

TRISHA PRABHU

BORN IN ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS, 2000

She's the CEO of a fast-growing tech company, the first female youth governor of Illinois *and* she takes a full AP course load. Wait—*what*? Yes, Trisha Prabhu, CEO of ReThink, is a high school student. Despite all her achievements, Trisha describes herself as “a pretty average teenager” who likes to “go out with friends, read, and sleep a lot.” When asked how she manages to fit it all in, Trisha says, “When you're the CEO of a company in high school, you really learn to time-manage.”

It began in 2013, when thirteen-year-old Trisha heard a tragic story on the news: an eleven-year-old girl in Florida had committed suicide after being repeatedly cyberbullied. Trisha couldn't stop thinking about the girl. How could this have happened? And what could be done to prevent it from happening again?

Trisha began by doing research, and learned how widespread and dangerous cyberbullying is. Victims can suffer from depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem, and are at greater risk of dropping out of school. She also learned that many of the hurtful messages people send are composed and sent quickly, often on phones. Trisha wondered if there was a way to get people to pause and think for a minute before sending a potentially damaging text.

“I really enjoy being a student, I really enjoy being the CEO, I enjoy being a teenager *and* a change maker.”



And that's how Trisha came up with ReThink, an award-winning app that detects and stops cyberbullying and online hate before the damage is done. Trisha already knew how to code—she'd started when she was ten, and she often spent her school lunchtime learning about computers.

ReThink learns and detects thousands of the most common words and phrases used in cyberbullying. If you have it on your phone or device, it notices when you're about to send such a message. It doesn't delete it—instead, it asks if you *really* want to send the message. That way, the user gets a chance to pause, review, and think, *Hold on; am I sure I want to post that?*

Trisha's app has been downloaded hundreds of thousands of times, and she's expanded her company to also include antibullying curriculum used in more than thirteen hundred schools. The state of Michigan even adopted Trisha's materials for more than a million of its students. As part of the first generation to grow up with technology like smartphones and the internet, Trisha wants to use that technology for good, and ReThink is doing just that.

MARYAM MIRZAKHANI

BORN IN TEHRAN, IRAN, 1977

When Maryam Mirzakhani was in sixth grade, she was interested in math, but she struggled with some of the concepts. Her teacher discouraged her, telling her she'd probably never be good at it. Maryam felt terrible and started to lose interest in math. That is, until the next year, when she had a wonderful teacher who helped rebuild her confidence. She also had a loyal best friend, Roya Beheshti, who saw how much joy Maryam got from math. Roya encouraged her friend not to give up on it. With this support, Maryam became excited about math again, and she soon soared to the top of the class.

Maryam and Roya remained best friends throughout middle school. They both loved browsing local bookstores, talking about math, and challenging each other to read and learn as much as possible.

When Maryam and Roya were in high school, they learned about a competition called the International Mathematical Olympiad. They decided they wanted to be part of it—even though their country of Iran had never had a girl on its team. They had no idea how well they'd do in the prestigious competition, but they wanted the opportunity to find out. They began by convincing the principal of their all-girls school that the school should be offering math and problem-

solving classes like the ones offered at the all-boys school. While Maryam and Roya's school had math classes, they were nowhere near as advanced as the courses the boys got. The principal was supportive and agreed to improve the classes.

“It is invaluable to have a friend who shares your interests...It helps you stay motivated.”

In 1994, Maryam and Roya became the first Iranian girls to make the Mathematical Olympiad team. Maryam's score earned her a gold medal, and Roya received a silver medal. Maryam returned to the competition the next year and got a perfect score. She went on to study mathematics in college in Iran, and then at Harvard University in America. She began to be recognized by peers and professors as a true math genius, and was known for her determination and relentless curiosity. She always spoke up and asked questions, even though English was not her first language.

By age twenty-seven, Maryam was teaching math at Princeton, and then she became a professor at Stanford University. Roya also became a math professor, and they remained friends. In 2014 Maryam became the first woman (and the first Iranian) to win the Fields Medal (which is like the Academy Awards for Math). Sadly, Maryam's contributions to the world of mathematics were cut short just three years later, when she died of breast cancer at age forty.

