

Shivanie Rampersaud Overview of the Commonwealth Women's Mentorship

Reflection

One of the highlights of 2017 for me was definitely the Commonwealth Women's Mentorship Scheme. Now that the scheme is coming to an end as I reflect on the process I am happy to report that I was able to accomplish all my goals that were set by myself and my mentor, Joan Posivy during the initial stage of the program. It has impacted my life in a very positive way, and has provided me with the much-needed guidance to build capacity in my areas of work and interest.

Over the past six months my Mentor and I have been in communication via video calling, emails and Facebook. We have had more than twenty planned sessions, along with additional communication for the need of clarification or simply checking in with each other.

Accomplishments

During the scheme I was able to focus more on my writing resulting in the creation of a writer's blog. I also ventured into public speaking which was an area that I was skeptical about, but in the end, I was able to successfully conduct several public speaking sessions which allowed me to empower other young people.

Another goal that I was able to accomplish was my dream of starting a business. Through guidance from my mentor I was also able to complete a business plan and become involved in a small online business, which I'm working to expand as planned.

Relationships

I must say the CWM has not only given me a mentor but also a good friend, who is a great inspiration. Joan and I have decided to keep contact with each other even after the scheme has ended.

Another high point for me in this scheme was the networking aspect, which allowed me to 'meet' many wonderful, intelligent, strong and beautiful young women from across the world, who has become like family. These young ladies were able to inspire me to work even harder to achieve my goals. Each of them has a different story of struggle, hardships and overcoming those. They have helped me to strengthen my position as a women's right activist renewing my faith in the

strength of women. I do believe that women can change the world, because it has been proven time and time again that no matter what challenges we may face we will always overcome.

This scheme is pivotal to empowering young women. It was truly an honour to be apart of the first one of its kind. I am forever grateful for this opportunity and look forward to providing support to other young women in the future.

“Women are often looked upon as fragile and weak but she has the strength to not only give birth to a child but also to a new world!” – Shivanie Rampersaud