

PRITHVI (2016 Batch)

1. You've received several prestigious awards in music. Which achievement stands out as the most memorable or meaningful to you, and why?

I cherish all the awards that I have had the fortune of receiving. However, three awards are close to my heart. When I was in my 6th grade, I was selected by LG in their 'Lead XI' talent contest, as a part of 15 kids from India to represent the country and sing the National Anthem along with Indian Cricket Team at the ICC Championship Trophy 2009 in South Africa. I had the fortune of singing the Anthem, along with Virat Kohli, Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid.

In 2019, I received the Spirit of Youth Best Male Performer at the highly prestigious Music Academy, Madras after singing in their Spirit of Youth Festival. Finally, in 2021, I received a 'Young Artiste' Scholarship from CCRT, a Government wing that aids in honing and fostering culture through arts. Being recognised by the Government of India is something I feel really proud of.

2. With your background in both technology and music, have you ever thought about combining these interests in unique ways?

Definitely! I feel data science is a growing field and provides scope for a lot of exploration. Especially with music, there are many things that can be done; like raga identification, song identification, identifying the singer through spectral dynamics, beat calculator, composing a song given a ragam, etc. Given how data science concepts can go hand in hand with music, algorithms can be built accordingly which will be an extremely useful contribution to the music fraternity; a very small contribution that I can give back to music.



3. You've been recognized for your achievements in fine arts and academics. What advice would you give to your fellow students on pursuing their passions and excelling in multiple areas of interest?

I would definitely encourage them to go on and pursue multiple of their interests simultaneously. Multitasking might not be everyone's cup of tea, and I cannot ask everyone to pursue varied interests just for the sake of doing it, but to whoever wants to excel in academics and also prove a point in any other field of their interest, they should not think twice about it. If so, everything else will fall in place.

4. As a student of this school, can you recall any specific teachers or mentors who have been particularly influential in your journey, either in academics or music?

My class teacher in my 6th grade, Preethi ma'am who taught English, was one of my favourites! Another absolute favourite teacher of mine was Vinitha Soni ma'am! I had the best times when she taught me English in my 10th and 11th grade. She was soft-spoken but extremely supportive! Other favourite teachers of mine include Shameem Fathima ma'am (8th grade Biology), Narmada ma'am (7th grade Maths) and Jayanthi ma'am (10th grade Maths). Mangalagowri ma'am of the Music Department has been a constant source of support and encouragement throughout the time I spent at CV!

5. As someone who has been part of the school's music and cultural scene, what do you feel is the significance of arts education in a student's overall development?

I have learnt to seamlessly juggle between academics and music commitment from 7th grade, when I started to give stage performances. During the course of 11th grade, I made a decision not to go ahead with IIT, but go in for a professional course that will be less demanding for me to handle a professional career as well as pursue my passion. Regular practice of music gave me clarity and helped me appreciate and enjoy the artistic talent of others.

6. You mentioned that you've performed at various sabhas and temples. Can you share how your school's music or cultural activities helped prepare you for these performances?

I personally feel, CV is a big ocean for a student as the number of students in each class is almost 700+ including all sections! Considering that, if you are able to make a mark in that school, rest assured, you will definitely be able to shine anywhere in the world. Growing up in CV ensured that I grew out of stage fear very early in life as

almost every day we had assembly programmes where I got to perform. It built my confidence in a big way, and being part of the school music choir ensured that I participated in many group competitions as well as solo ones. So, the practice of facing an audience was ingrained in me from early school days and I'm much grateful to my dear school for unknowingly making me ready for a career in performing arts.

7. What message or would you like to convey to your school juniors who may be looking up to you as an inspiration for their own journeys ahead?

I personally would like to share with all my school juniors - not to give up on the passion. Parents always aspire for academic achievements over sports / arts, but if we work hard and show them that we can manage both, I'm sure they will support and guide us. Most important thing here is, we need to understand academics are important too, so it is imperative to work hard during the school days and leave the decision on what we want to do for a profession, to a few more years after completing education.

