



## **EDGE Innovation Program (Fall, 2009) Student Participant Biographies (Eight Students – 4 CWRU; 4 UAkron)**

**Ankur Arora** is a first year MBA student at Case Western Reserve University. He earned his Engineering degree in Computer Science after which he worked for two years in the IT industry as a Software Solution developer with Infosys Technologies Limited in India. He has leadership experience at Infosys and was involved in development of a software program that saved time spent on certain tasks and hence increased overall productivity. He enjoys working on innovative technology, analysis and general business and is an aspiring entrepreneur.

**Mohit Ahluwalia** is a first year MBA student at Case Western Reserve University. He earned a Bachelors in Computer Engineering from India, is a member of the Marketing Club at the Weatherhead School of Business, and is an active member of the Entrepreneurs EDGE's Innovation Program. Starting off as a software programmer for companies like CITI Technology Services in India, he successfully made the transition to business analysis and product design with Sansui Software Pvt. Ltd (India) and BrandMuscle, Inc. (Cleveland, USA). This past year he worked with BrandMuscle, Inc. on gathering requirements and designing two software products for the online web-marketing domain.

**Peronne Joseph** is a Master in Entrepreneurial Biotechnology student at Case Western Reserve University. She moved from Trinidad and Tobago to pursue her tertiary education in biology and found the perfect opportunity to explore interests she always had in business development during her undergraduate education at University of Arkansas-Fayetteville. Peronne has worked as the Commercialization Assistant at the Clinical Tissue Engineering Center with specific interest on biomedical technologies which incorporate scaffolds, biologics and cells. She hopes to continue developing and managing the business and technology ventures of small to mid-sized biotechnology companies.

**Neil Keating** is a second year MBA Entrepreneurship student at The University of Akron. He has spent the last year working with The University of Akron Research Foundation and ARCH Angels on entrepreneurial initiatives, including Hop-On Student Venture Fund, a student run angel fund; Cafe Roo, a feasibility study on a student-run cafe on campus; and ROOBREW, LLC, a locally based micro brew. Prior to pursuing his MBA, Neil spent four years working in marketing for logistics companies including transportation giant YRCW. His duties there encompassed many specialties in marketing including analysis, communications, technical customer support, sales support and event planning. Neil is an alumnus of Mount Union College, graduating Cum Laude with a degree in Business Administration, with concentrations in Marketing and Quantitative Analysis in 2004.

**Kelly Mackey** is an MBA candidate at The University of Akron with a concentration in Strategic Marketing. She completed her undergraduate studies in International Business and Marketing at The University of Toledo (2008). During her time in Northwest Ohio, Kelly worked for La-Z-Boy Incorporated, where she helped administer an approved supplier program and was integral to the launch of a home accessory import program. Her professional experience also includes a diverse range of administrative and technical roles with several Northeast Ohio firms. She has a demonstrated interest in product and brand management and hopes to further develop her expertise in managing consumer product safety for globally-sourced goods. In her free time, she most enjoys traveling abroad and recently returned from her latest excursion to India (8/09).

**Ashok Manthena** is an MBA student at The University of Akron with a concentration in International Business and Finance. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering and has expertise in wide variety of fields, which he acquired working as a business owner, a business development manager and a consultant. He enjoys problem solving and analyzing the nuances of business challenges. His goal is to be a successful entrepreneur, and he looks to apply his work and MBA experiences to assist an innovative and progressive company to thrive.

**Michael Spence** is a current Masters in Engineering and Management student at Case Western Reserve University (expected graduation May 2010) and Entrepreneurs EDGE Innoquest student. Michael hopes to leverage his business skills and product development knowledge with his engineering background to provide superior performance to a high tech company. In addition to full-time studies, Michael currently works on an intern basis for Lubrizol on a Competitive and Market Intelligence change initiative. This past year, he worked on a team of individuals restarting a consulting firm, Lake Effect Innovation LLC, for which he is a managing member.

**Sheetal Wadikar** is pursuing her MBA in Strategic Marketing at the University of Akron. Originally from India, she has over five years of experience in the field of marketing communication. She has worked with some of the largest consumer finance organizations in India in the capacity of a Marketing Services Manager. Her experience spans across developing and managing product and brand promotions, advertising and marketing campaigns, and liaising with agencies and vendors. She has worked on product and brand campaigns across mass media, direct and internet mediums, and below-the-line mediums such as loyalty programs, relationship management programs, specialized brochures and displays, and POS (Point of Sale) collateral. She has an undergraduate degree in Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry from India. She is also passionate about writing and has experience in writing copy for brochures and drafting invitations and press releases as a part of her earlier work responsibilities. She is looking for an opportunity to prove her skills in the area of product and brand management and communication.