

Local tailor family to an NRI family - *Surya Prasad Padala*

I can still recall the day in 1990 when I was helpless and waiting for a miracle to happen to help me continue my graduation. My engineering admission fee (\$250 per year) for next four years was way expensive for my father who was a tailor in our village. My passion was to continue my higher education and make a difference to my family and to the society.

It was a mere coincidence when I found out about NSF scholarship programme. The miracle was NSF's scholarship for all 4 years of my graduation (1990-1994). With that life changing event, I successfully completed my graduation in 1994, my masters from IIT Kharagpur in 1996 and then worked for 16 yrs as a software consultant in United States. My story is a classical example of how **NSF transformed a local tailor family to an NRI family.**

More than the monetary support what I received from NSF was the spirit of giving, helping someone in need whom you never knew before. The very thought inspired me to pay forward which I've been trying to do for the last 12 years in my district in India. The best part that I am amazed at and feel so good is seeing most of our scholars becoming catalysts for the society by paying forward in their own way. Many of our other scholars who were settled in various jobs keep sending their checks every year asking me to use that amount to other needy waiting in the line.

I hope this amazing cycle of Pay Forward continues forever to make wonders.

After returning to India in Dec 2012, I have been exploring various opportunities around me and trying my best to use my god-given talent to make a positive difference. Here is a place where you can see what I have been trying to accomplish - <http://padalacharitabletrust.org/>

It feels great when my brothers and sisters connect with me so well when I share my life journey with them. I only tell them how I reached from one end to the other and I challenge them to do the same. Each time I interact with a group, I am told that my story inspires them.

Over the next few years I am planning to work on various initiatives to make a difference in school education. **What a life journey it has been so far? I am truly blessed. Thanks to NSF!**

Suryaprasad Padala
padalasurya@yahoo.com
+91 800 858 9365