



S. P. Mandali's
R. A. Podar College of Commerce & Economics
AUTONOMOUS
Accredited 'A+' by NAAC
Matunga, Mumbai - 400019

MUDITA

A collection of joyful memories



Alumni network of Podar is just like this tree; Branches reach for the sky, yet roots hold the earth



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Alumni Articles

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1965-67 - MY GOLDEN YEAR OF COLLEGE DAYS

- 1) It was on the eve of 1965, that R A Podar College witnessed the silver lining, when two of its NCC Cadets were selected to represent Maharashtra Contingent at the national level at the Republic Day Parade. They were Arun Dange and Sudhir Rao.
- 2) After a special camp at Ismail Yusuf College in Mumbai for one month, they proceeded to Delhi in the first week of January 1965. And within 10 days itself both of them were selected to represent Indian Contingent of the best 30 cadets for Guard of Honor to the Prime Minister of India. It was perhaps for the first time in the history of the State that two students from one college were selected simultaneously, to represent Indian Contingent.
- 3) Thus, Arun Dange and Sudhir Rao not only represented Maharashtra on 26th January, 1965 in the ceremonious parade in honor of the President Of India; but also were part of the India's Best Squad of Guard of Honor to Prime Minister of India on 27th January, 1965, and had a dinner with him at his official residence. Incidentally, **जय जवान, जय किसान** , a slogan raised by our then Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri received this Guard of Honor only once - Jawaharlal Nehru was PM in January, 1964, and by 1966 Republic Day, Lal Bahadur Shastri was no more.
- 4) During April 1965, two cadets of the College Sudhir Rao and Dandekar were selected to represent Maharashtra at All India Advance Leadership Course; again a FIRST time – two students from one college.
- 5) The academic year 1965-66 started and Student Sudhir Rao was elected as the General Secretary of Students Union of R A Podar College, with Principal P. G. Palekar as the President and Vice Principal B. G. Bapat as the Vice President.
- 6) On 15th August, 1966, the activities of Students' Union were inaugurated in the hands of the Vice Chancellor of University of Mumbai. Dr R V Sathe, who addressed the students with his inspiring speech.
- 7) And after that function all NCC Cadets of Podar College, Ruia College, Khalsa College, Ruparel College, Kirti College, VJTI etc. were given an oath by the Vice Chancellor. It was a great honor for Podar College that its student Sudhir Rao led all the colleges and presented the entire squad to the Vice Chancellor.
- 8) Among the activities of Students Union, a Blood Donation camp was arranged for the first time in the history of the college. More than 125 students of the college made a voluntary blood donation on that day.



- 9) During the year 1965-66, a Rifle Shooting Competition was arranged for all NCC Battalions of Maharashtra; and Sudhir Rao turned out to be the best shooter in the competition; a great honour for him and the college.
- 10) Year 1966 was being celebrated as the International Year of Cooperation by the United Nations. On this occasion, the University of Mumbai had arranged an essay competition for the students. An Essay submitted by Sudhir Rao on the subject “United Nations and Maintenance of Peace” won the second prize at the university, bringing laurels to the college.
- 11) And finally, at the end of the year, the Rotary Club of Mumbai honored Sudhir Rao with “The Best Student of The Year” Award. Taking cognizance of the achievements, the College Authorities honored Sudhir Rao with the Colors of the College.

This Sudhir Rao is none other than me and this was my story. Thanks to Podar.

Sudhir Rao
Class of 1967



MY YEARS AT OUR COLLEGE

We've all heard the famous Bill Cosby quote: "There's a time and place for everything, and it's called college". I guess this proves true for most boys and girls, and it certainly worked out perfectly in my case.

Podar, my alma mater, gave me literally everything: it prepared me superbly for the two years of hostel life that were to follow my graduation, and for the subsequent five decades of a career in Finance & Accounting. What more can one ask?

In June 1966 when I got through my high school – those were the years when school ended with 11th standard and there were four years of college education – my marks were more than enough to guarantee the then typical Tamil Brahmin route (perhaps even now): B Sc first year followed by Engineering, preferably at IIT. But I stood firm, and my family backed me. I said "I will do B Com in Podar". B Com was then an infra dig for 'brilliant' students. It turned out to be one of the handful of correct decisions I have taken.

Mind you, my aversion to the Science-Engineering path was not because I was scared of numbers, I loved them. But B Sc I year came with an inviolable package that included Biology, which was a strict no-no. So, in the first two years (up to what we called Inter Commerce) I had Mathematics, and the legendary Prof U. U. Bhat teaching the subject. Our first two years also had English and Hindi, and I owe my writing and speaking skills largely to the sound foundation Podar gave me in languages.

But what really made the difference as far as my English went were two innocuous cards, the library cards for accessing probably the finest College library in all of Bombay (now Mumbai). One of the cards was for subject books and the other for fiction and other light reading. You could use both for fiction, and I did just that. Through the four years I pretty much read a large part of the stupendous fiction that was available, comprising R K Narayan, P G Wodehouse, Charles Dickens, Daphne Du Maurier, Agatha Christie, James Thurber, Nevil Shute and many other greats.

Podar students got an opportunity to win the Dorab Tata Trust Scholarship in the first year and I will always be indebted to our college for significantly reducing my financial strain. The icing on the cake was when I appeared for the Tata Administrative Services (TAS) interview at the end of my MBA, and the panel was headed by Mr Malegamwala, whom I was seeing every month during the scholarship year. He smiled and said "look at the scrawny boy fully transformed now, suited and booted! You're looking great".

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As regards the subject books I wasn't reading, our dear, revered Principal G P Palekar made sure that I wouldn't ignore them. At the commencement of our fourth year, he called me and a few other batchmates of mine to his room. A large bunch of impressive tomes were piled up on his table. He pointed to them and said "each of you will take a copy of each of these ten epic books on your subjects on loan for this year, use them and return them after the final exam. We missed the first rank last year and lost it to Sydenham. I want to make sure one of you gets the first rank for us this year".

He didn't stop there. He gave a key to one of the tutorial rooms to us and said "you can sit and study in the room without disturbance". The fierce patriotism for our Podar was fired up instantly. We made a silent and unshakable pact together that one of us would top the University.

If I were to talk about my equation with each of our teachers in the four years it would run to a whole book and not just an article. Professors P N Shah, S A Sherlekar, U G Dabolkar, P M Tole, P N Phutane, M V Chandgadkar and the irrepressible Prof. Bhat.... I can go on about their classes forever. As for the Business Organisation classes of Palekar Sir, the joke was "Kumar (that's me) won't be able to recognise Sir outside, because as soon as he comes in, Kumar bows down and starts writing whatever he speaks".

My classmates – that would be another story. Joshi, Tamankar and I were regulars for the 8:00 am train from Kalyan to Matunga and would discuss everything under the Sun. Mohan, Raja, Gopal, Krishnan, Hushmandy, Satyam, Trikkur and I formed a lovely study group. Raja's mom would treat us to deadly dosas.

I wish I could talk about the girls in my class but beyond gaping at them I didn't do anything. Despite my 'topper' reputation none of them approached me for help with studies. Sheer injustice, I know.

I have lots more to tell, but I should respect the space constraint given to me and will end my essay here. Read the rest of it in my memoirs if I write it and get a publisher.

Cheers!

V S Kumar
Class of 1970



A GUIDE POST IN BECOMING A BETTER HUMAN

In one sentence I will just say Podar College guided me, helped me to become a better human. Yes, this is the purpose education and institutes, those imparting education, are meant for. But how it is being done or more specifically how I witnessed and experienced that in Podar College is the thing that should stand apart from the crowd.

I have vivid memories of some personalities and their personal qualities which made a big difference to the quality of my life.

I joined Podar College for Intermediate Commerce in June, 1972 after spending my early years in a village. I was suddenly placed in quite a different world than I used to be.

Prof M.V.Chandgadkar, a high profile personality used to teach us Business Communication. The 'You Attitude' is one of the essentials for effective letter writing; I remember the way, the style and the persuasive and illustrative language he used while explaining the concept made a long-lasting effect on my mind. *'Think of the person you are addressing, communicating, his status, his needs; psychological, social and put forward your intent, context in the best possible language, phrases so he will yield to you willingly'*. This principle is ringing in my ears till now. To be frank, the concept was not that clear then. But it has never left me. Since then, I have tried to practice 'You Attitude' in all my communication and interactions; not only written and verbal but even in my simple gestures. I witnessed pleasant results in my personal as well in professional life. A big part of my success, I owe to 'You Attitude' taught by Prof. Chandgadkar. Both the concept and the person who introduced it to me have become an inseparable part of my being. Today I see 'You attitude' in a spiritual context and its scope is like the sky - very vast.

I had received the National Scholarship for Children of Teachers and a library facility of borrowing two books at a time, as I had first class in First year commerce. I could not maintain first class in Intermediate Commerce. So, I did not apply for both the privileges. To my utter surprise, I was called by Modak Madam who used to handle the scholarship desk from the college office. She informed me that for my Scholarship there is no condition of securing first class like in the National Scholarship for General Category. The scholarship of Rs. 75/- p.m. was a huge sum that time. It was a heavenly blessing for a student hailing from lower economic strata.

