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**Dr. Nishtha Jaswal** is the Vice Chancellor at **Himachal Pradesh National Law University**. Having spent a considerable amount of time in the education sector, she shares her views upon the recent developments in the education field. She is a visionary leader who promotes the ideology of exploring different verticals for students to grow. Read here what she has to say in her interview.

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## What is your philosophy of leadership? How would you describe your leadership style?

“I combine the role of head and heart”

Being an academician turned administrator, I have a different philosophy. My view is not bureaucratic. Rules must be followed but not blindfolded. As asked, I can term my leadership style as a confluence of a task-oriented and people-oriented approach. I can portray a leader as a torchbearer who carries all the tools and responsibilities, even delegated, to be a role model. My commitment to the staff is, “Credit is yours. I own all failures.”

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## How do you strategize about the key programs and plans for the marketing and administration of your school?

“The policies of the University are updated with the changing times and expectations of the stakeholders”

In the modern techno-world, media and social media sometimes spread partial and sometimes honest opinions about any Institution. No marketing is required because education should not be a commodity put for sale in any showcase. It is a fragrance that spreads on its own. However, it is challenging to control discriminatory news about any Institution, but every flower has thorns. I must appreciate the endeavors of agencies like yours, which, I hope, will depict the honest picture of any educational Institution.

I believe in theories of adjustment, accommodation and assimilation. If the administrator has the strategies of dynamism, blend of traditionalism and modernism, and a quest for appraisal of the system, the Institution will not look backward until it reaches the pinnacle of glory.

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## How does the curriculum of Himachal Pradesh National Law University ensure the best practice of industry?

“We make sure students are abreast to the current industry standards”

If I refer to “Economic Activity”, of course, the economy is the backbone of every institution. Referring to processing of “Raw Materials”, I admit the role of any educational Institution to shape the students and prepare them for the future. But neither students are goods nor they are manufactured in factories. The Himachal Pradesh National Law University, Shimla, is a temple of learning where we follow a sacred curriculum. Apart from having curricular and extracurricular activities, the syllabi of different subjects have been prepared to teach the students the practical aspects. I understand that legal education will be a lame education if it is not given the color of clinical education. The system has got strength from the New Education Policy 2020 to some extent, which emphasizes the students' overall development. Mentoring and Counselling sessions are part and parcel of the curriculum to infuse thoughts' purity to prepare the students to take actionable decisions leading to impeccable actions. The students of today are the future of this country. Their personal and professional skills are developed through Moot-Court Competitions, Debating Competitions, Cultural Activities, etc.

***“Once the university's physical infrastructure is in order, the university's focus will be on the academic and intellectual development of the faculty and the students. The University will also ensure to live up to the stakeholders' expectations by performing its responsibilities.”***

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## **Any insights into how your university could be more welcoming to students of different races or economic backgrounds?**

“Devotees always throng the temple of learning keeping faith in it and recognizing its status”

There is no shame in admitting that HPNLU Shimla is just four years old with initial teething problems and financial constraints. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis has affected every section of society and the nation, and HPNLU Shimla is no exception to it. But the location of HPNLU, Shimla in *DevBhumi* in the Himalayan terrain, can be an attraction point for students from different corners of the country and the world. It is pertinent to mention that admission to HPNLU, Shimla, is done through CLAT Examination. It is the platform through which students from different corners of the country get the opportunity to seek admission in HPNLU, Shimla.

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## **What do you see as Himachal Pradesh National Law University's greatest strengths?**

“We are a single big family of individuals committed to produce excellent human resource for the country”

I must acknowledge that all the stakeholders of HPNLU, Shimla including its faculty, students & administrative staff are its greatest strengths. If there is any superlative beyond the words ‘the greatest’, then determination, dedication, devotion, hard work, trust, aspirations and many more strengths can be mentioned.

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## What are some of the biggest challenges for higher education you see currently?

“The pandemic has created many hindrances”

During the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, individuals, as well as Institutions, are facing common challenges, including proper off-line teaching, sound research, good interactions, financial hardship, limited scope, and losing the status of ***Vasudhev Katumbhamkam***. I wish we may overcome these challenges soon with our united efforts and blessings of the Almighty.