THE WOMEN ENGINEERS OF VMASC

A Social Media Series

All about Iswarya Choday Veera

WRITTEN BY JESSICA ZIMMERMAN

VMASC is excited to welcome Ms. Iswarya Choday Veera as a project scientist, who will be working with the Operationally Directed Instructional Network (ODIN) and the VMASC Capabilities Lab, as a front-end web developer.

Originally from Andhra Pradesh, India, Iswarya has a bachelor's degree in computer science from the Gandhi Institute of Technology Management, and a master's degree in computer science from Old Dominion University (ODU).

Working for VMASC is Iswarya's first official job after graduating from ODU last year. Even though her higher education has been mainly in engineering, she originally did not choose this field of study. "I wanted to go into math, statistics and physics. But I didn't get into the school I wanted to when I was in India. So, my mom laid out my options for me. She told me I could do anything, and be whatever I wanted to be," Iswarya said.

During this time, her brother started studying mechanical engineering at a local university in India. When she visited him, she got to see the campus and what he was learning. "From the second I stepped onto that campus, I just loved it and decided that's where I wanted to study. I still loved math, so I thought computer science would be the perfect fit for me," Iswarya said.

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After Iswarya finished her bachelor's degree in India, she wanted to continue studying computer science and so she started looking into programs in the United States. "I had visited the U.S. before and loved it. My grandfather encouraged me to come to the U.S. to study and so I went to a college fair in my city where there was an ODU booth. The recruiter explained the opportunities and programs at ODU and at the last minute, I chose ODU. I'm so glad I did," she said.

Iswarya is excited about working at VMASC where she will be creating features for different websites. She also wants to learn and get into cloud services in the future. "I would like to get my AWS certification and so I have been preparing for that. I would like to eventually work as a cloud engineer and own my own business someday.

We asked Iswarya if she had any advice for women that want to get into engineering for a career. "My advice would be to have the courage to stand up for yourself. There's no need to be disrespectful, but if someone does not treat you equally because you're a female in a field full of males, don't be afraid to put them in their place and make your point," Iswarya said.