



# Annual Newsletter

10th Anniversary Edition

Vol. 5, October 2017



## Sir Syed Global Scholar Award (SSGSA)

(formerly Sir Syed Emerging Scholar Award)



**EDUCATION**

**EMPOWERMENT**

**GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP**



**Sir Syed Education Society of North America Inc.**

-a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization



“Call me by whatever names you like. I will not ask you for my salvation. But please take pity of your children. Do something for them (send them to the school), lest you should have to repent (by not sending them)”

**-Sir Syed Ahmad Khan**

# From Chairman's Desk

## TO SSGSA FAMILY, SCHOLARS WORLDWIDE, SUPPORTERS AND AMU FRATERNITY

It is a matter of great pride for me to pen down this message for the special edition of SSGSA (Sir Syed Global Scholar Award) Newsletter celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this prestigious scholarship program. My heart fills with immense pleasure as I perceive the progress being made and the lives which this scholarship has touched so far in the past 10 years.



The seed of an idea from our founders sown in 2006-2007 as SSES (Sir Syed Emerging Scholar Award) has come to fruition, and the scholarship program has grown into a strong tree. It is indeed the endeavour of the dedicated SSGSA core members, application reviewers, donors, supporters and last but not the least, network of very talented pool of scholars over the past 10 years that this program is thriving and progressing at an incredible speed.

This newsletter is special indeed, the editorial team with the wonderful contribution of scholars, supporters and SSGSA members have weaved a seamless timeline of memories while sharing with you the success and vision of SSGSA. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to make this possible and especially the editorial team - Salman Bin Kashif, Mohd. Toaha Umar and Salman Khan. Lastly I want to thank the founders, donors, supporters and well-wishers of SSGSA for giving all the students like myself an opportunity to change their dreams into reality. As you will read through this newsletter, you will see how with guidance, support and a little encouragement, there is absolutely nothing which can stop the students of AMU from going beyond the vision of Sir Syed and conquering the world through higher education. We look forward to having more driven and talented people become a part of this great initiative.

*Irvine, California, US*

**-Ali Muzaffar**  
SSGSA Scholar (2013)

## Editor's Note

It gives me immense pleasure to present before you the 10th anniversary edition of the Sir Syed Global Scholar Award (SSGSA) newsletter. In this issue, we have attempted to bring out every possible aspect of the journey of this program as it stands well poised to expand its scope and provide a new dimension to the career of meritorious AMU students and alumni.



The process of drafting this edition has been a very enriching experience for the newsletter team. It was indeed a great opportunity to be the first reader of these inspiring experiences of SSGSA scholars and the founders.

The broad aim of this publication is to communicate the progress made by SSGSA as an organization, the principles it stands for and the future course of action. We hope that we are successful in highlighting all the aspects of what we do and the impact we have made.

We hope that you will enjoy reading the success stories and the journey of SSGSA in the past 10 years.

*Clemson, SC, US*

**-Salman Bin Kashif**  
SSGSA Scholar (2014)



# SSGSA: The Beginning

In 2007, driven by their love for their alma mater, and to foster the full realization of vast untapped potential, the founders, Dr. Rehan Baqri, Dr. Saif Sheikh, Mr. Ali Rizvi and Dr. Shaida Andrabi, came together to form an organization that changed the way students of AMU looked at their career prospects. Talented students from Aligarh Muslim University often missed out on realizing their full potential, due to insufficient information available about the procedure for applying, and lack of guidance, and thus, SSGSA was created. SSGSA has come a long way from its early days and a decade later, despite the challenges, it has grown to over a hundred members.

About SSGSA



Meeting between founder members and students ( From L to R: Dr. Saif Sheikh, Mr. Asim Rizvi, Dr. Rehan Baqri, Mr. Syed Ali Rizvi, Mr. Adam Ahmad, Ms. Sharmeen Khan) during the formative years of SSGSA, Chicago, IL



# Scope, Mission and Vision



The Sir Syed Global Scholar Award, which owes its inception to the shared vision of a few AMU alumni has undergone significant evolution over time to continue serving the needs of its scholars, while always adhering to the core values laid by the founders. The core values of the SSGSA are:

- A highly democratic structure.
- Great emphasis on selflessness: no self-promotion, either open or hidden.
- Promotion of leadership in the younger generation by mentoring and supporting our incoming scholars who would take the organization forward.
- Retain the independence of the organization, from all political and ideological influence and affiliation.
- Willingness to evolve in order to continue the mission of identifying and enriching outstanding thinkers, scientists, innovators and reformers.

This program was founded as Sir Syed Excellence in Science Award (SSESA) in 2007 with the financial support of AMU Alumni Association of New England and the Indian Muslim Relief and Charities (IMRC). Due to limited resources early on, it was restricted to AMU students from Science, Life Science, Engineering and Medical faculties, and was called the Sir Syed Excellence in Science Award (SSESA). In 2012, due to pressing demand from students and teachers to extend this award to other disciplines, it was renamed the Sir Syed Emerging Scholar Award (SSESA), offering scholarships to students from all faculties at AMU.

In 2013-14, the organization added a new dimension to its scope by constituting the International Summer Scholar program (ISRA). Three meritorious AMU students completed summer internships in prestigious laboratories in the United States.

In 2017, listening to the voice of students, teachers and donors, the organization adapted to its increasingly global profile and embraced its expanded portfolio of services that include international summer internship opportunities, in-person career counselling, online informational webinars, resume-writing workshops, supporting other charitable organizations, etc. in addition to the flagship scholarship program. This expansion in services and positive evolution of scope has prompted the SSGSA leadership team to adopt the new name of Sir Syed Global Scholar Award (SSGSA) to fully reflect the organizations global scope and ambitions.

Another aspect of this journey has been the regular integration of scholars in the organizational functioning as well as financial contribution. The initial batch of the SSGSA scholars have successfully taken a lead role in driving further the outreach of this program and bringing in the technological advancements in its functioning.

*The work is totally pro bono in nature and at no point any individual associated with the organizational functioning is allowed to claim financial benefits for his/her contribution.*



# Our Logo

About SSGSA

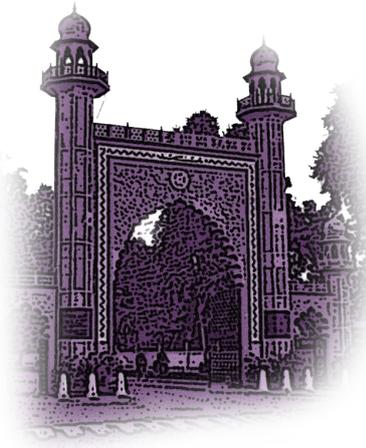


As time has gone by, our organization has undergone a metamorphosis from SSESA to SSGSA, and it was necessary to reflect this in our logo:

- SSGSA aims to **empower** students by providing them resources to quality **higher education**, which in turn will lead to them becoming **Global Citizens**, to engage in causes which are not just limited to India.
- The **knowledge tree** symbolizes this very concept of global citizenship, where the scholars spread the knowledge, while still being connected to their roots.
- The **torch** symbolizes the lightening up of the course of life by quality higher education, and the open book signifies that the education is a lifelong process.
- The **Ayat** from the Holy Quran is the motto of the SSGSA family , which symbolizes our commitment to advancement in knowledge.



# How the program works



## Selection of Scholars

SSGSA Scholars are selected on the basis of rigorous screening by independent academic experts and performance in GRE-style test and personal interview to assess knowledge and motivation.

## Mentoring

A committed team of mentors work with the scholars on every aspect of their preparation and application. The mentors continue to be available for guidance and help throughout the academic journey of the scholars, and in many cases well into their professional careers.



## Paying application fees

SSGSA covers the registration fees for standardized tests such as GRE, GMAT, TOEFL and application fees for up to five universities.

