

## KERON PRASHAD

This past year there was a huge change for me. I changed my major to criminal justice and it has been fulfilling. Since changing my major, I completed an Internship at the drug court in Downtown Orlando. Advita, a records retrieval company who are hired by attorney offices to retrieve records for upcoming cases, also hired me. I also am currently in an internship for Seaworld that will go until the end of this year in December.

In my college life, my fraternity, Delta Epsilon Psi, also planned and hosted our southeast regional formal. This was a huge event that we were planning since fall of last year. We held it in the Castle Hotel and it was a huge event that a lot of our brothers thoroughly enjoyed the event. Throughout the year, we also planned and



Keron participated in the Holi event hosted by the University of Central Florida.

attended numerous volunteer events that I was in charge of as the Service chair for my fraternity. We planned Be the change, Drench a Delta, and Garam Garba. My Mandir also threw many cultural shows in which I was a part of and where I was able to promote Hinduism in a positive way.



Keron helped raise funds for JD RF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation) through "Drench-A-Delta".



As a member of Delta Epsilon Psi, Keron hosted "Garam Garba" at the Hindu Society of Central Florida.

## NEEL PATEL

This year I finished my junior year at Harvard – it's crazy how quickly the past three years have gone by! I've had a great balance of work, school, family, and friends this year, and can't wait to make the most of senior year.

I'm majoring in computer science, and have had the opportunity to take some really interesting graduate seminars over the past year. These seminars are usually 10-15 students and a professor discussing and researching a recent topic in computer science over the course of a semester. I really enjoyed the research, and this semester has made me realize that I'd love to go to grad school eventually. My favorite class, however, was Swahili – my dad's family is from Kenya, and I'd really like to go visit and use my new language skills someday.

Outside of classes, I've worked in a research group focused on making healthcare more efficient by improving communication between doctors and patients. Children with severe illnesses end up seeing dozens of specialists, and managing all of this is a nightmare for these families. The tool we've built lets families coordinate treatment and goals between all of their doctors, putting them on an easier path to recovery.

I've also been working on a startup for the past couple of years, and am hoping to



Neel performed at Ghungroo, Harvard's South Asian dance show.

work on it full time after graduation. We help businesses analyze their customer feedback – such as quickly finding trends and suggesting improvements based on 1000s of customer comments. I'm working on the company full time in New York for the summer, where I live on a healthy startup diet of \$1 pizza.

The highlight of my year was dancing in Ghungroo, our campus' annual South Asian dance show. Ghungroo has acts ranging from Bharatanatyam to Bollywood Fusion, but I danced in Raas. I'm a pretty awful dancer (to be generous), and this was my first time ever doing anything artistic, but I had a blast, and can't wait to dance again next year! I've stayed involved in the South Asian community at Harvard, and am proud to be part of the events we've held benefitting charitable causes in India and at home.

## ASHISH YAMDAGNI

Last year was my final year at the University of Miami. I had mentioned a project of mine – Dance Ke Deewane, an Inter-collegiate Bollywood-Fusion Dance Competition. The role of DKD was to promote Indian culture and support Project Sunshine, a non-profit organization that helps families who have children living with medical challenges. Logistically, the show was a success! We had teams as come in as close as the University of Florida and as far as MIT come to compete against each other. WE were able to lodge them, transport them, provide them with the necessities to be able to compete and display their talents to Miami.

The event ran smoothly with a rather new crew of students who were learning the ropes of event management. However, we weren't able to make as great an impact as I would have liked. While our audience number was in the early hundreds, we weren't able to raise enough money and break our expenses. Because of this, our second goal of donating to Project Sunshine was not met. However, this did not mean we would not support them! We volunteered with them at the hospital and helped promote their future events. There is more to learn from failure than there is from success.

My last semester was not spent in Miami, but in Prague. I joined UPrague, a study abroad program offered by the University of



*Ashish spent his last semester at a study abroad program based in Prague.*

Miami and traveled to Poland, Germany, Austria and Turkey. We learned mostly about history and art—it was breathtaking to see what the world has to offer when standing in front of buildings that are nearly 1000 years old. I was never fond of history, but physically being where the some of the greatest events before our time took place is something else. Standing on the grounds of Auschwitz, where millions of Jewish families were massacred during the Holocaust is enough to send chills down your spine. Gaining an appreciation for the worlds events, and living by myself thousands of miles away on a different continent certainly helped me grow more than another semester in Miami would have. For more stories from Prague, visit <https://ashishinprague.wordpress.com/> !

