

## **Shivani Gupta (Computer Science '19)**

Q Hey Shivani thanks for allowing us to interview you! Can you tell us a bit about yourself and your role on Founders?

A. Yeah I joined Founders my sophomore year of college while I studied Computer Science in the College Of Engineering. There never were pre-defined teams as there are today and I was able to direct 54 back when it was in the basement of Grainger (2016), the startup fair with Ryan Chen (2017), and co-direct 54 with Matt Rastovac (2017). I'm currently working as a software developer at Capital One in San Francisco!

Q What made you interested in event organization?

A. I noticed that there was such a rich history on campus with entrepreneurship (Paypal and Paypal), and I could definitely see that entrepreneurial spirit reflected on campus. I wanted to contribute to providing a space for people to solve problems and start their own companies!

Q What's one specific memory really stood out to you?

A. In 2016 we had \$800 through sponsorships for 54. I realized I could utilize my connections through previous internships and cold-calling, so I was able to increase the budget to \$4,000 in 2017!

Q Do you have any advice for Shannon and Meraal for 54 (online)?

A. In the case that 54 is moved virtually, I think it can be a blessing in a disguise. They don't need to worry about providing food and snacks or any similar logistics. It might even be easier to get speakers and mentors over Zoom. Reprioritize the different aspects of the event to focus on virtual networking and it could be better in a different way!

Q What did you learn from Founders?

A. To be more confident as a leader. I was always the shy kid in the back of the room, not one to lead an event. I think that learning to network with others was invaluable, and you never know where it might take you. Because of an alumni who helped out at Forge, I was able to intern at deepscale.ai which was recently acquired by Tesla.

Q Any advice for current Founders members?

A. Introduce yourself to those people even if you are on the sidelines. Think about how what you're doing in the present is going to tie into your long-term goals. Don't be afraid of rejection, and think about using the Sandwich method for any type of criticism.