

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter of recommendation to champion Aastha Upadhyay. Aastha joined Preemadonna as a Summer 2017 intern, between her Sophomore and Junior years in high school. She reported directly to me, the CEO of Preemadonna. Preemadonna is a technology startup located in Silicon Valley - we build on demand printing products and mobile platforms with a focus on girls and women. Our first product is Nailbot - the smartphone nail art printer! Aastha learned about Preemadonna from her older sister, Ankita, and asked to join the team. As a reference, Ankita is four years older than Aastha and was a rising Junior in college. I reluctantly agreed, not knowing what to expect.

From the first day Aastha entered our startup office, I was blown away by her drive, unassuming leadership ability, and intelligence. Aastha was the lead coder of a stealthy initiative we were experimenting - teaching other girls how to code using nail art. Aastha immediately had several ideas as to how to design and code the website, but first listened to the entire team (most of whom were at least four years older than her with significantly more professional and academic experience). Aastha then shared her perspective while incorporating and acknowledging the input of other team members.

There are countless examples of Aastha leading the technical intern team at Preemadonna - from initiating the wireframing process to debugging the project website. Other interns frequently went to her for guidance and mentorship, and she knows how to lead a team while still contributing and driving technical initiatives forward. She even presented her team's summer project to the corporate team at Adobe with a live (SUCCESSFUL!) demo.

Aastha is also curious about areas that she did not necessarily have technical experience in - as she believes it will make her a stronger computer scientist. For example, Aastha took a keen interest in the design and user experience planning of the "Nail the Code" summer project. She actively listened to a company mentor and adjusted her technical implementation to take user feedback into account for a quick iteration. (She even lead some of the beta testing sessions!) These types of lessons are often learned much later in life, but Aastha is flexible, humble and has a deep desire to achieve and build meaningful technology.

My only request to Aastha and your institution is to recognize Aastha's talent and push her to even greater aspirations. I strongly urge this admissions committee to consider Aastha's application for admission. She will build technology that will change the lives of the next generation, and I can't wait to see what Aastha does next. I can assure you it will be significant and you will want to have a front row seat to the journey. I'm grateful that Aastha has let me be a part of her story.

Best,

Pree Walia

Preemadonna CEO & Founder

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