

I was born and brought up in India, a country well-known for its diversity across many facets. Growing up in India and then traveling to the US for graduate school, I've had many experiences which have distilled in me the importance of being in a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment and strengthened my commitment towards promoting it. In India, I've seen and experienced the strong competition among students for admissions to prestigious colleges and I'm motivated to think and work towards understanding and breaking down the barriers that underprivileged groups face in obtaining higher education. In our efforts to level the playing field, my brother and I offer free programs and resources to students interested in pursuing higher studies in economics. Traveling to the US for graduate school, I also had first-hand experience of the challenges associated with being subjected to an unfamiliar culture, way of life, and attitudes. For instance, there were many conversations where I did not always get the cultural references or examples people brought up and the experience taught me to be mindful about the different backgrounds of people I'm interacting with.

At Caltech, I served as the graduate representative in our division's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee for nearly two years. The committee's goals included establishing and maintaining an inclusive environment and increasing diversity across all of the divisions constituent groups. Towards these goals, we undertook various initiatives. We organized monthly lunches and individual listening sessions for members of the division to share thoughts and ideas about DEI. We introduced a short-term visitors program aimed at scholars who belong to groups that have been historically excluded to increase the diversity of researchers and research within the division. We proposed a faculty service tracking system to promote a transparent and equitable distribution of service work across the division. We also invited guest lecturers and conducted teaching workshops to promote inclusive pedagogy. The experience of being a part of the DEI committee was extremely beneficial in terms of understanding the practical challenges and nuances involved in promoting DEI in a division. As a faculty member, I'll be excited to share this knowledge and experience and also hear the experience of others to help foster DEI in the institution.

I believe extra-curricular activities also play a huge role in nurturing an inclusive environment in any institution. At Caltech, I've served as President of its cricket and badminton clubs. As president of these sports clubs, I helped organize yearly tournaments in which all students, postdocs, faculty, and staff affiliated with Caltech were welcome to participate. We also organized regular outreach events and weekly practice sessions. These events, apart from allowing students to play a sport they enjoy, help create conversations by providing a common ground for students from very

different demographics and backgrounds. I plan to continue pursuing and promoting such sporting activities and harnessing their strength in promoting a more healthy, diverse, and inclusive environment.