

From 24th January to 7th February, 2016, 128 students from five states travelled 1800 km over 15 days to 12 cities and heard from 28 inspiring speakers.

This is...



# LEAD

# PRAYANA

*Unleash your leadership potential*





## Why do we do **LEAD PRAYANA**?

LEAD Prayana, which began in 2012, is an annual leadership journey that takes over 120 passionate students aged between 18-26 from throughout India on a 15-day tour across Karnataka, and parts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Packed with role model sessions, hands-on activities, and site visits, LEAD Prayana inspires students by exposing them to individuals and institutions which have innovated and implemented solutions to major challenges. Through this leadership journey we aim to instill in the participants a need to bring change through effective leadership. When LEAD Prayana 2016, concludes, we will have had almost 550 students go on this leadership journey of a lifetime.

Through sessions with our specially selected role models and speakers, the participants are exposed to leaders across a variety of fields and not only learn more about topics including entrepreneurship, agriculture, technology, and the non-profit sector, but hear about the up and downs these accomplished leaders have gone through in their own leadership journeys. These intimate discussions help to broaden the participants' understanding of what a leader looks like and how to undertake their next steps to becoming leaders. An emphasis on asking questions offers the participants the unique experience to interact with the role models and speakers, and makes their Prayana more personal and rewarding.

Hands-on activities and community break-out sessions take the participants out of the classroom to enhance and apply their leadership skills in the community. Conducting educational activities and interactions in villages along the route and team building activities amongst the participants are planned with the aim of experiential learning. The skills learned in these activities will help the participants once they return to their colleges and start projects in their communities.

While ultimately a learning experience, LEAD Prayana is also an opportunity for fun and friendship. Group activities such as dancing, yoga, and games not only offer time to have fun and unwind during the journey, but help the participants to get to know each other. With participants from five different states across India, LEAD Prayana aims to offer a national networking opportunity for its participants and the possibility for lifelong friendships and connections with other motivated future leaders.

# 2016 Prayanee Testimonials



**Dhivya S, CMRIT Bengaluru**

"As the tagline says, Prayana is a journey for discovering ourselves, and yes, it has brought a great change in me. Every bit of Prayana was inspiring! And it's not only about learning, it's also fun. Before LEAD Prayana, I had friends all over Karnataka, but now I have friends all over India!"

**Bhavya S, BUD College Pune**

"I'm going to make it large one day for sure and will always say that LEAD Prayana helped me to achieve that!"



**Shyam S, SJMIT Chitradurga**

"I thought I have enough time and enough ideas to implement in my society but I was wrong... LEAD PRAYANA has shown me lots of problems and the best solutions for them through meeting the best role models and I am now eager to implement and initiate those ideas I learnt in PRAYANA."

**Richa S, Banaras Hindu University**

"Lead Prayana was a great platform to explore our ourselves. It was a journey based on experience learning. Overall experience was simply remarkable."



**Vivek A, RV College of Engineering Bengaluru**

"Prayana as the name suggests, is a wonderful journey made to colour 15 days of your life to make you remember it for a lifetime. Not many people get a chance to meet people across the country and spend time with them and make a network including role models. Prayana is a drink which I would love to sip over and again."



# LEAD PRAYANA 2016

## Route 1

### BELAGAVI January 24th

VTU Belagavi played host to the kick-off ceremony for Route 1, where after the lighting of the ceremonial flame, students and honoured guests alike were treated to a rousing speech by **Mr. H. Maheshappa**, Vice Chancellor of VTU. While Mr. Maheshappa shared his six traits of a true leader, he noted that in fact, “leadership is an enigma, but we know it when we see it”. **Mr. Naveen Jha**, CEO of Deshpande Foundation, also shared the learnings from his years of leadership experience, and told the students that LEAD Prayana would “take them to the ocean”, but it was their choice if they would seize this monumental opportunity to develop their leadership skills by jumping in, or whether simply dip a toe into leadership. The evening featured a talent show put on by the students of VTU Belgaum, including impressive dancers, an energetic rock band, and some comedy from the show’s hosts.



### KUPPAM January 25th-26th

Kuppam's **Agastya Foundation** was a definite highlight for the Prayanees of Route 1. **Mr. Nitin Desai** inspired the students with Agastya's mission to bring the "Ah, Aha, and Haha" into learning. The Prayanees explored the campus' many areas and centres and gave back to the Agastya community by constructing a shack and seating area out of natural and upcycled materials. An evening performance of Karnataka folk music by Folk India was a huge hit, and also featured many Prayanees taking the stage to perform folk songs from their own regions. While in Kuppam, the Prayanees also conducted educational activities in four neighbouring villages. They also visited nearby village Gadapalli to join their Republic Day program, celebrating with the students of the village government school.



