

# GREAT K NNECT



## SARVAJNA

Celebration of Uncle Bala's 80th birthday in campus

## GREAT LAKER RAHUL PULUPUDI (PGPM 2012) DELIVERED A GUEST LECTURE IN CAMPUS

Guest lecture for current batch on his success story with Afterthought Feedback services Pvt. Ltd

## 13TH CONVOCATION OF GREAT LAKES, CHENNAI

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## RAJIV SHARMA'S (PGPM 2007) START UP - ARTICLE IN FINANCIAL EXPRESS

Great Laker Rajiv Sharma (PGPM 2007) talks about his venture "Jolly Food Fellow" and his entrepreneurial journey in this article on Financial Express.

# FROM THE EDITORS

## MAGAZINE

Greetings from the Alumni committee of 2017-2018.

We are delighted to connect with you through this monthly alumni magazine. As the new batch of Great Lakers we have been fascinated by the reputation and success of the alumni of Great Lakes. The fact that we will be one fills us with great joy and pride.

We had the opportunity to meet our immediate seniors during the Graduation and it was great pleasure to interact and gain insights on how to handle our time in Great Lakes and make the best out of it.

We congratulate all the graduates and the gold medallists in various categories. We look forward to meeting you all again during the annual alumni meet.

In this edition of Great Konnect, we bring you latest news from the alumni front. We had a number of alumni success stories featured in various media including Rahul Pulpudi, Rajiv Sharma & Muralidhar Selvamani.

Uncle Bala's 80th Birthday was celebrated as an event with grandeur. Titled "Sarvajna", the event celebrated the legacy that Uncle Bala has created over

the years. It was a inspiring evening than an entertaining one when we realised the effect uncle Bala has had on the people around him purely from the enormous number of people assembled for the event and their committment in putting up a great show.

Read the magazine further to know about all events, happenings and news from the campus and elsewhere. We also welcome feedback and your suggestions in order to make Great Konnect a better effort to connect with you!

Have a great read ahead!

ALCOM

Great Lakes Institute of Management

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# DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

■ PROF. T.N. SWAMINATHAN

Dear Great Lakers,

It is a pleasure to connect with you again through Great Konnect. We bring this magazine to you every month with great enthusiasm to keep you informed on the developments in the campus and Great Lakes' growth as an institution.

With GLAA meets and groups we are well organized in connecting alumni in various geographical locations. With regular meetings and events I am happy to see the progress but we should stay motivated and keep doing this to make this movement an effective and a glorious entity.

We have been on our toes in the last couple of months with various events keeping us occupied including Sarvajna, Convocation and many other activities. After the recent graduation, we have an increase in the number of Great Lakes' brand ambassadors away from the campus and a new batch inside the campus.

I would like to extend a warm welcome once again to your roles in the new capacity and I sincerely wish

that you take Great Lakes brand to great heights. I am glad to see many success stories of our alumni getting featured in various media publications and I urge all alumni to share your stories with us, so we could do our bit in contributing to your stories and in turn ours.

Read the magazine further to know about all events, happenings and news from the campus and elsewhere. We also welcome feedback and your suggestions in order to make Great Konnect a better effort to connect with you!

Have a great read ahead!

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# SARVAJNA - BALA 80

EVENT

CLICK  
HERE TO  
WATCH  
THE  
ENTIRE  
EVENT  
UNFOLD  
IN  
PICTURES



Events like Sarvajna sets precedent for once in a lifetime events around the globe. This was an event when mind-blowing music and energetic dance moves became a sideshow to The Man in his 80s.

The festival in the campus was a can't miss event for thousands of Great Lakers spread across countries who are fond of Uncle Bala.

Details in every bit of art and other properties were meticulously planned to celebrate the one and only legend of

Great Lakes. From the welcome arch at the gates, the ramp to the venue, the photo wall, the gigantic "80", the lights and set screamed of brilliance in angles.

We all know Uncle Bala as a philosopher, we know him as a Guru, we know him as a strategist and we know him as our Uncle. The phrase self-made man/woman is often thrown around these days but our beloved Uncle Bala probably embodies it better than anyone else.

