Designation - Senior Manager</u>

My career since graduating from SIMS...

My career has grown in both dimensions - breadth and depth - since graduating from SIMS. From my first role as a functional consultant/ individual contributor to subsequent roles of functional lead, project manager, people manager, pre-sales manager, and industry lead, my career has taken me through all these roles, providing me extensive, in-depth experience in each role.

- Work hard, don't try to cut corners. There is no substitute for hard work. And whether you know it or not, your hard work will be noticed by your superiors.
- Be open to learning new skills. One cannot have a long, growing professional journey by sticking to just the skills one learned at the beginning.
- Appreciate the hard work of your juniors. Recognizing your team is as important as giving them financial rewards.
- Don't micromanage your team. Give them clear deliverables with the resources to complete them and then let them work.

#### Advice for recent graduates entering the workforce...

Whenever you get to a point in your career where you find yourself in a very comfortable place knowledge-wise and deliverables-wise, look for the next uncomfortable opportunity/ the next challenge that will make you learn something new/ something you haven't done till then.

Whenever you think of switching jobs, don't do it only because of financial increments of a few extra percent. Evaluate the work opportunities/ quality of projects, how much is the current firm investing in your growth via certifications/training, and most importantly the work environment/ culture in the firm, before making job change decisions.

#### My experience at SIMS in preparing me for my current career...

Yes, very much. SIMS made me interact and collaborate with 179 other people, whom I had never met before in my life. The various group case studies/ presentations required that I work with multiple, ever-changing groups of individuals, which is something that will happen throughout one's career. SIMS also taught me how to multi-task and manage multiple deliverables, which is a very key trait required in every business leader.

#### I have stayed connected with my alma mater since graduating by...

Apart from attending some of the Alumni meets and visiting the SIMS campus a few times, my biggest connection of late was when I contributed to arranging the 20-year reunion for our batch at the campus in December 2023. I will also be taking part in the GD-PI sessions for this coming new session.

A memorable experience or favourite class from my time at SIMS...

Two of my most memorable experiences at SIMS were the Bam presentations (conducted by the Late Mr Dilip Bam) and Hostel life, which helped forge friendships and gave me many happy memories too.

#### Networking with fellow alumni has benefited me in my career by...

Having a connection with fellow batchmates/ alumni gives you an idea of how their career growth has been and what new roles/ skills have they picked up. It acts as a sounding board for what role or level you should be at. These connections are also great sometimes for coming upon the next opportunity in your career.

Balancing work and personal life, and several effective strategies to achieve this equilibrium...

It would take this one step further, to work, life & and health balance. Take time for your family and your health daily by setting aside a minimum time outside daily work hours for both. Ensure you utilize your allocated leaves in the year to travel to new places or pursue your hobbies.

As you grow into leadership roles, remember you are responsible not only for your work-life balance but also that of your juniors'.

#### I stay updated on industry trends and developments by...

In my line of work, there are a lot of training, certifications, and courses that we need to take regularly to stay up to date with the latest developments and new product offerings.

#### A challenging situation in my career and how I navigated through it...

My entire career has been in the ERP space. The ERP landscape has changed dramatically over the last 20 years with old On-premise ERPs being fully replaced with Cloud-based ERP solutions. One of the key challenges I have faced in my career was to stay relevant and in-demand, by learning these new cloud ERPs and moving away from my initial, dying skill set of on-premise ERP. As I have mentioned above, it is very important to be open to learning new skills, if you want to have a long & and growth-oriented career.

Changes in the industry landscape since I entered and the way I have adapted to them...

As mentioned above, the traditional locally hosted ERP systems have been replaced by cloud-based SaaS ERP products, for which I had to revamp my product knowledge. Further in your role as a manager, it is no longer sufficient to perform project & people management. You also need to continue doing hands-on consulting to meet the high utilization targets. Thus, multitasking is ever more important now.

#### Specific resources or tools I recommend for career growth...

These would be industry I feel but specifically for IT consulting, make use of resources for both - increasing your product & and business knowledge and enhancing your consulting/client-facing skills. Also, take up any training opportunity your firm provides you to develop your leadership skills.

If I could go back and give advice to my college self, I would tell myself...

Interact more with people. Read business newspapers more. Participate more in extracurricular activities.

*My favourite quote is...* 

Jo Dar Gaya (from learning new skills/ taking new roles), Samjho Mar Gaya.

## Varaprasad Naidu Year: 2002-2004



<u>Company - FIS</u> <u>Designation - Senior HR Manager</u>

#### My career since graduating from SIMS...

I have been fortunate to be associated with great organizations, which provided me with wonderful opportunities to work on solving critical problems and provided a platform of immense learning. Working across multiple sectors widened my horizon and I have been in HR in all these while this has deepened my expertise.

