

Dr M Srinivasan is the Founder and Chairman of GEAR Foundation. Though he has held many titles in the course of his career in the field of Education, the one he identifies with the most would be that of a teacher.

After being disillusioned with the way Engineering was being taught, he left his Merit seat a month into his Engineering course and took up Education in 1970. He hasn't looked back since then. He studied under eminent scholars at the Regional Institute of Edn, NCERT, Mysore, leading to B A. Ed. degree and received his MA in English and Commonwealth Literature from Manasagangotri, Mysore. He also studied at Central Institute of English & Foreign Languages, Hyderabad for a Post-Postgraduate Diploma which is a rigorous course of study in Teaching English as a Second Language.

Armed with the belief that teaching should spark curiosity and interest in a child, he became the English teacher at Sainik School, Tilaiya. Faced with teenagers who had to learn the language of English from scratch, he knew he had to come up with new, effective and interesting ways to teach his subject. Music, and hands-on activities became regular teaching tools for him. He was even able to create a radio club, where he encouraged his students to play English songs, and make announcements, read news and design various programmes etc. in English. The model of teaching English at Sainik School, Tilaiya that he developed was recommended to all the other Sainik Schools. The same model, researched and documented in New Zealand is called the Whole Language Method and is adopted all over the world.

After 5 years at Sainik school he went on to be a Senior Master at Yadavindra Public School, Chandigarh. Soon after that he was invited to set up a pioneering school at Gurgaon, that resulted in him becoming the Founder Secretary and Vice-Principal of the Rotary Public School in Gurgaon. The four years of hard work there, meeting extraordinary challenges culminated in developing a strong desire in him to set up an exclusive school for Gifted Education.

It was in March of 1984 that Dr. Srinivasan's life would change forever. He was in a car with a few of his colleagues, driving in New Delhi, when they were suddenly hit by a bus. The survivors were rushed to the hospital, unfortunately, one of his colleagues did not make it.

At the hospital it was discovered that Dr Srinivasan had massive internal injuries. The Doctors themselves were surprised that he survived. Dr. Srinivasan firmly believes that it was his students' prayers and wishes that helped give him his second chance at life. After months of recovery in the hospital, he stepped out with the conviction that he had to do something for the children of his country.

While he was in the hospital, at a time when he couldn't even move, he got a call with a job offer for a prestigious post in the Sultanate of Oman. He decided to take up the job as an English professor in the Palace of Oman, after he recovered, so that he could save the money and come back home to start the school of his dreams; a place that would break free from a rote system of learning and help children reach their full potential.

He is joined in his creation of a dream school by his wife Savitri Srinivasan who is a dedicated Montessorian. She is a graduate in Social Sciences and holds a Dip. in Montessori Education from London Montessori Centre, London. Her experience in Public Schools of India and Corporate Administration abroad come handy in facilitating teacher-training and building public relations.

When they were in Salalah, Oman, Dr Srinivasan travelled to the United States to complete a Masters in Gifted & Talented Education from the University of Connecticut, USA. That program is based upon the belief that the development of talent in areas, as well as concern for the moral and ethical development of persons, is essential in all children.

After a decade in Oman, Dr. Srinivasan and Savithri knew it was time to return to India. Even though Dr. Srinivasan had several job offers waiting for him in New Zealand and the United States, there was no question in his mind of him taking them up. He and his wife knew that they had to return to India to build their School Beyond Walls.

Their dream school took shape in Bangalore in 1995 with the establishment of GEAR Foundation. By 2001 the school moved into its own campus. Dr. Srinivasan and his wife believe that GEAR belongs to its children. They are happy to be involved in growing dreams and nurturing the imagination of supple minds.

Srinivasan was also awarded an honorary D.Litt by the Karnataka University for the pioneering and futuristic model of education that he has heralded in India. Under his leadership GEAR has been recognised in several different forums.