Similarly, Shri Modgi, the librarian, on his own asked me why I was not availing the facility of borrowing two books. When he learned I am a Business Management student, he said, you will continue to get facilities then.

I got both Scholarship and the library facility till my graduation. These kind and humane gestures on part of two great souls have imbibed in me the values of unconditional love, going beyond one's duty, which otherwise I would not have learnt even after many lectures.

Prof P.J. Joshi, the most popular and loved by students; once took an extra Economics lecture which overlapped our Business Management lecture. He was so mindful of our deprivation, that he took a special class for only three students with the same devotion as if he was speaking



before a full classroom. Not only that he enquired about our backgrounds in a caring tone of a close friend.

Similarly, Prof Ram Patwardhan, a well-known Marathi literary critic used to teach us Marathi. He did not even know my face. He liked my answers in the examination paper. For a man of his stature, it was a trivial thing. He went out of the way and located me. Quite heartily he appreciated my answers and cared to understand my roots and life journey.

Both Professors; P.J. Joshi and Ram Patwardhan have made home in my psyche. Their humility, their kind encouraging words, love and care towards students have become lessons for me to follow in life.

Principal G.P. Palekar was a man of few gentle words. But he was approachable and I always experienced humility, love and respect in his behaviour.

All these experiences will become more outstanding in the backdrop of me being not extraordinary in studies or in other activities nor was I in any social circles. They have shaped my thinking and behaviour which helped me to succeed in my career. I have deep gratitude towards Podar College and personalities who cared for me.

Shubhangi Sinkar
Class of 1975



IN QUEST FOR ACHHE DIN

Our trade is extremely small, our hearts are generously big
Helping one another, from the graves buyers dig
Experience of last few years, are nothing to boast about
Hoping for **ACHHE DIN** is every member's shout

Policy of the government, comes with inputs from all
Active participation of members is my humble call
Value addition from oilseeds, we should sincerely try
Unless this is done, most will weep and cry.

The local market is huge, but only exports we rely
Working with negative margins, balance sheets will surely run dry
Let us work together, holding each other's hand
Making a decent profit, is the only way to stand

Times are getting tough, variables are too many
Risks increasing by the day, leaving hardly any penny
Qualities have improved, but not getting a respectable price
Blaming the competition, is no solution to survive

Sanjay Shah
Class of 1978



DIL KE KAREEB

If someone asks me the most memorable period of my life , I would immediately say “ 1979 to 1987”. Yes, the eight years during which I was closely associated with my college – R.A. Podar College of Commerce & Economics, Matunga”. Why eight years when the graduation takes only five years? That was because even after B.Com, I used to visit the college everyday for C.A. studies like many others.

But what made it memorable ?

Till B.Com.

Since the old time, “Podar college” was a very prestigious name. It was the most desired college for students aspiring to join commerce stream. I was very clear about my career choice & so was elated when I got admission in 11th standard in the first list only. That was the first pleasant memory. Podar was undoubtedly a college of studious students but that didn’t mean it was in any way less in sports & extra curricular activities. The college used to participate in all inter-college competitions and would win various awards & accolades. Though my active participation was restricted to Marathi literature (writing poems in the college magazine & being associated with Marathi Vangmay Mandal), I was very much interested in all the cultural activities. I was a sincere spectator of rehearsals of all dramas, folk dances etc. & had many friends who used to actively participate. First three years, the Table Tennis room and the ‘katta’ opposite the college was a daily pass time activity for me either before the start of the lectures or during free lectures. Annual College Day function & various programs, especially the personality contest & selection of Podar Prince & Podar Princess was a great attraction at that time. Various Literacy Circles (English, Marathi, Hindi) in the college was another platform for interested students.

As far as the college teaching staff was concerned, we had the best commerce faculties. There were many students like me who hadn’t joined any coaching classes and studying in the classrooms was sufficient for us to secure good marks every year.

Studying for C.A.

Though our CA studies & articleship was not a responsibility of our college, the college did accommodate us to attend our articleship training as first two years of articleship had to be done alongwith S.Y.B.Com. & T.Y.B.Com. Even after passing T.Y.B.Com, the ground floor rooms of the college always remained open for its ex-students for studies. That time most of us had small houses & I just don’t know how we would have coped up with rigorous studies of C.A. if this facility was not available & got the prestigious qualification which is the foundation of a happy & successful life for many of us.

Going ahead

My life partner is also a Podar alumnus and equally proud of being a Podarite. She entered the college as soon as I passed out in 1984. So, she has experienced another set of five years in the college & has her own sweet memories.



In 2013, my daughter topped in 12th Commerce in ISC. She was in Thane's Singhanian College and wished to take admission in Podar for F.Y.B.Com. The principal madam personally attended us & when I told her that I was an ex-student, she was much more happy to give her admission. The three years which my daughter thereafter spent in the college were very eventful as she participated in various extra-curricular activities including MONETA. The college has issued a certificate summarizing her three years contribution, achievements & development which I believe is as precious as any prestigious award or trophy.

So, what difference did college make to my life ?

A satisfying career in the industry, a happy personal life, pursuing my passion of writing poems & articles, speaking on various public platforms on tax related topics, publishing my two books, friends from various walks of life with whom I am still connected & with some got reconnected (Thanks to social media) – I sincerely believe that my college has contributed to some extent in some or the other way for all these things.

Interaction with various talented & versatile students over the five years has helped self development, given a lot of courage & confidence, and indirectly taught various values & principles of life. Our professors were our role models & they did set an example to lead a respectable life and become a responsible citizen.

So, Podar college was, is & always will be my “Dil Ke Kareeb” and the people who are my “Dil Ke Kareeb” also feel the same way being ex-students of Podar.

Rajiv Pradhan
Class of 1984



MY JOURNEY IN PODAR

Way back in 1979 as I stood as a student at the gates of R.A. Podar standing in a queue, waiting for my application form for admission to this college to be accepted, I did not know that my career was to be set in this very college and I continue to teach even if I have retired as the teacher of the subject of Office Management as I love watching the students develop their personality and I am a part of their overall growth as an individual. The year 1985 was a milestone here as I entered these premises as a teacher and there was no stopping then.

As the years went by my job satisfaction grew in leaps and bounds. I saw some of my students reaching the pinnacle of success in their respective fields and when they attributed it to the guidance given by me, it just fills me with happiness. I was happy with my task of moulding new entrants to college into polished, smart individuals and loading them with the confidence to achieve their dreams.

The love and adoration given by my students down the ages has enriched me immensely. The photo frames, the photo cakes and birthday celebrations are indeed very memorable and they have become a part of my extended family. The bond I share with my students is so strong that they are never far from my thoughts nor do they forget me ever.

Today though I have retired, my passion for teaching continues and I hope to motivate more and more freshers to push themselves to achieve greater heights in life. R.A. Podar college has shaped my destiny with true colours of love, joy and happiness as I continue to interact with my students and get blessings in return from them. There is no bidding adieu to my alma mater forever.

Rose John
Class of 1984



MUDITA

I am Smt. Urmi Sameer Dani, ex-student of R.A. Podar College of Commerce and Economics, Matunga. I am very delighted to share my 5 year journey in this college. These 5 years have been the most memorable ones and I will cherish them for a lifetime. The college days were filled with fun, entertainment, education, curricular activities and so much more.

I belong to the 1986 batch of Podar college. I had secured 78% in SSC and there were 2 final seats left for admission in Podar college. We both had the same percentage, but I was granted admission on the basis of certificates I had collected from my various co-curricular activities such as Sports, Music, Dance, Sanskrit exams and much more. That very same time I fell in love with this college as they gave equal weightage to other activities as well along with the academics. That time our principal was Mr. Sahu Raja, a Tall, Fair, Strong Built Personality with an equally compassionate heart. I still adore him, I am not sure if he is still with us. 2 years Of Junior college passed by studying. At that time all students are very studious, just coming out of the school environment. Interacting with different subject teachers, making new friends, sharing notes and the most exciting thing happened. We started sitting on the very famous katta then, chatting with our friends and gradually started learning to bunk the lectures. We slowly started enjoying nearby hotels for breakfast like Ramashray, DP's, Relax, Saraswati Bhavan. They were all awesome.

Gradually as we entered Degree college, my goodness the road towards limitless joy - "Mudita" opened for us. Podar College was full of Curricular Activities. Few of them were Rose Day, Geet Bahar, Literary Clubs, Inter collegiate Youth Festivals, Garba Nights and many more. I used to enjoy exclusive LCR (Ladies Common Room), never heard of it in the school days, on the 1st Floor of the college where we all girls used to have fun and frolic without any outside interference. We were a group of 10 Girls and used to participate in all Dance festivals. For Gujarati Literary Club inauguration, it was our monopoly to present dance every year. We had special invitees as guests. Sanjay Manjrekar, Ravi Shastri, Dilip Vengsarkar had come, for three consecutive years respectively- all of them ex-Podarites. Me being a classical Bharatanatyam dancer got selected every year for Inter collegiate Dance Competitions, it was great fun practising for days together. I had also participated in Geet Bahar, where for the very first time I had met the most famous Garba singer Falguni Pathak who, like me, had come as a student to take part in this singing competition.