## NEHA BHASKAR

The University of Miami has consistently hosted several service projects both on and off campus involving the highly diverse community of Miami. From beach cleanups to days at the nursing home, UM offers a wide variety of opportunities for students to become involved in community service. This year I got the unique chance to take part in FunDay, one of UM's longest standing service days that brings several people with special needs to campus for a day full of activities. Getting to interact with both adults and children was a very touching experience and taught me how to appreciate the little things in life as much as they do. While this event invited citizens of the community, I was also able to join together with other UM students to directly serve the campus by helping clean up the Arboretum.

Finally as the year came to a close, I was very lucky to be able to combine both aspects of community and campus by captaining a team for UM's Relay for Life. This event was extremely memorable for me as I was able to work with school staff, students, and friends to put on a relay in honor of fighters, survivors, and caregivers. Seeing these people come together after going through times of happiness, strife, and pain was one of the most moving experiences of my life.

Relay for Life served as one of the highlights of my freshman year as the team I captained was able to raise nearly \$1400 making it the #5 team out of 47 participating at UM. However small the amount, every little bit takes us



*Neha volunteered in FunDay - UM's longest standing service day.*



*Along with other University of Miami students, Neha helped clean the Arboretum.*

one step closer to a cure. Having a personal connection to such a cause, I learned the value of strength and how it can truly get you through anything and everything life throws at you. I use these experiences as inspirations to continue serving the community and upholding the ideals of Generation Om during my time at the University of Miami and beyond.

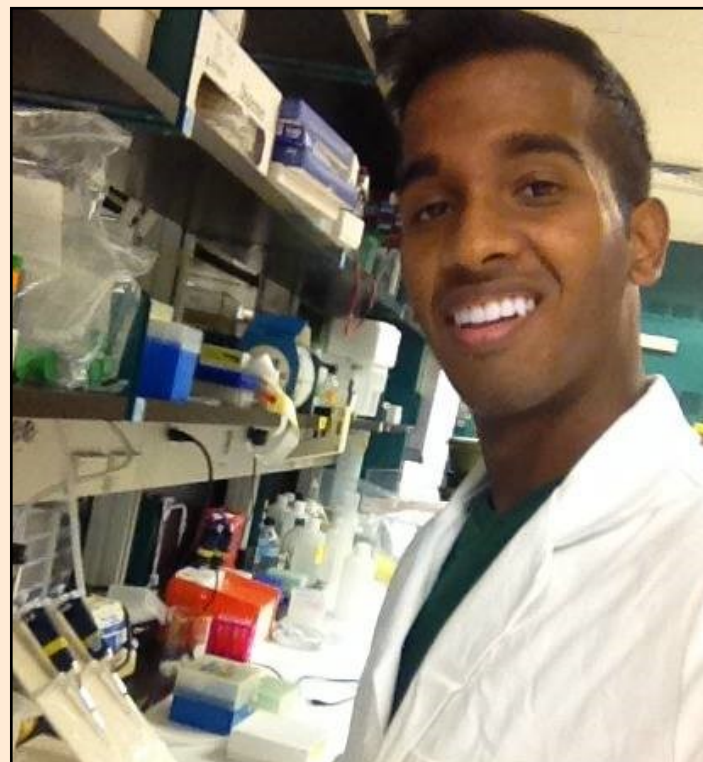
## ASHWIN BABUJI

This year I finished my third year at the University of Florida. I have taken many courses ranging from biochemistry to genetics, and even a python computer programming class, to help me on my way to ultimately get my major in biology and minor in business administration. Programming is also an important asset to have and will be very useful in the future. I have worked countless hours at Shands Hospital as a volunteer in the Pediatrics department, working with sick children and helping them move forward in their life. I work under Dream Team, a student run organization that works specifically with children affected with cardiovascular problems.

In my academic area of life, I continued my research, and recently was a co-author on a paper dealing with neuron activity. I am going to however stop this research come fall and continue my research in a more clinical aspect. Next term I plan to be a teaching assistant for Microbiology and hopefully help incoming students prepare for a long trip down the undergraduate track for medicine. I will also be taking courses such as animal physiology and studying for the MCAT. I also hope to take a medical mission trip soon and travel and help those who are in need. Finally, in my free time I am also captain of an intramural basketball team, a player of softball and spend time here relieving stress and having a good time. I am looking forward to my next and last semester at the University of Florida.



*Ashwin is a volunteer of Dream Team and works with children affected with cardiovascular issues.*



*Ashwin avidly takes part in research and has recently co-authored a paper dealing neural activity.*

## DIVYA DHULIPALA

This year has been the best year of my life. College is absolutely amazing, and I feel so fortunate to be at one that I consider home. At Duke University, I spent the past year working on three start-ups that have provided me with a new lens with which to perceive the world. Back-track Music is a good friend's music industry start-up company dedicated to the career development of unsigned artists and to creating artist-industry relations. Palette and Wanderwear are two companies that I cofounded. One is an art museum social media engagement application. The other is a social benefit lingerie company, for which we just won \$10,000 in start-up funding from Duke University; each purchase from our company funds the donation of one package of brand new, basic undergarments to homeless shelters, as these are some of shelters' least donated and most direly-needed items.

