



**REPORT ON ALUMNI MEETS & ALUMNI EVENTS**

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**March 2021**

**ANNUAL ALUMNI MEET 2021**

Great Lakes Institute of Management held its 2021 Alumni connect virtually featuring a talk from Capt. Raghu Raman and centred around leadership during crisis.

A good business school education is not just pedantic instruction, it is about inculcating a sense of collective purpose. Great leaders are those that can spark action, collaborate, and inspire. Nobody succeeds in a vacuum and building a reliable network is key. While the pandemic had robbed most of the opportunity to connect in person, the format of a new virtual medium has trivialized the limitations of space and broadened our perspectives.

It is in this spirit that the Great Lakes Institute of Management organized its '*2021 Great Lakes Grand Alumni Meet*' on 27th March, the first to be conducted virtually. The institute marks a key milestone with alumni association chapters in 33 countries, surpassing the ten-thousand-member mark. Dr. Bala V Balachandran, Founder and Dean Emeritus inaugurated the event. Speaking about crisis management, Dr. Bala stressed the importance of agility in uncertain times. 'Uncertainty is inevitable but worrying is optional.', he remarks, emphasizing the need for lean thinking, contingency planning, and enterprising outlook to remain competitive. He also spoke about AIC –

Great Lakes Balachandran Incubator (AGBI) supported by Atal Innovation Mission, the institute's startup incubator, which has an MoU with IIT-M and equips students to prototype and launch ventures under the guidance of faculty.

Dean Suresh Ramanathan then addressed the gathering and spoke of how alumni can be a source of information, ideas, and involvement. Giving back to your alma mater through collaboration and co-creation of value and ideas, he says, is a rewarding and mutually beneficially exercise. 'The future of business school education is knowledge creation. Imparting old knowledge well is a necessary but not a sufficient condition. It is equally important that faculty and students create new knowledge. Thus, we are reaffirming our commitment to impactful research that informs industry and public policy.'. He also highlighted the need for international collaboration: 'We have recently signed an MoU with Chicago Booth School of Business to impart executive education in India. This will help us leverage the expertise international schools offer and marry it with our ability to understand the Indian market intimately and customize solutions.'



<https://youtu.be/9k7LXjR58MU>

Captain Raghu Raman was the keynote speaker for the event. After eleven years in the army, Mr. Raman delved into the corporate world. Former President of Reliance Industries and founding CEO of NATGRID, he is now a bestselling author and public speaker. The central theme of his talk was 'Leading in a ruptured world'. Following the framework of RUPT (Rapid, Uncertain, Paradoxical and Tangled) he says that the horizon of uncertainty for all of us has reduced dramatically. Especially in a pandemic, it has become virtually inconceivable to make concrete plans even a few days into the future. Also, the leaders of tomorrow will be facing increasingly paradoxical decision making. 'The choices won't be between a right and wrong decision but perhaps between two right or two wrong choices. For instance, many might wonder why the government relaxed lockdown restrictions during Diwali. It is a tough decision but ~60% of sales for SMEs happens during the festive season. After 9-10 months of downturn, any further restrictions could adversely affect businesses. So, leaders need to get comfortable with

having a demography of dissatisfied stakeholders no matter what solution is proposed in a crisis.'. Complexities of a tangled world, he remarks, can have far-reaching implications. 'At the beginning of the lockdown, I was part of the committee set up to evaluate what constitute essential services. Communication was top of the list. As half of the cell towers are powered by generators, diesel now becomes an essential service. To transport the diesel you need working roadways, trucks and roadside dhabas where truckers eat, tower technicians the list goes on. Life is thus never restricted to silos but all interlinked.'.

