

Grateful for Forté: The Journey from Freshmen Year to Co-President

BY APEKSHITA ALKESH, *CO-PRESIDENT*

I first heard of Forte even before I came to Cornell – as an over-excited pre-freshman, I was researching all the extracurricular opportunities provided to students at Cornell. I was drawn to Forte not only because it was a women's business organization, but also because of the obvious community aspect and incredible diversity within the organization. Almost immediately, I felt that I too would find my place at Cornell through Forte.

I was lucky enough to get into Forte my freshman Fall, and have spent almost all my Cornell career trying to improve myself and my community through Forte. Honestly, when I first joined Forte, I had absolutely no idea what career I wanted for myself. As an Applied Economics and Management major, I knew I was entering the business world – however, I had changed concentrations at least five times and was nowhere closer to zoning in on my chosen career path. I gained tangible business knowledge and experience from my classes at Dyson, but I learned how to excel as a woman in the industry only through Forte's Education Series, Speaker Series, and all the wonderful senior members and alumni. Since I had gained so much from Forte, I knew that I wanted to find a way to give back to this phenomenal organization.

I got on Executive Board as VP of Marketing in my sophomore year. Through this role, I also solidified my passion for marketing as a career. As I spearheaded my own projects within Forte, I found the confidence to take on more responsibilities in other places on-campus as well. The incredible gratitude I felt towards Forte for giving me the opportunity to find my passion meant that even as I approached my senior year, I still wanted to be deeply involved with the organization. I knew that I wanted to become Co-President to be able to take on new challenges and trail-blaze more initiatives within Forte.

From my first semester at Cornell to my last, Forte has played an integral role in my Cornell experience. Forte and all its ladies have helped me achieve so many of my milestones at Cornell – and for that, I will always be deeply grateful!