## And the network grows...

Upon successful admission, the students in turn become mentors to other incoming students





*Sir Syed Global Scholar Award*  
*Sir Syed Education Society of North America*

About SSGSA

In its journey so far, SSGSA  
has successfully placed **70+**  
scholars in prestigious  
graduate programs around  
the world



# SSGSA :Admission offers



Name	Award Year	Admission Offers
Adil Masood	2007	Ph.D, University of Ghent, Belgium
Asif Alvi	2007	MS, Boston University, USA.
Asif A. Khan .	2007	Ph.D, Ben Gurion Univ, Israel
Shah Kamran Rahman	2007	Ph.D, Kings College, London
Uzma Mansoori	2007	MBA, Liverpool John Moores University, UK
Beenish Zia	2008	M.S, Portland State Univ, USA
Mohsin Khan	2008	Ph.D, University of Maryland, USA
Savita Singh	2008	Ph.D, Cleveland State University, USA.
Zainuddin Quadri	2008	Ph.D Program, ICGEB, Italy.
Ali Shoeb Moon	2009	MS, Yeungnam University, South Korea.
Mustafa Ali	2009	MS Program, University of Maryland, MD, USA
Abdullah Ahsan	2010	MS, University of Maryland, USA.
Syed Murtuza Abbas	2010	MS, University of Cincinnati, USA.
Supriya Jindal	2010	Ph.D, Cleveland State University, USA.
Amena Arif	2010	Ph.D, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, USA.
Musfira Jilani	2010	Ph.D Program, Portland State University & University College of Dublin*, Ireland.
Ruchi Dana	2011	MBA, Stanford University, Sloan Institute of Management (MIT), USA.
Hanadi Falki	2011	MBA Program, Auckland University of Technology, NZ
Medha Sharma	2011	Ph.D. Program, University of Toronto, Canada
Husain Bin Qasim	2011	MS Program, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA
Syed Shabih Hasan	2011	Ph.D. Program, University of Iowa, Iowa, USA
Moin Khan	2011	Ph.D, Turku Biotechnology Center, Finland.

SSGSA: Admission offers

\* Offer Accepted in case of multiple admits





# SSGSA :Admission offers

SSGSA: Admission offers

Name	Award Year	Admission offers
Abdul Haleem Kidwai	2012	MA Program, University of Massachusetts Amherst, MA, USA.
Amra Ismail	2012	Ph.D Program, Cleveland State University, OH, USA.
Mustafa Ali Khan	2012	Ph.D Program, University of Maryland Baltimore, MD, USA.
Haji Mohammad Saleem	2012	MS Program, McGill University*, Canada & University of Amsterdam, Netherlands.
Meraj Khan	2012	Ph.D Program, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, WI, USA.
Utkarsh Goel	2012	MS Program, Montana State University, MT, USA.
Danish Ameer Khan	2012	MS Program, Youngstown State University, OH, USA.
Shah Kamran	2012	Ph.D Program, University College London, UK.
Tanwee Kausar	2012	MS Program, Stonybrook University, New York, USA
Quamar Niyaz	2013	PhD, University of Toledo, USA.
Mohammad Anas Anis	2013	PhD, University of Cincinnati, USA.
Mohammad Sarim	2013	PhD, University of Toledo, USA.
Mohsin Jahan Qazi	2013	MS, Chemistry at University of Eastern Finland.
M. Sameer Khan	2013	MS, Power Electronics at North Carolina State University, USA.
Mudasir Yattoo	2013	Ph.D, Erasmus Mundus Program (Germany), Tohoku University* (Japan), University of Eastern Finland, Ph.D program at the Imperial College*, London, UK.
Ali Muzaffar	2013	MS, Engineering Management, at the University of California Irvine* and MS, Electrical Engg at University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and Duluth, USA.

\* Offer Accepted in case of multiple admits



# SSGSA :Admission offers



Name	Award Year	Admission offers
Haris Shamsi	2013	MS program at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology* (KIT) Germany and the University of Edinburg, UK.
Taru Saraswat	2013	MS, Computer Science, Cornell University, USA
Mohsin Jahan Qazi	2013	Ph.D program at the Tampere University of Technology, Finland and the University of Amsterdam*, Netherlands.
Mohd. Tabish Siddiqui	2014	MS, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, USA.
Qambar Hasan Rizvi	2014	Ph.D program at the Satellite Stem Cell Research Lab of School of Biotechnology, Yeungnam University, South Korea.
Atif Zafar	2014	Ph.D program at the Georgetown University, Washington DC, USA.
Farid Haq	2014	Ph.D Computer Science program at the State University of New York (SUNY), NY, USA, University of Toledo, OH, USA.
Kushagra Kumar	2014	MS, Industrial Engineering, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, USA.
Salman Bin Kashif	2014	MSc (Chemical Engineering) program at Universiti Teknologi Petronas, Malaysia, Ph.D, Clemson University, USA
Safia Rahmat	2014	MS program at the University of Toledo, OH, USA and University of Maryland (Baltimore County), MD, USA
Shujaut H. Badr	2014	MS, Mechanical Engineering program at The University of Massachusetts, Amherst*, MA, USA, Ph.D in Aerospace Engineering, Iowa State University*, Iowa, US, Virginia Tech University, Virginia, USA.
Wasikul Islam	2014	Ph.D program in Physics, Oklahoma State University*, Stillwater, OK, USA, University of Alabama, AL, USA and University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), Baltimore, MD, USA.
Farhat Parveen	2014	MS program in Electronics, University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), Baltimore, MD, USA, University of Toledo, OH, USA, New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), NJ, USA, and University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), TX, USA.
Mariam Siddiqui	2014	MS program in Electrical Engineering, the New York University, New York, NY, USA.
Sk Abdus Sayeed	2014	Ph.D in Biology ,Cleveland State University*, OH, US , Texas Tech University, Texas, USA, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK, USA and University of Arkansas, Little Rock, AR, USA.
Sabahuddin Ahmad	2014	Ph.D in Biology at Heinrich Heine University of Düsseldorf, Germany.
M. Zulqaranain	2015	Eindhoven University of Technology* (TU/e), Netherlands., Ph.D program, Boise State University, ID, USA.

SSGSA: Admission offers

\* Offer Accepted in case of multiple admits





# SSGSA :Admission offers

SSGSA: Admission offers

Name	Award Year	Admission offers
Mohd Zubair	2015	Ph.D program in Biological Sciences, the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, AR, USA*, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH, USA.
Prakhar Gupta	2015	MS program in Civil and Environmental Engineering, the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign (UIUC), IL, USA.
Abhay Mittal	2015	MS, University of Massachusetts*, Amherst, US and University of Southern California, USA.
Afzal Shadab	2015	Ph.D in Mechanical Engineering ,The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (MSE Aerospace Engineering) ,Pennsylvania State University (MS Aerospace Engineering), Arizona State University (MS Aerospace Engineering), University of Buffalo (MS Aerospace Engineering).
Kashif Ahmad	2015	Purdue University*, West Lafayette, USA ( MS in Industrial Engineering), North Carolina State University, Raleigh,US (MS in Operations Research), Joint Masters Program in Tribology and Masters in Space Technology in joint European Program.
Rajat Kant Goel	2015	University of Southern California, US*, North Carolina State University, USA.
Md Sajid Khan	2015	Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey with Full-Bright Scholarship.
Abhishek Royal	2015	MS, School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University , Boston University's School of Public Health (Boston) ,Tulane University, New Orleans (LA) , Yale University, USA
Mohammad Faraz	2015	MS, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago for Masters in Mechanical Engineering , Arizona State University, US, Oklahoma State University, USA.
Ajaharul Islam	2015	Ph.D, Physics, Kent State University*, Ohio, USA, Mississippi State University, MS, USA, Western Michigan University, Michigan, University of Massachusetts, Lowell, USA.
Abdullah Haroon	2016	MS in Civil Engineering at Southern Illinois University, IL, US , University at Buffalo (SUNY) , University of Illinois, Chicago , University of Toledo*, US., Michigan Tech. University, US, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, USA.
Abhinandan Jain	2016	MS in Electronics Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology's Shenzhen (China) campus.
Sarmad Rizvi	2016	MS in Chemical Engineering from University of Florida, USA, State University of New York (SUNY), Buffalo, New York, University of Toledo*, Ohio and University of Cincinnati, Ohio, USA.
Sharif Kidwai	2016	MS, Texas A&M University, Texas*, USA ,North Carolina State University, University of Illinois, Chicago & Michigan Technological University, USA.

\* Offer Accepted in case of multiple admits



# The SSGSA SUCCESS STORY: Senior Scholars



## ***Contrary to expectations, the organization achieved a resounding success***

The success of the early scholars served as the catalyst for SSGSA's rise. These scholars not only carved out successful careers for themselves, but also contribute to the working of SSGSA today. They were there during the trying times, and majorly contributed to SSGSA's flight to the top. Mr. Abdul Haleem Kidwai, Ph.D student at University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and one of SSGSA's most distinguished scholars, explains why SSGSA has thrived. "One prominent figure in SSGSA told me that a number of people, including someone at Harvard Business School, thought that SSGSA would fail. They thought so because there were no economic incentives in SSGSA. But the critics were wrong because they assumed economic incentives as the only parameter, and didn't factor in AMU's sense of community. The culture of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) emphasizes working collectively, cooperating with others and having the willingness to sacrifice to benefit others. SSGSA has tapped into people's social preferences which in turn has made it so successful". He further adds about the importance of having an organization like SSGSA in the world we live in, "In a world that is becoming increasingly divisive, antagonistic and conflict-ridden, these values of collaboration and cooperation need to be actively promoted. SSGSA is playing a pivotal role in this by facilitating international exchange of students and scholars".



