

CI student from the other side of the globe wins prestigious Edison Foundation scholarship

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Pandya taught technology to the students before going off to earn his undergraduate degree in computer science at the University of Pune, a premier university in Western India. Then he did freelance computer work for a few years before deciding to attend CI.

He knew California is the capital of computer science, so he hunted for a school with an excellent computer science graduate program that was affordable. CI fit the bill perfectly.

When Pandya arrived at Los Angeles International Airport, he had \$1,500 to his name and knew no one. But once he arrived on the CI campus, everything changed.

"I got tremendous recognition here," Pandya said. "It's like a family. Especially my department. I know the whole campus."

Within the first month, Pandya landed a job with CI's network infrastructure group where CI Senior Network Analyst Michael Long described Pandya as "an intelligent and humble young man who gladly accepts whatever work we throw at him and he always finishes well."

When Pandya's computer broke and he couldn't afford to fix it, Assistant Professor of Computer Science David Claveau, Ph.D., offered him a decommissioned computer from the computer lab.

"We are lucky to have great students from Ventura County, but also from around the world," Claveau said. "Dhruv Pandya arrived from India with a lot of heart, but without a computer. We found a computer for him and now he is doing the rest. We do our best to support our students' goals and in Dhruv's case, it's working out well, especially since he has won a CSU scholarship."

Pandya considers himself a global citizen, so after he gets his Ph.D. at a university in the U.S. or Canada, he plans to follow in his father's footsteps and use his skills to help others get an education in countries where education is hard to come by.

"I feel that God created everybody the same," Pandya said. "You have the same brains and nobody is above or below anybody else. Even if I make \$1 million, I will still go out in the streets and help people."