I served my dorm as Vice President of Southgate Hall and my entire class as a representative for East Campus Council. I got my first job doing marketing, social media, and graphic design work for the Center for Leadership Development and Social Action. I've gone to Swadhyay Yuva Kendra meetings every week. I've recorded music at Duke University's student-run record label and started to sink my teeth into the media and entertainment industry, all while taking exceptionally thought-provoking classes with brilliant professors. I am currently under-



*Divya participated in a Clean Up of Durham Central Park.*



*Divya participated in the freshmen dance for Awaaz - Duke's largest student-run production of the year.*

taking an eight-week community service project in Detroit to help revitalize this beautiful city through social entrepreneurship. I'm slowly trying to piece together all my passions in an effort to find my calling, or create it, if it doesn't exist already. Most importantly, I've made myself a family and a home at Duke, and I'm loving every minute of this crazy adventure.

## RUCHI JAHAGIRDAR

Even though this was my fourth and final year at Caltech, I still managed to have new experiences. This past term, a group of my closest friends and I participated in the annual OASIS (Organization of the Associated Students of the Indian Subcontinent) show, even though many of them were not affiliated with OASIS at all. We performed a fashion show, displaying the different styles of India with both dress and dance. My friend and I represented Punjab by wearing a traditional Patiala salwar and dancing to a bhangra remix. At the end of the show, all of the pairs came together and danced to the Lungi song. It was a great experience for everyone, as we all could not only hang out and have fun learning the dances, but also learn about the extreme diversity in India.

This past term also featured Ditch Day, a Caltech tradition where seniors put together a day filled with puzzles and activities to entertain the underclassmen. Ditch Day started out as a day where underclassmen would try to get back at the seniors who didn't have much work by breaking into their rooms and pranking them. In order to defend against the underclassmen, seniors would put stacks of objects in front of their door. This tradition changed when one senior told the underclassmen that instead of pranking his room, they could solve puzzles and play games that he created with a promise of a prize at the end. Eventually, all



*As part of a Caltech tradition, Ruchi participated in Ditch Day.*



*Ruchi's graduated from Caltech this spring!*

the seniors caught on and the deans designated Ditch Day a class-free holiday. Since then, seniors create "stacks" to entertain the underclassmen for this one day a year. Our stack was themed "The Hobbit" and featured giant hamster balls and scavenger hunts. At the end of the day, the underclassmen were able to forge their own rings and learned medieval martial arts!

## KRISHNAN SETHUMADHAVAN

My sophomore year in college has really been a year of growth. I say this because during one's freshman year, you really still are trying to find where you fit in when it comes to friends, classes, majors, and clubs. After freshman year, you begin to put your roots down and begin being able to grow yourself as a person in whatever capacity you would like. For me, this has mainly taken the form of Model United Nations, which I have been involved with since high school. During my freshman year, I joined the International Affairs Association at the University of Pennsylvania and began working on the Ivy League Model United Nations Conference, which hosts nearly 3000 high schoolers in downtown Philadelphia. A few months ago, I was elected the Secretary-General (President) of this conference by my peers and have had the privilege of running it ever since. This has been an incredible responsibility and has really taught me what it means to be a "leader" in every sense of the word.

I also joined a fraternity, Phi Kappa Psi, late in my freshman year and have enjoyed every moment of that experience as well. I was recently elected our fraternity's community service chair and have been organizing philanthropic events and community service events for the organization. I have made some of my best friends in this fraternity so far and it is a community I look forward to continuing my involvement in. I have also remained actively participating in Penn Weekend Service, a club which launches a



*Krishnan and members of his fraternity are pictured cooking brunch for recipients of organ transplants in Penn.*

different community service activity every weekend and have really enjoyed the variety of events that we put on as a club and the difference we can make in the lives of the residents of Philadelphia.

I also recognized my cultural heritage as being incredibly important to my personal well-being and identity in college and so I joined the Hindu Student Council, where I helped to organize Penn's Holi Festival and weekly pujas. I also joined the Pan-Asian American Community House, where I brought a Hindu-American actor, Rajiv Surendra (better known for playing Kevin G. in Mean Girls) to give a talk – which was incredibly fun. All in all, this year has been enriching and enlightening and I hope that the rest of my years in college will be the same way with the help of Generation OM.

## KARUNYA TOTA

It seems unbelievable that my freshman year at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign (UIUC) flew by so quickly. I can still clearly remember my family's thousand-mile road trip in a packed mini van to a quiet town in the middle of southern Illinois. I can even recall the blithering hot day of freshman orientation and the late night runs with my suitemates to find our classes the day before the start of our college lives.

