

Excellence with a difference

A Blind Woman CA Sets an Example

CA. Rajani Gopalkrishnan, one of India's very few visually-impaired women to become a Chartered Accountant, is truly strength and courage personified. Due to an incorrect line of treatment, she fell prey to a rare medical condition, Stevens-Johnson Syndrome (SJS), at a tender age of 9, and this resulted in gradual deterioration of her vision, leading to blindness. But with her courage and determination, she went on to become a successful chartered accountant. Behind this chartered accountant, Veena player and social worker, lies a determined woman who has defied all odds when it comes to success.



Recipient of the National Role Model Award for empowerment of persons with disabilities from the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India, and Karnataka State Award for Persons with Disabilities, she is presently employed as Senior Manager-Finance, Legal & Administration at CBM India Trust, a leading disability and development organisation in India.

With limited vision in one eye, CA. Rajani graduated in

(Contributed by Editorial Board Secretariat of ICAI. Comments can be sent to eboard@icai.in or rajani.gopalkrishna@cbmsaro.org)

Commerce from Bangalore University and started looking out for employment. Repeated rejections from employers prompted her to join the CA course. With very limited vision, she cleared the Inter CA exam. By 1994, she had lost her eyesight completely. With her indomitable spirit, success could not evade her for long. In 2000, she learnt to use a screen reading software which enabled her to work on computers. After a gap of more than seven years, in 2001, she started preparing for the CA final examination.

She recalls: *The volunteers have played an important role in empowering me and I strongly feel a desire to plough back to my society manifold whatever I have received.* By availing the services of a scribe, she eventually qualified for the CA Final examination in 2003.

In the last 10 years, she has provided guidance and assistance as a volunteer to more than 75 physically, visually or economically challenged students. She says *"I am happy that many students who were mentored by me are qualified Chartered Accountants today."* ■