

Aravindan K, Harishkkumar R, Balaji R, Purushotham R led by Srivathsan R met 105 students in the district of Ariyalur.

"It was the most heartening experience to interact with the children of Government schools in the Elandaikulam and Kovil Esanai villages of Ariyalur District. The 'Can do it' presentation went on with a great level of participation and interaction. The diary of dreams session enabled more interactions and we were amazed to see the students' dream and vision in life. The workshop also helped in refreshing ourselves with fresh thoughts and we had plenty to learn from them. It was really a team outing with a purpose and we are looking forward to participate more in the future."



Polaris volunteers with the students



March 05, 2012

TOUCH THE SOIL

Team Outings with a Purpose!



Ullas continues its journey to 'ignite young minds' in the interiors of Tamil Nadu. This week they have gone further in their endeavor to reach children in rural Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. We bring you coverage from the teams that participated in the program.



Students with their diaries

In the Sangli District of Mumbai, Rakesh Hathalia and Vaibhav Gavhane, led by Sunil Pandhare met 204 students of Bhilavadi High School.

"It was nice to see more than 200 students penning their dreams down, with some students even writing their mothers and fathers as their role models. We then started the 'Can do it' presentation, and when we showed them the photos of role models.... wow ...there was a roar....they all began shouting names and the work done by them. The girls from this high-school were brilliant (out of 5 toppers - 4 were girls). After this program, the Headmaster distributed the cheques to the students and in his speech thanked us and Ullas for the lovely program. The students even took out autographs on their Diary of Dreams! It was really a great experience when we interviewed the 5 toppers of the school. They told us that their parents were farmers, but still they supported them always, and we were amazed to see their spirit for education. None of them attended classes outside school, but still got more than 90%. We also came to know that even without having a full-time trainer, this school has produced around 25 national and state level players. Many girls have played in the national level volleyball games. It was amazing to come across a school with such a treasure of talent!"



Volunteers, school teachers with the 5 top rankers who received scholarships



Dharmalingam & team with the young achievers

Karthik Velayudham, Murali Rajamanickam, Sathishkumar Ravi, Nagendra Pavan Kumar Boggarappu, Shyam Sundar G, Siddharth Ganesh, Fraklyin Jeyaseelan, Paras Sharma, led by Dharmalingam Periyasamy, met 279 students from Kanniyamigu Quaide Milleth Govt Hr. Sec. School and Kannagi Govt Girls Hr. Sec. School in Pondicherry.

"The students were energetic and we could interact with most of them. This truly is a nice initiative by Ullas and we had a wonderful experience with the students."

Rajeswary Vinoth, Meera Santhanakrishnan, Lalitha, Sri Ganesh, Saravanan G, led by Sridevi T E, met 301 students in Govt. Hr. Sec. School and AV Hr. Sec. School in Thirunelveli.

"The children actively participated in the workshop and were curious to know the secret of success when we showed successful personalities from various fields. A touching moment was when a girl mentioned Bharathiyar's dream about women, saying that she wanted to be Bharathiyar's 'Pudhumai Pen' and be a role model to the next generation! Most of the students wanted to be IPS, IAS & doctors, and be of service in their home town. The toppers were pleasantly surprised and awe struck when we announced their scholarship."



A student sharing his dream

In Medak District in Hyderabad, Santhosh Jaina and Narender Muchapathi, met 313 students in 5 high schools.

"It was a great pleasure being a part of Ullas. I (Narender Muchapathi) studied till Class X in ZPHS Munigadapa, and I felt very happy to conduct the 'Touch the Soil' program in my native place. We found that the students studying in Govt. schools need proper guidance to move in the right direction. During the Dairy of Dreams program, they wrote down their dreams with high goals. Except for a few students who were shy and not confident, most of them came forward and showed good interest to get their queries clarified. Overall, it was very good experience, and we would like to participate in any activity conducted by Ullas in the future."



Narender during the session



Students penning down their dreams

Dhiraj Kumar, Neelakandan B, Deepak Rao and Mohan Raj, led by Devanand P, met 460 students in Govt. Girls Hr. Sec. School and EVRN Corporation Girls Hr. Sec. School in Madurai.

"The enthusiasm and energy level of the students in the schools were very high and they came forward to have an interactive session after an initial bit of hesitation. During our workshop we encouraged some of the children to share their dreams and we found diversity in their dreams - from to be like their mothers to be a Collector of Madurai and even to become a marine engineer. The participation of the teachers and headmistress was very commendable. We felt that through this workshop, we touched the lives of children and triggered the young minds to realize and shape their dreams."



