



Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan is a Rising Star whose journey began halfway around the world. Dr. Mahadevan left India on her own and came to the United States to pursue her education, eventually earning degrees in both Special Education and Career Development Education. Because making a direct impact in the lives of students was a professional priority for her, Dr. Mahadevan decided to forgo the academia track and instead became instrumental in establishing the Career Technical Special Population

Center, a annual grant-funded program that provides professional development education to career technical teachers serving special populations.

Dr. Mahadevan's colleagues attribute her accomplishments to her willingness to take risks in order to better the educational experiences of underserved students. She continues to be a risk taker by challenging the mindsets of teachers, administrators, and parents about the potential of special needs students to be successful in regular career technical education classes through her training and consultation. All the while, Dr. Mahadevan is known for listening intently to the frustrations expressed by career technical educators, empowers them through instruction of best practices, and helps them adapt to or create new strategies to resolve issues.

Ever the advocate for special populations, Dr. Mahadevan has lent her expertise to the NAPE Professional Development Institute since 2008, informing the conference audience on the importance of teaching communities and implementing best practices for nontraditional students in CTE, and she is always mindful of incorporating cultural diversity in all her presentations.

Dr. Mahadevan continues to be successful in challenging the status quo and changing teachers' convictions about inclusion by providing educational approaches, such as incorporating universal design into courses and strategies for accommodating and modifying curriculum, so that it is accessible to all Texas students. Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan is an educator whose star will continue to shine brightly for many years to come.