

ASHOK BHAT

ONE OF OUR VETERAN VOLUNTEERS

A civil engineer by profession, Ashok has been volunteering with General English classes at MCLaSS for more than two years. He started with volunteering for one hour a day, gradually increasing it to four hours a day. Now, Ashok volunteers for fifteen hours a week, assisting our teachers in classes and catering to the individual learning needs of our students- be it helping them with spelling and grammar or guiding them to use a computer properly.



Ashok particularly admires the services MCLaSS provides to migrants and former refugees as he understands the importance of support services at this juncture in their lives.

What Ashok enjoys the most at MCLaSS is meeting people from all walks of life, different countries and ethnicities and more importantly, getting to know more about the individual customs and traditions students of MCLaSS talk about every day.

“Volunteering is my passion and I always feel the need to give back to society whatever that society has given me”

In future, Ashok pictures himself being part of a not-for-profit or rather, forming a not-for-profit himself. So, being part of MCLaSS family definitely helps him understand the organizational models and not-for-profit sector better.

Ashok arrived in New Zealand twelve years ago as a skilled migrant from India and he relates his 12 years-ago-self to the students at MCLaSS. He says he went through a steep learning curve before he got adjusted to the culture and Kiwi way of life and he is glad to help anyone navigate the challenges that are often coupled with the process of migration.

For Ashok, it is humbling when students he works with appreciate his contribution and the praise they keep on giving him adds a sense of satisfaction to his life. Even though he is a volunteer, students often call him a teacher which, according to him, is even more overwhelming.

When asked how volunteering has influenced him as a person, he says, all these years of volunteering have taught him to be patient when interacting with individuals in everyday life and to understand each individual is different in his or her own way.