My Final Year, T Y BCom was the most memorable one. On the entertainment part, we had our Annual Day Function held at Don Bosco school, Matunga and guess what???

We had none other than the most popular Bollywood couple Mr. Amitabh Bachchanji and his wife Mrs. Jaya Bachchanji as the chief guest. What a crowd, what an excitement. I just don't have any words to express our joy that time, the whole crowd was overwhelmed, overjoyed, a lifetime memory to be cherished by all of us present that day!!!!

And on the Academics side, I secured 72% in my final year and stood at 14th Rank in our Podar College and Secured 37th Rank in the Merit List in Mumbai, and for this achievement I also received National Scholarship from Government of India for Post-Graduation Studies.



I am extremely grateful to the Almighty, My Principal Mr, Sahu Raja, all my Teachers of Podar for their teachings, guidance and continuous support throughout my 5-year journey. Also special thanks to my Colleagues, my friends for making this journey a very memorable one.

Urmi Dani
Class of 1991

MY YEARS AT PODAR COLLEGE

My years at Podar College are by far the best years of my life till date. I am sure there would be many others who would share the same feeling for the great institution. The greatest gift I got from Podar College was my self-confidence and self-belief. I came from a small school in Dadar with practically no exposure to the external world. What I had in me was a strong desire to do something notable and make my presence felt in whichever environment I am in. While I was decent in my academics, I was clear I was not going to compete for the academic laurels in this college. However, the multi-faceted ecosystem of Podar College was the right platform I was looking for to express myself. First through dramatics and later through singing, I not only got a golden opportunity to express myself, but also build an identity of my own. I still cherish the “Light of Podar” award which I received in my last year for my extra-curricular contribution.

In our formative years, we need the right impetus to hone our skills in the right direction. There could not have been a better place than Podar college that could act as a stimulus.

I will always be grateful to this great institution in shaping me as a happy, satisfied and successful human being.

Amol Shiroadkar
Class of 1997



THE BEST DAYS OF MY LIFE - SUMMER OF 92

Aamir Khan has always had a karmic connection with my life as a Podarite. 1988 was when I was released from Don Bosco High School and 1988 was when his first film "Qayamat se Qayamat Tak" was released. The "Raj" in me was all set to sing "Papa Kehte Hain Bada Naam Karega" as I entered Podar, just as my Papa had some 35 years ago. I remember meeting AK at a function and proudly showing my photo with him to my FYJC batch mates. From being a shy, studious, introvert student to a 180 degree metamorphosis was what 5 years of Podar did to me! The "Rashmi" however remains elusive till date!

My last year 1992-93 at Podar started with Student Council Elections, planning of which happened in the vacation batches at Ganesh Academy across the railway line. It was a keenly fought one, with both sides involving Saam, Daam, Dand, Bhedh to install their Sarkar. Our Opponents took the Vice President post and my experience as Joint Secretary in SYBcom stood us in good stead and we took the Student's Union Council. Elections in Podar have largely been free, fair and always throw up talent which nominations never do!

A unique flavour of Podar is the installation of the Election Banner, hung on the 2 pillars situated between the college entrance and the auditorium. After the nominations, the first Tuesday was the preferred day to launch the banner with both sides vying to hang theirs higher. Luckily as we had some "King Pins" who would put some modern day Chanakyas to shame, on Monday night we put up a substitute banner and reserved the place. The second challenge was to get our original banner signed by Mrs. Nathan, the Election Officer. A late night visit to her house in Vile Parle ensured that we got her Signature on our Banner and we were ready to hoist it on top first, with a whole lot of sloganeering and shouting!

Our Banner said "They can Achieve who Believe they Can, & We Believe..." and we were on our way to Achieve one of the Best Years of Podar! The same year 1992 Aamir Khan released his film "Jo Jeeta Wahi Sikandar" a film which so matched our keenly fought elections. It was a title aptly suited to "The Team" which won the elections and gave the Podar some amazing moments. Thank you Aamir Khan for giving us the tagline for most of the programs that year!

After War comes Love and what better way to celebrate that at Podar than with Rose Day! The girls look graceful in their sarees and the boys look dapper in their suits and ties. This was the day to approach girls whom one would never muster the courage to talk to in the normal course and ask them their names and class numbers to give them a "Friendship", "Like" or a "Love" Rose. We had an American Auction, where an alarm clock is set a time and students get to hand over small amounts to the organizers, the person whose name gets called out when the alarm rings gets the Bouquet. The crowd funded amount usually goes to Rs. 5,000-6,000 but since there was rivalry between two groups, and a mishap happened with the alarm clock, Rs.30,000 were collected, a sizable sum in those days. A first in Podar history!



The next program was Musical Housie, where the tickets had songs listed on them instead of numbers. With no computers available in those days, we had to manually make the algorithms to put 10 different songs on each ticket such that no 2 tickets would win the prizes simultaneously. The other challenge was to actually sit and write 10 songs on each ticket by hand as there were no printers. Our team of volunteers sat down over days to write those 3000 tickets neatly by hand which left just 2 days to sell the tickets. We enrolled 1 pretty girl from every class and gave them 100 tickets each which they sold in 1 day flat. Yes, multi-level marketing was started by Podar!

At the end of Musical Housie, I had put on the song "Yeh Lamhe Yeh Pal Hum Barson Yaad Kareng" from the movie "Lamhe", which left all of us emotional & in tears. We decided to organize the Roongta Trophy, an Inter Collegiate Singing Competition, in December. We had already started approaching colleges around the time the Babri Masjid was demolished on 6th December, 1992. The atmosphere was tense, curfew was imposed, and fear was in the air. In spite of this, our team left their houses during curfew relaxation to plan, organise and stick posters for the upcoming event. With so much going on around, 25 colleges still participated in mid December and the icing on the cake was when we got Hariharan to attend and render the song "Yeh Lamhe Yeh pal Hum Barson Yaad Kareng", which had by now become our anthem of sorts!

Rapport, our very own Intra Collegiate Festival in December, has a special place in every Podarites' heart. Luckily things were under control in Maharashtra and students participated enthusiastically. Here I must say I had introduced a game called Handminton, a mixture of Tennis, VolleyBall and Table Tennis to Podar. This was a game we played at Don Bosco and carried on the tradition at college inside the Audi. I remember having Jaundice during that time and running around with a box of GluconD with periodic visits to the sugarcane juice wala. In spite of all odds, we won the Rapport for our division in TYBCom!

As we entered 1993, Mumbai was rocked with riots and going to college was difficult, yet somehow managed to plan & organize the Annual Day. This was going to be the last program of the year & hence it had a lot of melancholy attached to it. We had put up a skit on National Integration where we showed how in spite of the fact that India is made of different religions, there is Unity in Diversity. We showed how Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam & Christianity all are separate religions but when they come together they create a true Indian. Seeds of National Integration and Secularism were taught to us in Podar! Bill Clinton had just taken oath as the US President and in his Inaugural Address at the White House and in my Vote of Thanks at the Annual Day; we both said "We believe in a Place called Hope."

As the year was ending, we had to start studying for our TYBCom Board Exams. As things cooled down in Mumbai, our trips to the College Canteen & Audi started reducing, and trips to the Reading Hall and Ground Floor reading classes started increasing. While studying in G7, I was introduced to Rama Naik's Boarding which provided sumptuous thali at Rs. 12.50, a relationship which gets revived once a month even now! The sad part of this period was the



Mumbai Bomb Blasts which occurred on 12th March, 1993. I had just filled petrol at the pump next to Shiv Sena Bhuvan in my car MFC7092 (a number which remained constant in my every car after that) and reached Plaza Cinema, when I heard a loud sound which was the bomb going off at the pump. Surreal! Luckily things got back to normal in Mumbai & we resumed studies.

There was one last formality to be completed as the year came to a close. In Junior College, I had read an article in the Podar Pageant by a Podar Alumnus, 5 term Member of Parliament, Central Minister, Shri Gurudas Kamat. In it he had mentioned "In one of the weaker moments they awarded me with the L.N. Welingkar for the Most Outstanding Student of TYBCom." This thought had stuck with me all through college. After many years, when I met Kamat Sir, I proudly told him, "Sir, you had to fight the election to win the Most Outstanding Student of TYBCom, I had won it Unopposed." The look in his eyes assured me that all the work put in over 5 years of Extra Curricular activities in Podar was suitably rewarded!

