

Deepjyoti Ghosh

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

I am an international graduate student, born and raised in India. I completed my undergraduate and graduate degrees in Kolkata and Delhi respectively. Growing up in such a diverse environment exposed me to various social ills that plague the imparting of education. Primary among these were discrimination along gender and caste lines and lack of access due to prohibitive costs. Striving to end such divides in the field of mathematics has been an endeavor of mine through my academic journey.

Since I always had an inclination towards academics and teaching, it was really painful to see talented students struggle to succeed academically due to the socioeconomic structure in which they resided. Previously, I helped out by tutoring students in need for free. Currently, I try to help such students financially through my parents in India, in order to continue doing my part in providing an inclusive learning environment in my home country. The inequities I grew up around in India were along another axis than in the US, but equally pernicious. Both societally and in mathematics people faced direct and indirect discrimination based on their sex and caste.

Coming to The United States of America, one startling observation was the inequality in access to higher education, particularly among underrepresented groups, in the field of math. I believe it is important to increase awareness and inclusion not just for math but for any STEM field. We all are aware of under representation of women or any other minority groups in such fields. I opine that in order to enhance inclusion and diversity we must address such issues much earlier, at the high school level, through engagement and practical application. This will help develop analytical skills and providing them with options in making informed decisions. It is very important to make people aware about the benefits that math, as a field, has to offer and excite the grey cells in order to ensure more participation and enthusiasm at the college level.

I consider myself very lucky to be in Houston, as it is the most diverse city in the country. I have the pleasure of teaching a diverse group of students each semester. I always have, and will continue to teach in a manner where everyone feels welcome irrespective of their social or personal background. The mathematics department alone cannot eliminate social inequity or lack of inclusion. But one can definitely make efforts to bridge the gap over time and contribute in making a more inclusive, equal and diverse society for all. I would like to get involved in teaching groups who can teach school students and inspire them about the importance of STEM as a field. Such outreach programs will not only encourage students to get involved in STEM fields, but also increase awareness and harness equal opportunity.

I believe any student can enjoy mathematics and warrant its empowering feeling. The potential to excel in mathematics transcends demographic, economic and geographical boundaries. I opine any education field, not just mathematics, possesses the power of adapting and solving the needs of any community. Most importantly, each student has the right to be treated with respect and equality. It is necessary to make sure that everyone had the place and opportunity to make their voices heard. We need to ensure such platforms are available to everyone irrespective of their social or demographic position.