

Priyanka Khopkar

"Success comes to those who wait"

Priyanka Khopkar (LF 2006 & PA 2008) is a firm believer in the above mentioned quote. Daring to go on a path often unheard of, Priyanka chose to work hard towards achieving her dreams.

A Lila Fellow from the Batch of 2006, Priyanka pursued her Masters in Microbiology from the University of Pune, after completing her Masters, she also pursued a Post Graduate Diploma in Bioinformatics from the Bioinformatics Institute of India, Noida. A studious girl, she pursued her graduation in Microbiology & Industrial from the University of Pune, not stopping there, she decided to pursue her post graduation in the field of Microbiology. Though she had the academic credentials to pursue her dreams, she did not have the financial means to pursue her post graduation. That is when Priyanka heard about the Lila Poonawalla Foundation. Priyanka remembers her interview vividly, she also recollects how the Trustees interacted with her & made her feel comfortable. Though hesitant at first, she cleared the interview, thus securing a scholarship. The interview was where her second innings truly began. An active part of the Foundation Family, Priyanka was also selected to be a part of the Peace Ambassadors Program, that too in its inaugural year i.e. 2008. An opportunity she is still thankful for. After completing her Masters, she took up a position for a Research Assistant, followed by a stint as a Junior Research Fellow at the National AIDS Research Institute, Pune. It is here that Priyanka, also decided to pursue Ph.D at the Symbiosis International University.

Currently she works as a ICMR Senior Research Fellow at the same organization. During her tenure as the Research Fellow, Priyanka has authored, co-authored, published & presented many research papers & journals at various national and international conferences and institutions.

"It is amazing to see how far I have come" says Priyanka with smile on her face. A matter of great pride, not just for Priyanka but also for LPF, she was also selected to present a Poster Presentation at the premier and renowned HIV Conference named Frontiers in Retrovirology 2016 which was held in Erlangen, Germany. *Another achievement feather added to the multiple feathers already adorning her talented hat*". "I am tremendously privileged to have two angels, Mom & Dad, stand beside me like a rock, it is due to them & their constant support and love that I have been able to achieve whatever little I have today" she says with a sense of pride and gratitude.

Priyanka advises her fellow LPF sisters to work hard and achieve their dreams, she also urges them to attend the various Training Programs that LPF arranges, as it will help them develop.