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To: Chris Turillo cturillo@medha.org.in

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Dear (Contact First Name),

Firstly, we would like to apologize for the long delay since our last update newsletter. It has been a busy few months here in Lucknow, as we have been preparing for the start of our program with students, which officially commenced on October 3rd at **Avadh Girls' Degree College (AGDC)**, Lucknow.

After over a year and a half of planning - developing the curriculum, searching for partner schools, hiring facilitators, and marketing to students - we were all more than ready to finally get started. With that, we would like to share with you some of the most important developments and key activities over the last few months...

Student Marketing

We officially began marketing our program to students in August, with a series of '**Employability Awareness Workshops**' at six colleges in Lucknow. The events included a **humorous skit** to convey the importance of employability skills, a short talk explaining the Medha program, and an **interactive exercise** to give students a taste of our experiential teaching methodology. Response to the events was extremely positive, with over 500 students filling out application forms. **New student marketing materials** were distributed, and the events were followed by on-campus, 'guerilla' marketing campaigns at our **booth/canopy**.

Enrollment

Despite the positive response to our marketing efforts, student enrollment has been lower than what we hoped for/anticipated. While we know these challenges are to be expected in our first year, it has been a bit disappointing for all of us. We are learning a great deal about the program positioning and challenges from these experiences however, and know it is going to help us a great deal in the future.

Classes

The good news is that the students who are enrolled in the program are consistently providing us positive feedback and have demonstrated significant improvement in their computer, communication, and analytical skills in just a short couple months. In addition, they seem to be thoroughly enjoying our **activity-based teaching approach**.

Employment

While the program has just commenced, students from [Jai Narayan PG College \(JNPG\)](#) and AGDC have had the opportunity to interact with local employers on Medha organized industry visits. Students have visited Big Bazaar, Airtel, Royal Bank of Scotland, India Avadh Hotel, Citibank, and Tata Docomo. More importantly, ten students from AGDC have started month-long internships with Tata Docomo, Microsave, and Sanatkada. Finally, five students from AGDC are interviewing for full-time positions at Citibank as I write this! We are extremely excited about these growing employer relations and the positive response we have received regarding our students. We look forward to expanding and strengthening these relationships moving forward.

Partnerships

Medha is currently running its program in three colleges - JNPG, AGDC, [Mumtaz PG College](#) - and has submitted a proposal to the Secretary of Higher Education, Government of Uttar Pradesh, to pilot the program in one government college next year.

Medha has been named an [AIF MAST partner](#), and will be working to expand the MAST program to college students. This partnership comes with significant financial support and domain expertise and experience from the AIF team and its existing partners.

New Hires

Medha recently hired Abhishek and Manish to focus primarily on program facilitation and curriculum development. In addition, Vinay, a former volunteer, has joined full-time to manage accounts and administration. Bios of our new members are available on the [team page](#).

Research

Medha hosted Holly Guzman, an MBA student from Chicago Booth, for three weeks in September. She conducted market research on the growing 'missing middle' (high school drop-outs) in the employability development space, with a specific focus on the automobile manufacturing sector. This research is being continued by a team of current Booth students this winter.

Feedback/Suggestions

As always, we would love to hear from you with any suggestions/guidance you may have, specifically as it relates to our current challenges. If you have any thoughts on how we may increase enrollments or expand our employer relationships they would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you as always for your support and interest in our work,

The Medha Team



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