

For Immediate Release

Dr. Kalam ignites young minds at the 11th Annual Ullas Workshop
...Ullas Trust awards scholarships to 1965 young achievers

Chennai, July 25, 2008: The Madras University Centenary Auditorium was abuzz with activity when over 2500 school children took centre stage to celebrate the 11th Annual Ullas Workshop. **His Excellency, Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam**, who was present at the occasion, inspired and ignited these young minds to realize the ‘Power of Dreams’.

Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam released the ‘**Diary of Dreams**’ which is given to Ullas achievers to encourage them to pen down their dreams and draw up an action plan to realize the same.

Addressing the gathering, **Dr. Kalam** talked about knowledge and its three components - creativity, righteousness and courage, and how the combination of these can create enlightened citizens. He emphasized the need for furthering education in villages.

Dr. Kalam enthusiastically answered questions posed by students. He expressed happiness on the efforts taken by Ullas trust to create the ‘Can do it’ spirit among the students from the corporation and government schools.

Started in 1997 by Polaris employees, Ullas Trust recognizes academic excellence in students studying in Corporation and Government schools. A humble initiative which started with 32 children has today awarded over twenty thousand (20000) scholarships to students in schools across all districts of Tamil Nadu and cities of Mumbai and Delhi.

Speaking at the 11th Annual Ullas Workshop, **Mr. Arun Jain, Chairman and CEO, Polaris Software Lab**, said, “Over the years we, at Polaris, have strived hard to build a ‘human corporate’. The Ullas program has played an important role in integrating the company with the larger community.

Ullas is based on the principle that young minds learn when they are exposed to best environments, see successful role models and are recognized in large groups. Ullas through a selection process creates a winning spirit among the students. The ‘young achievers’ are then encouraged to ink their dreams and work towards achieving it. Polaris associates act as mentors to these young students and help taking them closer to their dreams.

Every year, it is a gratifying experience to see the Ullas students graduate from schools to higher education to promising corporate jobs.”

This year, 1965 students from 197 Corporation, Government and Government-aided schools in Chennai and 128 schools across the 29 district headquarters of Tamil Nadu were awarded Ullas scholarships. The Trust also awarded ‘Ullas Young Achievers

Higher Education Scholarships' to 80 students who are pursuing education in medicine, engineering and other degrees.

Highlights of the Ullas Young Achievers for the year include:

1. 38 Ullas achievers topped their schools in the 10th standard public examinations
2. 7 Ullas achievers topped their schools in the 12th standard public examinations
3. 4 Ullas achievers were state toppers in the public examinations
4. 'Encouraging Excellence in Education – The EEE Award' for 2007 was won by Girls Higher Secondary School, Choolai, Govt. High School, Thoraipakkam and St. Peters Higher Secondary School, Royapuram.

Ullas Workshop – Igniting, Mentoring and Transforming young minds

The Ullas Trust conducts an annual workshop with the aim of exposing young minds to role models and achievers from the real world. Going beyond scholarships, Polaris associates act as '*Mentors*' to the Ullas Achievers. Every week, Polaris associates conduct computer science and personality development classes for students in office premises. Other activities such as memory training, rapid reading, and developing self-esteem are conducted to ensure overall personality development and enhancement of communication skills.

The Trust also provides an opportunity to the Ullas achievers to '*touch and feel*' the corporate environment and interact with successful professionals from all walks of life including public administrators, doctors, scientists, artists and academicians. The idea behind is young minds follow role models and are greatly influenced by their work.

About Ullas Trust:

Ullas Trust was started in 1997 with an aim to integrate the associates (employees) of Polaris with a larger community and nurture a 'Can do it' spirit among the students. The Trust recognizes and rewards academic excellence through annual scholarships. Ullas Trust has been organizing an annual workshop for the past ten years, with the aim of exposing young minds to role models and achievers from the real world. Every year, the workshop culminates with the Trust awarding educational scholarships to students identified through a selection process from Corporation and Government schools in all districts of Tamil Nadu, Mumbai and Delhi. Going beyond scholarships, the volunteers in the Trust act as "Mentors" to the Ullas Achievers, by engaging them regularly on interactive sessions. Over the last 11 years, Ullas Trust has awarded over 20000 scholarships to young minds across India.

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