

## Remembering Nishant Fozdar (New '09)

22 October, 2013

Last winter, we sadly lost one of our own. Nishant Fozdar, a New College '09 alumnus, was a remarkable young man with a passion for research, academia, mentorship and community enhancement.

At the time of his passing in December 2012, Nishant was a University of Toronto medical student who had made an impact all over campus, including here at New College.

"You always assume when you're the older sibling that you set the tone, but our relationship was

reversed," says Nandan Fozdar, Nishant's older brother. "As much as I thought I set high standards for Nishant to follow, he constantly motivated me with the amount of activities he was involved in."

That sentiment was echoed by Amena Zafar (OISE '12), who lived in Chestnut Residence, where Nishant served as a don.

"He was very busy, and we always wondered where he got his energy from. He was always so composed despite everything he was doing," says Zafar. "If anybody would go to him and talk about anything that was bothering them, he would take time out for them. He was a caring and considerate person."

Stephanie McKean (OISE '10), who worked with Nishant as a Chestnut don, recalls a time when she was having a difficult day and he was there to help.

"I'll never forget how quickly he went from [realizing I was not okay] to ensuring he did everything in his power to help," says McKean, "From getting me water, to listening, to talking when I no longer wanted to talk, to doing research to help guide my actions, and always, always checking in on me and the situation at hand."

Jasmik Saini (SMC '09), who befriended Nishant when they were both students in the Human Biology specialist program and worked with him as a Chestnut don, says Nishant's life experiences and passion for helping others drove his desire to mentor other students.

"Having gone through the transition not only to university but also to a new country during his first year at U of T, Nishant could really relate to the challenges of first-year students living away from home," says Saini. "As a newcomer to Canada and throughout his time in university, Nishant greatly appreciated the importance of strong mentorship."

"I recall Nishant reflecting that he had been very fortunate to make sound decisions and informed choices during his undergrad years by capitalizing on great mentorship opportunities," Saini continues. "Having realized these benefits, Nishant volunteered his time as an active peer mentor in different capacities, most notably for a group of first-year students through the university's First-Year Learning Communities program and also through his role as don at Chestnut."



From left to right: Stephanie McKean (OISE '10), Jasmik Saini (SMC '09), Nishant Fozdar (New '09).