**Abdul Haleem Kidwai**

## ***Mentorship much beyond the set objectives and a facilitating work culture***

Over the years, SSGSA has nurtured different types of students- tinkerers and bookworms, realists and dreamers, present and past students of AMU alike. Mr. Kidwai had a unique case, and he recalls the selection process fondly. "After completing my BA (Economics) from AMU, I went to Mumbai to pursue MA in Development Studies at Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). It was here that a friend from Aligarh told me about SSGSA, but I had already completed my application by then. I felt disappointed that I would not be able to benefit from their scholarship. However, I contacted them anyway for help regarding mentorship. They went out of their way to arrange for a separate test and interview, so I could also benefit from the scholarship!".



# The SSGSA SUCCESS STORY: Senior Scholars

SSGSA scholars become a part of a warm family, one which looks after them even after they have successfully secured their admissions. Mr. Kidwai speaks warmly about the SSGSA family's hospitality, "When I reached the US in 2012, I was contacted by several SSGSA members who made me feel welcomed in a foreign land. They connected me with other students and were kind enough to invite me over to have *ghar ka khaana* with them!"

## ***The SSGSA family continues to expand into a professional network***

The earliest scholars of SSGSA have had resounding success in their respective areas. Mr. Syed Murtuza Abbas, completed his Ph.D from University of Cincinnati in 2015. While working on his Ph.D, he worked as a teaching assistant, had an internship with Dassault Systemes, a research assistantship with Procter &



**Syed Murtuza Abbas**



**Syed Shabih Hasan**



**Beenish Zia**



**Adil Masood**

Gamble and taught at UC as an adjunct professor. In his current role as a technical consultant Dassault Systemes SIMULIA Corporation at Dallas, Texas, he helps customers from various industries use SIMULIA realistic simulation applications to explore real-world behaviour of product, nature and life. The other such well placed scholar is Ms Beenish Zia who completed her Masters from Portland State University and currently serves as Technical Marketing Engineer at Intel Corporation.

Dr. Syed Shabih Hasan completed his Ph.D. In Computer Science from the University of Iowa. While at UI, Dr. Hasan won the best student paper award at CBMS 2013, and was awarded several fellowships. He interned at Starkey Hearing Research Center in Berkeley working on motion based hearing aid controls. He is currently a Director at Delos Living, a New York based real estate and technology company. He works at Delos's state-of-the-art Well Living Lab in Rochester, Minnesota leading research in the area of IoT, big data, and cloud based mobile health solutions. Dr. Adil Masood completed his PhD from Universiteit Ghent in Belgium and currently serves as the project leader at IMEC in Leuven, Belgium. Our current chair, Mr. Ali Muzaffar is working as a Senior Consultant with Deloitte & Touche LLP, California.

The SSGSA Success Story



# The SSGSA SUCCESS STORY: Senior scholars



Ruchi Dana

“Recognition is the biggest motivator”

Another SSGSA scholar, Dr. Ruchi Dana is one of the Forbes Top Indian leaders for the year 2017. She fondly reminisces her days in AMU and shared with us an anecdote which served as a cornerstone in shaping her career. During the class, the teacher remarked “I am certain one of you will crack the medical entrance this year and the one is .....” “Eager, all eyes looked up and towards each other in a class of 200 students. Engaged in my chemistry sum, I didn't bother to look up. But, to my surprise, pointing me out, the teacher said “Ruchi Dana”. That show of faith changed my life. Not letting my teacher down, that year during my first attempt, I got admitted in one of India's top 5 medical institutes, my beloved Alma Mater:

JNMCH, AMU. The experience taught me my most valuable leadership lesson– “Recognition is biggest motivator”. From thereon, this lesson has been engraved in my heart: Talent needs to be appreciated in order to bring out the best in a person”, she adds.

She expressed her sincere thankfulness to the SSGSA mentors and the support AMU alumni network provided to her. “Even today, I can proudly say that the kind of support and cushion that AMU's alumni network can provide, it is hard to find elsewhere. For example, when I was applying to colleges for my MBA, I had almost lost hope when I got waitlisted in one of best MBA schools, but with the help of SSGSA and coaching from AMU alumni, I regained the confidence to ace my further interviews and finally got admitted into the best MBA programs of the world: MIT Sloan, North Western Kellogg's and my GOAL: **Stanford University!**”, she said.

She has had an illustrious professional journey so far. She developed 3 low cost medical devices during her years as a medical student at JNMC. Initially, when she decided to commercialize these medical devices, as a doctor in Aligarh, she did not understand the language of business. Having completed her MBA from Stanford Graduate School of Business, she felt that now she is versed with the knowledge of Venture Capital and Seed funding and so decided to give back to the society by helping student entrepreneurs raise funds to convert their aspirations into reality. With the help of PikAVenture, she aims to make an effort to foster entrepreneurship in the country.





# The SSGSA SUCCESS STORY: Recent Scholars

## ***Making dreams a reality: Highly motivated scholars and well coordinated organizational functioning***

***“I started trembling with excitement, joy and euphoria the day I received my admission confirmation, the beautiful day I realized that my dream was finally coming true.” - Rajat Kant Goel***



**Rajat Kant Goel**

This outpouring of emotions, aptly described by Mr. Goel, is what every accepted student goes through. Like Mr. Goel, who is currently pursuing his masters in Computer Science from the **University of Southern California**, quite a few outstanding students from the grand institution of Aligarh Muslim University have realized their dreams of pursuing their higher education from a top university. These talented students had the ability to channel their efforts to achieve something that requires an exceptional amount of

patience and persistence. Apart from the individualistic brilliance of a student, it is imperative that proper guidance is available to the students when they are going through the arduous process of securing their admission. The SSGSA family has guided such students for a decade now, and with exceptional results.

SSGSA has helped students find direction in their careers. Mr. Mohammed Afzal Shadab, research scholar at the **Hong Kong University of Science and Technology**, explains “I was more focused on research until my junior year, where I had to choose between traditional competitive exams and unexplored arena of finding my niche. SSGSA played a major role in helping me to follow my dreams. I believe that seniors and alumni are the best guides after parents and teachers. The presence of a guide in taking each and every step bolstered my efforts of reaching out to people. I lost hope many times as the whole application process was completely alien to me, but the presence of a specifically-assigned mentor supported me in my tough times during each phase of application. Even though I can be a trying person at times, my mentors were always there for me”.



**Mohammed Afzal Shadab**



# The SSGSA SUCCESS STORY: Recent Scholars



Mr. Mohammed Zulqarnain, research scholar at the **Eindhoven University of Technology, Netherlands**, credits SSGSA for helping him choose the right university, when he had a multitude of offers. Mr. Shadab further talks about the large societal impact that SSGSA has made. "Generally, middle class families don't encourage pursuing higher education from the abroad, but the good news is that the SSGSA family can help you join your dream school without spending even a single penny". Mr.



Kashif Ahmad, graduate student at **Purdue University**, recalls how SSGSA helped him achieve his dream of studying at a top university. "SSGSA makes it easy for a student by not only paying for tests and application fee, but providing the invaluable motivation and guidance which I believe is the most important component of studying abroad. Mentors of SSGSA believed in me and made me realize that the sky is indeed the limit. The hard work coupled with excellent mentoring landed me into the Master's program at Purdue University, a highly-reputed US University".



## ***Duly passing the baton: Sharing success strategies***

Continuing Aligarh Muslim University's proud tradition of knowledge sharing, the SSGSA scholars are more than eager to share their experiences and insights and each scholar is assigned a personal mentor to help in test preparation and applications. All SSGSA scholars have access to premium accounts of Magoosh for the preparation of GRE and TOEFL. A few suggestions from the successful scholars has been included in this section for potential applicants:



The verbal section poses significant challenges, and Mr. Abhay Mittal, from the **University of Massachusetts, Amherst**, utilized his computer engineering background to come up with an interesting strategy, "For the verbal part, I had created a Linux script which notified me of a word, its meaning and its sample uses periodically". Mr. Kashif Ahmad employed a more traditional approach, "I would highly recommend learning all those new words from the Magoosh flashcard app which is quite handy. I used to write the words (without writing out their meanings) on a big sheet of paper and stick them on my room's wall. Every time I glanced at the wall, the urge to recall the meanings made my memory sharper!"