As the years passed, we all went our individual ways. Some became CAs, some CSs, some MBAs and some started working. Some of us kept in touch, some lost contact. But that Podar element would always remain in all of us. Once again Aamir Khan popped up in the scene in 2009/10 with his movie "3 Idiots" which brought back a whole lot of memories. Facebook had just started getting popular in India, WhatsApp had just been launched. Every school & college in India started organizing reunions. Podar was no different. Our College Reunion at the Leela Hotel, and our Class of 1993 Reunion at the Hawaiian Shack brought back the Podar spirit!

Well, this has been a long read. I am sure this entire narrative over a period of so many years, reminds one of a movie we may have seen some time back which also had a similar narrative spread over many years. Well the movie is "Lal Singh Chaddha" and you guessed it right! It has Aamir Khan. Hmmm.

Kumar Nandu urf Koomar Shah
Class of 1993



LIFE IN PODAR AND THEREAFTER...

How did it start... Well let me begin with my story of Podar!

I never wanted to take admission in Podar or even study here. It was my dad's decision to admit me and my twin sister Pallavi to the same college. Throughout school, I always dreamt of doing research in nuclear science and associating myself with BARC someday.

But like every story has its own destiny, mine was laid to be at PODAR. Day One at the college premises was full of nervousness for a person filled with inferiority complex. The thoughts in the initial days were filled with anxiety of whether I would ever be able to clear college's tough exams or will I ever make my way through anywhere if I continue with Podar.

So here begins my story. I flunked in the first exam of my favourite subject ever, Economics (probably that was customary) and I needed to bring my attention and focus back to studies. The subsequent exam I topped in Economics and from there on I started gaining confidence in converting failures into milestones.

The stone was laid down at Podar (I believe) in building and grooming my personality in what I could achieve later and become as a person. I owe a lot to Podar, my seniors and my mentors for their contribution in my life.

The opportunities that each forum activity I participated in during college days gave me exposure. It helped me break my inhibitions and allowed me into a doorway to participate wholeheartedly. This experience over years through college's internal as well as external forums started instilling a sense of confidence and courage in me to try new things. While managing academics, I also managed to be actively involved in college curricular activities; something that filled me with extraordinary energy and enthusiasm. I was bestowed with 'Lights of Podar' and 'Principal's Special Award' for my contribution towards college academic and curricular activities. A special mention to all my teachers and mentors Prof. Mahesh Deshpande, Prof. Aparna Phadke, Prof. Leena Ramani, Dr. Rajam Rajagopalan and Dr. Sanjay Honkalse in making and shaping my career at a primitive stage.

Thereafter I carried the same Podar infected positive energy and enthusiasm into building my professional career in HR. Till date my energy and course of conversation doubles, if i happen to meet Podarites in any professional arena or outside.

I made my first sketch in one of the class-room while studying, wrote my first poem at college katta, participated in my first skit on college stage, started jamming at audi, made first letter draft for external invites at mezzanine floor, rappled for the first time on podar wall, directed my first skit while at college, made my first career choice through CGF's recruitment drives and career seminars, got my first selection at an investment bank through college campus drive, started reading my first romantic novel at podar library, opened up for the first time ever beyond myself only to a Podarite...



Podar gave me a set of good friends, best memories, a strong foundation for building a career and most importantly the wings to fly high with courage and to believe in myself with confidence.

I owe everything to my alma mater. PODAR still holds a special place in my heart and has made a significant contribution in my LIFE. I am ever grateful to Podar!

Pranali Wani
Class of 2004



A TO Z OF PODAR

- A – A+ and Autonomous
- B – Bond, long-lasting friendship Bond
- C – Chartered Accountants’ (CA) factory
- D – Dhol felicitation, a trademark, on Annual Day
- E – Enigma, annual inter-collegiate cultural festival
- F – Fully devoted Ganesh Chaturthi celebration in ‘Audi’
- G – Gymkhana and Green Gym
- H – Hikers Club’ most-awaited monsoon hike
- I – Iconic Clock Tower
- J – Joy arising from other’s well-being (Mudita)
- K – Katta, an inseparable part of college campus
- L – Library & Reading Hall: airy, expansive yet houseful
- M – Matunga ki Jaan, Mumbai ki Shaan, Maharashtra ki Pehchan
- N – Number One (#1) in Youth Fest, Rostrum Spectrum, HSC, TYBCom
- O – Once a Podarite, Always a Podarite
- P – Planning Forum’s ‘real-life’ activities like Mock Parliament
- Q – Quintessential Personality Development
- R – Rapport, one of the very few colleges to have ‘intra-college’ talent festival
- S – Subhash sandwich, served with a smile
- T - Talent Powerhouse
- U – Unabated encouragement from teachers



V - Versatile Clubs and Forums

W – Winning trophies, Winning hearts

X – (E)xtra-curriculars as important as academics

Y – Young, 80 years young!

Z – Zeal of Podarites: Born for Greater Things

Geetanjali Kedia
Class of 2006



कट्टा

कॉलेजचा कट्टा आज काल उदास असतो
कारण परत भेटू म्हणून आम्ही पुढे निघालो
आणि मार्केटिंग अकाउंटिंग च्या चक्रव्यूहात कधीच नाहीसे झालो
स्वतःला मोठे बघण्याचे लाखो विचार
आणि आता सहन करतोय नोकरीचे अत्याचार
काल त्याला सहज भेटलो
त्याला उदास पाहून मी खरंच ओशाळलो
भेटलो कि तो खुशाली विचारतो
सोनेरी दिवसांची आठवण करून देतो
ते मित्र, कॅन्टीन आणि बाईक चा स्टॅन्ड
आणि हातातील फ्रेंडशिप बँड
आठवते हो सर्व काही
पण आता पर्याय नाही
अजूनही वाटे लहानगे व्हावे
परत एकदा कॉलेज अनुभवावे
सांगितली सारी गाथा मी ही कट्ट्याला
सुभाष शेजारी होता साक्षीला

जाता मोठ्या आवेशाने
मी म्हटले कट्ट्याला
माझ्या यशाचा भागीदार तू
माग काय हवे ते तुला



एक कटाक्ष टाकत भारी

कट्टा फार निरागस हसला

संसाराची रथचक्रे ओढताना

मित्र दुनियादारीत फसला

मान करीत वर अभिमानाने

म्हणाला

फक्त माझी आठवण ठेव

फक्त माझी आठवण ठेव

Ajinkya Pawar
Class of 2007



LETTER OF GRATITUDE TO MY ALMA MATER

It is always a pleasant feeling when I look back on the days that I have spent in R. A. Podar College, Matunga, my loving alma mater. As I write this letter of gratitude, I can't help but feel a sense of pride and belonging. Those five years I spent in this have indeed been an exciting, challenging and crucial phase of my life which helped me bloom into a successful person that I am today. I am grateful for the opportunities that were offered to me during my time as a student. With late night preparations for events, early morning study sessions before a test and the feeling of pure happiness after turning in an assignment that took forever to finish, I have thoroughly enjoyed every bit of my college life.

I am pleased to share that as of today, I am a Partner at a reputed law firm named MDP & Partners and working as a headstrong litigator in the Real Estate sector. Post my graduation from R. A. Podar, I pursued my LL.B. from New Law College, Matunga and finished my Diploma in Tax Management from Welinkar Institute of Management & Research, Matunga.

Whenever I ecstatically recall the early years in college, the first thought that comes to my mind are about our dear professors. I express my heartfelt gratitude to respected Principal Dr. Shobana Vasudevan, Ex-Principal Dr. Sita Ramanan, Late Prof. Nilima Solankurkar, Prof. Vinda Parulekar, Prof. Mahesh Deshpande and Prof. Hema Vad and all the college staff especially Mr. Kisan Pagar who have instilled the confidence in me to sail through my endless ventures. They ensured I got my basics right, guided me in the right direction and knowingly or unknowingly, created a huge impact on my life.

One of my fondest memories in the college has been my affectionate relationship with my Late Prof. Nilima Solankurkar, who was a constant guiding force for me. I had the privilege of serving as the Secretary of the Marathi Literary Circle (MLC) for almost 5 years under her guidance and received her relentless encouragement towards me and my work. They say “*a teacher affects eternity and you can never tell where a teacher's influence stops*” - She was that teacher to me.

Talking about my youthful days in the college, I have bagged several laurels and have been awarded with ‘**L. N. Deshpande**’ Trophy for Noble Social Work; the ‘**Light of Podar**’ Trophy by Student Council; ‘**Gold Medal**’ for Principal Special Award, ‘**Best Volunteer**’ in Tsunami Benefit Scheme. I was appointed as the **Unit President** of The National Students Union of India (NSUI), the student wing of the Indian National Congress of the college and subsequently promoted to being the **District Secretary** of NSUI. It was because of these opportunities I received from the college that improved my leadership qualities and enhanced my personality greatly.

