Building Youth Leadership for Sustainable Planet, an international conference was organized in association with Youth LeadeR, an International Network on July 28, 2015 in Bertram Hall as a precursor to actualization of Green Loyola Programme envisaged for the academic year 2015 -16.

The main thrust of the conference was to identify youth leaders of Loyola College and give them space to dialogue with some of the youth leaders of the world for international collaboration in creating the world that is sustainable and free of certain societal ills – global warming, environmental hazards, violence against women, child abuse, inequality, political dominance, etc.
Rev. Dr. S. Lazar, S.J., Secretary, Loyola College, the convener of the conference introduced the theme of “Healing Earth”. Rev. Dr. G. Joseph Antony Samy, S.J., Principal, Loyola College, Chennai strongly urged the participants to build a society that is not limited by boundaries. Rev. Dr. S. Ignacimuthu, S.J. Director, Entomology Research Institute, an environmental Scientist called for concrete action to make the globe a place for peace and prosperity. Rev. Dr. Xavier Vedam, S.J., Principal, Loyola College, Metala, Namakal Dt. felicitated the organizers and participants and appealed to the youth to be men and women for and with others.

Mr. Eric Schneider, Youth LeadeR Founder, conducted the programme and emphasized the need for the constructive role to be played by youth leaders in building a brave new world. He also connected the participants of the conference, mainly the Enviro Club members of the College, and select students of Post Graduate English Literature, Advanced Zoology and Biotechnology, and Under Graduate students of Commerce with some of the International Youth-LeadeRs via Skype and initiated a discussion on issues like Environment, Protecting region from illegal tracking (oil and gas exploration), Making water a human right, Positive news media, Community radio, etc.
Mr. Eric, Founder of Youth Leadership addresses

It is particularly noteworthy that participants enjoyed the fruitful discussion and music via Skype with Ms. Holley Somerville-Knott from Australia (aged 11), an environmental activist and lead musical driver of the epic Bentley Blockade, protecting a region from illegal tracking (oil and gas exploration). Further, Ms. Usha Vishwakarma, Red Brigade, Lucknow along with her team demonstrated self-defense strategies to women participants especially against sexual violence meted out to women.
The highlight of the event was the graffiti wherein a lot of messages, doodles, drawings, etc. were made hailing sustainable issues. We need both institutional and individual actions to reduce our impact on the environment. Therefore, organizers and participants of the conference, staff and students joined in the signature campaign on the graffiti to make long lasting and positive impact on the world around us by committing to the pledge on sustainable future. In addition, some of the participants volunteered to form a core group that would chalk out action plans for the academic year and concretize Green Loyola Programme on the Campus.

**Ms. Anna Jahns**, Representative of UPLIFT initiatives in India liaised Loyola College, Chennai and Youth LeadeR Network and the Conference was organized by **Dr. K.S. Antonysamy**, Director, Web Enhancement and Public Relations Office and **Dr. Xavier Mahimairaj**, Coordinator, IQAC.

Earlier the inaugural session of International Conference was preceded by observance of one minute silence expressing condolence to the sudden demise of **Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam**, the former President of India. It was unanimously felt that we pay homage to the leader who was concerned with sustainable development by working on the day an hour extra, as he himself wished.
Participants of Building Youth Leadership for Sustainable Planet

Dr. K.S. Antonsamy
Director, WEPRO
Loyola College