Hameed Rajamohamed, Alaguraja Alagappan, S T Sundarababu, Bharathi Ram, led by Balasubramanian, met 387 students in A V Joseph Govt. Hr. Sec. School and Ramakrishna Hr. Sec. School in Thirunelveli.

"The students were really happy about the session and they promised to start working for their dreams to come true. The team made a wonderful effort, and together we actively got involved and engrossed in the workshop. The students said that only after filling the Diary of Dreams Diary were they able to visualize their dreams, and that the session motivated them to prove themselves in the world. We were really happy that we were able to inspire them."



Janakiraman, Chandirasekaran, Vimal Bharathi, Karthigeyan, Senthil, led by Kandanathan, met 271 students in SSD High School and Govt. High School in Nagapattinam.

"The 'Touch the soil' workshop has been a very interactive session. The students were highly enthusiastic and many students were good at singing, reciting poems and delivering speeches. They were able to identify almost all the personalities during the 'Can do it' presentation. We were touched when we found out that though the annual income for most of the student's families was low, they were still determined to study and achieve their goals."

Sangamithra V, Rajagopalan B, Sujan Vardhan, led by Saravanan R, met 65 students in the Govt. Boys Hr. Sec. School in Krishnagiri.

"The children were very keen in listening to the presentation and identifying the personalities, especially when it came to sports and cinema. Most of them wanted to become IAS, IPS officers or sportsmen. Boys were able to spot Arun Jain from the Dairy of dreams and we were sure that after the presentation, everybody started thinking of having a goal and the importance of goal setting in life. This Ullas Touch The Soil program, no doubt, brought a paradigm shift in our mindset as well."



Mudgal, Sanjay Prasad, Tenzing Kunga, led by Vijaya Udayasankar, met 350 students in Govt. High School, Thillaiadi Valliammai Govt. High School, Thiruvalluvar Govt. Girls Hr. Sec. School in Pondichery.

"It was a great pleasure for us to be with the Ullas Achievers. Initially when we started the session, children hid their faces to avoid eye contact with us, but after many attempts we made them feel comfortable. Then so many thoughts and ideas flooded the hall. The children were more than happy to come and speak up, sharing their views, especially on current affairs. They not only discussed current issues, but were also able to give the solution to those problems. One among the crowd was able to spot MS Swaminathan....and many were able to identify Arun Jain. The children aspired to see India as a developed country by 2020, saying that Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's Vision 2020 will be realized."



Ariraj and Arunkumar, led by Paribaskar K, met 350 students in Govt. Girls Hr. Sec. School in Krishnagiri.

"All the students were first generation learners, and were very clear in what their goals were and what they wanted to achieve. Their energy level was infectious, and it was a wonderful experience to be with them."



Prasad MN, Sudhakar Gopanna, Alfred James, Velraj J, Nitin Kishore, Karthick C, Prasanna S, Sriram Ramakrishnan, led by Prasanna, met 304 students in Trichy.

"It was a very interactive session. The students were very sharp and were able to identify the celebrities(including our CEO). The children we met belonged to very poor families & challenging social backgrounds - parents working as labourers, scavengers, vegetable vendors, daily wage earners etc., who neither understand nor appreciate the value of education. They pull the children out of school to take care of siblings, to care for ailing parents, to work in the fields during the harvest season, to get them married, to vend different wares during festive seasons and so on."

K Paribhaskar, Sanjeevi Baskaran, Kishore Arunkumar, Narayanasamy, D Segar, S Harikrishna, RN Balasubramanian, led by Prem George, met 550 students in Govt. Hr. Sec. School and Govt. Girls Hr. Sec. School in Thiruvannamalai.

"Most of the students' parents are into Agri farming and they are all below the poverty line. So they are very deserving, and it was a very touching moment for all of us that we will remember for long. Our entire team was honored with the traditional 'ponnadai' by the HM, much to our joy."



Srinivas Mummani conducted the Diary of Dreams workshop for 70 students at Zilla Parishad High School, in the Lankelapalem of Visakapatnam.

"The program began with a lamp lighting, and a traditional song sung by a student selected in a Zee Telugu singing competition. The new students were very happy to get their scholarships, while the old students shared their experiences with the new Ullas achievers and non-Ullas students."

