

October – December 2023



SHOOTING STARS  
FOUNDATION

# NEWSLETTER

Educate | Empower | Enable

## Mission and Vision

At Shooting Stars Foundation, we envision a future where all young people have equal access to the STEM knowledge and skills needed to achieve academic success, career success, upward mobility, and a lifetime of economic self-sufficiency for themselves, their families, and their communities.



## Quarter highlights

In the last quarter, Shooting Stars shone in San Jose and Portland. San Jose's event brought together 85 attendees, featuring an inspiring speech by alumna Kotha Roopa. Jayashree Sundaresan's melodious performance and a scrumptious dinner capped off the evening, leaving a sense of anticipation for 2024 impact.

In Portland, 100 attendees celebrated with heartfelt speeches, Sing Along sessions, and lively Dance Reels. The event showcased Shooting Stars' impactful journey, outlined future plans, and expressed gratitude for Portland's support in graduating 150 scholars—a testament to the positive influence of community collaboration in education and success.

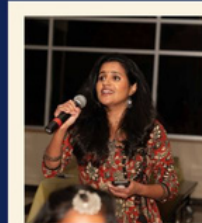
Marching Towards Our Vision

745

STEM scholars funded

6,469

students served since BOY  
2021



# Quarter Highlights

## SAN JOSE DONOR EVENT

The Second Annual Shooting Stars Ambassador Appreciation Event in San Jose was attended 85 supporters at the Mayfair Community Center in San Jose on Nov 4th. 7 Board Members (Brian McCann, Chris Gaebler, Jayashree Sundaresan, Uma Meyyeppan, Kevin Lee, Latha Narayannan , Annamalai Muth) as well as a trustee, Ramnath Mani, from India attended the event. The room was filled with generosity and warmth from our donors, volunteers, officers, partners and board members. We heard from donors, volunteers, the board, as well as the CEO – Latha Narayannan.

Highlight of the event was the speech from one of our very own Alumni Kotha Roopa, a SSF scholar from India who is now doing her Masters at Webster University in Mississippi. The audience were inspired by her story. Attendees enjoyed the melodious voice of Jayashree Sundaresan who took the audience to nostalgic music memories of 1990s. The meetup ended with a scrumptious dinner and looking forward to much more impact of Shooting Stars in 2024!



Heartfelt gratitude to our amazing volunteers – Meena Vellayappan, Vellayappan Kannappan, Subha Sriram, Prashanthi Tallapaneni, Kalyani Golla, Ezhil Sriram, Jayanthi Subramaniam, Daniel Thilak, and Kalpana Krishna.



San Jose Donor Event

## PORTLAND DONOR EVENT

The Shooting Stars Portland Donor and Volunteer Appreciation Event, which saw an impressive turnout of 100 attendees, was a celebration filled with heartwarming moments and vibrant festivities. The evening commenced with a delightful traditional banana leaf dinner, skillfully prepared and served by dedicated volunteers, setting a festive tone for the event.





# Quarter Highlights

A highlight of the evening was the inspiring speech by visiting alumni Shashi, who shared his remarkable journey and achievements. His words resonated with the audience, eliciting both emotion and applause, as everyone present rallied in support of his accomplishments.

The event also provided a platform to delve into the profound impact that Shooting Stars has had to date, showcasing the tangible outcomes of the community's support. The organizers outlined compelling future growth plans, fostering anticipation for continued positive change.



**PDX DONOR EVENT**

Adding a musical touch, the Sing Along (Paatu Paadava) segment proved to be a big hit! As the event concluded, the organizers expressed heartfelt gratitude to the city of Portland for its unwavering support, emphasizing the significant milestone of supporting 150 scholars to graduate.

The occasion stood as a testament to the power of community collaboration and the positive impact.



**PDX DONOR EVENT**

## **VIRGINIA DONOR EVENT**

A dozen donors from Virginia gathered at the Vienna Library to get an update on Shooting Stars. Thanks to our long time ambassadors, Akila Sakthi and Vidhya for arranging the amazing gathering.



**VIRGINIA DONOR EVENT**



**SHOOTING STARS  
FOUNDATION**

# STEM Programs

## ALL GIRLS CYBERSECURITY HACKATHON

This quarter, the All Girls Cybersecurity Hackathon, a collaboration between Shooting Stars Foundation and Optiv Inc, drew over 200 enthusiastic students from 8 Bengaluru colleges. The competition on October 14th and 15th involved 34 teams and 24 projects, including malware detection and password strength checker.

