

## NSF APNA Reflection Sweta Srinivasan

When I found out I could go to India and teach the kids there a subject I was interested in, I immediately agreed. One of my main reasons, other than my passion for science fair, for doing this workshop was to work on my speaking skills. I have always been a shy and quiet person, so I wanted to take this opportunity to not only teach one of my passion's, but to also improve myself and gain some speaking skills. My twin sister Divya and I have been participating in the science fair since 4<sup>th</sup> grade and immediately thought of the idea to teach the kids our favorite science fair project, "How Germs Spread". Divya and I spent time collecting materials and making materials to present to the kids in the school in India.



When we arrived to the school on the first day, I was very nervous. We would be teaching a 4-day workshop at the "Taralabalu Education Centre, Mysuru" for the 8<sup>th</sup> standard. There were 56 kids in the class. Everyone was very welcoming. The students were very attentive and very engaged in the lessons. We taught them the importance of handwashing and the effects if they didn't wash their hands.





On the first day of the workshop, we gave them an introduction of ourselves and an introduction of the project. We also asked some guiding questions to get them thinking about what they were going to learn and give them an understanding of the experiment they would be taking part in the next day. On the second day, we reviewed how diseases were spread and how to correctly wash your hands. We then explained the experiment. Then, we conducted the experiment. We chose 20 volunteers, 10 girls and 10 boys. They would all use a lotion called 'glo germs' which would represent germs on their hands. 10 of them would wash their hands using only water and the other 10 using soap and the proper hand washing technique we taught them. Then we compared the 2 groups and they saw how much of an effect using soap and the correct hand washing procedure had on getting rid of germs. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, we reviewed what we learned the previous 2 days and gave them a test. On the last day, we handed out certificates.



Other than from teaching them about science, I learned many new things from teaching at the school. Something I thought was interesting was how interested they were in the education system here in the U.S. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the workshop, after their school ended, all of them asked Divya and I many questions about the classes we had, about our tests and quizzes, the timings of school, etc. It was really fun engaging with all of them. I really enjoyed it a lot. It showed to me that they were comfortable with Divya and I as their teachers. Also, the way the school was structured and the classroom structure was very different from what we have here in the U.S. When we walked into the classroom, everyone stood up and welcomed us. I found this

quite interesting because they act more formal in their classroom, however here in America, we have more freedom in the classroom. Something else I found quite interesting was that they had some trouble understanding us due to our American accents. Since my parents and many people I know have Indian accents, it was very easy for me to understand everyone. Since they don't have exposure to American accents, the students had some trouble getting used to it, but by the end, they were comfortable with our accents.

Overall, I had such an amazing experience from doing this workshop. I had never done this before and I am so glad I took the opportunity to do so. I was very nervous the first day, but by the 2<sup>nd</sup> day I warmed up to the class because everyone was very welcoming. I loved teaching the students something I was very passionate about and along the way, my speaking skills improved. I learned many new things about It was a very memorable experience and I will definitely be doing this again!