Besides my career-focused life, I am currently serving as the Chairman of the Legal Human Rights and RTI Department of the Mumbai Regional Congress Committee. I strongly believe that it would not have been possible without the political exposure that I gained during my college tenure in the NSUI as it has abundantly helped me reach where I am today. Very recently, I was elected as the Mumbai Congress Regional Representative (**PCC**) of Indian National



Congress. By choosing to be more proactive in the political process, I hope to make a real impact in our nation and look forward to my role and the journey ahead.

The college has provided me with the opportunity to coordinate medical camps in rural areas and execute drives for providing food and clothing for people in underprivileged areas. I also managed AIDS awareness camps, and eye and blood donation camps through National Social Service (NSS) and other NGOs. I received significant guidance from Prof. Mahesh Deshpande while working with the NSS team and, by engaging us in such social work he has made our belief of giving back to the community stronger. President George W. Bush emphasises “*there could be no definition of a successful life that does not include service to others*”.

I express my deepest gratitude to ***the college*** for giving me the courage to be bold and take up the opportunities when they arose; for not letting me hold myself back for the fear of failure; for giving me unforgettable memories. I can never truly express my fullest gratitude and love for ***the college*** and its commitment towards excellence and for helping us shape ourselves strong enough to face the outside world. Even today, I overtly remember the values inculcated in me by ***the college***, the professors and most of all the clerical staff and for that, I am forever indebted to them.

I again thank my alma mater, for paving the way to my successful adult life!

Adv. Tushar Mahadeo Kadam
Class of 2007



पोदारमधील माझा अनुभव

आपलं वयोमान आणि शिक्षण पद्धती एकमेकांशी संलग्न आहेत. म्हणूनच आपलं वय कमी असताना शाळेतून आपल्याला प्राथमिक शिक्षण दिलं जातं. त्यामध्ये सगळ्या विषयांची प्राथमिक माहिती आणि माणुसकीची काही मूलभूत मूल्य ह्याचा समावेश असतो. एकदा शाळा संपली की आपण महाविद्यालयात प्रवेश घेतो. महाविद्यालयात अर्थातच शाळेतले सगळे विषय नसतात कारण आपण आपली करियर स्ट्रीम निवडलेली असते आणि त्या विषयांमध्ये अजून खोलात शिरून ज्ञान आपल्याला मिळवायचं असतं. शाळेत शैक्षणिक ज्ञानाबरोबरच मूलभूत मूल्य शिकवली जातात. महाविद्यालयात मात्र आपलं वय वाढलं असल्याने आपण "बाल" नसून "तरुण" असतो. त्यामुळेच महाविद्यालयात शैक्षणिक ज्ञानाबरोबरच विद्यार्थ्यांच्या व्यक्तिमत्त्वाचा सर्वांगीण विकास ह्यावर लक्ष केंद्रित केलं जातं आणि विद्यार्थ्यांना उद्याचे सुजाण नागरिक करण्याची जबाबदारी महाविद्यालयावर असते. त्यामुळे एक उत्तम महाविद्यालय आपल्याला लाभलं तर आपल्या विकासासाठी नक्कीच त्याचा लाभ होतो.

मला खगोलशास्त्राची आवड असून मी कॉमर्स क्षेत्र निवडलं आणि कॉमर्स निवडल्या बरोबरच मला रा. आ. पोदार महाविद्यालयात प्रवेश मिळवण्याची इच्छा होती. त्याप्रमाणे ११ वी ते graduation चा माझा संपूर्ण प्रवास रा. आ. पोदार महाविद्यालयात झाला. पोदार मध्ये ११ वीत प्रवेश घेतल्यावर माझ्या लक्षात आलं की ह्या महाविद्यालयात शैक्षणिक ज्ञानाबरोबरच तुमच्या सर्वांगीण विकासाकरिता अनेक मार्ग उपलब्ध आहेत. कॉलेजमध्ये सतत होणारे कार्यक्रम, इव्हेंट्स, फेस्ट्स ह्या माध्यमातून अनेक कला अवगत झाल्या. मुख्य म्हणजे हे सगळे उपक्रम विद्यार्थ्यांचे हाताळत असल्याने नियोजन म्हणजेच management ह्याची सुद्धा उत्तम तालीम मला पोदारमध्ये मिळाली. क्रीडा त्यात बास्केटबॉल, क्रिकेट, फुटबॉल, कबड्डी, इत्यादी, कला, त्यात सुद्धा गायन, वादन, नृत्य, चित्रकला, नाट्यकला, रांगोळी, इत्यादी म्हणजे जवळ जवळ सर्व खेळांना आणि सर्व कलांना प्रोत्साहन आणि उत्तेजन देणारे उपक्रम आणि योग्य मार्गदर्शन देणारे शिक्षक असल्याने माझं व्यक्तिमत्त्व घडवण्यात मोलाचा वाटा पोदार महाविद्यालयाचा होता.

१२ वीत जर्मन स्टुडेंट एक्सचेंज प्रोग्रॅम मध्ये कॉलेजतर्फे सहभागी होण्याची संधी मला मिळाली. आम्ही निवडलेली १५ मुलं जर्मनी मध्ये जाऊन तिथल्या आमच्या जर्मन मित्रांच्या घरी राहून, त्यांच्या शाळेत शिकण्याचा आणि जर्मन संस्कृती, जर्मन टेक्नॉलॉजी आणि अजून त्या देशाबद्दल अनेक गोष्टी जाणून घेण्याची संधी मला मिळाली. पोदार कॉलेजतर्फे क्रीडा, कला ह्याबरोबरच फ्रेंच, जर्मन अशा आंतरराष्ट्रीय भाषा देखील शिकवल्या जातात. ह्या प्रोग्रॅम मुले मला जर्मन ह्या भाषेचं शैक्षणिक ज्ञान मिळालंच परंतु त्याच बरोबर दुसऱ्या देशात जाऊन चार चौघात बोलण्याचा आत्मविश्वासही मिळाला.

डिग्री कॉलेजमध्ये अर्थातच स्कोप जास्त होता. कॉलेजचे विविध आंतर महाविद्यालयीन फेस्ट्स, युथ फेस्ट, इत्यादी ह्यामध्ये विद्यार्थ्यांना सहभागी होऊन त्यांची कला जगासमोर सादर करायला एक मंच उत्पन्न होतो आणि ती कला चार चौघात आत्मविश्वासाने सादर करण्याचा सराव देखील होतो. बीकॉम फर्स्ट इअर



मध्ये असताना कॉलेजने राबवलेल्या विविध शैक्षणिक, आणि इतर उपक्रमांमुळे मला नक्कीच चार गोष्टी शिकायला मिळाल्या आणि माझ्या ज्ञानात भर पडल्याने जगात वावरायचा आत्मविश्वास मिळाला.

सेकंड इअर बीकॉम मध्ये असताना लोकडाऊन असल्याने आमचं कॉलेज ऑनलाईन माध्यमातून सुरु होतं. असं संकट अचानकच जगावर आल्याने कोणीच ह्या माध्यमात मुरलेलं नव्हतं. परंतु कॉलेजने योग्य ती सोय करून विद्यार्थ्यांना मार्गदर्शन करत, कोणाच्या काही तांत्रिक अडचणी असतील तर त्या सोडवत उत्तम प्रकारे शिक्षण ऑनलाईन माध्यमातून आम्हाला दिलं. त्याच वर्षी कॉलेजच्या हॉबी सर्कल तर्फे मला "ग्रहण" ह्या विषयावर वेबिनार घेण्याची संधी मिळाली. कॉमर्स कॉलेजमध्ये माझ्या विज्ञानाच्या विषयाला एवढा पाठिंबा पाहून मी फार खुश होतो. अर्थातच त्या वेबिनारच्या माध्यमातून मला माझा विषय लोकांपर्यंत कसा उत्तम प्रकारे मांडायचा ह्याचा सराव झाला. आणि कॉलेज कायम कुठल्याही चांगल्या विषयाला कायम प्रोत्साहन देत आलं. तो विषय कुठल्याही शिक्षण शाखेचा असला तर ज्ञान ग्रहण करण्यासाठी कॉलेज आम्हाला सतत प्रोत्साहन देत आलं.