### ALL WOMEN CYBERSECURITY HACKATHON EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



In-Person Hackathon at JIT, Bangalore



The success of this event is in large part due to the exceptional Optiv mentors and Just-in-Time (JIT) volunteers who answered every question,



providing assistance that ensured participants successfully completed their projects.

The event had a significant impact, with 96.2% reporting increased programming skills, 97.4% expressing eagerness for future SSF hackathons, and 92.4% inspired to pursue a career in technology. An impressive 87.3% of participants showed interest in volunteering for similar initiatives.



*"My favorite aspect of the hackathon was the opportunity for learning and nurturing innovative ideas."*

*- Hitha Dathananda (Participant)*



**SHOOTING STARS  
FOUNDATION**



# STEM Programs

## NETSCOUT ALL GIRLS HACKATHON

In collaboration with NETSCOUT, The Shooting Stars Foundation organized a All Girls Hackathon on September 23rd. Kudos to our pre-hackathon event hosts Abigail Batinga, Anish Manda, and Ansh Gupta who guided participants through mobile app and web design, emphasizing skills crucial for the hackathon's Tech For Good theme.



Hackathon speakers, including Amy Gnad, Nadia Bilal, Jan Jungman, Regina Taylor, The Rice Middle School Ravenclaw Robotics Team, and Sanjay Munshi from NETSCOUT enriched the event with their insights.

20 teams submitted innovative projects to our expert judges, guided by 25 tech mentors throughout the hackathon.



## CAC PREP CAMP

In October, coach Abigail Batinga led more than 30 students through a rigorous and fun coding camp, preparing our students to compete in the Congressional App Challenge. Youth officers Jachin, Krishna, Shreenidhi, Roshan, Krishna, Eashan, and Nirvan helped bring the camp to life. As congressional districts around the country make decisions on winning apps, we are confident that our participants will take home big prizes and be invited to DC to share their hard work - stay tuned!

*"I loved working with Abigail. Beyond being very knowledgeable, she was incredibly patient and kind, and I got a lot of valuable feedback from her."*

- Nidhi, Participant

*"The prep camp is great, it helps you advance your basic knowledge on coding."*

- Adi, Participant

## 2023 CONGRESSIONAL APP CHALLENGE PREP CAMP



**SHOOTING STARS  
FOUNDATION**

# NETSCOUT ALL GIRLS HACKATHON



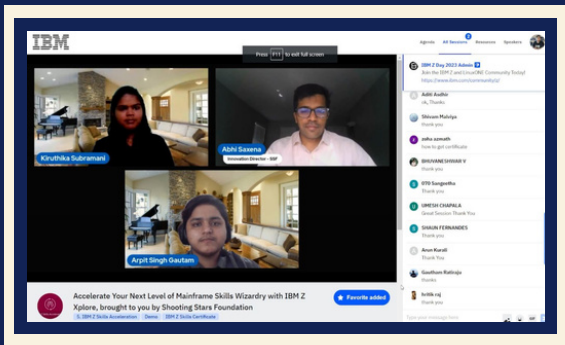


# STEM Programs

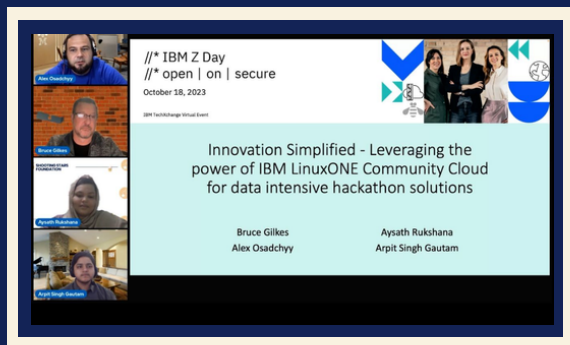
## IBM Z DAY 2023

On October 18th SSF participated in IBM Z Day bringing more than 570 students from our community to learn more about the latest IBM Z and LinuxONE innovation as well as hear about the mission and impact of Shooting Stars.

A special thanks to Abhi, our dedicated ambassador, for leading "Accelerate Your Next Level of Mainframe Skills Wizardry with IBM Z Xplore."