Mr. Raman also spoke of key principles leaders must keep in mind during a crisis. 'A map is not the territory. A map of the London underground is perfect to plan a subway ride but not useful above ground. The map is an abstraction, similarly, processes and conventional frameworks must be adapted to fit the current landscape.'. He touched upon the need to build connections from the ground up: 'Virtual communication is simplex in nature, you can only communicate one person at a time. You cannot take an environment that previously had multiple lines of communication and perfectly port it to a digital platform, so build relationships from the ground up instead.'. He touched on the need to encourage communication no matter how redundant: 'In the army when a patrol returns to the garrison a call goes from the gate to the adjutant informing of the arrival. Ten minutes later the adjutant will get a call from the motor transport department followed by calls from the armory and platoon leader. We are trained to understand that every call has a specific purpose and never to be dismissive. In a crisis, leaders must make every person who informs them feel heard, even if you are already aware of the news. This will multiply the information channels you have access to. Information leaking to your competition may damage you a little but what is causing colossal damage is your own information not getting back to you.'. Lastly, he spoke about the need to relearn with humility: 'A friend of mine was an IAS officer posted in

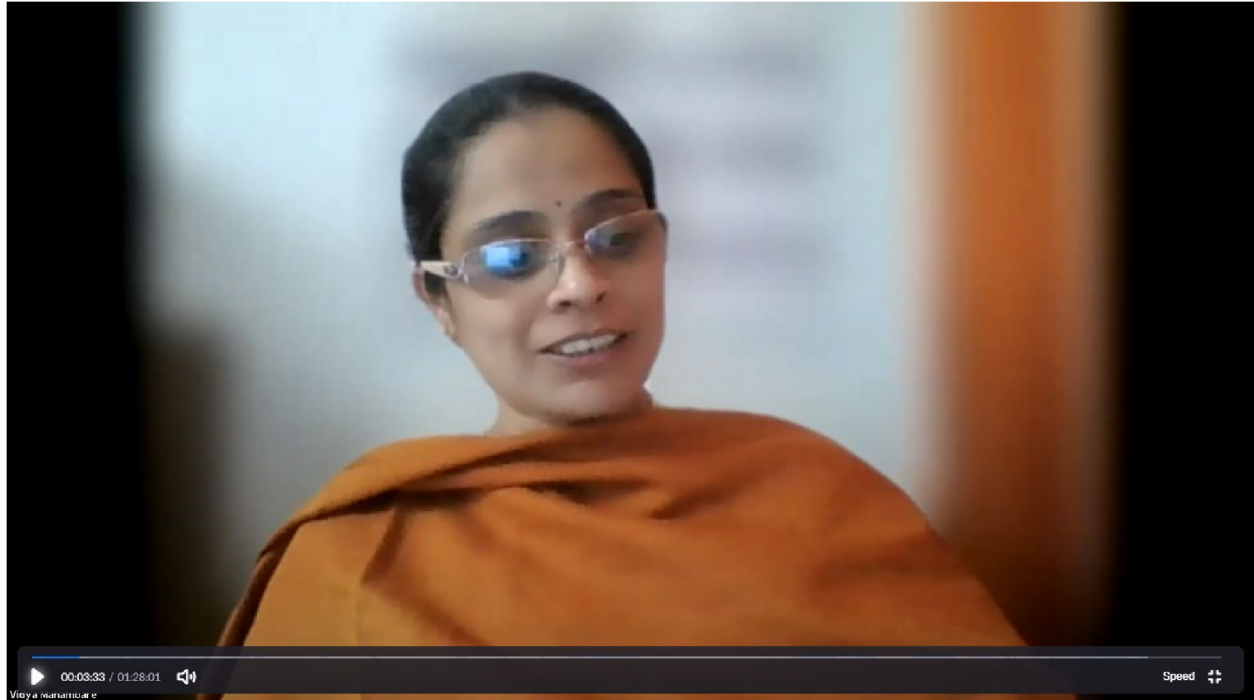
Ambalapuzha, Kerala. One year, using surplus funds, he organized the purchase of GPS trackers for the fishermen in the district envisioning they would use them to navigate the ocean. Instead, they sunk gunny bags filled with food scraps from the market and marked the locations using GPS. They would return the next day to shoals of fishes. With this, they were able to reduce their carbon footprint and increase productivity. Great ideas can come from anywhere we just need the humility to absorb them.'

The Alumni meet also featured panel discussions, moderated by Prof. D Sriram, about "Phygital" the emerging trend of fusing the physical and digital world to reinvent the customer experience lifecycle. The event closed with a showcase featuring lively music and dance performances by Alumni.

