

through and through. At Microsoft, where she worked most recently, she was named one of 15 Fast Track employees with potential to be future company leaders. At UIUC,

In theory, women should find few obstacles in pursuing a career in academia where they are more sheltered from external social and political stigma. Yet it remains a concern that women

M.Sc(Math), M.Tech(CS), and Ph.D.(CS) degrees from BITS, Pilani. Dr Jyothi Mathur was an Assistant Lecturer and later a Research Associate at BITS. She was awarded the Fulbright

## Discrimination in Academia?

- Women represent 41% of the nearly 1 million faculty members in the U.S.
- In 2-year institutions, women account for 42% of full professors.
- In 4-year liberal arts colleges, women account for 23% of full professors.
- In research universities, women account for 17% of full professors.
- For each year after securing a tenure-track job, male assistant professors are 23% more likely to earn tenure.
- For each year after earning tenure, male professors are 35% more likely to be named full professors.

\* Source: University of Chicago

while pursuing her Masters in Computer Science, she won the C W Gear outstanding graduate award, and her thesis was nominated for the David J Kuck outstanding award. At Microsoft, Prasanna was responsible for co-designing two patented technologies, and was among only 5 Siebel Scholars, selected for academic excellence and leadership. Now what did we tell you in the beginning!

Each story inspires in different ways, and promises more achievement in the future. And then there are some more who are just making a foray into the Corporate World, like **Indira Raman** who started with Colgate Palmolive in Sales and Marketing, having topped the Business Management Program at XLRI, and **Sushma Vasudevan**, an MMS graduate from BITS who is with Boston Consulting Group now after a successful two years at IIM Kolkata.

**Academia**

continue to face the glass ceiling syndrome, have limited networking due to the lack of an “old girls club” and face inadequate legislation to empower the working mother.

In developing countries, women face increased challenges, where higher education is limited and sometimes restricted to women depending on the socio-religious fabric of that country. Economic and family constraints many times limit women from dreaming beyond their own borders to pursue their dreams.

In spite of the challenges faced and the sad but true fact on discrimination, women have progressed in the academic profession at various levels accounting for many success stories.

**Dr. Jyothi Mathur** is currently the Educational Programs Coordinator for Interdisciplinary Computational Graduate Specializations at Purdue University. She joined BITS, Pilani in 1971. She has her B.Sc,

Fellowship in 1985 and was a post doctoral research at the Georgia Institute of Technology. From 1987 to 1992, she was a Visiting faculty, Computer Science Department at Purdue University. She now lives in West Lafayette (USA) with her husband who is a BITS alumnus. Dr. Jyothi Mathur teaches Sitar at the studio she established in 2002. She is very involved with her local community and has had several Sitar recitals for fundraising. **Dr. Reena Aggarwal** (nee Garg) is currently a Visiting



Dr. Jyothi Mathur

Professor of Finance in Sloan School of Management, MIT and Stallkamp Faculty Fellow and Professor of Finance, Georgetown University. She joined BITS in 1974 for her MMS. She earned her PhD in Finance from University of Maryland. She was the Interim Dean of the McDonough School of Business for 2004-2005. As a Fulbright Scholar in Brazil and Chile, she examined stock markets and privatization programs. Dr. Aggarwal was named in the "Outstanding Faculty" article in the Business Week Guide to the Best Business Schools.



Dr. Monica Valluri

obtained her PhD from Purdue University in 1999.

**Swarnalatha Ashok** is currently an Associate at the Institute of Systems Science of the National University of Singapore (Singapore). She earned her MSc Tech. degree in Computer Science from BITS, Pilani. Prior to joining ISS, she was managing network management (cellular networks) software development projects at the Motorola Software Centre, Singapore.