8. How did your time at CV contribute to your overall success and personal development that played a pivotal role in your journey?

I have gained quite a lot being a part of this institution and I cannot thank enough for all that it has given to me.

Be it the extremely competitive environment in academics with FIIT JEE as a part of the school curriculum, everyday/festival assembly sessions marked with wonderful dance/music programmes and speeches; enjoying the practice sessions as a part of the school choir; competing/winning in music competitions; participating in Bournvita Quiz and going up to semi-finals in Kolkata while in 8th grade; going to NASA, USA as a part of the school tour while in 8th grade and enjoying a different level of experience with friends and teachers; winning a Robotics Competition and going to Boston, US in 9th grade.. While the Principal and teachers created a beautiful encouraging ambience to learn, the competitive peer groups created a healthy environment to contend and collaborate.

THE JOURNEY MIGHT BE TEMPESTUOUS, INVOLVING HESITANCE AND SELF-DOUBT, BUT ONE SHOULD ALWAYS FIRST TRY AND HAVE FAITH.

NITHIN RAMESAN (2013 Batch)

1. Your journey from Chettinad Vidyashram in Chennai to Qualcomm is a remarkable one. What drove you to make this move, and would you recommend it now after experiencing the changes?

I think my path from CV to Qualcomm was a result of a series of smaller decisions and motivations, rather than the result of a single large motivation. I liked doing research enough that I thought a PhD would be a good next step, and it was. I did a couple of internships at Qualcomm and soon I started working there full time. Yes, I would definitely recommend this journey to my past self.



2. Are there any milestone projects that left a lasting impression on you and are there any lessons that you learnt from those experiences that you would like to share with us?

I'd consider my PhD thesis/research one giant project, and it definitely left a lasting impression on me :) Some of the important things I learned from it are:

- 1) Staying motivated
- 2) The importance of not procrastinating on work
- 3) How to learn/pick up new topics in as efficient a way as possible

3. Can you share any personal challenges you've faced in your journey and how you overcame them?

Dealing with the pandemic and all the disruptions and uncertainties that it brought with it during grad school was a challenge, as I'm sure it was for everyone. Having a lovely support system in the form of friends certainly helped in coping with that.

4. How has your experience at Chettinad Vidyashram, along with your education at

IIT, shaped your ability to excel in the dynamic tech industry? Is there a specific lesson or experience that continues to influence your professional life?

On the technical side of things, the basic math skills I learned during school and the engineering and math principles I learned during college continue to be used during my work now. A lot of the coding practices, also come in handy. I've found that learning new/advanced math and coding skills is much easier when I can springboard off of strong basics.

5. Could you share how you balance work and personal life, including any hobbies or principles that help you excel professionally while cherishing your personal life?

Successfully dividing work from personal life is definitely still a work in progress for me. It was harder during grad school. It's become easier now as I work a full time job. I try not to work more than a certain amount of time every weekday, and I also try not to work on weekends. This means I need to be as efficient as possible when I am working. I've been able to find some time to pursue hobbies I want to - these include reading, baking, running and playing Dungeons and Dragons.

6. What advice would you offer to aspiring engineers and technologists at Chettinad Vidyashram, inspired by your achievements at Qualcomm?

I believe that the tech industry is constantly changing - in a year of working a full time job, I've had to learn/re-learn a number of new skills/topics to work on different projects. The primary thing that has made that easier for me is trying to not view those tasks as a burden, but instead as something new and interesting to figure out. In the interest of not getting stuck in a rut, I've tried to stay as curious as possible about everything I hear and see during work. It can definitely get pretty exhausting to keep doing this, of course, and I try to be curious in moderation so that I don't burn out.

7. Beyond technical skills, what qualities or values do you believe set you apart in the competitive world of technology and innovation?

Being able to communicate well is a pretty important skill in any collaborative job, which tech jobs usually are. I think another very important skill is being able to document my work -and generating extensive documentation means that all of that taking over happens a lot more efficiently.

EXCELLENCE IS NOT A SKILL..IT'S AN ATTITUDE!