## September 2021

### Resilient Banking & Finance – A FINCOM event with Alumni Guest Speakers

The official Finance and Economics committee was inaugurated by Great Lakes distinguished alumni [Surabhi Kashyap](#) (PGPM, 2015), Director, EY, and Aditya Suresh Kumar (PGPM, 2006), Head of Research and Strategy, Macquarie. The event started with a remembrance of our beloved Uncle Bala. Prof. [Vidya Mahambare](#) discussed his vision for the finance domain at Great Lakes. FinCom is dedicated to this vision.

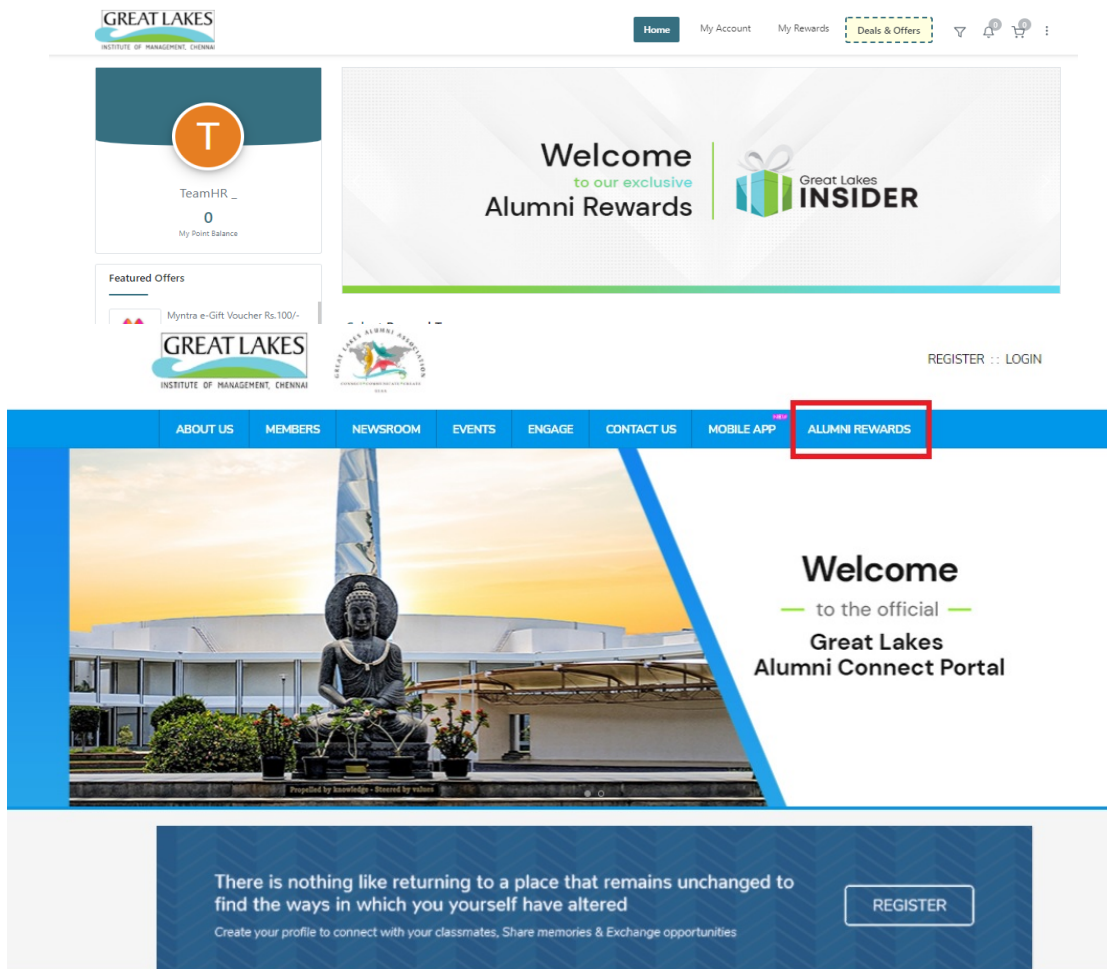






October 2021

1. During the Alumni Meet on 9th October 2021, Great Lakes announced the launch of an exclusive **Alumni Rewards Program - Great Lakes Insider** for 9800+ strong alumni spread across 33 countries. The launch event, Confluence 2021 was held virtually and the new Alumni Connect Portal was also launched simultaneously. The seamless rewards program has been set up to strengthen alumni relations further and build a well-connected, Awesome Active Alumni (AAA) network across the globe. Alumni who may have missed signing up, can do so here - [alumni.greatlakes.edu.in](http://alumni.greatlakes.edu.in)



