

"No Great Things Were Ever Done Without Great Labour"

CA. T. Suganthi, who suffers from acute polio in both limbs, shares with the CA fraternity her sorrows and challenges encountered and ultimate joy reaped in earning the title of CA at the age of 21. She also shares her confidence and enthusiasm for those who think life is difficult.

Women have been at the forefront of every sphere of life. The profession of accountancy is no exception, and I'm proud to be a part of it. According to Ardent Veterans, "ambition motivates one into result-oriented personalities". And it was this spirit, combined with my persistence and the blessings of the society that despite being afflicted with severe polio, I have become a Chartered Accountant at the age of 22.

In my childhood I considered myself to be a dependent polio-affected person whom everybody sympathised with. My parents and doctors tried hard to bring me back to normal but to no avail. Both of my lower limbs had been so badly affected by polio that physical movement became an extremely challenging affair. As I grew, I stopped minding my physical disability as God had blessed me with all other treasures in life: an encouraging father, motivating mother, inspiring brother, well-wishers, teachers and helping friends.

Challenges Faced in Academic Arena: The very first hurdle came when I went up to the seventh standard in Madurai. The class room was upstairs. My father represented the matter to the headmistress of the school, who took a spot decision and shifted the sixth standard upstairs and the seventh standard downstairs — for my sake, of course. I scored 446/500 in my tenth standard and had to decide on my group for Plus One. New subjects like Accountancy, Commerce, Economics etc., created a special interest in me and I chose these as my group, thinking even at that time that this would lead me to the glorious 'CA' title. CA. S. Rammoorthy first motivated me to become a CA. I completed Plus Two with a high score of 1106/1200, ranking me first in the school in the Commerce group.

Challenges During Graduation/Foundation: I applied for B.Com in Lady Doak College but to my dismay there was no response till the last date. On



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persistent enquiries, the Principal, at last, agreed to meet me. She was shocked to see me enter the room crawling, and I knew that my admission to the college was not going to be an easy affair. She told me about the practical difficulties I could face if I studied in the college. However, I promised her to manage myself independently and finally convinced her. The only condition was that I should have a wheelchair. Although I had promised her to manage myself independently, I was a bit nervous at heart. But, to my pleasant surprise, a ramp was specially constructed for my wheelchair in the college. During the second year of my B.Com, I got through the Foundation Exams in my first attempt.

Challenges in Mobility: I joined articleship training in Coimbatore under CA. H. Venkatesh Rao and commenced my CA Inter studies in ICAI as well as private coaching classes. My brother used to drop me to class on his two-wheeler. I had to cross over so many difficulties, in attending to classes at various places and climbing multi-storeys without lift facility. Meanwhile I also met the then Managing Director of TWAD Board to request a transfer for my father, as his support was very much required for my CA affairs, and this was granted within minutes.

I entered a transitional stage of my life when I got a very special gift from my mother — a scooter, 'specially designed' for the physically challenged. Getting a license to drive the same was not so easy.

But once I got the wheels, I could go to attend my office and classes on my own.

The exposure to the nitty-gritties of accounting in the Auditor office, helped me to acquire an in-depth knowledge of practical issues in accounting principles. In those days, I was lucky enough to attend the inspiring lecture delivered by CA T.N. Manoharan (the present ICAI President) on how to confidently face the examinations ahead. I passed my CA Inter (both groups) in my first attempt scoring 327/600, for which I was honoured with a 'Special Recognition Prize at the Coimbatore branch. The Auditors' Association patronised me by granting me a scholarship. The ICAI on its part refunded me the tuition fee.

I also completed my B.Com graduation with 77% through correspondence simultaneously, which I had earlier discontinued.

Challenges Faced During CA Final: My Taxation faculty suggested that I apply for availing an extra half-hour to write my exams, specially meant for the physically challenged, which had to be endorsed by two members of the ICAI. The same was readily done.

Intelligence Failure: In my first two attempts for the Final, my preparations did not meet the required

professional competence. Most of my friends left for Chennai to take special private coaching. I wanted to follow suit, but couldn't do so as my parents could not relocate again. I was determined to write both groups at the same time, though many recommended that I write one at a time. But, to their surprise, I cleared both groups of CA Final in my third sitting.

My Impressions about CA Course: I started realising the magic behind the two letters "CA" from the trust, confidence, reliance, value and pride, which the world attaches to the title. I joined a reputed CA firm, which gave me further exposure in auditing. In the campus interview, I was selected by Dhanalakshmi Bank Ltd. for the post of Officer at its Coimbatore Main Branch. At the workplace, everyone looks at me as a CA rather than a physically-disabled person. Soon after I got the job, I was honoured with a memento at the CA Day celebrations on 1st July 2005 by SIRC-Chennai.

Even after earning a good placement, I have not given up studies. I have passed JAIIB exams of IIBF and I'm making efforts to face CAIIB shortly. For me, learning is a continuous process. The success is not an action but a journey, and today I can proudly call myself a successful woman Chartered Accountant. Remember the words of Swami Vivekananda: "No great things were ever done without great labour". □

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Four Generations of Chartered Accountants

This is the first case of four generations (Direct Bloodline) of one family being Chartered Accountants, which has been brought to our notice. In the present context when succeeding generations are not always inspired by the profession chosen by preceding generations, this is one family where Members of four generations have vindicated confidence in the same profession, and in that sense, it can be motivating factor for many who have to make a career choice.



Late CA. B.N.
Chaturvedi
M. No. 321



Late CA. A.N.
Chaturvedi
M. No. 3496



CA. M.M.
Chaturvedi
M. No. 31118



CA. Rishabh
Chaturvedi
M. No. 124465

It is noteworthy that both CA. B.N. Chaturvedi and CA. A.N. Chaturvedi were Chairman of Central India Regional Council of Institute of Chartered Accountants of India in 1956-57 and 1976-77 respectively and CA. Madan Mohan Chaturvedi was Chairman of Western India Regional Council Of the Institute in 1986-87. Rishabh Chaturvedi passed CA Final exams held in May 2006, in first attempt.