### DODDABALLAPUR January 27th

On the way to Doddaballapur, the Prayanees took the opportunity to visit the birthplace of Visveshwarya, the famed engineer. However, the man LEAD Prayana was actually going to visit was a humble farmer living in a remote village. **Mr. Narayan Reddy**, sprightly 81-year-old internationally acclaimed organic farmer, shared his passion for organic farming, the natural world, and living a simple life. Mr. Reddy reminded the budding leaders to “never compare themselves to the richest developed country, but the poorest man in the village”, and his quick wit and good humour keeps all the students amazed by his life and leadership story. The students also participated in educating the villagers about the importance of sanitation and education. A tour of the farm and its techniques, home cooked meals made from the bounty of the farm, and finally a reflection session with Mr. Reddy, rounded out the day before the students went to sleep in the rustic farmhouse.







# LEAD PRAYANA 2016

## Route 2



## NIZAMABAD January 24th

The day started off with the Kick-off Ceremony featuring **Mr. Ram Reddy**, a retired engineer and father of Kakatiya Sandbox co-founder Raju Reddy. This was followed by the journey's first site visit to **Bangaru Irrigation Systems** and a tour of their farms and factories, offering insight into the agricultural industry so important here in India. Transitioning to a completely different field, the Prayanees then visited local media network **Media Vision and K6**, learning how the studio runs and interacting with the chief of the channel and getting the chance to be featured on a live stream.

## HYDERABAD January 25th-27th

The group's 3 days in Hyderabad were jam-packed with sessions, site visits, and inspiration. The first stop was **IIT-H and T-Hub**, where the Prayanees interacted with budding entrepreneurs and got an opportunity to better understand the highs and lows of building your own business. A tour of the beautiful 5-floor T-Hub and sessions with **Prof. Madhavi K.** and **Prof. Krishna Raju** of IIT-H rounded out a day of entrepreneurial learning. The second day in Hyderabad marked Republic Day, so the Prayanees connected with their roots by visiting a local Goshala and joined the enthusiastic students of Saraswathi Vidya Mandir school to hoist the nation's flag. An afternoon of site visits, first to **Hyderabad Golf Association** with **Mr. Dayakar Reddy** and **Mr. Sanjay Jesrani**, second to Nirmaan to learn about **Vidya Helpline** which offers free educational guidance over the phone, and lastly to **Deegit Inc**, a global technology and staffing solution company. The final day in Hyderabad began with a visit to **CARE Hospitals**, with cardiologist Dr. Krishna Reddy telling the Prayanees how "purpose is the soul of an organization". The final activity in Hyderabad was a visit to **Adaequare**, an innovative software company where the CEO, **Mr. Pavan Peechara**, is guiding innovative solutions to common problems such as complex taxation policies and procedures.





# LEAD PRAYANA 2016

## BENGALURU January 28th-29th

Dr. H.R. Nagendra, Chancellor of the famous yoga university S-VYASA, welcomed the Prayanees, and after conveying the importance of yoga techniques to purify and control the mind and body, the students were also treated to a tour of the campus, including their world class yoga science research and treatment centres. The next stop was **Jain University**, which played host to two speaker sessions from role models in drastically different sectors. The first was **Suhas Gopinath**, who shared the amazing and wildly entertaining story of his rise into IT leadership as the world's youngest CEO at 17, sharing his wisdom of the importance of "leading from the front". **Nalini Shekhar** and several of her non-profit's beneficiaries also spoke to the Prayanees about Hasiru Dahla, which works to empower and offer meaningful employment to ragpickers.

When they arrived at **Microsoft Ventures** the next day, the Prayanees were happily surprised when five accomplished leaders took the stage that day, rather than the stated two. First was **Mr. Musthafa PC**, the founder of iD Fresh, who told the Prayanees to determine the purpose of their life, and then "ask yourself, what will you do to achieve that purpose?". The founder of LEAF, **Mr. Nair**, also addressed the 130+ student leaders and offered an insight into the agricultural industry that is so integral to the Indian economy. While his position and title might have suggested a more serious session, IAS officer and "Mr. Transparent" **P. Manivannan** captured the audience with his dynamic interactive session, starting off with his "3 S's" that define the human experience: survival, solitude, and sex. This session was no doubt a highlight of the Prayana. The speakers concluded with **Mr. Naveen** and **Mr. Suresh** from the host, Microsoft Ventures. Mr. Naveen asked the Prayanees a profound question: "If everything is comfortable, what are you learning?".



## MANDYA January 30th



**Mr. Mandhuchandan** was a young IT professional who left his comfortable job in the United States to sow the seeds of an organic farming movement in India, and was the role model for the day as LEAD Prayana visited **Organic Mandya**. "Don't wait to do what you want to do" was one of the main messages Mr. Mandhuchandan shared, as well as how young people needed to change their attitude towards agriculture, not as something of the rural past. They also visited **Jaggery Park**, where a farmer told them, "I feel proud to be a farmer today.. to be able to lead a healthier and happier life is a dream come true... no other job can give that immense satisfaction that farming can offer". The agricultural focus of the day also included some hands-on organic farming activities.





