

FBIT Alumni E-Newsletter – Faculty Fun Fact Questionnaire

Name - Rajen Akalu

1. What is your favourite food?

Is red wine a food group? I'm actually vegetarian for environmental and ethical reasons, but wife Jenny is always trying get me to convert. My kids eat meat, so I'm fighting losing battle there.

2. What is your greatest fear?

Missing an exam! Most students don't realize that exams are quite stressful for profs too. I worry whether everything will go according to plan. I am quite conscious of the role that I play in the careers of my students. But fear isn't a bad thing; once you embrace it rather than causing stress, it can help you focus your energy, prepare, and pay attention to details.

3. What has been your greatest adventure?

Having kids. Our twins Annabelle and Landon are two and a half and we recently had a baby boy, Lucas at the start of the semester. Despite my best efforts to impose a routine on my kids, I never know what is going to happen from one day to the next.

4. List the places you have travelled.

Europe: England (although with Brexit, not in the EU for much longer!), France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Ireland, The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Austria, Slovakia, Sweden, Luxembourg.
The Americas: Guyana, The U.S. St. Lucia, Jamaica, Brazil.
The Middle East: Egypt, Israel.
Africa: Ghana, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia.
Asia: Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam (I think that's it!)

5. Do you have any pets? If so, please tell us what type of animal and their name(s).

I don't have any pets at the moment, but during my Ph.D. in The Netherlands my Colombian roommate, Adrianna had a cat called Fidel, whom I nicknamed 'Mimi'. I spent a long time with that cat while working on my thesis. That experience made me realize that I'm a cat person. Although I like dogs too of course.

6. What is your favourite television show?

I'm a fan of Sons of Anarchy. Not sure why actually, maybe because I'm an outlaw at heart. Unfortunately I have respect for the rule of law as a result of my legal training and I lack a motorbike.

7. What is your favourite song?

At the moment 'Into you' by Ariana Grande. I find myself singing along to when it comes on the radio. I've stopped caring about the strange looks I receive from other drivers at stop lights on my way to work.

8. What is your favourite childhood memory?

I used to be in Scouts when I was a child. I have great memories of hiking and camping. I didn't think of it at the time, but scouts gave me a love of nature and the outdoors. It also allowed me to develop initiative, resilience and leadership skills.