

Earlier this year, I met Dr. Ratnam Chitturi when he came to Tucson, AZ to discuss NSF with the current volunteers here. I asked him about any opportunities to volunteer in India, because my parents had planned a trip to India this summer. He told me about the APNA program, and I was immediately interested. After contacting the people running the APNA program and submitting my application, I asked my uncle, who lives in Hyderabad, to look for possible schools I could volunteer at. He chose a government high school in Ameerpet, and finalized the dates for my second to last week in India.



I volunteered at the school for 5 days, and conducted a workshop in Spelling/Vocabulary Bee. The first 4 days, I explained the rules, as well as some helpful tips to understand the English language. It was a little difficult to get the message across,

because not everyone could understand my English, especially with my accent. However, thanks to my knowledge of Telugu, I was able to effectively communicate with the students. On the fifth

day, I conducted a competition for the students and gave them all certificates and small prizes.



This experience gave me an insight to how we might take education for granted, but it is so valuable to so many people out there in the world. The classroom I taught in was very small, maybe the size of half a classroom at a regular school here in America. However, 70 8th grade students crammed together to fit in the classroom

so they can learn. The classroom did not have a proper door, nor did it have a ceiling fan, much



less an AC. The lighting that was available came from the sun. There were no glass windows, only an iron railing to separate the classroom from the dirt field outside of it.

The reason this experience was so life-changing for me is because we take the smallest things in life for granted, and we don't realize that people are happy even without any of these things, and are able to be as successful as anyone else in the world. It isn't what we have that defines, it's what we learn from our experiences.



I would like to thank everyone at the NSF APNA program, the Principal of the school, Mrs. Parameshwaramma, as well as Vice Principal Mrs. Uma Devi, for allowing me to have this opportunity. I would like to thank my uncle and my parents for organizing this for me and communicating with the school so that everything went as planned. I truly had a lot of fun doing this, and I hope to do it every time I go to India from now.



With Vice Principal Mrs. Uma Devi