

# **PG OUTREACH**

## **(LOYOLA EXTENSION AWARENESS PROGRAMME - LEAP)**

### **Introduction:**

The Outreach program of Loyola College has been providing students with first hand experience of the rural and urban realities of our country from 1993. At the post graduate level the program aims at exposing the students to the rural, urban divide and the entailing disparities. In the first year, this is done through village visits where in the students stay in a village for five days and live the life of the underprivileged masses. During their second year of post graduation the students are expected to gain awareness of the urban maladies that the poor urban dwellers face through internship at various NGOs. The outreach program is under the supervision of Rev.Fr.Xavier Vedam.s.j., Vice-Principal, Prof.Gladston Staff advisor and the program is coordinated by Mr. Martin and Mr.Nachimuthu.

### **Vision:**

- To enable students to have a positive concern over society.
- To make our institution, a role model for serving the neighborhood community
- To conscientise people in the community and bring about attitudinal changes on literacy, health and women empowerment
- To make students take pride in doing community service
- To initiate team process within the students groups.

### **Dynamics of the programme:**

The First year postgraduate students from sixteen departments comprising of 431 students are taken to various rural areas such as Chengelpet, Palliagaram near Uthiramerur, Pazhaverkadu and Kovalam for their field exposure, accompanied by their department staff-in-charge. At the camp site the students are given orientation on the rural dynamics of India and they are sent for two days of field exposure to the near villages, to understand the dynamics of that community, their life style, culture, religious practices and the prevailing social issues. This visit also helps the city dwelling students to understand the rural reality. The students presents their observation through street play, skit, and mime and by using charts, which is analyzed and summed up by the outreach core team members consisting of Prof.James Sundar, Prof.Gladston Xavier, Dr.Kalaiarasi, Prof.Iyappan and Prof.Selvanathan an external support for the outreach program. The expected outcome of this camp is to bring attitudinal change in the minds of the students' community to inculcate the spirit of care and concern for others.

As a follow-up of the first year camp the students plan for the next sixty hours of community service which they have to do in the second year. The students carry out participatory exercises in various places in the city limit in collaboration with the Voluntary Agencies (NGOs) in Chennai based on their prior planning with their department staff-in-charge. Students carry out various activities like

- Awareness on health and sanitation.
- Organizing medical camps for the community
- Creating awareness among the community on social issues
- Assisting the evening tuition centers for the orphans and visually challenged children.
- Planning out strategies for Widows Income Generation programme
- To signify the importance of education for scavengers children's

- Vocational therapy given to mentally retarded children
- Organizing Pongal, Christmas programme for the community

Once the student completes their outreach activity, they are asked to submit a report along with authorizing certificate from the concerned NGOs, about the activity carried out by the students. All these students' activities are being monitored by the outreach coordinators by visiting the NGOs.

## **Project activity of the Outreach: TATA – Loyola Kovalam Outreach Project.**

In the beginning of the academic year, April 2005 – 2006 a project was launched in the name of TATA Loyola Kovalam Outreach Programme. The project is under the supervision of Rev. Fr. Xavier Vedam, S.J., Vice Principal and Director of the Outreach Programme. The activities of this project have been carried out and have benefited the community irrespective of their caste and religion

### ***Activities carried out for the following target group at Kovalam:***

**Children:** Seven tuition centres were initiated , where 300 children benefit along with nutrition programme, based on the prevalence of malnutrition among the children. Along with education, student entertainment needs are taken care through educational tours and camps. Art and craft, practical lesson in spoken English along with other subjects get special attention.

**Youth:** Youth are the primary focus of the project. Need based youth activities are often carried out by themselves with the facilitation of the project. In the focused intervention area, 12 girls who are idle were sent to Nano nagle community college in Chennai. After studying the area, it was suggested strongly that there should be a Community College in Kovalam and then Kovalam Community college was initiated. The Community college teaches basic life skills, spoken English, specialized courses in the field of DTP (Desk top publishing), Catering assistant and A/C refrigeration which had benefited 88 youth of Kovalam.

### **Women Programme:**

Women are the vital supporting factor in the community. Organizing widows and training them in sustainable livelihood programs was the major area of intervention. A series of confidence building workshops were conducted to enable them to understand and improve their entrepreneurial skills. Revolving fund scheme was initiated for the widows of Kovalam to carry out their small scale business, which is benefiting their family at large.

In conclusion, we the staff of outreach department thank the Jesuit Management at Loyola College and more especially Rev.Fr.Rector, Rev.Fr. Secretary and Rev.Fr. Principal for the support and encouragement rendered to us.