# The SSGSA SUCCESS STORY: Recent Scholars

Ms. Safia Rahmat, who secured admits from **Universities of Portland, Maryland, Southern California and Toledo**, emphasizes about time management while appearing for the GRE test, “As each section in the test has a time limit, I encourage practicing accordingly. Set time limit for each question and move to the next if you are not able to finish it in the time defined”.



**Safia Rahmat**

All the scholars agree that having a good profile is an absolute must. Ms. Rahmat adds, “Having been here for four months now, I have seen undergraduate students participating in various projects to make their resumes outstanding, which helps them gain an edge over their peers.” Mr. Shadab emphasizes about having a strong statement of purpose (SOP) and letters of recommendation, “The SOPs give you an outlet to showcase your passion, your goals, your motivations, and what new you can bring to the table. That is what truly matters.” Mr. Mittal talks about a crucial facet of the application that can boost the chances of securing an admission, “Going back, one thing that I think I missed out greatly was contacting professors before applying which I couldn’t do due to time constraints. I would really recommend writing to professors beforehand to get to know the research being carried out and see any scope of funding.” It always helps to show extra interest in the university where the student is applying, and Mr. Ahmad agrees. “I would recommend applying for teaching assistantship positions right at the time of school application. Certain departments in every university of USA are quite generous when it comes to funding and so, a thorough research might turn out to be fruitful! ”

## **Self Belief**

All the SSGSA scholars agree on one point- that believing in yourself is absolutely critical for achieving success in this tedious process. “It is never too late to follow up on an opportunity”, says Mr. Kidwai. “If I had simply given up thinking that my application was too late, I would have missed out on being part of the amazing SSGSA family. Therefore, no matter at which stage you are, BA, MA or Ph.D, keep an eye out for opportunities and pursue them.” Mr. Goel adds, “Don’t get deterred by the profiles of other applicants. Every university is looking for some uniqueness in a candidate that we sometimes overlook in our profile. Just believe in yourself, work hard, and put your best foot forward while applying”.

The SSGSA Success Story



# The SSGSA Success Story: Recent Achievements



Argonne National Laboratory (US)'s High Energy Physics division generally selects two students every year among the US universities in a Nationwide application process and provides 'ANL-ATLAS Graduate Fellowship'. This year they have selected me as 'ANL-ATLAS Graduate Fellow 2017'. As a fellow I will be staying one year at Argonne National Laboratory and will also work at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab) during that one year time. I will be working on a frontier project of "High Luminosity Large Hadron Collider"(HL-LHC) which will be the upgraded version of present day Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN Laboratory near Geneva, Switzerland. By the way, I have been working in the ATLAS collaboration of CERN towards my Ph.D (Physics) at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK, USA.

I have been extremely thankful to SSGSA and its inspiring senior Aligs for encouraging me to dream big and for providing me wonderful opportunities few years ago by selecting me as one of its scholars in 2014, so that I could come to the US for Ph.D. Perhaps, I could never afford this 'seemingly expensive' dream. It was SSGSA, which changed my perceptions, dreams and motivations of life. Since my arrival in 2015 I have been working as the Operational team member of SSGSA and I am trying to help and mentor other AMU-students who also dream to do their higher studies abroad. That new experience not only has been very beautiful, also it's amazing working style as a team is teaching me lots of lessons and leadership for life. I thank SSGSA from the bottom of my heart for everything.



**-Wasikul Islam, Stillwater, Oklahoma**

## Mr. Mohsin Khan was:

- chosen as one of the Leaders of Tomorrow (LOTs); 100 young people were selected across the world by the University of Cambridge, UK-based Global Biotech Revolution (GBR) organization.
- inducted in Sigma Xi for academic excellence; one of the oldest research society; over 200 winners of the Nobel prize have been Sigma Xi members.
- selected as the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists Foundation Grad Fellow.





# International Summer Research Award (ISRA)

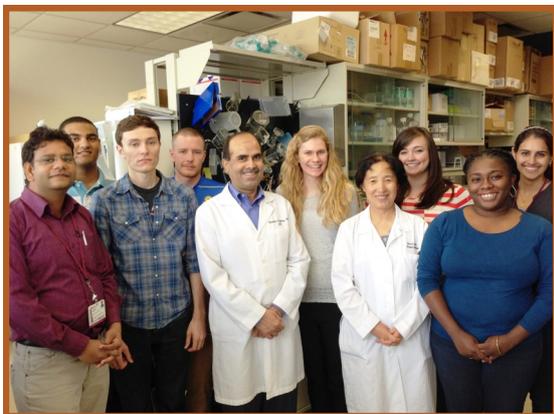
For nearly a decade we have been mentoring students and alumni of Aligarh Muslim University who wish to pursue higher education in the West (specifically North America, though many of our mentees have been successfully placed in European and South Asian Universities). To realize that so many students needed this kind of assistance that was either not available or was very expensive and that with our efforts many opportunities opened up for them, has been a very humbling and rewarding experience. There is nothing more satisfying than to see our volunteer efforts benefit the very people it was intended to.

In early 2013, it was felt that while our mentees come to the US for higher education, it would be great to have summer internships arranged for those interested, so before they came to the US and committed for a long term for higher studies, they would have a first-hand exposure of the quality of lab work and research, in addition to networking with academicians who could help in their final placement in MS or Ph.D programs. Therefore, the International Summer Research Award (ISRA) was conceived. ISRA program is offered under the aegis of the Sir Syed Educational Society of North America (SSGSA), Under this ISRA program so far 3 students have come from AMU to the US universities to pursue short-term research for few months.

- Mr. Sabahuddin, was the first recipient of the ISRA program and placed at Loyola University Medical School, Maywood, USA in 2014.
- Mr. S.K. Abdus Sayeed completed his summer internship at University of Houston, Houston, USA in 2015.
- Mr. M.R. Wani completed his summer internship at University of Alabama, USA in 2015.



Mr. S.K. Abdus Sayeed in his lab at University of Houston( Main Campus), Houston, USA (Summer '15)



Mr. Sabahuddin Ahmad with his colleagues at Loyola University Medical School, Maywood, USA (Summer '14)



Mr. M.R. Wani in his lab at University of Alabama, USA (Summer '15)

International Summer Research Award (ISRA)



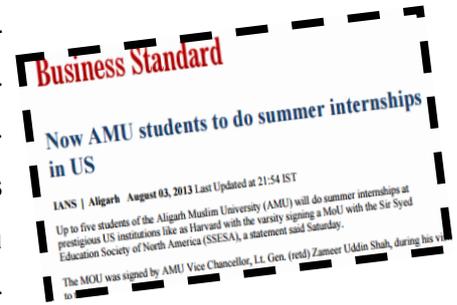
# MoU with Aligarh Muslim University



## AMU students complete summer internship at US

Press Release from AMU Public Relations Office | Dated: September 15, 2015

Two students of the Aligarh Muslim University, SK Abdus Sayeed, M.Sc. Botany and M. Rafiq Wani, M.Sc. Zoology, who went to the University of Houston, Texas and University of Alabama, United States of America, respectively, as International Summer Research Award (ISRA) interns for a period of three months have returned back to India after completing the summer research.



In 2014, first ISRA scholar, Mr. Sabahuddin Ahmad, B.Sc. (Hons) Botany had successfully completed a fully funded summer research programme at the Loyola Medical School, Chicago (USA). Mr. Mohsin Raza Khan, Chairman of the Sir Syed Global Scholar Award (SSGSA), USA and a past SSGSA awardee, said, "SSGSA is thankful to the AMU Vice Chancellor, Lt. Gen. Zameer Uddin Shah (Retd.) for extending much needed help to encourage students and benefit by ISRA internship".

SK Abdus Sayeed and M. Rafiq Wani, who have just returned to AMU, are engaged in preparing for GRE/TOEFL test to pursue higher education in US. Both Sayeed and Wani have appreciated the help and guidance extended to them by the SSGSA mentors, Dr. Saif Sheikh, Dr. Rehan Baqri, Mr. Syed Ali Rizvi and Mr. Mohsin Raza Khan. "They guided us in everything like our elders and we learnt a lot during the period when we had the opportunity to work alongside brilliant scholars and imbibed new methods and techniques in a very academic atmosphere", said the scholars. The Sir Syed Education Society of North America, a non-profit organization, has been mentoring students and alumni of the Aligarh Muslim University who wish to pursue higher education in North America. The SSGSA team and AMU together realized that AMU students needed assistance with their goal of pursuing higher education in the United States graduate schools and get first-hand research exposure to United States research laboratories.