Recently, I completed my first year as a computer Science major in the College of Engineering. From the intellectually stimulating classes to its bright enthusiastic professors, the University of Illinois has provided me with a cheerful and thought-provoking educational environment. Moreover, the peaceful location and diversity of the campus has allowed me to fully concentrate on my studies and build values of leadership and friendship throughout time.

Some of the organizations that I found most welcoming include WCS (Women in Computer Science), AAA (Asian American Association), and ACM (Association of Computing Machinery). WCS has given me the opportunity to connect with a community of strong aspiring women in technology. Whether I am



*Karunya attended the Spring Awards Banquet for the Women in Computer Science (WCS) organization.*

speeding through resume sessions or contributing to Lean In discussions developed by Sheryl Sandberg, I have become more passionate about encouraging young girls to follow their dreams by pursuing careers in STEM. Furthermore, AAA has given me a family of friends and ACM has strengthened my skills in web development and provided me with opportunities of leadership through this year's upcoming Reflections|Projections (one of the nation's renowned student-run conferences in technology).

As for this summer, I am currently an Undergraduate Researcher at UCF's Center for Research in Computer Vision. Overall, I am looking forward to learning much from this experience and getting more involved on my campus as a sophomore this upcoming semester in the fall.

## SOHANI KASIREDDY

From the very first day as a nervous freshman to the bittersweet goodbyes during graduation, college has been a truly enriching experience. It has allowed me to grow as an individual by giving me the opportunity to discover and develop upon my interests. As a freshman, I became involved with the Center for Leadership and Service (CLS) and quickly realized my passion for mentoring and working with children. This led me to become involved with Project MASCOT, a service based organization under the CLS, aimed at tutoring under-privileged elementary school age children in Gainesville. I continued my service to this organization throughout my time at the University of Florida and also served on the executive board.

As a volunteer with Shands Hospital, I was able to shadow and assist physicians and various other medical professionals in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and ER. The fast-paced and unpredictable nature of the ER immediately captivated me. During my time in the ER, I also worked with patients suffering from various neurological deficits. This experience bolstered my interest in neurology and eventually led to my decision of pursuing a degree in Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience! I also had the humbling opportunity of working with the underserved and uninsured population as a volunteer at Rahma clinic and Helping Hands clinic. Interacting with patients from all walks of life was truly an eye-opening experience.



*Sohani volunteers with Project MASCOT by mentoring elementary school age children in Gainesville.*



*Sohani graduated from the University of Florida this spring!*

## PEARLY PANDYA

**M**oving to Midtown Atlanta was definitely a thrilling journey, as I started to attend Georgia Tech. It was difficult to learn to start living by myself and everything around me was new – the new responsibilities, new studying techniques, as well as new experiences, such as flying alone and finding my way around the city. However, I made many new friendships, met several inspiring professors and faculty members.

I joined various organizations and was offered leadership positions in editorials, including Marketing Manager of the college yearbook Blueprint as well as Layout Editor and Cartoonist for the Biomedical Engineering monthly magazine Pioneer. It was exciting to find ways to continue my publicity passions and artistic interests at a technical university, and I am once again able to find a balance between art and engineering. I also started assisting in Space Medicine research on the gravitational effects on the optic nerve.

As a volunteer for the Engineering World Health organization, I was able to test and repair medical devices to be delivered to those in need in developing countries. Every month, we would visit MedShare in Decatur, Georgia and troubleshoot and repair medical devices that are donated by local hospitals. We would also have repair workshops where MedShare professionals would teach us how to repair systems, such as an EKG. My Biomedical Engineering group and I repaired electrosurgical units that would be supplied to hospitals in Uganda. It was great to be able to use my knowledge and engineering skills to serve others and help for a greater cause.

Furthermore, I joined India Club and was elected as a Freshman Representative for the club's executive board. Through this organization, I have been able to



*Pearly and members of the Biomedical Engineering (BME) group present their medical device project.*

connect with a close knit group of Tech students who share my desire to preserve our Indian culture and give back to the Indian community. We organized several events on Tech's campus: Cricket Tournament, Garba, Diwali, India Day, and Holi Show. I led the Marketing Team for this year's Holi Show "Bahara," which required promoting ticket sales as well as designing the theme of the show.

Through India Club, I was also able to help start service projects, such as Tiffin/Grocery service and Tutoring service. The Tiffin Service brings fresh, healthy Indian food to campus; I was able to help lead the initiative to design the online ordering process as well as the delivering the food to Tech students. We also created a program through which students can create study groups and tutoring sessions within India Club. It was exciting to be able to help the Georgia Tech Indian community by starting unique and innovative projects on campus!