The theme of Sarvajna was decided upon keeping them in mind. The term has its origin in Sanskrit meaning philosopher (all knowing) and we could not fathom a greater personality from our epics other than Krishna as a symbol of these characteristics.

Every decor, element used in the entire event encompassed the theme of Lord Krishna in various abstract forms. Starting from the Screensaver, invite to the event backdrop the abstract grew much clearer with time and ended with a clear line art of Krishna.

Uncle Bala was welcomed with Purna Kumbam. The guests were taken through the ramp in a procession on the buggy which was sight for royalty. The procession ended in the photo wall structured as a maze with number of pictures from Uncle Bala's childhood to most recent ones. One could look at the effort the committee had put and troubles it would have undergone to curate such pictures and kept it a secret all through the process. The photo collage made with smaller pictures of Uncle Bala himself looked stunning as the highlight of the photo wall.

The procession then led Uncle Bala to the stage with a grand stage was set for a brilliant evening of fun and fanfare. But seeing Uncle Bala in person is an experience by itself. There

were several dignitaries who graced the occasion who later came up on the stage and explained the impact he has had on each of their lives. Every part of the evening was like a watching several pieces of a word picture paint the complete canvas of the man we had only known so far through a few encounters.

The energy in the air was palpable and it was undying from minute 1 to minute 300 of the evening. The brilliant piece of documentary film showcased the great story of how Uncle Bala came to be the man he is and the monumental success he has carved for himself. It successfully portrayed the difference that Uncle Bala has made with Great Lakes and his scheme of making Great Lakes a global phenomenon. The invocation song was sung by Kalaimamani Gayathri Girish and to make the event exclusive and special, a theme music was composed exclusively by Music Director James Vasanthan.

As the festivities started with a mindblowing music performance by the students, it was amplified multifold when staff also shook a leg for peppy numbers and foot tapping music with their kids.

The evening was still young and we could not wait for more. We were waiting for what comes next. The festivities didn't seem to end.





A stamp was released for Uncle Bala with his bust size portrait with the monumental tower of reflections in the background. To sum up Uncle Bala's life in a single portrait is a big challenge but nothing can say the story better than Great Lakes and tower of reflections in the picture. Uncle Bala with a Padmashri prefixing his name deserves this honour.

This was followed by the book release of 'Cometh the Hour, Cometh the Man'. This book encompasses the narrative of Indian education over a long timeline. Starting from the days of Nalanda & Takshashila, India was glorious for its education system which we lost somewhere in the recent past due to multiple invasions and colonisation. Now Uncle Bala envisions to revive those glorious days by creating an eco system equivalent to the silicon valley to revolutionise the education field and thereby attaining the spotlight internationally as it used to be in the past. This idea is well captured in the book which has three parts "cometh the hour", "cometh the man" & "cometh the accolades" where the near and dear ones of uncle Bala wished him on his birthday and on his mission is compiled as a book.

The crowd cheered the loudest when Uncle sang the melodic tune of his favourite song without missing a single note. The Kanne Kalaimane is a favourite among all who has listened to this song, and uncle bala expressed himself through the words of Kannadasan to the Great Lakes Family. That was one moment to get emotional.

What's a birthday celebration without cutting a cake and so there was one. Uncle Bala cut the cake with guests present alongside and the crowd roaring in celebration. If that wasn't momentous enough, the sky lit up with colours and sparkles as the fireworks took over. One could not exaggerate this beyond reality as the reality itself seemed exasperating. As the man of the hour took the moment, there were a 1000 kith and kins of the family wishing him a long life; music to please the ears, food to please the gut and lights to please the eyes, it was indeed a soul warming moment that will be etched in everybody's mind as a very special memory.

The performances from our Great Lakers right from the musical groups to the dance performances was filled with enthusiasm, each item executed to perfection.

This evening was finally etched forever in the memory of everyone when it was time for the grand finale, a musical showcase by Famous Rajasthani group. The ooh's and aah's of the crowd was adjunct by their applause throughout the performance. As they delivered their final piece a classic Rajasthani take on the 'Happy Birthday song' for Uncle Bala, the students crowded around him and together celebrated in great fervour. Guests from Film Industry Ms. Gautami Tadimalla & Mr. Ramkumar also attended the event.



