

## My Experience with Commonwealth Women's Mentorship Scheme

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I am from world's largest democratic country which is diverse in its culture and second most populous in the world - India. Currently, I am the only mentee from India in Commonwealth's Youth Council Women's Mentorship Programme. Less than one-tenth of applicants were selected from 700 applicants from all over the world, makes me realise that this programme is missioned to specifically empower the women.

During application I introspected about my work and also my leadership skills which made me question, "Am I valuable to the society?" I thought how I can contribute in changing and impacting the society and this made me even more enthusiastic for this Scheme.

My journey started after selection into this programme and getting a mentor, Ms. Lynn Labrecque King from Canada. She is extensively involved in social work since 1980s. She has worked with Government in Child Welfare Ministry and currently Director of non-profit non-governmental organization – Alberta College of Social Workers. I am a final year student of law from Asia's oldest law college, Government Law College, Mumbai and also pursuing Post Graduation Diploma in Human Rights Law from National Law School of India University, Bangalore.

Entering in the second month of six months pilot program makes me happy and I am able to see some changes in my behaviour even in such short period of time. Though I knew that I have social bent of mind but the direction and guidance was much needed. My mentor is guiding me very well and after each meeting I have loads of research to do.

Together we plan to achieve some goals and also evaluate our progress in journey. Having had two long discussions with her to date, I already have some clarity in my mind regarding the path to choose in future without any second thoughts. The discussions on the nature of governance in both, a developed country like Canada and a developing nation like India, helps me giving clarity on the ways governments work and arenas where it lacks.

Trying to also come up with an analysis and extensive research on one of the burning issue currently in India which affects people at large and governance system of India, Ms. Labrecque is helping me throughout. This research will then be used in approaching organisations and trying to bring a change in the society.

The qualitative change in the mind frame is utmost essential and for the same, Commonwealth Youth Council constantly keeps all the mentees engaged in discussions through the Whatsapp group and also by asking us to give our opinions and thoughts on some issues. The launch ceremony of this pilot made us feel confident and I thought that where I am heading to with this programme!

I feel blessed to be part of this Scheme and hope to achieve our goals in these 6 months. I hope that through this programme we are able to empower more women in our countries and bring some change in the society.