थर्ड इअर बीकॉमच्या मुलांना सगळे कॉलेजचे उपक्रम हाताळायची संधी असल्याने तेव्हा आत्मसाद केलेल्या सॉफ्ट स्किल्सचा वापर आम्हाला पुढे आयुष्यात सगळीकडे उपयोगी पडेल. थर्ड इअर बीकॉम मध्ये "मॅथेमॅट्रिक्स" ह्या फेस्टच्या माध्यमातून मला दृष्टिहीन मित्रांसाठी काम करण्याची संधी मिळाली. म्हणजे कॉलेज अशा फेस्टच्या माध्यमातून विद्यार्थ्यांकडून समाज सेवा देखील करून घेतं आणि सुजाण नागरिक होण्यासाठी ह्याची मदत आम्हाला नक्कीच होईल. आपण आपल्या समाजाचे देणं लागतो ही भावना कॉलेजने आमच्यात जागरूक केली आणि हे सॉफ्ट स्किल आम्हाला आमच्या पुढील वाटचालीत अनेक प्रकारचे प्रसंग हाताळताना उपयोगी ठरेल. मॅथेमॅट्रिक्स मध्येच मला पाहुणे वक्ते म्हणून खगोलशास्त्रावर वेबिनार घेण्याची संधी मिळाली. हॉबी सर्कल मध्ये देखील सलग दुसऱ्यांदा मला खगोलशास्त्रावर व्याख्यान घेता आलं. एनिग्मा म्युसिक डिपार्टमेंटचा मी HOD असल्याने आणि मोनेटा मध्ये कमिटी असल्याने मला फेस्ट कसा हाताळायचा, टीम मध्ये काम कसं करायचं, नियोजन, टाइम मॅनेजमेण्ट, इत्यादी ह्याची उत्तम शिकवण मिळाली. पोदार कॉलेज विश्व विख्यात TED शी संलग्न असल्याने मला TEDx R. A. Podar अशा विश्व विख्यात मंचावर खगोलशास्त्रावर व्याख्यान देण्याची संधी मिळाली. त्यामुळे माझी भाषा, बोलतानाचे हावभाव, बोलण्यात स्पष्टता, लोकांसमोर बोलण्याचा आत्मविश्वास अशा अगणित गोष्टी मला आत्मसाद झाल्या.

माझा छंद खगोलशास्त्र म्हणजेच कॉलेजच्या शैक्षणिक क्षेत्राच्या बाहेरचा असून सुद्धा कॉलेजच्या सर्व शिक्षकांनी, सर्व कर्मचाऱ्यांनी मला कायम प्रोत्साहन दिलं, तो छंद जोपासण्यासाठी आणि मी त्या विषयात देखील अजून काय प्रगती करू शकतो ह्याचं मार्गदर्शन केलं, आणि माझ्या सर्व उपक्रमांना, वाटचालीला कायम प्रोत्साहन दिलं, प्रेम दिलं ह्याबद्दल मी कॉलेजचा विशेष आभारी आहे. एकूणच माझ्या व्यक्तिमत्त्वाचा विकासामध्ये माझ्या महाविद्यालयाचा खूप मोलाचा आणि महत्वाचा असल्याने मी कॉलेजचे, कॉलेजच्या सर्व शिक्षकांचे मनःपूर्वक आभार मानतो!



MY EXPERIENCE IN PODAR

My whole life took a turn on 26 August 2017, the day when I got admitted in R.A Podar College of Commerce and Economics. At first in my view, college was just where all studious people came and studied, but as time passed I realized Podar is very different from any other college. I remember our beloved principal Shobhana Vasudevan ma'am addressing me in her office to take part in various activities and forums.

In FYJC, I participated in RAPPORT which eventually resulted in making many new friends and knowing a little about the culture of Podar. During SYJC I became a volunteer in Podar Enigma and at that moment I was really shocked to see how a college fest can be so properly and well managed.

After clearing my 12th board examination with flying colours, I decided to pursue B.com from Podar. In my first year of degree college I made new friends and eventually became a member of THE KATTA GANG and started chilling with my homies on KATTA. During my first year I participated in various intercollege fest and enjoyed RAPPORT and MONETA.

At the end of the first year, not only me but the whole world was shocked due to the introduction of a deadly virus named COVID-19. The whole second year and almost half of the third year went online, but when all the world went digital, all fests of Podar also went digital. We enjoyed doing online Enigma. It was a whole new experience for me. But in the end I never realized how fast these 5 years of college life went.

One thing Podar taught me is to identify the real faces of people and it has also improved my self confidence and communication skills. The motto of Podar "Nurturing intellect, creating personalities" is very true.

At the end I would just like to add,

"Katte ki Subah se, DPs ki sham tak.
Subhash ke sandwich se, Bandys ki franky tak.
Enigma Zindagi se, Rapport ki Roshani tak.
Na jaane hum kitni yaadein le jaa rahe hai
Ye points, Ye katta, Ye Audi, Ye climbing wall hume bula rahe hai.
I may walk out of Podar, but Podar will never walk out of me.
Once a Podarite, always a Podarite."

Thank you Podar for these 5 memorable years and changing my life.

Shrey Chaurasia
Class of 2022



Alumni Interviews

Alumni network of Podar is just like this tree; Branches reach for the sky, yet roots hold the earth



Dilip Vengsarkar

Class of 1978

Q. Which is that one experience that Podar has given you, that has shaped you into a better person or has helped you throughout your life?

A - Well, there can't be just one incident. Actually, I became a test cricketer while I was still in college and played for India. I went on a tour to the West Indies for the first time, New Zealand and then Australia and Pakistan. When I was in college, I was the captain of the college's team and Mumbai University. I was also the captain of Indian universities against the MCC England team. Around that time, I got an excellent platform to showcase my talent. and Podar offered that to me.

Professor Chandarker, I think, was the main instrument - he was my mentor. He was the one who taught me the subjects which I could not attend because of my cricket commitments. I used to go to his house every morning whenever I was in Mumbai, and he used to take special classes for me. And then he would tell others also. There was Professor Putane, our statistics professor; Professor Mahajan was there as well.

There were some great professors around that time, and they wrote books. The faculty that time was fantastic. Absolutely top class. And that shaped everybody's life and career for that matter.

Q. Is there any other activity or maybe something cultural that you were involved in apart from cricket?

A - No, I didn't get much time because during my first year in college only I think we won the Intercollegiate tournament for the first time in the history of Podar College. The final, I remember, was in Baymont Stadium and we beat Siddharth College. It was a very close finish.

In the first year itself, I got a lot of runs for college and then I was in Bombay University also playing tournaments. So, I didn't get much time to attend college and to attend lectures as well. But the college helped me a lot because whenever I had time, they gave me special classes individually.

There was a peon called Parab, I think he used to get all the books from the library to my home just to go through the books and that sort of thing. They literally pampered me so much but that was the privilege I had again. The Professors, the principal at that time were all amazing people. Professor Chandarker, I think was the best teacher at the same time I think he was in charge of sports also, and then he was secretary of the mobile ticket board. So, he was involved in cricket in a big way, and he always helped us.



Q. Now that our college is completing 80 years and stepping into the 81st year, is there any special message that you would like to give to the upcoming generation like the new Podarites?

A - Yeah, to be honest with you, I have been to college a few times. Whenever they won, I was invited as the Chief Guest also. Shobana ma'am is very keen on sports. She is a fantastic Principal for the college. She obviously platforms a lot of players across various different sports.

So, I quite admire this thing, and I hope it continues, because it's a great tradition and history, what we have in Podar college, and everybody should keep it up, that's important.



Uday Tikekar Class of 1981

Q. Which incidents from Podar have helped shape you as an individual and how have they helped you in the outer world?

A - Basically some of my seniors, Mr. Vijay Gokhale, Niranjana Paralkar, Sunil Karve, they used to participate in the cultural activities of college. So I had learned Tabla for about 11 years before I came to Podar and my intention to come to Podar was to participate in as many events as possible. One incident that I remember vividly is there was a dholki kept near the entrance and I started playing it. After a while I realized there were a lot of people standing behind me and all of them were my seniors. They just picked me up and took me inside. That's how I started participating in events. I started accompanying, participating in individual events. My parents were theater artists so I decided to try my hand at acting. The first competition that I took part in was successful, I got tremendous applause. After that my interest grew and things went on happening.

Then I started participating in music events, dance events and so on. After that I was recognised because the first competition was organized by Doordarshan. That's how I started growing as an actor. Even before I started my career in acting, our Principal P.J. Joshi encouraged us a lot. We had late night rehearsals and practices. He, along with his wife, personally visited us and inquired about our progress. Before every event he wished us luck. He helped us limitlessly. If he hadn't been around we might not have reached this level of success. Hats Off to them.

Kumud Mishra ma'am, Prof Dalal they also encouraged us a lot. Even if you have a talent platform should be made available. This platform was given to us by Podar. My seniors encouraged me. I'll fall short of words to express my gratitude towards Podar. I'm here only because of Podar and there are no two ways about it. Huge thanks to my parents because they supported me and they specially admitted me to Podar so I could choose my path.

I get very emotional when it comes to speaking about Podar. Whenever I visit the auditorium, I walk down that memory lane. All my experiences flash back and how I grew. We came to college early in the morning at around 7 and left only after completing our practice late. I will never forget about the canteen, we were bred by Ramdas and his brother. We used to eat on credit so that time he used to be behind us to pay off his canteen debt. And later when I got recognition and whenever I visited college he personally looked after what I needed and never charged me for that. He loved us.

All the helping staff, Pagar Mama, all of them made college feel like home. It still is my home but the difference is in not physically present there.



Q. Is there any hidden talent which you recognised only because of Podar?

A - I had the talent but Podar gave me the platform. I got to explore myself by participating in various events and got to know oh yes I can do this. I found myself in Podar. I also got my wife Aarti in college. She is a classical singer and I accompanied her. Not only my professional career but I got my family also because of Podar.

