

# Strength in Community: One Forté Member's Experience in Six Feet Closer

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Over the past six months, I have been involved with Six Feet Closer, a women's mentorship organization founded during the early stages of the pandemic by Forte Campus alum, Shaibyaa Rajbhandari and Niyanta Khatri, both of whom have known each other since childhood in Nepal. Discovering Six Feet Closer through Forte's weekly opportunity newsletter, I could not have been more excited to work on building a mentorship program and community of inspiring women with alumni and members of Forte Campus. The mission and ethos of Six Feet Closer drew me to join the team. The purpose of finding meaningful connections between women across the globe, especially amidst the stressors of the global pandemic and difficulties of the job climate, really resonated with me. As a few of my close friends are international students, I was truly moved by the emphasis on sharing the real struggles and challenges women were facing globally. An essential part of Six Feet Closer's core is sharing these stories of women with diverse backgrounds and fields spanning the arts and entrepreneurship, social impact, technology, consulting, finance, and marketing.

This past summer, we engaged in a design sprint, meeting weekly across 5 different time zones to discuss how we could align our audience to key offerings. Working with Forte peers to gather user research, understand our audience's needs, and refine SFC's value proposition, our team decided on offering three core pillars. The first pillar is the mentorship program focused on one-on-one pairing between young professionals and undergraduate women. "She Leads", is a content-based pillar, focused on sharing insights and stories about women navigating and succeeding in various industries through social media platforms, blog posts and our newsletter. In this way, our team was able to highlight women from different countries and backgrounds, as well as authentically portray many of the struggles these women around the world were facing, including uncertainty about visas, navigating careers, and job safety. The third pillar provides career guidance, an end-to-end program that combines business and technology. My time so far on the SFC team has taught me that personal experiences and stories should be valued and appreciated through all of its points, high and low. The Six Feet Closer team and my Forte peers have reinforced this value by uncovering unique strengths in each other, encouraging and listening to each other's stories, and understanding each other's journeys. Forte Campus has shown me the power of a strong community of women who seek to help each other grow.