



Community Languages Schools

Ambassador Program
Student Profile



Carmila Chand

Namaste! My name is Carmila Chand and I studied Sanskrit at the VHP Sanskrit School of Australia. I come from a Fiji-Hindi speaking background and joined the VHP Sanskrit School of Australia so that I could immerse myself into my heritage in greater depth.

On my very first day of community language school, I was nervous and felt out of my element. Fast forward to today and I wish I had enrolled sooner! The benefits of attending a community language school have influenced all aspects of my life, from how I feel about myself to my contributions to society.



My learning experiences at the VHP Sanskrit School of Australia helped me to read and understand sacred texts in their original forms. It improved my Hindi and, with Sanskrit being a spiritual language, it enabled me to learn in a meditative way that helped sharpen my mind in a different way to conventional western learning techniques.

“What began with learning a language, led me onto a journey of reconciling and strengthening my identity.”

For me, being among peers who represented a variety of sub-cultures and languages helped foster a sense of belonging to a wider community of people. In the Hindu Maha Upanishad, there is a Sanskrit saying, *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* – the whole world is one family. While my family have not lived in India for more than 5 generations, attending the Sanskrit school nurtured my curiosity and broadened my perception of identity to appreciate the wider and more diverse lands and cultures I represent. What began with learning a language, led me onto a journey of reconciling and strengthening my identity in a way that feels comfortable to me.

One of the most important things about learning and communicating in a community language is that it enables me to express myself in a vibrant way and share that with the multicultural society in which I live. It helps foster a sense of belonging, not just for me, but also for others. Australians are multidimensional people and cultural expression through language is an important reminder of that.

If I could give my 10 year old self a piece of advice about learning Sanskrit, it would be that you've got nothing to lose and everything to gain.