

## WIPO website opens doors

I come from Bathinda, a small town in India. I first became interested in IP during my law course in 1997, but as there were no teachers or resources available, the law school advised us to pursue other options. My interest in the subject lingered on, until eight years later an opportunity came through the WIPO website and in 2005 I enrolled for the WIPO Academy Distance Learning (DL-101) course.

I downloaded the course material in one go because of cost and connectivity. During the month and a half which I dedicated to the course, I thoroughly studied not only the course material, but also the suggested readings and some aspects of Indian law. I passed with 98 percent. Due to lack of resources and family pressures I could not continue my formal education, but I kept updated by studying the resources available in the WIPO website and newsletters.

I included my DL 101 certificate in my CV, which I posted on one of the jobs websites. Unexpectedly, I was called soon afterwards by an engineering company in Chandigarh, seeking to secure its IP rights. At first the employer was skeptical that anyone from such a small town could have adequate knowledge of IP. But after being interviewed by an IP expert from the pharma sector, I was selected. I started working full-time for the company from February 2006.

Within the company I encountered negligible awareness of IP. But using the resources from the WIPO website, especially from the WIPO SME site, I have been able to explain and implement many things. We have documented the company's innovations, and made two PCT applications using the guidance on the PCT website and the PCT-SAFE software. We registered one industrial design, and also have a trademark registration pending. We handle everything in-house, from prior art search to filing and prosecution, so saving considerable costs for a small enterprise. We introduced engineering log-books and confidentiality agreements. I have inspired many colleagues in different departments – including marketing, advertising, mechanical and chemical engineering – to enroll for the DL 101 course.

The past year has been one of fulfillment both for my employer and my family, and I thank WIPO in general, and the WIPO Academy in particular, for this achievement. My employer's satisfaction was demonstrated when he sponsored me for the WIPO Executive Program in Goa, India, in March. The program has provided me with new insights, and has chalked out a path for us to follow in the coming years.

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