Uncle Bala made a Grand entrance with Poorna Kumbam and with kids on either side of the ramp with colorful balloons



Uncle Bala was overwhelmed with emotions meeting his aunt, who raised him as her own



Uncle Bala with guests for the evening including Mr. Peter Church & Mr. A Mahendran



"Ketkadha Kural" - Video bits of staff sharing their experience with Uncle Bala and Wishing him a Happy Birthday





The staff of Great Lakes and their Kids enlightened the audience with a special dance performance.



A stamp with bust image of Uncle Bala with the tower of reflections in the background was released followed by the launch of the book "Cometh the Hour, Cometh the Man"



Sankaran sir sharing some love with his brother, Uncle Bala during the cake cutting

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# 13TH CONVOCATION OF GREAT LAKES, CHENNAI

## ARTICLE

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13th convocation of Great Lakes Institute of Management was held on July 26, 2017 with Chief Guest Mr. Ajay Piramal, Chairman –Piramal Group & Shriram Group and Guest of Honor -Dr. John F.O. Bilson, Dean – Stuart School of Business, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago

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Mr. Ajay Piramal, Chairman - Piramal Group and Shriram Group and Dr. John F.O Bilson, Dean - Stuart school of Business, Illinois Institute of Technology presided over as the chief Guest and Guest of Honour for the 13th convocation of Great Lakes Institute of Management. Over 600 participants from PGPM, PGDM, PGXPM & PGPM- Flex graduated. Gold medals were awarded

to 5 Academic toppers and 7 best outgoing students across the different programs. Besides these gold medals, certificate of merit and medals were also awarded under the categories -Dean's Merit List, Domain toppers, best Empirical Study and Committee contributors.

Uncle Bala stressed on the need for a renaissance in the education industry in his speech. with technology and entrepreneurship joining hands leading to emerging concept of technopreneurship, the world is looking at India to make a difference.

Mr. Ajay Piramal, who delivered a lecture to the current batch of students earlier in the campus, highlighted the

**CLICK HERE TO  
VIEW MR. AJAY PIRAMAL'S  
CONVOCATION SPEECH**

**CLICK HERE TO WATCH  
DR. JOHN BILSON'S  
GRADUATION ADDRESS**



importance of having a deep desire, passion and courage to do what one really likes. He added that hard work, good values, association with good people and above all having faith are the real reasons for success.

He spoke about his family, and his story of how he made it in the Pharma industry from the family that dealt with textiles over a long period of time. He spoke about how Indians have a growing demand in the international market and the difference that Indians can bring about in the industry.

Dr. John Bilson, spoke as a pure academic and said how academicians take pride not just during graduation but continuous growth of the graduate throughout their career. He emphasized on the need to embrace technology citing the invention of cellphone which is probably the most disruptive instrument in the history of the world. He said people should understand that technology will only create more jobs and we should not be afraid to embrace it.

The event ended with a press interaction with the guests and a sumptuous lunch for all the participants. Later in the day, the graduates visited the campus to revisit their times as students and were engaged by the alumni committee with various events and fun activities. We formally extended our best wishes to all the graduates and welcome to your role as the brand ambassadors and alumni away from the campus.

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# GREAT LAKER RAHUL PULUPUDI (PGPM 2012) DELIVERED A GUEST LECTURE IN CAMPUS

■ ALUMNI NEWS

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Few years ago in 2012, Rahul Pulupudi was like one of us, pursuing PGPM at Great Lakes. Then soon after graduating, he founded his own Market Research and Data Analytics company- Afterthought Feedback Services Pvt. Ltd. , along with Suman Sen another Great Laker. In just a year of operations, they saw exponential growth in sales from just INR 1 lakh to INR 32 lakh and today they have some great brands on board such as Piramal Glass, Bisleri, Smaaash, In-dian Railways, CK Birla Group amongst others. We were fortunate to have Rahul at Great lakes, sharing his experience of how ATFS grew its clientele and the kind of unique research services the company

offers. He attributed the confidence to do his own venture to Great Lakes as he felt it provided him the space to explore his strengths and weaknesses and the belief that even he could hobnob with the bigwigs of the business world. As ATFS continues to climb the ladder of success, it has offered a great opportunity to Great Laker- An opportunity to get guidance for their Empirical Projects from ATFS experts. Great Laker really look forward to this opportunity as it will help gain insights from those executing industry projects.