**Dr Padmini Srinivasan** is a Professor at The University of Iowa (Iowa City, USA). She graduated from BITS in 1978 with a Master's in Biological Sciences. She obtained her PhD in Information Studies from Syracuse University in 1985. She is a Professor at the School of Library & Information Science & the Department of Management Sciences at The University of Iowa. Her research interests are text mining, web mining, topical crawlers, text categorization, information



Dr. Ritu Lohtia

**Dr. Lata Narayanan** is currently an Associate Professor in the Computer Science Department and Undergraduate Program Director at Concordia University (Montreal, Canada). Her research interests are Mobile computing, WDM networks, algorithms for routing on distributed networks and parallel algorithms and computation. She has over 13 journal publications and over 25 conference publications.



Dr. Neelam Gupta

**Dr. Ritu Lohtia** is Associate Professor of Marketing at Georgia State University (Atlanta, USA). She graduated in 1986 with a Master's in Management Studies from BITS, Pilani. In 1991, she earned her PhD from University of Maryland in Business Administration. Dr. Lohtia was the Highly Commended Winner in 1976 for the article published in the *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*. In 1994 she was the second runner-up for the Best Article published in the *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*.

**Dr. Neelam Gupta** is currently an Assistant Professor in the Computer Science Department at the University of Arizona (Tucson, USA). She graduated from BITS in 1986. She



Swarnalatha Ashok

filtering, formal models for information retrieval (with special emphasis on biomedical applications).

**Dr. Monica Valluri** is the Assistant Director of Kavli

Institute for Cosmological Physics and Senior Research Associate at the Department of Astronomy & Astrophysics in The University of Chicago (Chicago, USA). She graduated from BITS in 1987 with her Masters in Physics and obtained her PhD in Astrophysics from IIS, Bangalore in 1993. She was a Visiting Professor in University of La Plata, Argentina in 1999 and Visiting Scientist in University of Marseilles, France in 2000. From 1999 to 2001 she was an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Chicago.

## Community & Public Service

In today's world, most of us who constitute the well-educated, highly qualified niche make that contribution towards social causes. Then, to most of us, this contribution equals monetary donations or a few hours of voluntary service outside of work. Then to others, it is their calling; their choice of profession; a mainstream activity- primarily, a way of life.

This section portrays the lives of those steeped in community welfare and Administrative



Kalpana Nayak

services. It is a tribute to these

fine women who have applied themselves to fields that perhaps come closest to making a real difference.

Each is a shining example of grit, sincerity and commitment to cause. We begin with

the illustrious **Kalpana Nayak** ('90 Comp Science) who is the Commandant of the first all-women battalion of TN police profiled in NewsToday. Recently, J Jayalalithaa, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu commissioned India's first All Women Police Battalion, led by Kalpana Nayak. Challenges on her job include providing commando training to over 1000 women police officers in TN. Unique in spirit and deed.

**Dr. Jasveen (Dhillon) Jairath** has charted a new course from the very beginning. A EEE graduate (1967-72), Jasveen dabbled in Dramatics and public speaking at BITS. She then followed that up with a

Doctorate in Economics and switched to the social services line. She is currently the Regional Coordinator of CapNet South Asia which is an international network for capacity building in integrated water resources management. Jasveen's interests lie in research, advocacy and networking in water resource development. Her message for us is simple and we suspect, straight



Anita Balasubramanian

from the heart. "Escape from narrow careerism and be adventurous", she says. While there are women who work in the public service or with NGOs and other development oriented organizations, there are several who break new grounds in education periodically. **Smita A.** has been working for the past 17 years in the field of social development, of which 12 years have been spent in elementary education. She has also worked on two major UEE programs in the country - Lok Jumbish in Rajasthan and District Primary Education Program (DPEP), a national program covering 18 states. Smita is currently the Director of Education Programs at the American India Foundation, New Delhi.

So does **Chandra Anil**, who as joint coordinator of AID in Chennai specializes in innovative educational methods to improve the effectiveness of education for primary and middle school children. Chandra, who graduated from BITS in 1995, says some young volunteers working on the course of India's development inspired her when she was still an engineer in electronic design.