

Akash Gururaja
2018 CARTHA Fellow
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

My name is Akash Gururaja and I am a rising senior at Linn-Mar High School, expecting to graduate in 2019, and eventually pursue a career in healthcare. My passions include music, community service, and science. I have been playing the piano and the violin and also singing in both Indian and Western classical styles for about 10 years. Being a part of the Indian classical music scene has given me many opportunities to travel and play for concerts while connecting with youth musicians across the US. In 2015, I co-founded an initiative called 'Carnatic for A Cause' in order to provide suitable platforms for youth musicians while having their musical talents raise awareness and support for a variety of community causes. As of 2018, we have collaborated with over 50 youth musicians and raised (at six concerts) over \$12,000 on behalf of charitable causes.

My aspiration for humanity is that we creatively solve many of our society's challenges through connecting communities and collaborating in community service projects. My CARTHA Fellowship gives me the opportunity to address loneliness as a public health challenge in our community by using my musical talents. Younger artists like me can make a bigger difference in the lives of residents in nursing homes and hospice care agencies. I aspire to share my music with them and inspire others to do the same.