Kudos to Rukshana, IBM Z Datathon Program Manager, and Arpit Singh, past winner, for presenting on the impact of Shooting Stars and leveraging IBM LinuxONE for innovative solutions.



Students networked globally, connecting with participants from 120+ countries, and participated in live Q&A sessions. We are truly grateful for our ongoing partnership with IBM, anticipating an even greater impact next year.

## 2023 IBM Z DATATHON

The 2023 IBM Z Datathon, themed "Tech For Good" and organized by the Shooting Stars Foundation in collaboration with IBM utilized the IBM LinuxONE platform for diverse challenges. The event featured insightful sessions, notable speakers, and tips from professionals and tech mentors. With more 5,600 registrations, 600 teams, 40 countries, 20+ IBM SMEs & IBM Z Datathon Judges, and 206 project submissions, IBM Z Datathon was a great success.

Feedback from the IBM Z Datathon showed increased programming expertise, high interest in future events, and positive recommendations. Participant presented impressive projects across health analysis, regression modeling, and used newfound knowledge in LinuxOne, virtual machines, and machine learning.

*"I learned that the Linuxone cloud community is a great platform to have Virtual Machines. I gained confidence & learned team-building skills."*

- Saketh, Hackathon Participant



# 2023 IBM Z DATATHON



In-person event at Saveetha College of Engineering, Chennai



In-person event at Global Academy of Technology, Bangalore



In-person event at Imperial College, London



In-person event at SRMIST, Ramapuram, Chennai



# Scholar Programming

## COGNIZANT SALESFORCE VIRTUAL INTERNSHIP

The Cognizant Salesforce Virtual Internship Skilling Program is a wonderful digital upskilling opportunity for 13 of our SSF Scholars. With an increasing demand for digital skills world over, this is a unique opportunity for our scholars to learn the Salesforce Developer software. Salesforce is a cloud-based Customer Relationship Management Software that helps companies manage their business and customers in an effective way.

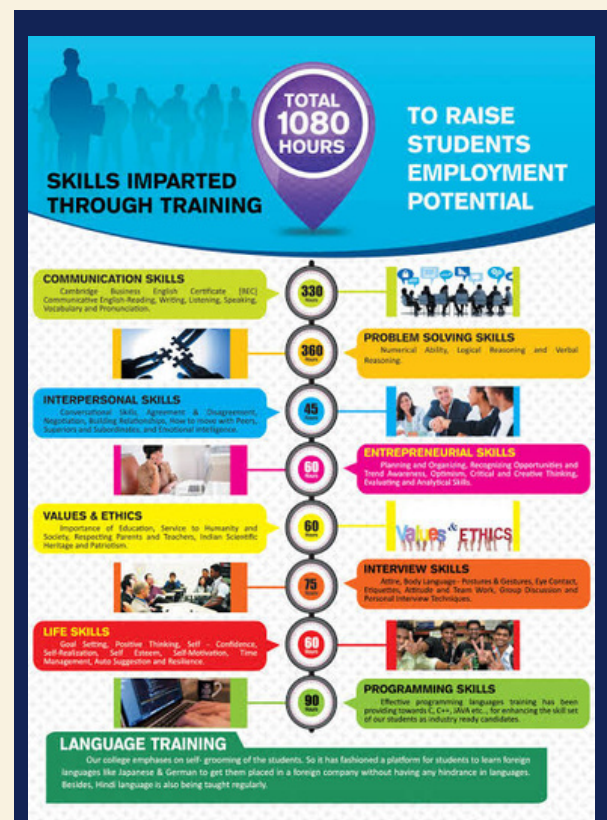
The participants enjoyed 10 Instructor led sessions, mentoring sessions by Industry experts and non-technical sessions to help them build their employability skills.

At the end of the program, successful participants of this program will earn a certificate which carries the AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) symbol, Cognizant and Salesforce logos. This certificate promises to add tremendous value to the students' resumes.



## COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND PLACEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

The Communication Skills and Placement training program is an ongoing virtual weekend program for 50 of our SSF scholars. It aims to help participants with building their communication skills and preparing them for job placements.



From a placement standpoint, participants will be exposed to different facets of resume building, corporate communication, group discussions, and how to face interviews without any fear. We believe that this program will help our scholars become confident communicators and land jobs of their choice!