# MURALIDHAR SELVAMANI (PGPM

## 2009) PROFILED IN THE HINDU

### ALUMNI NEWS

Why a well-rounded MBA experience is important

I still remember the day I walked into Infosys' Disneyland-like Mysuru campus as a trainee software engineer. It was late 2005, and for a mechanical engineer who loved programming, a job at Infosys was the ultimate prize. A Forbes article published shortly afterwards stated that getting into Infosys was harder than getting into Harvard! These thoughts came rushing to me, a decade later, as I sat in a Harvard Business School class on online economy, rehashing my structured query language (SQL) skills. My professor wanted to have some fun by giving future managers and consultants a taste of the techie life. This was yet another validation that a business graduate with technology chops can add tremendous value in an increasingly technology-driven world.

#### Cornucopia of possibilities

It was this belief that drove me to apply to Great Lakes Institute of Management (GLIM), Chennai, after coding for two-and-a-half years at Infosys. The flagship post-graduate programme in management (PGPM) is a full-time, one-year accelerated MBA programme that accepts applicants with work experience. It was perfect for me

because I could return to the corporate world faster, and reduce both my opportunity and tuition costs. Shortly after graduating in 2009, I joined Wipro as a business analyst and achieved my goal of transitioning from a pure technology role to a predominantly business role. Mission accomplished? Not quite.

After five years of travelling across Europe and North America for exciting assignments, I wanted to understand better how technology trends are shaping our world and what it means for the future. The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University is a pioneer in the field and has helped students "know the world" for more than 80 years. While still a school of diplomacy, students today come from a variety of backgrounds for a truly interdisciplinary learning experience.

I studied digital economy and political economy, and explored how the forces of business, politics, law and technology interact and influence our lives. While the political economy part was mostly at Tufts, I took advantage of the school's close association with Harvard and cross registered for a quarter of my courses. At Harvard, I studied design thinking, cyber security and internet law to

develop a multidimensional perspective about the digital economy. The culmination of all this knowledge is a product idea for Twitter called Twitter SOS that enables local communities to become resilient in the wake of natural disasters such as the Chennai floods of 2015. I hope to soon pitch this idea to Twitter and see if I can transform ideas to action on the ground.

Graduate education — especially at universities abroad — is like playing sport at the highest level. There has to be a strong motivation to pursue a certain path and the perseverance to stay in the course in the face of challenges — financial, emotional and academic.

In addition to hard skills, MBA aspirants must invest in soft skills because companies value professionals who thrive in collaborative and cross-functional environments. An MBA is a life-time investment and its value is best assessed over a five to ten-year horizon. It is acceptable to take your time to find your true calling — don't rush into a B-school simply because someone you know is.

[READ THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE HERE](#)

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# RAJIV SHARMA'S (PGPM 2007) START-UP - ARTICLE IN FINANCIAL EXPRESS

## ALUMNI NEWS

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Ahmedabad-based start-up Jolly Food Fellow (JFF) has brought together two of Gujarat's most prized possessions-the entrepreneurial spirit of the state and its cuisine-and created a platform showcasing the wide range of dishes available across the state.

Set up in 2015 by Niraj Harlalka and Rajiv Sharma as a marketing and branding platform for food vendors, JFF uses videos to reach out to its customer base. Based on the idea that "you eat with your eyes", JFF has its own website and applications on Android and iOS, which allow food vendors to display their choicest food items through the video format. It has crossed 6.5 crore consumer impressions, with 1.6 crore video views since it went online. JFF aims to reach 100 crore views per month in five years' time.