Q. What message would you like to give to the new Podarites?

A - Analyze yourselves because every home has a Sachin Tendulkar, Madhuri Dixit, Shah Rukh Khan, that's what parents feel but we know what we can do best. Give your 100% in whatever you like. There are very niche career options so if you wish to pursue something in those, go for it. Even if you have a degree in commerce you can choose your option for further studies. Even now when I'm talking to you I'm someone in the canteen or the Audi or makeup rooms. This is a fantastic feeling. I'm really proud of being a Podarite.



Tushar Dalavi
Class of 1987

Q. How has Podar helped shape you as an individual and helped you in the outer world?

A - Podar has helped me in my career as an actor and shaped my overall personality. When I was admitted as a student I only had the idea of joining the best commerce college. I was very nervous at the beginning but gradually as I made friends and got to know our teachers had various experiences slowly I started to open up. It gave me a perspective, helped me develop my personality. I had no God father in the acting field and little did I know I would take up acting as a career.

I had a liking for acting and slowly I started participating in college events. One event that I remember vividly is the Hindi Sahitya Mandals intraclass competition. I had very little knowledge about Hindi writers then, so we visited libraries, found some one act plays and then translated them. But I believe in that age it helped us grow. I had a liking to perform on stage along with going to libraries and reading books of various writers translating it. Nothing of this was done on purpose. We developed a perspective towards everything around us, we thought about it and realized a lot of things about the outside world. Then I started participating in intercollegiate fests which gave me friends. I was involved in some politics. I was the GS of the union.

I was the CR as well which helped me. Podar helped me in the foundation of my early career.

Q. Is there any hidden talent which Podar helped you discover?

A - We didn't have reality shows back then so college events were a great platform. Youth festival being a very prestigious event we did every possible thing to win the trophy. We performed Marathi plays and we got to know and participated in Gujarat events as well to earn points. Along with that we participated in Konkani and Kannada events as well. We got the script translated from the canteen incharge. We developed the never die attitude and we at least gave it a try. We stayed back in college for rehearsals, we developed team spirit and we have it out shot. We took it up as a challenge and faced it. All of this was possible only because of college. As we were doing all of this for college it came from within and things went on happening. Now when I think about it I realized all those things helped me later. When I had challenges all those experiences helped me, college life was like training.



Q. What message would you like to give to the new Podarites?

A - Times have changed and my experiences may not be relevant today but i would like to say that whatever you do, do it with complete passion and good spirit. You're not getting back these days of college again and we are in such a good institute, we should make the most of it. Podar encourages all the activities and provides opportunities. It's our duty to keep up with the name and the legacy of Podar because Podar has a rich tradition. Even today when we connect with any Podarite the attitude is different, the tone of the conversation changes. That bond is developed only because of the activities we do in college. All that you do, do it to take the college name to greater heights. It definitely helps in the overall development of personality and always have gratitude towards college.



**Pooja Gaitonde,
Class of 2013**

Q. Which incidents from your college life have had a positive impact on you and how have they shaped you?

A - Podar has been very supportive in terms of my music. The reason I say this is because music requires a lot of riyaz and considering that, all the teachers and staff let me pay attention to my music and not worry about the attendance and were very cooperative in that. Podar I think is known for supporting extracurriculars along with our academic careers as well, so I think I've been blessed to be a part of Podar since FYJC right until my Masters in Commerce. They've been very supportive.

Q. Is there any hidden talent of yours that Podar helped you discover?

A - Yeah. I think there are so many hidden talents. In today's generation & in our generation, there is no dearth of talent and Podar recognizes that and promotes it well. It's been an amazing experience for me. Like they say, "Once a Podarite, Always a Podarite."

I have personally seen this once. It was a concert for the Alumni in the Shanmukhananda Hall. I had performed and the hall was completely full. It had people right from the '82 batch and '87 batch to the most recent graduates. It's like 'Jaan Haazir Hai', and that comes only when the institution gives you that much of an attachment.

Something that I really like about Podar is that when you enter here, you'll instantly see people you know and they recognize you. I really like that vibe. The teachers are also so supportive and friendly. Even today, teachers like Vrushali Ma'am and CS sir & I are extremely friendly, more than a teacher. They stress on the academics while ensuring the culture is maintained as well. So it's not like the academics are compromised. I feel so nostalgic about my time there.

Q. What message would you like to give to the new Podarites?

A - I would just say that it's so supportive for cultural activities. I think one should make the best use of it. And I'm sure each and every student has some talent. So I think if you focus on that along with your academics, it'll be the cherry on the cake.

So I think the best thing is if you're there in Podar and if you have a talent, you can make the best use of it and try to get it out, in the public place. Be it music, be it dance, be it whatever, and just



focus on yourself, because that's important. Because other colleges, they don't give such privileges of attendance or such liberty either.

Alumni network of Podar is just like this tree; Branches reach for the sky, yet roots hold the earth



Shantanu Rangnekar

Class of 2018

Q. How has Podar helped shape you as an individual and helped you in the outer world?

A - When I was in junior college I couldn't experience life at Podar because I had some acting projects lined up. I always knew I had to pursue acting and was passionate about it but I wanted a degree as well. I decided to take up commerce and the best college for Commerce is Podar.

My journey in Podar actually started in degree college. In my first year I got to know about the Youth Festival, its grandeur and how Podar's enthusiasm for participation is different. I started participating in the youth festival and the staff were so supportive they groomed us really well. That's when I realized Podar doesn't help individuals grow only academically but it helps students grow through culture and art as well. That was the best part of being in Podar. I was growing academically along with my art, communication, confidence and skills being developed. I was the Vice-Chairperson of Enigma. I learnt about management skills and it helped develop my personality. I was also the General Secretary of Podar, all these experiences shaped me into the person I dreamt of becoming.

I was able to do all of this only because I was in Podar and our Principal ma'am, Vice-Principal, Vrushali ma'am, Sandhya ma'am, Amita Ma'am, the cultural coordinators, all of them helped me in this journey of mine.

Q. Was there any hidden talent of yours which you got to know after coming to Podar?

A - There was nothing as such but I liked music and singing songs. So once I told ma'am that I want to sing and audition for the event. I was pretty confident to give the auditions and after the auditions ma'am told me we should perform and I performed during Geet bahar in front of all the student audience. I always wished to perform but that platform was given to me by Podar.

Q. You have participated in Youth as a student and now you are one of the directors. How do you feel coming back to college as a director?

A - This is a very different feeling. Many colleges approach us to be their directors for theater events but we choose only Podar because we're just giving back to Podar the art and legacy that we got from our seniors. We don't take up two colleges at a time. We dedicate all our time to Podar. Art and the love for Podar is beyond everything else. I have participated as a student and now I'm the director. One common thing in both these roles is I was learning then and even today I'm learning.



It is a surreal feeling that Podar has never taken away our learning phase from us. It provides every opportunity to learn and grow.

Q. Any message for current Podarites?

A - Enjoy your time in Podar, learn and grow. Also keep up with the name that Podar has earned as the best Commerce college. Grab every opportunity it offers you. Upload the culture we follow at Podar all of this together will help you reach greater heights and you'll be a respected human in the society!



Abhijit Gaikwad

Class of 2018

Q. How has Podar helped shape you and helped you in the outer world?

A - There are many incidents, because our college is the best place for artists and for people inclined towards academics as well. It gives us a platform. I got recognition because of our college. I am a DJ and I got a platform to perform, everyone knows about it so whenever there is any problem regarding technical stuff they call me. College has given me my future and it always supports individuals. Our Principal ma'am along with the entire staff everyone is very supportive.

Q. Is there any hidden talent which you recognised because of Podar?

A - I always loved music but my batchmates, my juniors and my seniors supported me in my journey. I had kept music to myself but Podar gave me that platform and exposure to come out of my shell.

Q. Which academic incidents and friendship related experiences do you think you 're able to experience only because you were in Podar?

A - My batch was the artist batch because we had Shantanu Rangnekar, Udit Patil, Poonam Shah and we had amazing sports persons as well. I had the working department but my batch recognised that the working department wasn't made for me. They realized I was meant for DJ and all the technical stuff so my batch supported me and helped me grow. So I love working for college.

Q. What message would you like to give to the new Podarites?

A - Do everything with unity because where there's unity things happen really well. If it is a cultural fest or a finance fest work in unity. Accept the difference in opinion and work on it. It is important for the fest to be successful. Successful fests give recognition to the college as well as the students. Recognize each other's strengths and help each other grow.



**Sahil Joshi,
Class of 2020**

Q. Which incidents from your college life have had a positive impact on you and how have they shaped you?

A - I believe there have been numerous events where I have explored new canvases and obliterated the boundaries within. I couldn't be more grateful to Podar for helping me challenge my limits and push them further. As far as I remember, the very first event where I got to showcase my passion was during Rapport in my first year. Getting into R. A. Podar with the sole intention of shaping my passion towards music into something I could dwell with my whole life, I really couldn't *not* look forward to the event! Hence, I decided to register for the event 'Bollywood Solo'. Compensating my performance anxiety with the sheer happiness of getting up on stage and performing something new in front of a totally unfamiliar crowd seemed like a huge task for me. However, the post-performance feedback gave me a strong feeling that this is my home ground and this is where I have to cherish and evolve as an artist. In my junior college, I participated in numerous inter-collegiate fests and bagged prizes, and this is where I met my career-mate Maitreya Joshi, whom I work with as a music director.