# Spotlight

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

This quarter we introduce Sama! Sama is a SSF Program Leader who joined our team in 2023 - Sama brings a wealth of experience from her social work background.



*"Over the past year, I have passionately orchestrated projects and initiatives that directly impact the lives of those we support, fostering a positive change in their educational journey. Working closely with the team, I've witnessed the transformative power of education and the tangible difference our scholarships make in creating brighter futures. It's a privilege to be part of an organization committed to breaking barriers and providing opportunities for deserving students."*

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

We are honored to work in partnership with such amazing donors across the world who are often introduced to SSF through camps their children attended.

Then, they lent their expertise to the organization through their volunteer work. Finally and most importantly, they changed the life of scholars and their families forever through their generous support.

Here's one other testimony from our donors, Sangeetha:

*"I first came to know of SSF when my son enrolled in a camp. He thoroughly enjoyed the camp. My intrigue with the wonderful work the organization was doing, inspired me to volunteer. I was so touched recently when my scholar contacted me to let me know that he had secured a position with high remuneration. He said that it would change the course of his life."*



## BOARD SPOTLIGHT

Kevin has been an avid supporter and adviser of SSF for many years, well before we pioneered our US Board of Directors. Kevin is a founding SSF Board of Director member and a STEM advocate at heart.



**SHOOTING STARS  
FOUNDATION**



# Spotlight

This summer Kevin volunteered countless hours of his time to help direct our first ever Financial Planning Academy for underserved students in the US reaching 30 students and amassing over 1,200 impact hours.



Students learned about python programming, data visualization, and how to take care of their financial futures. We would not be the organization we are today without Kevin's leadership, initiative, and passion for STEM education. Thank you, Kevin!

## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

In 2022, our strong partnership with EAH Low Income Housing continued, impacting over 7,000 youth.

Through hands-on, project-based camps, we reached more than 50 low-income students with camps in HTML web design, tech entrepreneurship, and game design.

Michelle Parker shares,

*"Shooting Stars has given the youth in our EAH communities an opportunity to expand and experience technology in a fun and creative way. Students are encouraged to explore by designing projects that are relevant and relatable. It's such a joy to hear children ask when the next camp will be while expressing gratitude to the teachers. It's their eagerness to learn and continue to develop those rich connections in technology that inspires us all".*



## OFFICER SPOTLIGHT

This quarter we are so excited to spotlight youth officer Nivetha Subramanian. Nivetha is a current Youth Officer Vice President and recently concluded a season of giving donation drive that brought in \$2,300 in support of our STEM programming.



**SHOOTING STARS  
FOUNDATION**

# Spotlight

OFFICER



***Nivetha Subramanian,  
Youth Officer,  
Shooting Stars Foundation***

SPOTLIGHT

Nivetha, thank you for being a great leader and for putting our mission at the forefront this holiday season!

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

This quarter, we feature our Shooting Stars Alumni – Divya, Gokulnath, Sathvika, Dineeshwar, Ramya, Gunasekaran!

Each of them faced a lot of struggle to stand in the position where they are today!

Our Alumni Divya, whose journey was marked by profound struggles one after the other was astonishing, a testament to her strength and determination in the face of adversity and loss.

Today, as a Junior Engineer at Mold Masters, Coimbatore, Divya stands as a true evidence to the impact of organizations like SSF, proving that with resilience and support, one can overcome even the darkest of circumstances

To read more about Divya's journey, [click here](#)

## Alumni Spotlight



Dheeneshwar is now an ENT resident at PGIMER, Chandigarh. Discovered during a critical juncture, SSF became more than just a support system; it served as a wellspring of motivation for Dheeneshwar's future endeavors.

Following a strenuous year of preparation in Chennai for post-grad studies, he successfully entered his desired course, conquering both physical and mental exhaustion.

Navigating a demanding workload and language barriers, Dheeneshwar's unwavering determination shines through. His story reflects the struggle he endured and the pivotal role SSF played in providing continual support, turning challenges into stepping stones for positive change.