The screenshot displays the Great Lakes Alumni Rewards Program website. At the top, the Great Lakes Institute of Management logo is on the left, and navigation links for Home, My Account, My Rewards, and Deals & Offers are on the right. Below the navigation, a user profile card shows a profile picture with the letter 'T', the name 'TeamHR \_', and a 'My Point Balance' of 0. A 'Featured Offers' section highlights a 'Myntra e-Gift Voucher Rs.100/-'. A large banner reads 'Welcome to our exclusive Alumni Rewards' with a 'Great Lakes INSIDER' logo. A 'REGISTER :: LOGIN' link is visible. A blue navigation bar contains links for ABOUT US, MEMBERS, NEWSROOM, EVENTS, ENGAGE, CONTACT US, MOBILE APP, and ALUMNI REWARDS (highlighted with a red box). Below the navigation bar is a large image of a Buddha statue in front of a building, with the text 'Welcome to the official Great Lakes Alumni Connect Portal'. At the bottom, a blue banner contains the text: 'There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered' and 'Create your profile to connect with your classmates. Share memories & Exchange opportunities', with a 'REGISTER' button.

2. We take this opportunity to congratulate **Madan Menon** for outstanding achievement in his professional space.

**Innovative International Acquisition Corp (USA)** - Under the leadership of Madan Menon, his company has been successfully listed with NASDAQ in October 2021.

You can read more about it here:

<https://www.nasdaq.com/press-release/innovative-international-acquisition-corp.-announces-closing-of-%24230000000-initia>

To read more about the company, you can visit their website at

<http://innovativeacquisitioncorp.com/>

### November 2021:

'**The Great Circle - Alumni Talks**' initiative continued as usual with resounding support from the students and alumni. In November, we had Sathish Seshadri (PGPM Co '06) shared valuable insights with students and help them get a step closer to future-ready.

**Sathish Seshadri** - Vice President, Strategy at Genpact spoke to our students on the topic 'A consultant's mindset'.

How can we build trust?

*The Trust Equation*

$$T = \frac{C + R + I}{S}$$

Trustworthiness =  $\frac{\text{Credibility} + \text{Reliability} + \text{Intimacy}}{\text{Self-Orientation}}$

Trusted Advisor

- David Maister



## December 2021:

**The Great Circle - Alumni Talks** initiative continued with enthusiasm and support from the students and alumni. In December, we had Madan Menon (PGPM Co '05) share valuable insights and knowledge with the students to help them get a step closer to their future.

**Madan Menon** - COO and Board Member of Innovative International Acquisition Corp (USA) spoke to our students on the topic of '*Understanding SPACs.*'

### What are SPACs

- A special purpose acquisition company (SPAC) – Also called a “**Blank Cheque Company**” is a company that has no commercial operations and is formed strictly to raise capital through an initial public offering (IPO) for the purpose of acquiring or merging with an existing company.
- SPACs have been around for decades, but their popularity has soared in recent years.

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MM 2021



**Alumni Regional Chapter Meets** - We organised our first set of regional alumni meets in Hyderabad and Delhi NCR in the month of December, 2021.

The Keynote address for the Hyderabad Alumni meet, was delivered by **Mr. Sankara Krishna Prasad - Founder of Cito Healthcare**. The regional meet in Hyderabad was hosted at Hyatt Gachibowli and we saw 40+ alumni turn up for the meet for an afternoon filled with fun and memories.

For the Delhi/Gurgaon Alumni meet, *Dean Dr. Suresh Ramanathan and Dr. Umashankar Venkatesh* welcomed our alumni from Delhi NCR and Gurgaon. We had a splendid meet with 130+ alumni attending the meet. The meet was held at Radisson Gurugram Udyog Vihar.

