

Passion Turns Father and Son into Tutors

Sidarth enjoys finding new ways to engage students and help them learn. “I have to find new ways to motivate them to learn and I use many different techniques to help them understand new concepts. Sometimes it is easier for students to relate to me since I am closer to their age,” explained Sidarth.

“Sometimes people feel that they will have more by keeping what they have and remaining isolated; but the volunteers have learned the truth about giving. When you give of yourself, you receive more than anyone else,” explains Sai who, along with his son, lives out this principle. They have been volunteering for two years.

Dr. Gil Lee is a professor of Electrical Engineering at The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) and also the President and Founder of Intellichoice, the non-profit that started the Math Tutoring Program at Harrington Library. He is an energetic, soft-spoken man with a big heart who is compassionate, tireless and determined. “Children deserve a chance to succeed” is his hearts cry. I find joy in providing this opportunity for those less fortunate,” explains Dr. Lee.

Dr. Lee, Sai and Sidarth’s enthusiasm spilled over as they talked about the children. Dr. Lee says “The duo works together as volunteer tutors. Sai is always busy, with a schedule full of work obligation and family commitments, but his love and concern for the children is his motivation for volunteering. Being with the children inspires Sai.”

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Dr. Lee describes his fellow volunteers as being “generous and selfless people who give of themselves to help children succeed in math.” Several are professors from UTD and Southern Methodist University. Engineers from Texas Instruments, Raytheon, AT&T, CISCO, East Texas IC, Ericsson and Fannie Mae also volunteer. Others include a Children's Hospital doctor, a lawyer, a postdoc, many UTD undergraduate students and high school students. The total number of active volunteers is about 60.

Dr. Lee is eager to provide a program that will inspire students to reach for all life has to offer them. His goal is to provide the children who are consistent in the program with scholarship assistant and the chance to gain entrance into Ivy League colleges.

Sai has volunteered in the past at Habitat for Humanity or community events. Sidarth has volunteered in school events. Sai has a background in Science and thought he would be able to help the children succeed in math. “The main challenge we face in the math-tutoring program is simply keeping the children focused.”