AMU Vice Chancellor, Lt. Gen Zameer Uddin Shah (Retd.) visited the United States in 2013 and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Sir Syed Education Society of North America ensuring summer research opportunities for AMU students in prestigious universities of the United States. Under the MoU, five students selected through a rigorous and transparent merit based screening system would be supported each year for the summer programme.

International Summer Research Award (ISRA)





# The SSGSA Family

## Passing the baton: Building Leadership

One of the main purpose of SSGSA is to groom future leaders. The scholars who show interest in the functioning of the organization are first integrated into the operation team, where they absorb the culture, observe and develop into experienced mentors themselves. They gradually grow into their roles, and bring their own set of values and ideas to the team, which is integral to the growth of the organization.

SSGSA, as an organization that promotes youth leadership received its first taste of success in this sphere when Mr. Mohsin Khan, an SSGSA awardee, became the first scholar to become the chair of SSGSA in the year 2013. Allowing the young individuals to take the lead roles in organizational functioning continues to pay rich dividends, and has helped to unearth the dynamic present leadership of Mr. Ali Muzaffar and Mr. Wasikul Islam.

The operational team support the day to day work of SSGSA- especially during the application phase. They make sure that proper publicity is done when the application process starts, so that the best and the brightest from the Aligarh Muslim University get to know about this wonderful programme. They make sure all the applications are in the correct place, and they are responsible for notifying the applicants, and maintain constant communication with them. They act as a liaison between the applicants and the team of reviewers. Throughout the application process, they are the ones who make sure that the process is on the right track, and on schedule. After the conclusion of the application process, they are responsible for ensuring that the scholars are well prepared for the gruelling university application process. They assign mentors to the scholars, conduct regular webinars, and make sure that all queries of the scholars are answered. They serve as a link between the scholars and the executive committee, and book the test dates for the GRE and TOEFL tests.

The SSGSA Family





## Mr. Mohsin Khan

*SSGSA Chair 2013-15, First SSGSA Scholar to become Chair*

**Ph.D candidate, University of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland, USA**

A mentor serves more than just being an adviser – he/she is someone, who is a trusted person, supports his mentee by providing insightful inputs, steers them in the right direction, and takes pride in his mentee’s accomplishments. All in all, mentors can make profound positive impacts on the lives of their mentees; SSGSA program has changed lives of over hundred individuals including myself.

SSGSA mentors are trusted friends, role models, and people, who encourage and take pride in their mentee’s career growth and educational achievements. In retrospect, I still remember the day, when I got a call from a friend informing me about the SSGSA program results. It was a freezing winter day and I was getting ready to attend organic chemistry laboratory session. This was the first time (2009), SSGSA let apply non-biotechnology students for its annual mentorship program and my morning and evening schedule included checking email to find out whether SSGSA results are announced yet. However, that freezing winter day, I couldn’t make a quick trip to the AMU computer center and instead went to the lab. In the next few minutes, I got busy with my classmates in group-activities until a colleague kept me calling continuously despite the fact that I was unable to take the call during lab session. After sometime a feeling of unease crept over me and I thought there might be something really important, without realizing the next words that he will utter will change my life forever. The statement “you are one of the seven awardees” still resonate in mind, when I think about the beauty of this wonderful mentorship program and how it has helped me to advance my career.

I proudly associate myself with SSGSA, not only because of its motto of helping AMU students advance in their career aspirations but also its long term goal of training next-generation of the leaders, who lead the administrative and organizational functions of the program. I believe this is a singular AMU program that let its beneficiary run it. Over the years the rapport I developed with SSGSA mentors, scholars, and supporters made me realize how important role mentors play in young students life.



# The SSGSA Family: Founders

**Dr. Rehan Baqri**  
**Associate Director, Merck KGaA**  
**Boston, Massachusetts, USA**



The SSGSA Family

During the time I was pursuing my undergraduate studies at AMU, my friends and I would spend several hours at the local *dhaba* discussing the most dreaded question on AMU campus, “*iske baad kya karoge?*” Most serious answers almost always involved quality higher education and exposure to the world. For me, the best way I could achieve both of those things was to come to the US to do my Ph.D. Unfortunately, a good friend of mine could not do so, even though he was far smarter and more deserving than me, simply because he didn’t know about the opportunities and how to navigate the daunting application process. He ended up joining a local MBA institute, and while he is successful in his own right today, he still regrets that missed opportunity. This realization seeded in my mind the need for a scholarship program that not only provided financial aid but also mentored students through the graduate application process.

Due to few resources early on, we limited it to science, life science, engineering and medical faculties. With the sustained efforts of our new leadership, we are now offering internship opportunities, in-person counseling, online career seminars, resume writing workshops and many more services in addition to just a stand-alone scholarship. This expanded bundle of services and future ambitious goals set by our leadership (which I am proud to say are all ex-SSGSA scholars), have led to a natural evolution in the scope and mission of our organization.

Over the past decade, our organization has faced numerous challenges from missing fundraising targets, dodging political pressures, keeping overworked volunteers engaged, to managing timelines and operations across continents. It has been a tremendous journey, made possible only because of our special and talented team of volunteers and the unwavering support of our donors. The one thing that keeps us all going is the common goal of giving back our due to our beloved alma mater, our community, and our country. And we will keep striving to meet our goal by helping students realize their full potential because we believe that education empowers individuals, and successful individuals positively transform their societies.





**Dr. Shaida Andrabi**  
**Assistant Professor, University of Kashmir**  
**Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, India**

It is a matter of great pleasure that we are celebrating 10 years of our journey that is filled with interesting and successful stories. This journey is a story of shared vision, perseverance, enthusiasm and faith to contribute to our alma mater and society.

I was given the responsibility to be the first chair of this “rudimentary vision”. I was blessed to have the support of two amazing people, Rehan Baqri and Saif Sheikh. The organization was registered in Boston, Massachusetts, a city of international reputation for knowledge, culture and research. We were lucky to have another great friend Ali Rizvi, an extremely dynamic and resourceful person, who joined us soon and helped us tremendously with his amazing connections and experience. He has been an invaluable pillar for the organization—emotionally, financially, and intellectually.

We had set up a goal that within a few years, we would like to have our incoming scholars take the reins of the organization, and none of us would ever run for any such positions once we finished our “only one” term. We had the first taste of success when our scholar Mohsin Khan assumed the responsibility of the “chair”. He had obtained admission in Ph.D in the US a couple of years earlier and had taken keen interest in organizational affairs. That was a moment of delight for us. Keeping the same culture, we now have the current leadership, Ali Muzaffar and Wasikul Islam, from the younger batch of our scholars. These young leaders have brought lots of positive changes and value to the organization and have steadily taken the organization to a new level. The four seniors (Rehan, Saif, Ali Rizvi and me) have been providing all moral, financial, intellectual and logistic support to enable our younger leaders to build on this foundation further. We would expect the students/ alumni to bring intellectual and financial independence and strength to this great and ever evolving organization.

Our hopes are ever increasing and so are our expectations. Until now, this program has mentored hundreds of students and helped more than 70 scholars to successfully get admission in prestigious institutes across the globe, though most of them are now in the US, as it was designed to be so. That tells a lot about our journey and success. Of course, we look forward to obtaining much greater successes and overcoming much bigger challenges.

Now that we are compiling the events of this journey of 10 years, I am sure that we will have many interesting and exciting stories to read. I hope that this effort of putting these experiences and thoughts together will go a long way to inspire our younger generation towards achieving their career goals and bring laurels to SSGSA and our alma mater Aligarh Muslim University. It will also serve the purpose of highlighting our achievements and strengthening our belief that we can achieve much higher goals by providing opportunities to the deserving and highly motivated people.



**Mr. Syed Ali Rizvi**  
**President, Resolv Corporation**  
**Boston, Massachusetts, USA**

My motto has been to give back to the community from which I benefited so much. I have therefore been engaged, among other things, in various activities to assist, guide and mentor. In that process, I joined various AMU related groups and associations that were doing yeomen service to our alma mater, the great Aligarh Muslim University.

