BLOGS

#MyCLATStory-Victory Lies in Preparation

Ruchika Mohapatra · 29 Apr 2023

If you know what you're worth, go out and get it, but you have to be willing to take the hits! Ashreet's #CLATStory is a testament to his hard work and zeal to succeed irrespective of his circumstances. From completing his undergraduate degree from a traditional law school in the aftermath of a super cyclone to completing his dissertation and getting a scholarship to study in the UK, Ashreet's story reminds us that all you need to succeed is the strength of your will power.

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I am Ashreet Acharya, currently a PhD Candidate and teaching assistant at Liverpool Hope University, England. I am an alumni of Technical University of Dresden, Queen Mary University London, Utkal University, India and National Law University Odisha.

How did you start your CLAT journey?

I'm sure, like many others, I began thinking about law school after receiving dreadful board results, which are, of course, the pinnacle of everyone's academic career (not!). I decided to take the AILET, CLAT, LSAT, and other exams since I noticed a lot of people doing so. I got the opportunity to get into DSNLU and yet, I chose to stay at home and attend Madhusudan Law University, a traditional and one of the country's oldest law schools. After that, I decided to pursue teaching as a career, and for my Master's, I wanted to pass CLAT, which I did in 2019.

How were your initial years in law school?

In retrospect, my years were fine because they were formative years during which I learned the value of hard labour. It was the foundation upon which I built my career. Because of the Board exam trauma, I worked extra hard on my studies and performed quite well, which gave me the resolve to do more. Initially, I was labeled as a terrible mooter and even worse researcher, but I worked on my flaws and was able to be the moot court convener of my law school in my final year, as well as completed writing numerous peer-reviewed journal articles, which led to my co-writing a book on Research Methodology itself.

What motivated you to pursue law as a career?

To be honest, I never intended to do so, and like many others, I became disoriented through the years as my career alternatives ranged from the judiciary to the Indian army to business sectors to plain old litigation. However, I decided on academics because academicians have all been very influential in my life. With age and years of living and witnessing so many individuals construct diverse professions as lawyers, I acquired a respect for the profession that blossomed into a love for it, since no matter what you do with your law degree, you are most certainly making a difference and looking out for the little guys.

Tell us a bit about your experience while taking CLAT LLM. How was that experience different from the time you took CLAT UG?

It was a better, more determined man taking the exam at a bad time. Traditional law schools have a horrible reputation when it comes to sticking to timetables and completing exams, which I witnessed firsthand when a super cyclone hit Odisha in 2019 and caused a power outage that lasted over two months.

Preparing for CLAT and my final semester exams in the heat, humidity, and lack of electricity and resources was a monumental undertaking, but I didn’t have anything else to do. Prior to this, I took TISS-NET and passed it, but I was unable to join the institute because my final semester exams were scheduled after the academic session. However, passing that exam gave me a huge confidence boost, which I desperately needed during CLAT UG. I was able to achieve the required scores and perform admirably in both my final examinations and the CLAT.

What were your top 3 sources of information for CLAT? Did you prepare for CLAT all by yourself?

I prepared everything by myself. I was able to purchase a few practise books and exclusively used those; I must have taken over a hundred mock tests, which worked quite well for me. As a result, my go-to sources are judiciary books that have condensed what you've studied into revisable points, mock tests, and previous question papers.

What would you say sets apart your #CLATStory from others?

Nothing really does; most people who pass CLAT or any other exam do so not just by chance, but also through the good old-fashioned method of hard work. The true test comes after CLAT, when you have to confront law school and thereafter. But I hope that you find something within yourself during these uncertain times, which will help you deal with the stress of law school and beyond.

Any advice you'd like to pass on to law school aspirants and law students?

I've tried to make it as relatable as possible, and I hope you understand that it's acceptable to be confused or bad at certain things; all you need to do is figure out where you're going wrong and fix it. It's that simple: the struggle will shape your character both outside of law school and within yourself. If you take away one thing from this piece, it is that giving up is never an option.

This interview is a part of our series #MyCLATStory where we interview law students and legal professionals.

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