# LEAD PRAYANA 2016

**MYSURU** January 31st



The **Infosys** campus in Mysuru is one of a kind, where corporate intelligence blends hand-in-hand with marvellous European architectural techniques. Spreading around 337 acres, it never seemed to end as students walked around the campus exploring while accompanied by several enthusiastic Infosys employees. This Spark Infy team also conducted a session which shed light on the importance of communication and logistic analysis for an entrepreneur. The day ended with the Prayanees heading to Chamundi Hill view point for a fantastic view of the city.

## DHARMASTHALA February 1st-2nd

Dharmasthala is a haven of social support organizations. First the Prayanees visited **RUDSET Institute**, which trains unemployed youth in skill-based work that they can build their own business out of. Next was the **GVK Center**, a savings group which acts as bridge between the banks and rural women who would not otherwise have access to them. Finally, the group visited **SDM College** and had a special tour of their community radio stations and media room, and were treated to an exciting cultural program of dancing and music.

The second day, the Prayanees split into two groups. Half visited **SIRI**, where they produce clothing and bags in a collective work atmosphere that instills leadership skills and compassion in the workers. The other half visited an innovative alcohol rehabilitation center, where the organizers attribute their success rate to being able to shift the addicts "from wine to the divine". The visit to Dharmasthala concluded with an inspiring and highly spiritual session with the Dharmadhikari himself, **Dr. Veerendra Heggade**.



## MANIPAL February 3rd



Welcoming LEAD Prayana, **Dr. H. Vinod Bhat**, the man responsible for the spectacular growth of **Manipal University**, delivered a session and answered questions from the Prayanees. Students were also taken all over the university campus, including the anatomy and physiology museum, library (one of Asia's largest), the Marina Indoor Games Stadium, and the planetarium. The day ended with some time spent at Malpe Beach during sunset (and lots of selfie taking!).

# LEAD PRAYANA 2016 — DHARWAD February 4th

A visit to the world's largest kitchen, **Akshaya Patra**, wowed the Prayanees from the beginning of the day. Feeding 1.3 million school children per day, Akshaya Patra follows the most sustainable and advanced



methods of mass cooking. The afternoon was spent at **Kalkeri Sangeet Vidyalaya**, which blends traditional arts with academics for wholesome nourishment of the budding minds. Ran by volunteers from various Western countries, KSV recruits students from poor areas who have potential in academics or in the arts. An evening session by **Dr. Gururaj 'Desh' Deshpande**, co-founder of the Deshpande Foundation, showed the Prayanees that you can break all the misconceptions of your desired field and still succeed. One of the absolute highlights of Prayana 2016 was the incredibly inspiring session with **Ms. Malathi Holla**, internationally-acclaimed Para-Athlete, who proved that sometimes the hurdles put before us give us the chance to go higher than we ever expected we could.

## HUBBALLI & YUVA SUMMIT 2016 January 30th

The lead-up to Yuva Summit began with the pioneer of personal branding in India, **Ms. Tanvi Bhatt**, who shared her story of leaving behind engineering and to follow her true passions and find success. **Dr. Shalini Rajneesh**, IAS Principal Secretary in Karnataka, answered questions the Prayanees had in regards to challenging problems our country is facing and emphasized the importance of supporting each other within our nation. **Dr. A. Velumani**, scientist-turned-CEO of Thyrocare Technologies Limited, shared the importance of focus in life and sticking to your passion and dreams without diverting your eyes to neighbours' ambitions. **Sasisekar Krish**, CEO of nanoPix, shared his career of ups and downs, culminating in over two dozen patents in his name. Amidst successful businessmen and entrepreneurs, **Zenia Tata**, the social activist and executive director of XPRIZE, demonstrated her courage in impacting millions of life around the globe. **Ms. Anousheh Ansari**, the first private female astronaut, shared her inspiring journey from growing up in Iran to spending 11 days on the International Space Station. Ms. Ansari's passion for space was infectious, and one could see a sudden increase in astronomy amongst the Prayanees.

**Yuva Summit 2016**, the renowned youth summit about leadership, innovation, and entrepreneurship, acted as the climax of Prayana. LEAD Talks offered the Prayanees an opportunity to be inspired by their successful LEAD peers, and interactive sessions with **Mr. R. Gumaste** (Kirloskar Ferrous Industries) and **Ramji Raghavan** (Agastya Foundation) continued the trend of meeting local community leaders. A Yuva Summit Q&A session with **Mr. Narayana Murthy** of Infosys had all the hands in the air, hoping to ask question of the IT legend, and a short surprise session by **Mr. Shekhar Gupta** delighted the audience. The Yuva Summit Awards Ceremony had the year's best LEADers, faculty, and colleges awarded in front of a crowd of 4,500+ at the Taj Gateway in Hubli by the night's legends. Following the ceremony, the Evening with Legends panel began, offering the Prayanees an opportunity to see these diverse influential leaders together, interacting and sharing their stories and advice.

