

# DARE TO DREAM

The official newsletter of WinVinaya Foundation



## HIGHLIGHTS AT WINVINAYA

### MARGADARSHAN 2023 -

#### A UNIQUE JOB MELA

WinVinaya Foundation trains candidates across 18 disabilities in various skills, with over 50% of our workforce comprising individuals with disabilities. Our aim is to showcase the remarkable strengths of Persons with Disabilities to corporate audiences.

MargaDarshan was more than a job fair; it was a job mela with tailored experience challenging assumptions and highlighting the diverse talents within the disability community.

The hallmark of MargaDarshan was the inclusive team that orchestrated every aspect of the event, from creating experiential zones to setting up the interview hall, stage, and registration desk. This team comprised individuals with diverse abilities — Hearing & Speech Impairment, Visual Impairment, Locomotor Disability, Neuro Diverse Spectrum, and those without disabilities.

Remarkably, this entire logistical feat was accomplished in just two hours, leaving onlookers astounded at the efficiency and quality achieved by our inclusive team. It shattered misconceptions that it is difficult to communicate with the deaf through sign language, displaying the productivity that an inclusive work environment can achieve.

The event started with lighting the lamp by our esteemed chief guests. This was followed by a prayer song by Pranav who is a person with Neuro Diversity.

After that, our event took a delightful turn with a dance performance by candidates with hearing and speech impairment. The energy was infectious, and corporates were in for a surprise as they witnessed the graceful dance moves.

Then, Divya, our Power BI lead trainer, conducted an insightful interview with our trainers with visual impairment - Mustaq and Arun. They discussed about their expertise in accessibility testing, acquiring global certifications, how they learnt and trained others in Power BI and commute independently using public/ private transport. They emphasized the need for companies to adopt a growth mindset, focus on capabilities and not on disability. They advised the candidates to be confident in their interviews and grab the opportunities.



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**Panel Insights:**

**Rethinking Disability in the Workplace**

The enlightening panel discussion moderated by Mr. Prateek - Co-founder & CEO, ATF Labs, had insights from Ms. Usha Akam - Global IT Director, SAP Platforms, Mr. Manikandan - Head - Talent Acquisition for Technology at Wells Fargo, Ms. Divya Mhatre-Placement Officer, TEACH Mumbai, Ms. Radha - Director of AccountsWhiz, Mr. Chaitanya K-Co-founder, Yunikee, and Mr. Mohammed Jabir, a deaf candidate trained by WinVinaya.

They brought forth a wealth of ideas and perspectives, redefining how we view disability in the professional sphere. Key takeaways include a call to reevaluate recruitment strategies for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), emphasizing strengths over degrees. The panel advocated for long-term investment in PWDs, reaping benefits like enhanced productivity and reduced attrition. They urged companies to broaden recruitment across disabilities, provide sensitization programs, and embrace diverse communication methods. For those not ready to integrate, outsourcing to inclusive companies was proposed. The panel highlighted the economic potential of including PWDs in the workforce, offering a vision for a more inclusive future. The post-panel session featured heartfelt appreciation, including a painting by Ms. Vaishnavi, a WinVinaya associate with Muscular Dystrophy.

The drama which showed a world with more deaf and less hearing people showcased a unique perspective of their life. Shiva Jaygopal shared how empowering persons with disabilities transformed his life. The event included a crucial Indian Sign Language session by Ms. Akila and Mr. Ashwin, dispelling misconceptions and promoting effective communication with the deaf.



**.Exploring Diversity:**

**Showcasing Abilities and Assitive Technologies**

MargaDarshan's vibrant stalls showcased diverse perspectives on abilities and assistive technologies:

- 1. Sensory Safari - Navigating Diversity with Persons with Visual Impairment:** Revealed a world of possibilities through fun and game, featuring specially designed cricket balls and tactile chess boards. Demonstrated the use of screen readers and talk-back features on laptops and mobile phones.
- 2. ISL Sprint - Introduction to Indian Sign Language:** Demystified Indian Sign Language, introducing attendees to basic ISL elements. Certificates were awarded to those learning the fundamentals, breaking the misconception of ISL being challenging.
- 3. Neuro Embrace - Celebrating Neurodiversity:** Highlighted the unique skills and achievements of individuals with intellectual disabilities and mental illnesses, fostering understanding and appreciation for neurodiversity.
- 4. Assistive Technologies Showcase:** Trestle Labs and Deep Vision showcased cutting-edge technologies, offering insights into accessibility solutions and tools supporting the workspace integration of Persons with Disabilities.



**SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY!**

The ball is in your court now...

If you or your organization is eager to embrace growth and embark on a journey of unlearning, we invite you to consider the numerous opportunities that lie ahead. Connect with us at [Placement@WinVinayaFoundation.org](mailto:Placement@WinVinayaFoundation.org) and let us explore how incorporating persons with disabilities into your workforce can be a transformative experience.

Are you curious to deepen your understanding of disability and gain valuable insights? We offer experiential disability sensitization sessions tailored for corporates. These sessions unveil a unique perspective on disability, fostering a culture of inclusivity within your organization.

Take the first step towards a more inclusive and enlightened future. Feel free to reach out to us at [Placement@WinVinayaFoundation.org](mailto:Placement@WinVinayaFoundation.org). We are here to guide you on this meaningful journey.

The door to diversity is wide open. Step in!

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## TRAINING @WINVINAYA

WinVinaya's recent milestone is more than numbers, seen in the completion of a specialized training program last month for candidates with intellectual disabilities and mental illness. Our tailored approach accommodates diverse disability categories, unlocking each individual's potential for meaningful employment.

We celebrated achievements with a valedictory session attended by 17 candidates from various disabilities, emphasizing the success of our training program. WinVinaya champions diversity, advocates for inclusion, and empowers individuals with disabilities, showcasing the transformative impact of targeted training and authentic support.

## HUMANS OF WINVINAYA



In this month's newsletter, we are happy to introduce you to Arun, a beacon of warmth and unwavering spirit, who has not just embraced life but thrived, breaking barriers, and inspiring those around him.

Arun embarked on a formidable journey when late blindness cast its shadow over his world. Initially unaware of his disability, he faced the world with a determination to persevere. In those early days, where identifying objects became a challenge, Arun pressed on, his vision fading but his resolve unwavering. Graduating despite the encroaching darkness, he entered a storm of uncertainty, grappling with his newfound visual impairment and the vast unknown of assistive technologies.

His journey took a challenging turn when seeking job opportunities. Joining an organization in auditing and QA, which did not heavily involve computer work, he faced exclusion and realized the workplace was not

inclusive. Unprepared for the challenges of working with a disability, he sought a new path.

Arun's journey took a transformative turn when he embraced self-acceptance, undergoing basic mobility and screen reader training. In 2022, the dawn of a new chapter unfolded at WinVinaya Foundation. Here, as an Accessibility Tester, Arun explored a realm of possibilities. With newfound knowledge and guidance, he ventured into the depths of accessibility testing, earning the coveted Section 508 certification. Today, he stands not only as a tester but also as a trainer, sharing the invaluable skillset with others who walk a similar path.

Arun's odyssey extends beyond professional accomplishments. Now happily married, with a delightful daughter, he confidently shoulders the responsibilities of a family, proving that resilience and hard work can illuminate even the darkest corners of life.

Arun's story unfolds as a testament to the power of creating positive spaces. His journey, marked by determination and perseverance, echoes a universal truth: with the right environment and unyielding effort, one can turn dreams into reality.

**Please scan the QR Code provided to access the sign language video of this newsletter**

