

Big Help for Education Post Internship

By: Alekhya Penumarthy

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My name is Alekhya Penumarthy and I was a youth intern for the Bighelp Organization. The school I taught is S.K.D.V.S High School in Pinapadu, Tenali, Guntur district, A.P., India. There are 50 students in Grade 10, 6 subject teachers, and 5 classrooms.

Tenali is located in the coastal Andhra region of the state. It lies on the Eastern coastal plains. Tenali is a town in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, India. Tenali is a major railway junction between Chennai and Kolkata. Tenali is known for its rich cultural and literary legacy. It has produced many famous poets, actors and educationists. Heavy rains are generally experienced between July and November during monsoon time.

My paternal grandparents are both natives of Tenali. My father was born in Tenali. Both my grandparents did their graduation in Tenali. My grandfather, after retiring as GM in Telephones in Hyderabad, came back to Tenali around 2001 and got settled. Most of his relatives still reside there.

In the Indian culture, girls are very secluded into doing sports. For example, they don't have a soccer team or volleyball team. However, the boys have a team for every sport. I also learned that they are also very strict about what attire to wear in public. Nobody wears shorts or leave their hair down. Girls only seem to wear kurtis all the time. Some students and teachers that I met were Swarna, Aditya, Supriya, Padma (science teacher), Phalguna for principal who teaches math and Laxmi (social studies).

During the workshop I taught the children the differences between Indian and American culture. I told them about our schooling system here and how a typical day in school is. I also talked to them about transportation to school and back. I shared my experience with seasons with them, and what sports kids play here during each season. I explained the differences of clothing between the two countries, and what an average house looks like in America. After I shared the differences, I talked to the children about hygiene in America and how we could keep India eco-friendly. I taught some of the kids to play soccer and I showed them some soccer tricks, for example, heading the ball, stopping the ball when it comes to you, and kicking the ball. We also had juggling competitions and in the end we played a soccer game. My speech altogether was about 30 minutes, but in addition to that with the activities teaching, I taught for two hours. The next day, we revised what we talked about the day before and later we played Pictionary. The children really seemed to enjoy the game.

We donated 75 Big Help bags to the outstanding students in academics. I also donated notebooks and mechanical pencils to all students of Grade 10. We gave each of the kids' pencils and notebooks, and backpacks to some of the kids. Bighelp really helped me every day to make my appearance to the school successful.

Everyone in Bighelp gave me ideas on what to say and what to do at the school. They gave me a lot of information on how the school would be and what I needed to share to the kids. At the end of the program I realized how the children in the school were really interested to what I shared with them. They also helped me understand the Indian culture more, and they were all so kind to me. They made me feel so comfortable right when I met them, and they treated me with such great respect. The children became very motivated at the end of the program and began to realize how successful they can become and how education is a very important key in becoming successful. Their ambition was to become someone who they thought they would never become. Some kids even wanted to travel the world and that showed how much they cared for their future.

I am highly thankful to the principal, Secretary and Correspondent, teachers and students of S.K.D.V.S High school for extending their valuable time in supporting me. My parents were so helpful in every single step in my internship. My mom and dad donated 25,000 rupees to the school for their science and technology dept. I was also given opportunity by the school authorities, to give speech to the students on the Independence day, August 15th. I would also like to thank my mentor, Mythili aunty for all the help. Also, Chand uncle, Rekha aunty, and Anitha aunty for their inputs as well!



