# Aiming high – P.Mridula @ PSBB KKN



**Tanya Elizabeth Ken, right, and P. Mridula, Class IX students of PSBB K.K. Nagar.**

A team of two girls from Chennai will be among the finalists in the junior category to showcase their app at Technovation World Pitch Summit in San Francisco in August. Six teams from across the world will take centre stage at the event.

Tanya Elizabeth Ken and P. Mridula, students of Class 9 from PSBB K.K. Nagar, will be presenting their app 'Lakshyashala', which seeks to bridge the gap between the career aspirations of students and the guidance required with the help of mentors.

"If a student of our age wants to be a cyber security architect, we realised that they often don't know whom to ask for guidance and the people they seek out aren't always helpful. Through the app, students are put in touch with mentors, primarily alumni of the school.

The Technovation programme encourages girls from the ages of 10 to 18 to work with women mentors, identify an issue in the community and develop a mobile app for the purpose. The aim is to offer girls around the world an opportunity to learn the skills they need to emerge as tech entrepreneurs.

The themes this year were Poverty, Environment, Education, Peace, Equality and Health, based on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

"We picked education to focus on since it has a concrete link with all the other themes. Education mitigates poverty and brings about equality. We were also inspired by the Prime Minister's 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' campaign, which focusses on educating the girl child and have designed our app in such a way that it should reach students in both urban and rural centres," explained Mridula.

Teams from U.S., Canada

At the finals in August, the girls will present their app to a jury and will be competing with teams from the U.S., Canada, Cambodia and Kenya.

K.E. Bhuvana, Director of ThinkDiff S'Kool, an after-school STEM learning centre, who mentored the girls through the project, said the number of young students interested in programming was growing gradually.

"An initiative like Technovation works towards getting more students, especially girls, interested in computers, programming and technology and gives them a platform for the same. Students pick up a lot more skills when they have to apply it creatively and such avenues should be encouraged," she added.

Both Mridula and Tanya say that with an increasing number of students wanting to opt out of the oft-treaded career paths, the app will be extremely useful.

"We are planning to make the app commercially available after the Technovation but we need to work a lot more on it and develop it further," they added.

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