Around 2006, two AMU scholars, Shaida Andrabi and Rehan Baqri realized that not only financial help, but sharing of knowledge of the admission process was crucially important. They therefore approached me and shared their idea with us. I agreed with them that in the maze of either scarce or too much information, it was difficult for young students to maneuver, on how and where to start to pursue higher studies abroad. This unfamiliarity ranged from the initial application process, finding all that goes into the shortlisting of universities, selection and final placement in a reputed program in which a student is interested. I gave full support to the concept and with our friend Saif Sheikh who is based in Chicago, we formed this incredible team.

We are humbled and proud of the fact that we have been a part of a journey of ambitious, hard-working and focused scholars who have got admits from prestigious universities in USA, Europe and Middle East. Each awardee is mentored by experts in that field and if we do not have the required resource, we find one.

From the paper submission of documents to an online application process, from phone calls to Facebook Live Q & A sessions and everything in between we have embraced new and evolving technologies and media to remain connected with students. In our tenth year of our existence, as we look back, we are happy to have come thus far, but know that much needs to be done. We are thankful to our individual and institutional donors, the Aligarh Alumni Associations of New England, Atlanta, Chicago, Houston and others including Indian Muslim Relief and Charities ([www.imrc.org](http://www.imrc.org)) for their support. We are also thankful to the many volunteers without whose help none of this would not be possible.

So if you like what we do, come join us and be part of an incredible team to inspire, mentor and guide. If you know of someone who can benefit from our programs, do ask them to connect with us.





**Dr. Saif Sheikh**  
**Vice President, Jina Pharmaceuticals**  
**Chicago, Illinois, USA**

I realized the importance of giving back to alma mater after graduating from AMU and moving to a different Institution. It never occurred to me that how fortunate I was to be a student at AMU. This institution is not only provides education but also helps to transform a young mind to develop self-esteem and strength to face any challenge in the life.

After coming to US, I thought about various ways of supporting my alma mater. I joined the alumni association and participated actively but I was always looking for ways to support students of AMU. I remembered my days at AMU when someone from abroad came to visit our department we had so many questions regarding higher education in western countries. They helped in whatever way they can but there was no organization that specifically provided guidance to AMU students interested in higher education in US or Europe. Early on I started to work on this mission with few alumni in Chicago.

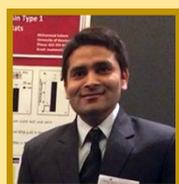
In late 2006, I came to know that Shaida Andrabi and Rehan Baqri were working on the same vision helping AMU students to realize their dream of higher education in US. I joined hands with them to work together. Ali Rizvi Bhai helped to give this project an organizational structure and got on the bandwagon. We got our first batch of students in 2007 after financial support from few well-wishers. Later, several alumni who had the zeal to help students joined the team.

Currently, we have over hundred volunteers helping AMU students every day. I will close with a following statement “We contribute in student’s success by enabling them to gain higher education but behind the scene is a giant success for their families and the community.”



# The SSGSA Family: Operation Team

SSGSA wouldn't be where it is today without the exceptional work done by the operation team. The main motivation for the operational team members is the cause that SSGSA stand for and provided below are few testimonials from the members of the operation team highlighting the sense of satisfaction and privilege to be associated with this program.



During my application process, SSGSA team helped me in every aspect including editing my resume, preparing statement of purpose (SOP), and selecting universities. Since then, I have been working with SSGSA team and observed that every student selection for SSGSA awards is completely transparent and unbiased. I request everyone to support this wonderful initiative that will help underprivileged students to get quality education abroad.

**-Mohammad Saleem, Nashville, TN**



Sometimes life gets busy and finding time for SSGSA activities becomes hard. But as Randy Pausch famously said "enabling the dreams of others is even more fun". The joy that comes from volunteering at SSGSA is beyond measure. To see that a little effort on my part can help bring a positive transformation in the life of another person, especially someone from the AMU is very gratifying.

**-Musfira Jilani, Dublin, Ireland**

Realizing the role which SSGSA award played in moving towards my career goals, I felt very enthusiastic to contribute to the organization in order to help it expand and help more and more students like me who aspire to receive quality education outside India. In the past three years of my association with SSGSA as a member of operational team, it has given me an opportunity of working with a team, collaborating with people from both in and outside India and most importantly communicating to students and planning their applications. I believe that while working as a team member of SSGSA, I have acquired important organizational skills, which are very beneficial for my personal development and would also prove handy in my professional career.



**-Mohsin Jahan Qazi, Netherlands**



My first motivation to be part of SSGSA was the great cause it is working for. Now it's my 2nd year in this organization and my respect for the team has only increased over time. The best part about working with SSGSA are its people. Everyone is friendly, cooperative and professional. It has always been a pleasure to work with SSGSA.

**-Abu Talha Danish, Aligarh, India**



# The SSGSA Family: Office Bearers

## Executive Committee



**Mr. Ali  
Muzaffar**  
Irvine, CA



**Dr. Saif  
Sheikh**  
Chicago, Illinois



**Dr. Shaida  
Andrabi**  
Kashmir, India



**Mr. Ali  
Rizvi**  
Boston, MA



**Dr. Rehan  
Baqri**  
Boston, MA



**Mr. Mohsin  
Khan**  
Baltimore, MD

## Operation Team



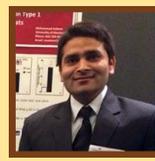
**Wasikul Islam**  
Stillwater, OK, US



**Musfira Jilani**  
Dublin, Ireland



**Mohsin Jahan Qazi**  
Amsterdam, Netherlands



**Mohd Saleem**  
Nashville, TN, US



**Mohd Zubair**  
Little Rock, Arkansas, US

## Web Portal Team



**Rajat Kant  
Goel**  
Los Angeles, CA, US



**Abu Talha  
Danish**  
Aligarh, India



**Salman  
Bin Kashif**  
Clemson, SC, US



**Mohd Toaha  
Umar**  
Aligarh, India



**Salman Khan**  
Aligarh, India

## Newsletter Team

## Advisory Board

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**Prof. Asadullah Khan**, Aligarh Muslim University, India

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**Prof. Arif Suhail**, Aligarh Muslim University, India

**Prof. Badar Iqbal**, Aligarh Muslim University, India

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**Dr. Nausha Asrar**, Houston, USA

**Prof. Shakir Husain**, Youngstown, Ohio, USA

**Dr. Farhan Ahmad**, Hicksville, NY, USA

**Dr. Moghis Ahmad**, Chicago, USA

2006

**Inception of SSGSA**



2007-2008

The outreach program of SSGSA to raise awareness about higher education opportunities abroad begins, with interactive sessions conducted by Mr Ali Rizvi and Mr Hasan Kamal in AMU.

**First batch of SSGSA scholarship awarded.**

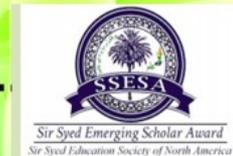
4 students from the early batches of SSGSA, Adil Masood, Asif A Khan, Asif Alvi and Beenish Zia, get placed in top universities



6 more scholars secure placements at top universities around the world.

2009-2010

SSGSA gets represented for the first time at the Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations (FAAA).



SSGSA expands its outreach program in Aligarh Muslim University, and Mr Adil Masood, from the University of Ghent, Belgium, became the first successfully placed SSGSA scholar to go back to AMU as an ambassador of SSGSA, when he delivered a talk to students of Science and Life Sciences faculties.



Dr Ruchi Dana, from JNMC, AMU, successfully got placed in the prestigious MBA program of Stanford University.



A path breaking Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Aligarh Muslim University and SSGSA, to facilitate summer internship opportunities in the United States of America.

Dr. Saif Sheikh interacted with the students of AMU and apprised them with the opportunities of higher education in USA.



Past SSGSA awardees Ms. Nida Rehmani and Mr. Asim Rizvi were selected for the prestigious STEM-ER program (2014)



Sabahuddin Ahmad completed his internship at Loyola Medical School, Chicago, USA under the ISRA program.

2011-2012



The Business Standard featured an article on the International Summer Research Award program, the initiative of SSGSA which enables AMU students to undertake a summer internship abroad.

Dr Saif Sheikh, then SSGSA chair, delivered a seminar on educational opportunities in the US, which was facilitated by Dr Suhail Sabir in AMU.

2013

Aligarh Educational Endowment Fund (AEEF) praised SSGSA's efforts for giving the meritorious students of AMU a promising platform for pursuing their higher studies from prestigious universities abroad.

SSGSA got represented at the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations (FAAA), held in Chicago, Illinois, in June 2014

2014





Mr. Mudasar Ahmad Yattoo delivered a talk on the opportunities abroad, required test scores and application process at the Department of Chemistry, in September 2015.

