



W.H.E.E.L.

Scholarship Contest Winner

Vagdevi Anyapu

Topic:
New Career Choice
Why Now?
Your Inspiration

With the overwhelming number of careers offered in the US, I am now in the engineering field, defying the cultural standards and gender norms set in the country I come from. In India, it is quite normal for women to become doctors (as I had earned a degree to become a dentist), and men to become tech whizzes. But, even as doctors, women face the growing pressure of leaving their job due to heavier responsibilities at home and invisible rules that say 'stay home and wait for your husband.' Coming to America and choosing to be an IT professional, changes the perspectives of those back in India who still believe women should belong in the fields or stay at home.

I had initially been a dentist, and before I could apply my skills in a real setting, my life rapidly changed. Married and pregnant in three years, moving to America and having a child was my full plate. Observing, however, was something I was gratefully gifted with during my long, home-working days. Women and men attended schools here cohesively, with no visible gender norms controlling either of the groups. Women weren't shamed upon for attending a college to become an engineer, even more, some women in my husband's workplace now hold higher positions than him. Changing my observations to become my motivations were the statistics. According to the World Economic Forum in 2017, the global gender gap was at 47%, the smaller latter held by women.

While I had the option to choose a variety of fields, I was inspired by my husband to pursue the engineering field. The advancements that are being made in that field are incredibly rapid. Unfortunately, the disparity in the number of people that are able to work in the medical field is falling behind compared to the engineering field. If balanced out, these two fields could be the success the world needs. For example, take Epic. Epic is a healthcare software company that swiftly covers large ground in America, holding medical records of 54% of patients.

There is a lack of representation of women in the fields of healthcare and technology. As a student from India with a medical degree, and now a current student studying for a degree in IT field. I want to bridge a gap that breaks both gender norms and creates a new crossover between two very different fields. I hope my goals will be a role model to my son, future kids, and the women I interact with, allowing them to continue overlapping knowledge.