The two founders met over their

love for food. Sharma, an alumnus of Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and co-owner of a popular juice outlet in Ahmedabad, felt that retailers were getting a "raw deal" and was looking for a branding and marketing solutions provider. Harlalka, who has an information technology background, was looking for a project which would be a vehicle to reach the masses.

JFF is also gearing up to build the world's first "food profile engine". A dedicated team is working towards gathering data on consumer behaviour based on its mantra, "Data is the new fuel".

Harlalka explains, "Our platform, which should be online in two to three years, will show people the food they like, the people around them, and the places they would like to go to. We already have profiled 4 lakh food items which are currently in our database."

The start-up is also keen on working with augmented reality. "We will bypass the virtual reality (VR), and move straight into the augmented reality (AR) system. This should take 16-18 months. Then our revenue model will be directed more towards targeted advertising," says Sharma.

Currently, the start-up does targeted promotions for food outlets, at a cost of Rs 30,000-50,000 per video. JFF also offers top-up services for mid-segment restaurants, which can cost the outlet about Rs 5,000. The restaurants pay as per the views received and the engagement factor on the video which is uploaded via JFF's Facebook page and website. It mostly generates revenue from fast moving consumer goods companies, who pay for videos made using their products like spices or oils. All of this allows the founders to reach out to small street vendors, who are featured free of cost, all "for the love of food" says Sharma.



“We have 150 merchants already, and now we have our own standards on how the videos must be shot. We make suggestions and restaurants make changes based on our recommendations. We bring in the best practices, and we are building a community of restaurants,” explains Harlalka.

Bootstrapped initially, JFF received its first round of funding in February last year through angel investors, and is now looking for more funding to kick off the AR foray.

“We are getting repeat visitors on our page from places such as Maharashtra, Delhi and Tamil Nadu with very diverse cuisines. We are growing month-on-month, with each video now receiving a lakh views in one day itself,” Sharma beams.

**CLICK HERE TO READ  
THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE**

# CAMPUS BUZZ

## NEWS



**01** The first “Pharma day” was organized at Great Lakes, Chennai with the inauguration of Pharma club which will have experts from pharmaceuticals and health-care industry sharing their expertise with students to make them Business ready managers for the sector. It was followed by a panel discussion on “Technology bringing the smile on the last mile reach” screened no up.

**02** Great Laker Anureet Deb (PGDM 2018) on winning “The Best Project Award” during his internship with Genpact. Anureet worked on “Transition to the new revenue recognition standard” to win this award.



**03** Our beloved professor Mr. T N Swaminathan has been appointed the Vice President of The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE), Chennai. TiE is a non-profit, global community welcoming en-trepreneurs from all over the world.



# PROF. S SRIRAM LECTURE HALL INAUGURATED

## NEWS

In memory of Late Prof. S. Sriram, Former Executive Director of Great Lakes, Prof. Bala V Balachandran announced a Scholarship and inaugurated a classroom named after Prof. S. Sriram in the presence of his family, friends and former colleagues.

Dr. Ranjan Banerjee, Dean at S.P.Jain Institute of Management & research and a former colleague of prof. Sriram along with prof. Bala V Balachandran inaugurated the classroom and announced the scholarship. Many of his former colleagues and family members were present for the occasion and alumni of Great Lakes remembered and appreciated the gesture in various social media platforms.

Prof. Sriram passed away on April 29, 2016.



# Chabeel Day Celebrated in campus



Students of Great Lakes celebrated Chabeel day in the campus. Chabeel is a sweet, cool, summer drink. Traditionally, Sikhs offer chabeel to the general public on hot days, especially between May and June, when Sikhs remember the martyrdom of their 5th Guru Arjun Dev Ji on June 17.



## Great Lakes Awarded Managerial Excellence Award

Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai was awarded Madras Management Association's Managerial Excellence Award under "Educational Institutions" category for the year 2017. Prof. T.N.. Swaminathan accepted the award on behalf of the institution and made a phenomenal presentation of the best practices followed in Great Lakes as a World class institution

# GREAT KONNECT



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<http://www.greatlakes.edu.in/pgpm-talent-listing/>

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