

## Rachel Prawalika Jaddu (engineer and computer scientist)



Rachel Prawalika Jaddu works as a senior software developer at Blue Origin Enterprises, L.P., a private American space technology company located in Kent, Washington. It was founded in 2000 by Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, the world's largest online retailer and cloud computing company. Blue Origin operates the suborbital New Shepard rocket and the heavy-lift New Glenn rocket. In addition to producing engines for its own rockets, Blue Origin supplies engines for other vehicles, including the United Launch Alliance's Vulcan Centaur. It is also working on the Blue Moon human lunar lander for NASA's Artemis program, the Blue Ring spacecraft platform, and the Orbital Reef space station in partnership with other organizations.

**Her science journey** began when Rachel was born in 1990 in Hyderabad, India. She attended St. Mary's College of Engineering and Technology in Hyderabad, India and received her Bachelor of Science degree in Electronics and Communications Engineering in 2012. She became interested in computer science



during the second year of her engineering studies. She was fascinated with evolving technology and started taking related classes which laid the foundation for her

computer science career. Since she didn't come from a strong computer science foundation, she initially struggled with the basics and had to spend extra time understanding programming logic. However, that experience helped her build

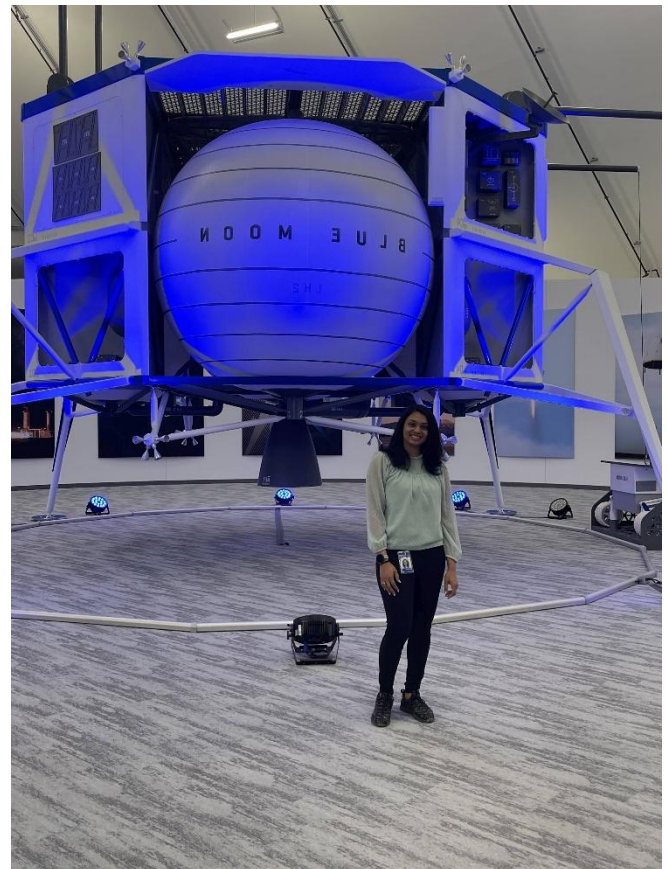
resilience and strong conceptual base. There were quite a few women majoring in computer science at St. Mary's College which made the environment competitive but also motivating.

## **WORK AFTER COLLEGE**

It wasn't easy looking for a job after college due to heavy competition, especially since the software industry was highly sought after at that time. Rachel was fortunate to be among the top 10 candidates selected during her college career drive, which helped her secure her first job. Her first job was as a software tester. It gave her a strong foundation in understanding systems, quality, and attention to detail.

Currently she is one of the senior software developers at Blue Origin. She truly enjoys her work. It's both challenging and rewarding! She appreciates the opportunities to contribute and grow in her role. Her career goal is to continue growing and learning in her field. She truly enjoys her work and aims to stay relevant by keeping up with emerging technologies and continuously upgrading her skills.

Rachel is shown on the right with the Blue Moon lunar lander. Blue Moon is a family of lunar landers and their associated infrastructure, intended to carry humans and cargo to the moon. It is under development by a consortium led by Blue Origin and including Lockheed Martin, Draper, Boeing, Astrobotic, and Honeybee Robotics.



## **WORK-LIFE BALANCE**



Balancing work and home life is challenging, especially as a woman in a competitive environment while raising a child. Rachel focuses on prioritizing tasks, setting clear boundaries and making quality time for her family. Having a strong support system and being kind to herself also helps her manage both roles effectively.

## **MENTORING WOMEN SCIENTISTS**

Rachel believes mentoring is very important! She makes it a priority to share her knowledge and experiences. While she is especially passionate about supporting women in science, she strongly believes in mentoring all young scientists who are eager to learn and grow.

## **ADVICE FOR NEW GRADUATES**

For new graduates, her advice is to stay curious, keep learning, and embrace challenges as opportunities to grow. Build strong fundamentals, seek mentors, and don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone. Most importantly, be patient with yourself-career growth takes time, persistence and a willingness to adapt.

## **HER SCENCE JOURNEY**

1990- Rachel Prawalika Jaddu was born in Hyderabad, India

2012- Received her Bachelor's degree in Electronics and Communications Engineering from St. Mary College of Engineering and Technology in Hyderabad, India

- Started working as a software tester

2015-Immigrated to the Unites States

2022-Started working at Blue Origin