The final day of Prayana began with yoga and a session by the local **Mr. Vivek Pawar** of Sankalp Semiconductor. The final session was reserved for the long-awaited Nobel Laureate and Founder of Grameen Bank **Prof. Muhammad Yunus**, whose story demonstrated how doing something small for a large amount of people can have a huge impact. With that (and many hugs and tears), LEAD Prayana 2016 came to a close.





# Inspiration from **LEAD PRAYANA** role models!



"Change fate into opportunity"

**Ms. Malathi Holla**

International Para-Athlete

"There is no right or wrong decisions.  
It's just about the choice "

**Mr. Gururaj "Desh" Deshpande**

Co-Founder of the Deshpande Foundation



"Never compare yourself with the  
richest developed country, but with the  
poorest man in the village"

**Dr. Narayan Reddy**

Internationally-acclaimed organic farmer

"Things are changing so fast that it  
allows us to really make a difference."

**Ms. Anousheh Ansari**

First private female space explorer and  
co-founder of Prodea Systems



"It's only entrepreneurs who can  
turn their ideas into jobs for others."

**Mr. Narayana Murthy**

Founder of Infosys



# I've unleashed my leadership potential...

# ... now what?

After seeing each of your leadership potentials being unleashed during this extraordinary journey, we at LEAD would like to see you go on with hands-on leadership experience. Each one of you has immense potential, and to prove your presence and to make real change, we would like you to get engaged in the following ways.

## 1. Stay connected!

Follow LEAD on all social media platforms (/dcselead) to get regular inspiration and see what other LEADers are doing in their communities. You'll also never miss any LEAD events or updates!

It is also important to stay connected with your fellow Prayanees. Keep in touch and use the networks LEAD Prayana helped you build to stay motivated, support each other, and build long-lasting friendships!

## 2. Haven't started a LEAD project yet? START NOW!

During LEAD Prayana, you met many role models and speakers who made a big difference by addressing a small issue in their community. Now it's your turn! If you've always thought about doing something to change something in society, start today! We at LEAD are here to support you.

Don't have an idea? Start looking around you for issues you think you can help address. Even small projects are steps along your leadership journey. You can also check out the Idea Bank on our LEAD website ([leadcampus.org](http://leadcampus.org)), or get in touch with local LEADers to gain inspiration or join a group project.

## 3. Become a Master LEADer or LEAD Ambassador!

Now that you have completed LEAD Prayana, you are eligible to apply to become a Master LEADer, and eventually a LEAD Ambassador. Master LEADers are on the front line, engaging with promising students and spreading the word about the benefits of joining LEAD. Ambassadors get the chance to represent LEAD on their campus and work closely with the LEAD associates and school administration to help LEAD grow at their college. Contact your local LEAD associate to discuss setting up an interview.

## 4. Attend a Valedictory!

LEAD Valedictories occur in many LEAD centers across India in April, and it is where the stand-out projects and LEADers in that location are identified, showcased, and awarded. Valedictories commemorate all the hard work, innovation, and learning that happened in the past academic year. It is also a great opportunity to reunite with your fellow Prayanees from your area and to network with other local LEADers. Visit our website ([leadcampus.org](http://leadcampus.org)) for more information.

## 5. Join the LEAD Leadership Program (LLP)!

LLP is a unique 10-day residential camp that emphasizes practical exposure over classroom learning. LLP combines hands on learning experience in understanding practically leadership, team building, critical thinking, creativity and entrepreneurial mindset through inspiring guest speaker sessions, individual mentorship, engaging activities, and exposure visits to industries and community-based organizations in order to foster practical, critical and creative thinking ability within the students. LLPs take place in late May, June, and July, and you can find application information on our website, [leadcampus.org](http://leadcampus.org).

Best of luck as you continue your leadership journey!

Ajay Suman Shukla  
& the LEAD team





# THANK YOU to all our loyal sponsors!



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**LEAD, Deshpande Foundation**

LEAD Helpline: 080-3301-3041 or [leadcampus.org](http://leadcampus.org)

DCSE, BVBCET Campus  
Vidyanagar, Hubballi - 580031  
**Karnataka**

MCIIE,  
IIT- Banaras Hindu University,  
Varanasi - 221005, **Uttar Pradesh**

Rukmini Chambers,  
Vinayak Nagar, Nizamabad,  
- 503001, **Telangana**

