

Growing up in Nepal as a first-generation college student within a business-oriented family, I navigated considerable challenges in pursuit of higher education. The socio-economic barriers and limited educational infrastructure posed significant hurdles in my homeland. Despite the presence of talented and passionate students, the lack of opportunities hindered their growth and global recognition. Coming from a family where both parents were entrepreneurs managing their businesses, I drew inspiration from their resilience and determination amid demanding schedules. Both my parents, especially my father, faced economic hardships during their upbringing, preventing them from pursuing higher education. Nevertheless, my father strongly supports my educational endeavors, recognizing the profound value of gaining a deeper understanding of the world through learning.

Reflecting on my journey, my foundational values were nurtured during my pursuit of representing Nepal in the under-19 international school cricket league—a goal I ultimately achieved. This experience imparted invaluable lessons in hard work, dedication, and the significance of collaborative efforts for a greater purpose. These principles have since become integral to my character, seamlessly blending with my fervor for technology and academic pursuits. Additionally, as a first-generation college student, I grappled with a lack of guidance and an educational environment conducive to my growth during my formative years. This challenge propelled me to work harder and create a conducive learning atmosphere, where I sought advice from academic peers and experimented with various study methods. My determination paid off when I secured the second-highest score nationally in the 12th standard and earned a merit-based full-ride scholarship for my undergraduate degree in India.

Despite its geographic proximity to Nepal, India boasts distinct cultural and societal nuances. To navigate this shift, I played a pivotal role in a university robotics team, leading a prototype project to a top-15 finish among 150+ competitors. My collaboration with esteemed professors resulted in receiving the Best Presentation and Project Awards. These experiences reinforced my belief in the power of determination to foster excellence. Beyond my undergraduate curriculum, I pursued online courses in Data Structures, Algorithms, and Computational Motion Planning. To further enhance my expertise, I worked as a software engineer in a startup founded by PhD graduates and UCB professors. This valuable experience significantly sharpened my computer science skills and intensified my pursuit of a graduate degree in robotics from CMU's School of Computer Science.

As a CMU international student, I've embraced the role of a researcher, closely collaborating with distinguished professors who consistently bring out my best. Their mentorship has deepened my understanding of the profound impact experts engaged in groundbreaking research can have on robotics and AI. Inspired by these minds and my startup founders with PhDs, I've gained a deeper appreciation for the significance of advanced degrees in driving industry innovation. Leveraging my interdisciplinary background, I'm committed to fostering collaborative learning environments in my research, where individuals can harness collective strengths for excellence. This aligns perfectly with my aspiration to significantly contribute to the field, making me a strong candidate for the PhD program.