2015

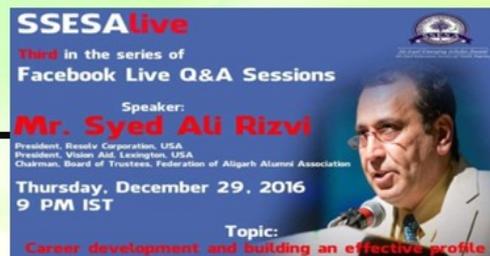


Mr M.R. Wani and Mr SK Abdus Sayeed completed their summer internships at University of Alabama, USA and University of Houston, respectively.

SSGSA Resource Centre, where the aspiring students can have access to webinars, collection of interesting videos related to higher studies, and copies of important information, opened in Centre of Alumni Affairs, Aligarh Muslim University.

The first ever Facebook Live Q&A Session held

2016



SSGSA Application Portal went live in 2016. The portal streamlined the selection process greatly, and the total number of applications went up by 200%.

The SSGSA Reviewer Portal went live in 2017. The portal allows the SSGSA reviewers to log in with a unique email ID and password, and review the applications assigned to them while submitting the marks online, thus easing the process considerably.



2017

Current SSGSA leadership, Mr Ali Muzaffar and Mr Wasikul Islam participated in the United Nations Youth Assembly as delegates and presented about Sir Syed Global Scholar Award in the panel session of "Sustainable Development Goal: Quality Education" at UN Head Quarter in New York

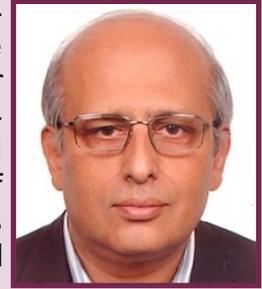


Sir Syed Global Scholar Award  
Sir Syed Education Society of North America

# Advisors, supporters and well wishers



I was recruited to SSGSA fairly early in its life. Though Shaida Andrabi had first asked for my help to interview prospective applicants, we also schemed up to start a GRE-like shortlisting test, which I put together for quite a few years. What attracted me to SSGSA was the idea of experienced Aligs mentoring their juniors access higher education beyond one's immediate reach and the very democratic and loose model of SSGSA's governance. The latter also provides leadership and soft skills opportunities to the mentors, which are so essential in today's connected world. It has been an absolute pleasure to witness the growth of SSGSA and its success, which is so evident from this 10<sup>th</sup> edition newsletter. Metamorphosis is not easy and neither was the transformation of SSES into SSGSA. But as the caterpillar changes into a butterfly, I wish it will not crawl the surface any more but soar the skies. My best wishes for the next ten years and beyond.



**-Dr. Shahid Jameel**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
*Wellcome Trust DBT India Alliance*

AMU Alumni Association of Greater Chicago (AMUAA-GC) is involved in the girls education program and funded over 16 projects resulting in building of classrooms, computer facilities and science laboratories.

AMUAA-GC also financially support Sir Syed Education Society of North America ([www.ssgsa.us](http://www.ssgsa.us)) that gives Sir Syed Global Scholar Award (SSGSA) each year to deserving students of AMU who are interested to pursue MS/Ph.D. program in the United States and Europe. SSGSA award helps the students with financial assistance for taking GRE/TOEFL exams and payment of university application fees. It also mentors students throughout the application process.

AMUAA-GC commends the work done by SSGSA team in helping AMU students and alumni in their pursuit for higher education in the United States and Europe.

**-Dr. Zafeer Ahmad**  
*President, AMU Alumni Association of Greater Chicago*

I have been associated with SSGSA for the last 8 years as reviewer, financial supporter, mentor and well-wisher. This outstanding program help students who interested to pursue advance study in the United States. There are many brilliant and hard-working students from India who are unable to follow their dreams of higher education due to lack of resources and understanding. I am very pleased that SSGSA has enabled such students to succeed by mentoring and financially supporting them throughout the application process.

**-Dr. Moghis Ahmad**  
*Vice President of Chemical Technology & Manufacturing,*  
*Jina Pharmaceuticals Inc. Illinois, USA*

Advisors, supporters and well wishers



# Advisors, supporters and well wishers

Advisors, supporters and well-wishers

It gives immense pleasure to learn that the SSES (now SSGSA) has completed a decade of its remarkable accomplishments and bringing out a newsletter celebrating the tenth anniversary of the program. I congratulate all those involved in the endeavor of providing guidance, mentorship and all that takes to help students procure placement in some of the finest institutions of the world. When I was contacted in the year 2007-2008 by two of my former students, Dr. Shaida Andrabi, Dr. Saifuddin Sheikh, that they along with Mr. Ali Rizvi and Dr. Rehan Baqri wish to initiate the program, I was confident that the program will succeed, considering the love of the foursome for their alma mater.



It however took me some efforts to convince and persuade some of my senior colleagues from the university to help initiate the screening of the students for the program as they were skeptical about its success. While some considered the program to be another "flash in the pan" by some spirited young men lacking experience, others felt that efforts needed to carefully screen so many students for so few awards (at the time), offering only modest monetary support may not be worthwhile. Thankfully, Prof. Abdul Azis, the then Vice-Chancellor recognized the merit of the program and agreed to help. After the initial years, as more and more students benefitted from the awards, cooperation and help was readily forthcoming. Dr. Shahid Jameel, then associated with ICGEB, was of great help in the screening of the students for the award.

It is heartening that the organizers of SSGSA have been able garner support not only from AMU community, but could also convince many others to make generous donations for the cause. It is indeed a matter of great pride that the number beneficiaries from this program has risen to 70. A look at the details of the recipients of the award reveals that they have been selected on merit without any consideration of their region, religion or sex.

The remarkable success of the program proves once again that a lot can be achieved with sincerity, dedication and selfless efforts. I admire the young people who could dream to help youngsters from India in achieving their goal of obtaining higher education in premier institutions across the world. This they could accomplish so successfully in spite of their extremely demanding careers and limited resources at their disposal. The success of this endeavor also owes a lot to many others who helped the cause in many different ways.

I hope and pray the program grows in an exponential way and increase in the number of supporters of the program will parallel that of the recipients of the award".

**-Prof. M. Saleemuddin,  
Former Professor & Coordinator,  
Interdisciplinary Biotechnology Unit (AMU)**





## OFFICE OF ALUMNI AFFAIRS ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH - 202 002 U.P. INDIA

**Prof. Suhail Sabir**  
Chairman  
Alumni Affairs Committee

**Professor**  
Department of Chemistry

**Member AMU Court**

**Member Executive Council**

**Member Academic Council**  
Aligarh Muslim University

**Ex. Hony. Students Counsellor**  
IDB Scholarship Program  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

**Coordinator**  
SSESA Program

**Advisor**  
IDB Scholarship  
Program in India

**Coordinator Scholarships**  
AMU Alumni Association of Michigan,  
Northern California and Texas, USA

**Provost**  
Mohammad Habib Hall

Sir Syed Emerging Scholar award (SSESA) has been one of the most successful program launched by our Alumni in USA. I am associated with the program as campus coordinator since the time it was launched by one of my very dear student, Dr. Rehan Baqri with the help of Aligs like Mr. Ali Rizvi, Dr. Saif Sheikh who all are my very close friends. Mohsin Khan who was past chair was also my student. He is a highly motivated person. These days Mr. Ali Muzzafar looks after the program. It has been very fortunate that whosoever has taken over the program has shown his keen interest in the program as they see it as the best platform for fulfilling their ambition of going for higher studies in US and other countries. Every student who has been awarded SSESA becomes a mentor for future students. The awardees join world's best institutions and become motivational force for others. I wish and hope that it continues for years to come whatever new name it adopts soon.

**Prof. Suhail Sabir**

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# SSGSA @ AMU Campus

The organization couldn't have come into existence without the support of amazing faculty of our university. Prof Saleemuddin, former professor and coordinator, Interdisciplinary Biotechnology Unit at AMU was one of the early supporters of the program from the faculty. The campus activities are coordinated by Dr. Suhail Sabir who also happens to be the chairman of the Alumni affairs committee. The conduction of tests and the interviews are coordinated by Prof Asad Ullah Khan. For the outreach of the program, it is imperative to have a strong ground team at the AMU campus.