- One has to be a humble student and keep learning and sharpening your skills.
- Always look out for ways to improve the process or outcomes.
- Learn to explore and experiment.
- Believe in yourself, and respond to situations and not react.
- Build a good network of friends and well-wishers
- Help your friends and colleagues

Advice for recent graduates entering the workforce...

- Be ready to learn and unlearn
- Always ready to go the extra mile for the project or objective at hand
- Work on your social skills
- Create short-term and long-term goals and track them
- Reach out to mentors and work towards self-development.

#### My experience at SIMS in preparing me for my current career...

There was never a dull moment at SIMS. SIMS gave us the freedom to learn in Our way choose our curriculum. Presentations, case studies, and discussions with students from various fields introduced me to different perspectives.

#### I have stayed connected with my alma mater since graduating by...

Apart from regular visits to campus for interaction with faculty and students, I have also been part of the SIMS selection process.

#### A memorable experience or favourite class from my time at SIMS...

I have many memorable experiences at SIMS, sharing one of them, during our study on performance management, we were assigned a task to reach out to companies to study their performance management system. We reached out to a few of the companies by cold calling, and most of them responded positively and helped in sharing their process.

#### Networking with fellow alumni has benefited me in my career by...

Alumni have been my lifelong friends, mentors, and mirrors. I am at ease in reaching out to fellow SIMSits as they are from similar backgrounds. Over the years the bond has only strengthened, they have been instrumental in my learning and personal and professional growth.

### Balancing work and personal life, and several effective strategies to achieve this equilibrium...

If you love your work then there won't be any issue of work-life balance. Apart from being a professional HR person, I also have hobbies that I actively pursue, like participating in marathons, trekking, photography, and reading. I believe in, Physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

#### I stay updated on industry trends and developments by...

Working on challenging/ New projects teaches you many lessons. I learn a lot from my Colleagues, mentors, and friends from the industry, interacting with industry experts, seminars, etc. I also read many management-related books which provide new insights.

#### A challenging situation in my career and how I navigated through it...

I had many challenging situations, sharing one, during my stint with one financial KPO, our client was moving one project to another vendor because of concentration risk. This impacted 100+ jobs in our company, we were asked to let go of these employees. I worked with the business head and presented a plan to retain these employees with the organization and absorb them, CEO approved the plan. We were able to place all the impacted employees within the organization without any layoffs, which boosted the morale of the employees also they rewarded the organization with a higher engagement score. Changes in the industry landscape since I entered and the way I have adapted to them...

The industry and people landscape has changed drastically since I entered SIMS. There has been considerable change in technology, government regulation people's preferences and consumer behaviour and all these are linked to each other. Encapsulating a few things helps in adopting change.

- Take the first mover advantage in technology by learning it.
- Use technology in your day-to-day work for automation etc.
- Understand and track the shifting behaviour of your customer/ stakeholder.
- Stay hungry and stay foolish.
- Work towards improving the ways of working through innovation.

Specific resources or tools I recommend for career growth...

- Study well at SIMS, and develop good friends at SIMS and work, who will be your friends and guide in future.
- Develop a network in your professional circle who have 5 to 10 years more experience than you.
- Be up-to-date with technology and industry trends.
- Use technology and innovation to solve business problems, don't hesitate to experiment.

If I could go back and give advice to my college self, I would tell myself...

I was the more academically inclined person at SIMS, I should have enjoyed it more.

#### *My favourite quote is...*

I believe I can fly; I believe I can touch the sky, I think about it every night and day spread my wings and fly high.

# SPECIAL MENTION



The Editorial and Media Relations Cell is extremely thankful to the Head, Placement Cell-Ms. Shweta Mehrotra, for supporting the book, The Shining Stars, Volume 5.

We thank you for helping us by providing us with the inspirational stories of our respected alumni. Without your support, the book would not have seen the light of the day.

~ Team Editorial and Media Relations

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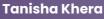


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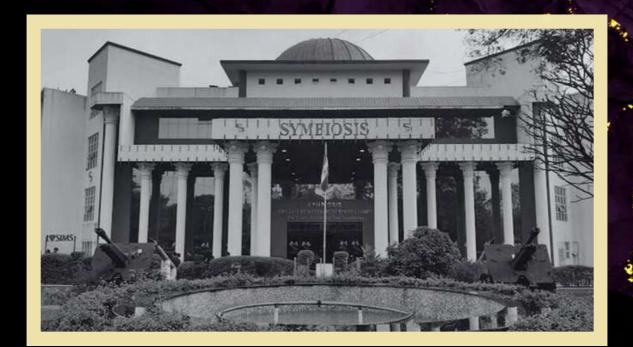


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