In degree college, Maitreya and I got an artful opportunity to compose and perform a set of songs as an invocation with my fellow cultural mates at the 75th year celebration of our college at Shanmukhananda Hall. This opportunity was granted to us by Vrushali Kaneri Ma'am, to whom I've always been grateful. Following the success and appreciation of this event, Maitreya and I got to work as student directors for the Indian Group Song Event at Youth Festival 18-19 organized by Mumbai University. For two consecutive years, we both worked as Student directors for Indian Group Song Event and bagged the gold medal for the same. Later in the third year, we got to work as Student Directors at State, Zonal and National level, where we represented Mumbai University. It has been a splendid journey of growth.

Q. Is there any hidden talent of yours that Podar helped you discover?

A - Up until degree college I had always been a person with linear thinking. I was pursuing Hindustani classical music at that time and every other music genre was foreign to me. I was very unfamiliar with the latest bollywood songs or trending pop songs, since my only focus was learning and evolving in Hindustani Music. With the same mindset, I got myself to audition for Youth festival music events, only confined to Hindustani Music. Somehow the director who came to audition us first wasn't from the Hindustani events. His name was Sumit Chache, whom I call Sumit Dada, who was the director of Western music events. I tried to convince him that I was not familiar with any western songs per se, or I had never tried anything of that sort. Believe me, he forced me to sing since my friends told him that I have a good music sense and I ended up singing 'Kesariya Baalama' for a western song audition! Looking at the way I was singing, he



told me to be present for rehearsals thereafter. He groomed me in all those events and made me give my best. Surprisingly, in all the three years of my degree college, I managed to bag the Silver medal in the Western Group song event of the Youth Festival .

Never had I ever thought that someone like me, so linear about my potential and limitations, would achieve something like this. Participating in Western group song, I learnt to play Harmonica, Acoustic guitar, Kazoo, and expanded my horizons. I even learnt how to sing harmonies and Beatbox! Now that I look back, I feel grateful to have been exposed to such events that helped me expand my own boundaries.

I am grateful that Podar has helped me unfold facets of my personality that I wasn't previously aware of. Maitreya and I worked as student directors for the Indian Group song in Youth festival as well, which was a whole new canvas to paint. Working as a director helped me gain a whole different perspective. It gave me the confidence to materialize my ideas and execute them with the help of my other fellow students.

Q. What message would you like to give to the new Podarites?

A - I have always been grateful for all the wisdom I received from the people I came across. Surely the most important message would be to never be afraid to experiment and learn new things. Oftentimes we feel anxious about wanting to experiment new things due to which, we tend to stick to our comfort zones. But opportunities have the potential to make us grow, and I truly have lived and experienced the fact that we would never know of the outcome if we never tried. Hence, you all shouldn't be afraid to experiment and even fail for that matter. You never know how things could lead you to something and that could turn out to be the most beautiful thing you have ever experienced. Make sure you never get carried away with success! Learn to empathize with people and learn to be grateful to people and to experiences that teach you!



**Maitreya Joshi,
Class of 2020**

Q. Which incidents from your college life have had a positive impact on you and how have they shaped you?

A - Podar has helped me both musically and as an individual. When I came here in the first year in 2015, I participated in Rapport, along with participating in various Music, Theater and Sports Events as well. Slowly I started learning more and more about other festivals & participated in them. Then came the 75th festival celebration, which was somewhat of a turning point where Vrushali Ma'am gave us the opportunity to control eight different genres. So that gave us a boost. That was the first thing that we did when we participated in the Youth Festival.

We learned from our seniors who came and they showed us how it is done. First year we learned, and then from the next year we started composing and directing. So that was again a turning point where we started directing and then we started recruiting more people. We started composing our own music. We started making singles, releasing on social media (YouTube specifically) and other platforms and then started making contacts. So that was the musical part of it.

The other part was where the personality gets developed automatically when you are around so many different people. There are so many different kinds of students there, from diverse backgrounds. So when you interact with them, you learn life skills. You learn how to interact with people, how to interact with the faculty, how to convince people when they are not in your favor. But some of the other life skills that I learned from my college are writing and of course time management, by handling various events while managing both studies and classes.

Q. Is there any hidden talent of yours that Podar helped you discover?

A - No, not really something that Podar helped me discover, but I entered college as a sports person, as I was a table tennis state level player. Then I started for the college team in 11th and 12th, however because of CA I had to give it up. That's the first thing.

The other thing which helped me develop again was the time management and people skills, how to handle people, how to interact with them, and manage various events at one time.

Q. What message would you like to give to the new Podarites?

A - There's only one message. What I want to say is enjoy those five years, and do as much as you can. Just don't get stuck in the studies of it, that will happen more or less if you concentrate



on it. It will happen in its own time. But do the other extra-curricular stuff - participate in various events, participate in various cultural, sports, social activities, do everything possible to develop your personality more than focusing just on the curriculum part.



Glimpses of a glorious past...

Alumni network of Podar is just like this tree; Branches reach for the sky, yet roots hold the earth



Some of the first students in
Podar College



Early days of the Podar library



The Chief Guest delivering his
address at the Annual Day



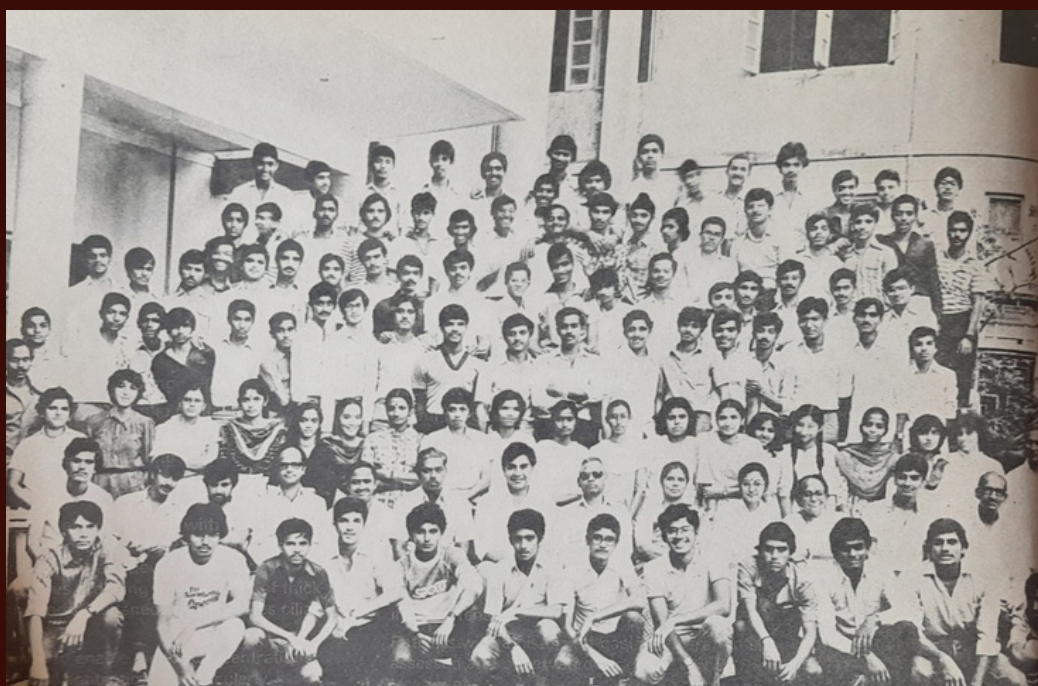
The Vice Chancellor meets the
students' representatives



Students playing cricket in
Gymkhana grounds



Farokh Engineer, Chief Guest,
speaking on Gymkhana Day



Gymkhana Day Prize winners 1983-84



Inauguration of Planning Forum



Inauguration of Hindi Sahitya Mandal



N.S.S. Annual Day



N.S.S. Medical Camp, Barhanpur



Dramatics Workshop



Hindi Drama at Youth Festival



'Bhoma' team with the Shakespeare trophy for English Drama



Youth Festival trophy received by Principal



Inter-Collegiate Cricket Champions



Madras IIT Basketball Tournament Team



Senior College Teaching Staff



Junior College Teaching Staff



Inauguration of Gujarati Literary Circle



Youth Festival Dance Team



Annual Day 1993





Annual Prize Distribution 2001



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N.C.C. Cadets 2001-02



The winning cricket team



Enigma & RAPPORT 2005-06



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Degree College Teaching Staff



Junior College Teaching Staff



The Clock Tower through the years...



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Once a Podarite, Always a Podarite!