

Bentley College picks Tomorrow 25 finalists

"A lot of times you find yourself alone trying to make a stand," says **Anjali Gupta**. Finally, though, making a difference has paid off for Anjali and 24 other high school juniors from around the world who became the finalists in Tomorrow 25, Bentley College's international leadership competition.

Besides Anjali, who is from the Charter School of Wilmington, Delaware, the finalists include **Vikas Lonakadi** of Clear Lake High School, Houston, Texas, and **Vrutika Mody**, of Singapore American School, Singapore.

Chosen from hundreds of nominees from around the world, the 25 winners received national recognition and interacted with high-profile leaders at an event organized by the Bentley Leadership Forum in cooperation with *Time* magazine. The event, which took place at Bentley College in Waltham, Massachusetts, aimed at bringing together leaders from the worlds of business, technology, arts and entertainment, and philanthropy to explore how social responsibility can be profitable in today's business environment.

Keynote speaker **Norman Pearlstine**, editor-in-chief of *Time*, kicked off the day-long conference.

After a question-and-answer session with Pearlstine came the panel discussions, addressing issues of ethics and social responsibility in business environments and social service entities. Senior officials from Time Warner, Verizon, Deloitte & Touche, and the Boston Red Sox explored the question of whether social responsibility can be profitable. The discus-

They are still learning, reports **Priyanka Chablani**

sion about business values in the 21st century reminded Vikas of his own Indian culture.

"Although I have lived outside India for most of the time, our Indian culture has instilled a lot of good values and ethics which will be a part of my life," he said.

Anjali is the founder and president of her school chapter of the Delaware Kick Butts Group. Members of this anti-tobacco campaign teach children at local schools about the dangers of tobacco use. Anjali plans to expand this project into the West Indies this summer.

enforcement to deal with the problems of trash overwhelming Houston neighborhoods.

Vikas took action in Houston politics last October when he noticed that no one in the 2004 Congressional race had addressed issues specific to his Houston community. He organized a debate among the candidates of District 22, and the event drew more than 250 residents, besides local and national media coverage.

Vrutika is the president of her school's chapter of Peace Initiative, a human rights organization in Singapore. Peace Initiative works to meet the goals of Amnesty International, which was banned in Singapore for promoting human rights in a country with its own moral agenda.

Vrutika and other members of PI also managed to raise and distribute \$55,000 to victims of the December tsunami.

Last November, her high school hosted the Model United Nations Conference for the Interscholastic Association of Southeast Asian Schools, and Vrutika sat as co-chair of the Security Council.

All the Tomorrow 25 finalists plan to expand on what they learned at the Leadership Forum. They have already started collaborating online towards a project entitled 'T-shirts for Africa,' for which they will collect and donate clothes to impoverished people in that continent.

The students said that they took home with them much more than insight into the business environment.

As Anjali put it, "In less than two days, I met three of my closest friends."



■ Anjali Gupta



■ Vikas Lonakadi



■ Vrutika Mody

Besides gaining a perspective on challenges businesses face, the students most enjoyed interacting with each other. "The other 24 that I met there were so accomplished and well-meaning... that made it so exciting to get to know them and learn what they had managed to do in their community," says Vrutika. Indeed, all three South-Asian award recipients have demonstrated initiative and leadership in their schools and communities.

She organized an Anti-Smoking Awareness Day at the Charter School.

Vikas is the founder and president of his school's Science National Honor Society and captain of the Academic Quiz Bowl team.

Additionally, he is a member-at-large for Houston Mayor's Youth Council Program where he has worked on projects including 'Stop Trashing Houston,' a city-wide campaign that uses public education and

Non-profit center hopes to address South Asian heart disease

MONIKA JOSHI

While undergoing training at Weiss Memorial Hospital, Chicago, in 1970, Dr **Enas A Enas** came across a 26-year-old doctor of South Asian origin who was brought into the emergency room with chest pain. It happened three times, and on each occasion he was sent back. The fourth time, he landed in hospital with a heart attack.

The next month, Enas saw a similar case of a young South Asian with heart disease.

Enas, now director of the Coronary Artery Disease among Asian Indians Research Foundation, has results showing a four-fold higher rate of coronary artery disease among Indians in the United States compared to the general population.

"(Also) Indians get heart disease at a much younger age," he says. "It happens in marathon runners, vegetarians — people who do everything right."

Thus emerges the need for a different way to diagnose and treat coronary artery disease in this population segment. An upcoming facility at the non-profit El Camino Hospital in Mountain View, California, plans to focus on that.

The proposed South Asian Heart Center that has received its first \$1-million grant from entrepreneur and philanthropist Malini Alles will become operational this fall. Enas is on the advisory board.

The one-of-a-kind center in the Silicon Valley is intended to make the South Asian community aware that heart disease has assumed epidemic proportions, and to provide early screening and referrals.

This year, it aims to reach out to 1,000 clients at the center and another 1,000 at their place or work, recreation or worship.

In addition, it hopes to reach out to 5,000 physicians in the next five years.

"We are not trying to replace doctors," says **Seema Sharma**, chair of the proposed center's marketing committee. "We are encouraging people to stay with their doctors, but providing them the information and education they need in terms of the type of testing they need done."

"There is no disease more predictable, preventable and treatable than heart disease," Enas says. "It doesn't come out of the clear blue sky, it has been in the making for 20 to 30 years."

Heart disease in America has been on the decline at the rate of two percent a year for 15 years because it is identified and treated. But the situation of South Asians remains unchanged, one of the reasons being that their risk profile is different.

Conventional risk factors such as smoking, high blood pressure, high LDL (bad) cholesterol, low HDL (good) cholesterol, obesity, hypertension and lack of exercise apply to South Asians but do not fully explain the incidence of heart disease in them. Additional risk factors, including abdominal obesity, high lipoprotein(a) and homocysteine, are at play, and patients should be screened for them.

The threshold of intervention and goals of treatment should be lower for South Asians.

The risk to a South Asian smoking a pack of cigarettes a day is similar to an American smoking two or three packs, Enas points out. "An Indian gaining 10 pounds is similar to an American gaining 20 pounds."

While a body mass index of 25 is acceptable for Americans, with a BMI over 30 making them obese, South Asians are at risk at 25. Similarly, a waist size of 40

inches is considered high for American men and 36 inches for American women. But a waist of 36 inches for South Asian men and 32 inches for women puts them at risk, he says.

Indians have mastered the worst form of cooking, says Enas. "Everyone else has to go to McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken or Pizza Hut." Deep frying destroys all nutrients in food, as also cooking for long periods of time.

The center that will cost \$5.6 million will employ a clinical case manager who will be a diabetic educator and nutritionist.

Also on board will be an executive director, a nurse, a medical director, and an administrative assistant.

Nivisha Mehta, interim executive director of the center, says a case manager will be assigned to each patient to follow up regularly and make sure (s)he complies with the instructions.

"The case manager will follow up and call them — did you make an appointment with the doctor? Did you go to that yoga class? Did you have any questions that I can answer?" Mehta says.

"They may call them every week, two weeks or every month. It depends on the patient."

The project came up at the behest of Dr **Jon Friedenber**, president of the El Camino Hospital Foundation, Sharma says. Doctors from the hospital as well as other medical groups in the Bay area, and volunteers from the South Asian community joined in.

At present, there are 60 volunteers, including Sharma.

Once the initial program is successful, the center hopes to help establish similar clinics in other areas with high concentration of South Asians, examples being New York and Chicago, and outside the country in London, and India.