

50 scholars shortlisted for Khorana Program for Scholars

Fifty scholars have been shortlisted for a 8 to 10 week exposure to research work in their respective fields under their chosen professors, in some of the top most universities of the US in biotechnology, molecular genetics, biochemistry, and other allied areas, under the Khorana Programme of the Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF). The international exposure will enable them to focus on their respective work in a better and enhanced way.

In order to address the need for human resource development and capacity building in biotechnology and allied areas, IUSSTF, Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and WINStep Forward (WSF) had partnered to pave the way for the creation of the Khorana Program for Scholars in 2008, named in honor of Dr. Har Gobind Khorana, who won the Nobel Prize in 1968 for his work at the interface of Chemistry and Biology while he was a member of the University of Wisconsin-Madison faculty. It was envisaged that such an initiative would enable the creation of sustainable and vibrant linkages between the two nations, as well as build long-term Indo-American science and technology relationships.

IUSSTF was established under an agreement between the Governments of India and the United States of America in March 2000. This is an autonomous bilateral organization jointly funded by both the Governments that promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Innovation through substantive interaction among government, academia, and industry. The Department of Science & Technology, Governments of India, and the U.S. Department of State are respective nodal departments.

The Khorana Program, which has completed 12 successful years, has been a platform to over 350 Scholars providing the much-required exposure to cutting-edge scientific research experiences at a formative stage that not only broadens their intellectual horizons but also leads to increased engagement in scientific and technological research careers.

Amartya Pradhan, Khorana Scholar of 2019 batch from Netaji Subhash Institute of Technology, New Delhi was thankful for the opportunity he got to meet Dr. Aseem Ansari, Director of Khorana and SN Bose programs, Mr. Sudhakar Dalela, Indian Consul General to Chicago, Dr. Bobby Kasthuri, renowned neuroscientist, Dr. Marsha Rosner, student of Dr. Har Gobind Khorana and other distinguished intellectuals at the Knapp Center for Biomedical Discovery, UChicago.

“After Chicago, I took off to Atlanta, Georgia, to join the Aneja Lab under Dr. RituAneja at Georgia State University (GSU). I was stunned by the amount of systematic organization and facilities in the lab and within the department. At GSU, I studied the effect of drug-mediated metabolic stress on the lipid droplet abundance, one of the most significant emerging hallmarks of cancer. I was fortunate to have been mentored by Chakri and Shriya.”, says Pradhan.

The shortlisted scholars for 2019-20 call are currently finalizing the project with U.S. Host Mentors. The final list of placed Scholars is generated as soon as a mentor confirms his/her willingness to host a student. A total of 34 scholars have been successfully placed thus far.

This year, scholars have found placements at prestigious institutions in the United States such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Johns Hopkins University, University of California at San Diego, Cornell University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of Wisconsin at Madison, Purdue University, University of California Berkeley, University of Michigan, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Illinois at Urbana

Champaign, Harvard University, Stanford University, Yale University, Washington State University, and Georgetown University.

Among the 739 applicants this year, the 50 shortlisted candidates have been asked to identify up to 3 professors who could be potential mentors in order of priority in the United States based on the matching area of interests.

