In Memoriam - Dr. Vandana Sharma, Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics

Dr. Vandana Sharma was a passionate mathematician, a beloved teacher, and a cherished colleague at IIT Jodhpur. A highly-qualified and dynamic young professional, Vandana earned her Masters degree from IIT Madras, and PhD from University of Houston, and served as a faculty member in Arizona State University from 2014-19. She joined IIT Jodhpur in 2019 and was especially instrumental in the Institute’s successful transition into online teaching during the pandemic. Her research focussed on reaction-diffusion systems, and was published in reputed international journals and avenues. She was especially passionate about innovation in teaching and online learning that could help students visualize the concepts in a simple yet exciting way.

Vandana’s illustrious career was decorated with honor and recognition, such as Indian Academy of Science Summer Student Fellowship (2006) and Early Career Mathematician by Mathematical Association of America (2015). Looking back, I remember Vandana as a wonderful friend and teammate, with an ever-smiling personality, always giving others hope regardless of her own personal circumstances.

Vandana bravely and courageously fought her battle with Covid and breathed her last on May 16, 2021 at AIIMS Jodhpur. Losing her in this way is an irreplaceable loss to her family and friends, the IIT Jodhpur community, and the world of mathematics. She was an exceptionally dutiful daughter to her parents and had dedicated her entire life to service and the pursuit of science. While the anguish of her leaving too soon can never be abated, I hope we can honor her memory by being compassionate to each other in action, more than words, and cultivate her virtues in our conduct with utmost integrity, professionalism and devotion to service.

Dr. Rajlaxmi Chouhan, Department of Electrical Engineering, IIT Jodhpur