I have been associated with SSGSA for the last couple of years. Dr. Shahid Jameel (called, Shahid Bhai) introduced me to Dr. Saif Sheikh back in 2012 to coordinate SSGSA Test/ Interview in Biotechnology Unit, A.M.U., Aligarh. My link with this non-profitable organization was initiated by organizing test and providing logistics for interview but in the subsequent years, SSGSA Executive committee has engaged me as board member to conduct interview. It is always a pleasure for me to extend my support for academic progression of any institution or community by maintaining the integrity.



The services of SSGSA for the progress of higher education among the youngsters are incredible. The perseverance, determination and sincerity of the team members are the key to success in their long term goals. SSGSA is doing a noble work in promoting education as well as supporting deserving and competent students of different backgrounds, irrespective of their region, religion and casts. The only criteria, chosen to select candidate for the support, is merit which is being ensured by qualified interview board members.

I am always in touch with students of different disciplines, especially in their last semesters of the courses to discuss future plans and talked about SSGSA as a good platform for career building in the field of education. I am happy to share that student in the campus are well aware about this organization with immense views. It is indeed a fact that many students of A.M.U. have been well placed across the globe through the amicable support of SSGSA.

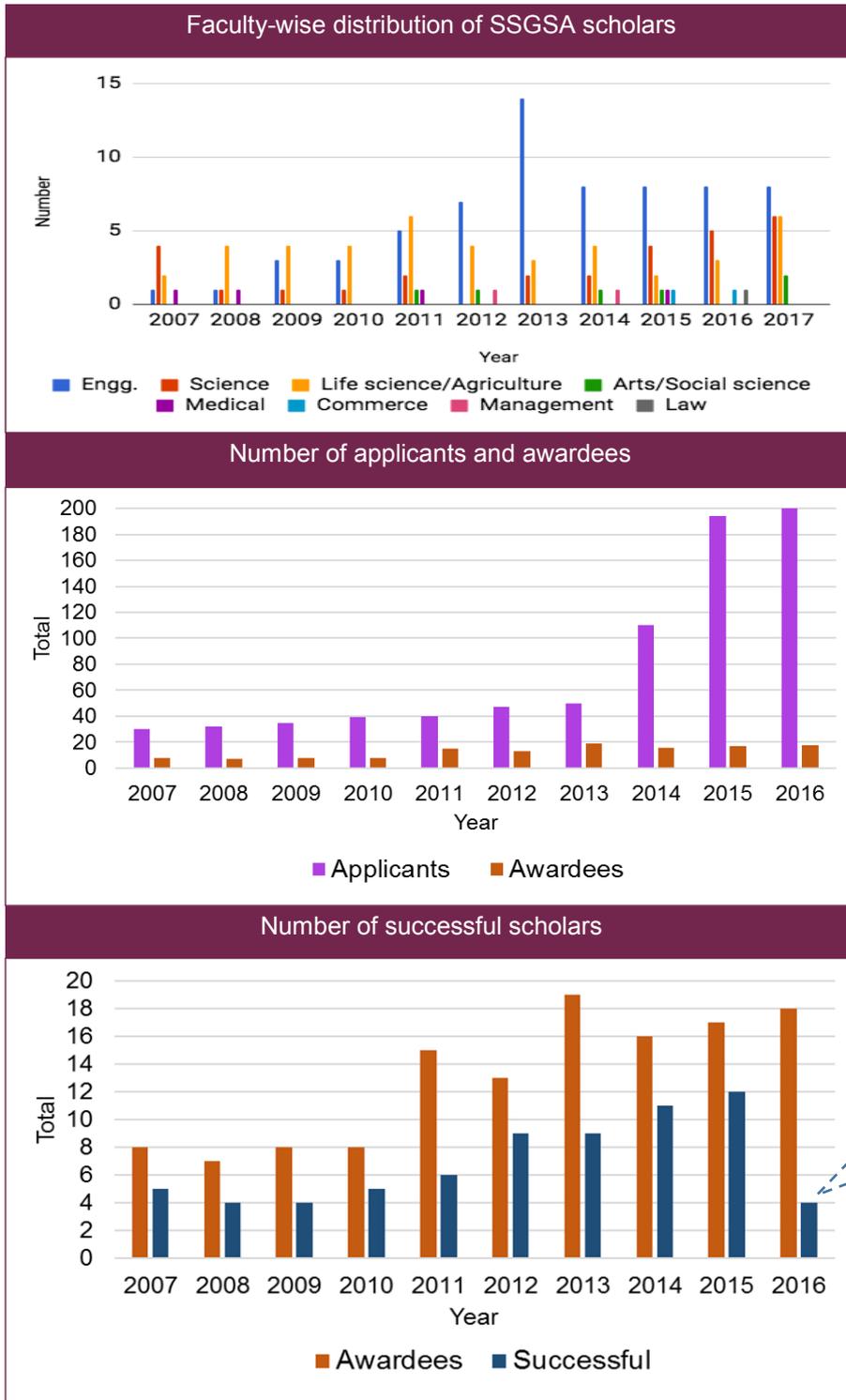
**-Dr. Asad U Khan,**  
*Professor, Interdisciplinary Biotechnology Unit*

SSGSA @ AMU Campus





Initially, SSGSA had a consistent number of applicants with a strong success rate. But from 2012 onwards, due to the growth in number of volunteers and advisors, there has been a significant spike in the number of applicants across all faculties. As SSGSA values quality over quantity, the number of accepted applicants has remained more or less constant. This has resulted in more meritorious students getting accepted into the SSGSA program.





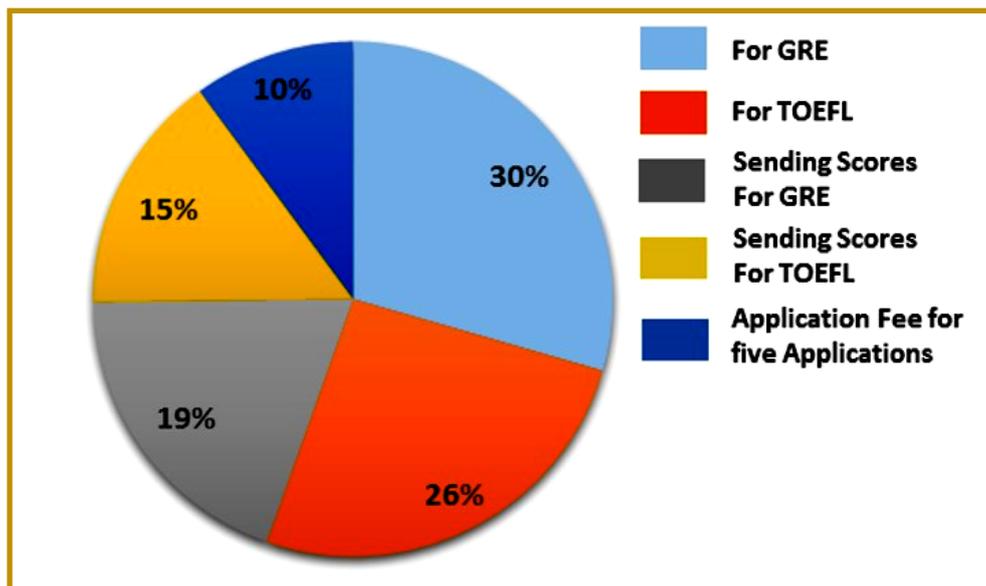
# Funds and Expenditure

## Funds collection

SSGSA is funded by AMU alumni and well-wishers. Over a period of time SSGSA has established credibility as a result of a dedicated team of volunteers to help students in achieving success in their dreams of getting admission at top international Universities. There are several AMU alumni associations and individual donors who have supported SSGSA every year for the last 10 years. We believe in demonstrating results of the previous year when we request funding for the next year. In the last few years, several SSGSA alumni have also joined the mission and are financially supporting the program. We plan to continually expand the program based on availability of the funds to benefit more and more AMU students who dream to achieve higher education.

## Expenditure pattern

Almost all funds collected currently go into funding the applications and proficiency tests of the scholars with a basic distribution as presented in the chart below. With expanding operations, SSGSA aims to utilize funds in developing a resource centre at the AMU campus which would more directly enable the students explore the opportunities abroad by providing learning material and video enabled mentoring sessions.



*The work is totally pro bono in nature and at no point any individual associated with the organizational functioning is allowed to claim financial benefits for his/her contribution.*





## **SSGSA earnestly thank its donors, supporters and well-wishers**

Want to contribute your bit?  
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Please fill the form @  
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A team member will contact you.

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***Jo abr yahan se uthega,  
Wo saare jahan par barsega...***



**Sir Syed Global Scholar Award**

*(formerly Sir Syed Emerging Scholar Award)*

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