

March 18, 2026

Dear AIR Board of Directors and Award Committee,

It is a deep honor and great privilege to accept the 2026 AIR Rising Star Award. This moment is both humbling and profoundly meaningful. As a first-generation immigrant from India, I came here with big hopes, a lot of uncertainty, and a quiet determination to build something meaningful. To be recognized like this means more to me than I can fully put into words.

I want to sincerely thank everyone who nominated me for this award. Thank you for believing in me, for trusting me, and for seeing something in me that made you feel I deserved this recognition. That belief has meant everything.

Special appreciation is extended to my mentor, Mr. Manoj Patil, President of Little Priest Tribal College, for his guidance, patience, and honesty. His example demonstrates that this work extends beyond student outcomes — it is about approaching every effort with care, integrity, and intention. That mentorship has played a pivotal role in both personal and professional growth.

To my LPTC colleagues — Angie Kent, Sudha Shanmugam, Yatty Mohammad, Mark Vasina, and my Institutional Effectiveness team, Mounica Soma and Phillip Woods — thank you for being my support system. You've been there through challenges, deadlines, and everything in between, always encouraging me and pushing me forward.

And to my family — my parents, Chandra Shekhar Mareboyina and Manjula Vani Mareboyina — thank you for giving me the confidence to believe in myself, even when things felt uncertain. To my brother, Aniruth, thank you for always being my silent strength. And to my extended family and friends, thank you for standing by me through every step of this journey and celebrating every milestone.

This award may have my name on it, but it truly belongs to all of you. I am so grateful to be part of this community, and I look forward to continuing to learn, grow, and give back in any way I can.

With heartfelt gratitude,

*Kavya Mariboyina*

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Director of Institutional Effectiveness

Little Priest Tribal College