To read more about Dheeneshwar's journey, [click here](#)



**SHOOTING STARS  
FOUNDATION**



# Placement Highlights



## Harshan



**RTL design or Verification Engineer,  
Sandlogic Technologies, Bangalore**

ECE Student, KLE tech, Hubli  
Batch - 2024

I am really thankful for my donor for fulfilling my dream to become engineer

## Sarvanesh



**MS Automated operations Engineer,  
Ericsson company, Bangalore**

Electronics and Instrumentation Engineering student, RMK engineering college, Tiruvallur  
Batch - 2024

SSF provided me scholarship for my education, so that I was able to complete my degree. By completing it, I earned knowledge and skills to crack my interview. I am really thankful to SSF and my donor.

## Prakash



**Application Engineer, Jove  
multisystems, Iyyapathangal, Chennai**

ECE student, KSR institute for Engineering and Technology, Tiruchengode,  
Batch - 2024

I can't get job if my donor didn't help me, SSF family is the only reason for getting job.

## Ishaan



**Graduate Engineering Trainee,  
TVS Motor Company Limited, Coimbatore**

B.E. Production Engineering student, PSG college of Technology, Coimbatore  
Batch - 2024

Being biggest support, SSF provided me an intern offer which added value to my resume. Their training programs groomed my skills. SSF's financial support reduced our burden. The friendly environment got me more connections in SSF which was the primary reason for my resume to shine in the placement drives.

\*All scholar names are changed for privacy purposes



## STEM College Scholarship

We create a path for highly competent global scholars through college sponsorships, resources, training and mentorship to help them successfully graduate from top medical and engineering schools with a STEM degree.

[Learn more →](#)

# Upcoming Events and Programs

Program	Participants	Location	Dates
San Jose Hackathon	7-12 Grade Girls	In person and Online	January 20th
Vivo High School Stem Competition	High School Students	In person and Online India	February 6th
AMD Pervasive AI Developer Contest	College Students	Online	January



**SHOOTING STARS  
FOUNDATION**





SHOOTING STARS FOUNDATION

# WANT TO BECOME A CORPORATE PARTNER?



@shootingstarsorg



@shootingstarsfoundationorg



@shooting-stars-foundation-inc



@support@starsfoundation.org

## PARTNER WITH SSF



### STEM CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES WITH STEM

#### SSF Mission

Empower Individuals & Communities to Break the Cycle of Generational Poverty through STEM Education

#### SSF Impact

1500

Underserved students reached

100

STEM programs hosted

90%

Indicated dramatic increase in tech skills



@shootingstars



@shootingstarsfoundation



@shooting-stars-foundation



@support@starsfoundation.org

### Why should you partner with SSF?

- ✔ Increase STEM Participation in Underserved Youth
- ✔ Employee Skill Based Volunteering
- ✔ Employee Engagement and Team Building
- ✔ Build DE&I Hiring Pipeline

“Over the last four years we've sponsored seven hackathons – both in-person and virtual with Shooting Stars. The most recent virtual hackathon attracted 47 employee volunteers across the company. In addition to the satisfaction of working with students, a hackathon is an intense team-building opportunity for employees.”

-Karen McCloskey, Corporate Sponsorship, NetScout



<https://shooting-stars-foundation.org/corporates>



### 2022 Sample STEM Programs

#### F5 Young Women Tech Immersion



- 30 high school girls
- 3 week, 60 hour immersion camp
- Students learned about tech business and entrepreneurship and completed courses in web and app design to bring their tech business to life!

#### After Camp Survey

- 95% will pursue a STEM Major
- 97% will attend another SSF Camp

#### Amgen Tech Business Camp

- 30+ middle and high school students at Amgen headquarters in Tampa Bay
- 5 team businesses, website and apps were created
- 20+ Amgen employees engaged
- Showcase day included Amgen executive leadership, participant parents, offices of the Tampa Bay Governor and Congresswoman



#### IBM zDatathon



- >600 participants online and in-person
- 55+ team Tech for Good data science projects completed on IBM zPlatform
- 40+ IBM employees engaged
- 30+ internship opportunities provided by IBM

#### Netscout Cybersecurity Program



- 30+ high school students from Charlotte, NC
- 8+ cybersecurity projects and research papers created
- 10+ NetScout employees engaged

#### After Camp Survey

- 100% of participants reported their understanding of cybersecurity and security breaches increased drastically
- 100% of students reported that they enjoyed this camp and would recommend it to their friends

<https://shooting-stars-foundation.org/corporates>