

## **Internship Student Profile**

**Vignesh Bhat**

### **Asha The Hope: An organization that lives up to its name.**

With the number of days I had left to look for an internship drawing to a close, I was once again riddled with my usual practice of procrastination. Without further ado, I started rolling out many a mail, and a message, to many a organisation and contacts but to no avail. I came across Asha The Hope on the same day, and the words “Counselling centre” were all it took to reel me in. I quickly sent Ms. Pranjul a message along with my resume and hoped for the best, and thankfully enough I did get a reply back from her soon! A call was scheduled, and I was ecstatic! I had a few other replies from other organisations/NGOs by then, but I decided to keep them all at bay since ATH was something that drew me towards itself.

After a call with Ms. Pranjul briefing about ATH’s objectives and mission, the other interested people for the role of an intern and I had a group discussion call which was followed by a Q&A session! I then visited the office for the first time wherein I wrote a detailed subjective career counselling assessment test and had a quick word with our mentor- Ms. Pranjul, wherein I was asked to come on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May.

So that’s where my journey began- A journey filled with learning, fun, practical application, laughs and a few shortcomings that we all dealt with professionally. The journey was planned out by Ms. Pranjul in the form of a module and we all came up with an action plan that we would carry out over the course of our internship. This action plan comprised short-term and

long-term goals in a systematic way to make sure we were working on interesting things for thirty days straight! I fell in love with the organisation already, since planning, organising and working things out are the things I love to do most, and Pranjul ma'am had done so much planning and brainstorming to come up with the action plan for us beforehand! A commitment we rarely get to see these days.

I guess what helped me be comfortable with myself, and so at ease, was that I was doing this internship with four other classmates of mine; but now that I look back, I can affirm that even if this was not the case, the very friendly, open-to-communicate environment that ATH is cloaked with, would have made me feel the same comfort regardless of the presence of my friends. The action plan guided our work everyday and allowed us some room to have fun as well, lunchtime was not fixed, and the atmosphere was so very ambient. Yet, the urge to work was also around us since the employees of ATH were our models balancing work and fun, and thankfully so.

This journey, like I termed it earlier, was nothing but an ocean of knowledge that awaited our access. This access to knowledge was only made possible by our mentor who was with us in every step although she had a lot on her plate already, tirelessly helping us grow. Her and other pillar-like-support offering individuals- Dr Asha herself, Mr. Girish, or Dr. Jyothi and Ms. Swathi never failed us by always being there for our group, breaking away the stereotype of how interns are treated at an organisation.

Our mentor kicked off the learning process right on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May, wherein we got to have a group discussion on psychology, and experience hypnotherapy as well! I reaped so many benefits through ATH, and I will forever be thankful. My perspective on life itself has

transformed through the teachings by our mentor. The way I view life now explains a ton of behavioural processes I have carried out in the past, and can also justify the behaviour of a few of my friends. This gives me a strong rush of peace. "Rush" and "peace" are terms that probably do not go hand in hand, but if only you could learn what Ms. Pranjul preached to us one fine day, you would believe in this implausible oxymoron as well! This new perspective not only has helped me, but like mentioned already, has helped me understand others better. This better understanding has in turn positively influenced my counselling style in a practical, real life world which others have benefited from as well, something I will touch upon later.

Other catalysts like the basic counselling skills and art therapy sessions by Swathi ma'am, "Know Thyself" sessions by Jyothi ma'am coupled with the daily self introspection that Pranjul ma'am asked us to do, Asha mam imparting knowledge on career counselling, counselling and the inspiration we drew from her on life as a whole, and Girish sir motivating us every now and then- all of it came together when I had to sit down and counsel the tenth graders of Achieve school of Education- an opportunity that was given to us by ATH. An opportunity to help students figure out what they want from their education and career choices. Without the teachings by the hard working individuals at ATH, I would have a nervous, scrawny outlook whilst facing the students of ASE. Thanks to the knowledgeable sessions I attended in ATH, I was able to help the students not just in career aspects, but for many of them- their personal aspects as well. I did as I was taught and added a little of my mix to it, which proved to be very successful in the one on one sessions we had with the students of ASE!

Dr. Asha is a visionary with whom I fortunately had many sessions with. She is a remarkable individual who any layman can draw inspiration from, and imbibe practical knowledge that is beyond the reaches of books and texts! A simple seemingly surface level

conversation with her would translate to a vast amount of knowledge when reviewed deeply in retrospection!

With the little 30 day period of time I have spent with this organisation, which by the way flew in front of me so fast, I have seen some personal growth. Of course it is not like I am a completely transformed individual, for the time period of 30 days is almost an impossible feat to achieve, but I do see some growth and a sown seed that implicitly is making me continue on this journey of self-growth, which I owe to Ms. Pranjul. There were times when I slacked off or did a task wrong- from the pre counselling administration in career counselling to common mistakes in Quora answer writing/ editing/ article writing and she was there to correct me, not the correction that I had gotten accustomed to, but the kind of correction that made me want to strive for better and the best versions of myself, and now that the full-time internship has come to an end, those words continue to stay with me and continue to drive me, which I deem the best learning. A journey filled with learning, fun, practical application and laughs, a journey that I would love to continue full time if only college allowed me to.

### ***Feedback***

***Asha the Hope is a space that is cloaked with a positive aura and energy. The employees are very friendly and play a huge part in building the welcoming nature that the organization holds! Everyone who I have met here is modest, easy to talk to and communicate with, and are very down-to-Earth as well! As an intern, there was not a single day when I went back home with disappointment/dissatisfaction. The organization breaks all stereotypes of how interns are treated in workplaces, as it strives to hold a nurturing environment for the interns which focuses on building the academic, and personal growth along with a boost of practical***

*knowledge of each intern making sure no one is left out, and I along with the other interns at ATH, were in the safe hands of Ms. Pranjul Somani, which made the entire experience of a full time in-office internship a memorable and a fruitful one!*

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*All in all, a great experience as an intern at ATH, breaking the bounds of what other internships had to offer, with lots of learning, application of the knowledge picked up, and a lot of fun as well! A thorough workplace environment that many organizations seem to lack!*