

## Brief Biography

Having grown up in different places in India, Rakesh was exposed to many different cultures. Since, his father was in paramilitary, every 3-4 years they moved to a different place, which made his education challenging and interesting at the same time. Exposure to different environments increased his awareness to many different professions. Although earlier in his childhood, Rakesh wanted to become a fighter pilot but realized that was not the career meant for him. With a strong interest in biomedical sciences, he decided to become a scientist when he was 21. He did his Bachelors in Biochemistry from Delhi University, Masters from Madurai Kamaraj University in Biotechnology and later completed his Ph.D in Immunology from the Medical School of Hannover, Germany. He did his postdoctoral on immunological memory formation at University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) in United States. He joined UAB as Scientist in the Division of Infectious Diseases in 2015. He is currently a senior scientist at UAB, and his laboratory uses patient samples to understand host immune responses against various bacterial pathogen including *Chlamydia*. In his spare time, Rakesh likes to play with his 20 months old daughter and outdoor sports.

Recently through social media, Rakesh became aware of FEA and the service this mission is providing to the society. It is his firm belief that a society can only grow towards positivity and progress if the youth is educated, motivated and aware. Like Pankaj, Rakesh also believes that education and personal guidance are the best ways to achieve one's dreams. Given this opportunity, he wishes to contribute his part for the betterment of the society by providing guidance and mentorship to the younger generation. His pledge is to nurture the talent that he can identify through this FEA mentorship program.