

# Ever flowing Stream

## News letter from Pravaham

April to September 2017

Dear friends,

### Greetings from Pravaham!

Pravaham is continuing in its mission to empower the marginalized and neglected sections of the society and help them realize their special purpose in the mission of God. Thank you for partnering with us in this mission. Your support and prayers empower and encourage us to serve effectively and enthusiastically. I am happy to share with you how Pravaham has impacted the lives of people it touched and the community around.

Community Education Program for school drop outs continues to be the highlight of our programs.

42 students enrolled in the 13<sup>th</sup> batch (2016-17) have successfully completed the course and received their certificates on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2017.

### Graduation ceremony for the 13<sup>th</sup> batch on September 2nd, 2017



Graduates taking oath



Dignitaries present at the graduation



Passing on the light



Guest of Honour Mr.Raju Lalwani,  
Hong Kong



Chief guest, Ms.Selvi Julious  
Principal, School of Nursing, Karigiri.



Saraswathi receiving the 1<sup>st</sup> Rank  
Trophy from Ms.Sonia Gurnamal

We are happy that all the students were given job placements in four Health Service organizations in Chennai and Bangalore. These girls who were once considered a burden to the family have now become burden bearers of their families. These young women have become important pillars in their families' economic, social and spiritual development.

Let me share with you the success stories of 3 students, in their own words.....



*“I am Swapna, I am 16 years old. Both my parents died of AIDS before I was five years old. I have a sister who is two years older than me. My grandmother who is very old couldn't take care of us. So we were brought up in an orphanage till class 10. I got very low marks and I did not have interest to study regular courses, though I passed class 10. My sister who failed in class 10 was sent home to live with our grandmother again. I was came to Pravaham through the organization which educated me to get trained in vocational skill.*

*I am so happy that Pravaham gave me an opportunity to study. In the beginning I found it difficult to cope with my subjects. But my teachers were very patient with me and helped me to understand. Now I have completed the course successfully. I never dreamt that I will have a diploma in my hand. Pravaham helped me find a job in a Nursing Home in Chennai. I grew up always hearing from my grandmother say that we girls are a big burden to her. Now she is happy that I am earning and supporting her. My elder sister Sonia who is 18yrs old was working as a daily wage labourer in a leather factory.... hard work washing the skin of the animals... My grandmother wanted to get her married.... but I did not let that happen. I convinced my grandmother to send her to Pravaham community college. Seeing the changes in me, my grandmother was more than happy to send her to study. I gained confidence that I can face any challenges that life brings. I am grateful to all who supported me even without seeing my face. I pray for them always.*



## Minnala



My mother had big dreams for us...her five children... three girls and two boys. She used to call my elder sister Doctor Nirmala as she wanted her to be a doctor. My second sister Collector Vennela and me ... Nurse Minnela, my brothers as Engineer Shekar and Police Inspector Skakthivel. My father digs wells, canals etc for a living and whatever he earned he used to drink and bring very little money home. My mother grazes goats. In spite of many difficulties they sent all of us to school. My elder sister passed std.12 with good marks but my parents couldn't send her to college. They got her married and she was harassed by her mother in law for dowry and she committed suicide when she was full term pregnant with her second child. The burden of raising her first child fell on my family. This incident has shaken my family very badly and my mother lost all her hopes. My second sister passed Std.12 with good

marks but now she is working in a leather factory.... When I passed std.12 I too thought that I will also go and work as a labourer but I was lucky. My friend told me of a girl from our village who went to Pravaham community college and got a diploma and is earning well. I convinced my father to let me go and study because it was offered almost free.

I am very happy after coming to Pravaham. This beautiful place gave me happiness and peace. I was so unhappy most of my childhood now I thank God I found meaning to my life. I now fulfilled my mother's dream. I am now Nurse Minnela.....

My mother is so proud of me. When I visit my village they call me 'Nurse amma'. Pravaham helped me to find a job and now I will educate my brother and help my family.”



**Minnela, working as a Health Assistant**

## Vijayalakshmi:

*"I am Vijaya lakshmi. I am 20 years old. My father is a farmer and my mother takes care of the cattle. I have two elder sisters. My family was considered cursed in the village because we are all girls and there are no boys in the family and added to this both my sisters are born blind. We are looked down upon by all the relatives. I completed class 12 and I had big dreams of going to college and wanting to become a Nurse. My father told me that he cannot afford to send me to college. For two years I was grazing cattle shedding tears every day thinking that there is no use of studying up to 12<sup>th</sup> class because my mother who is an illiterate and I are doing the same work. I lost all hopes of studying further. My father wanted to get me married as I am the only one without any deformity. My father takes care of the farm of a lady who works in CMC Hospital, Vellore. She was very sympathetic to my plight and one day she came and told me about Pravaham community college. She took me there personally and helped to get admission in Pravaham Community College. I am so thankful to her for guiding me to Pravaham.*



Vijayalakshmi with her father



Vijayalakshmi receiving her diploma

*Pravaham not only gave me a diploma, but also a new life, a sense of fulfilment, courage and self worth. After coming here I have tasted the love of God. My faith in God has increased and that gives me peace that whatever may be my circumstances God will always be with me and will see me through. I am working as a Care giver in a Senior Citizen home in Padapai ,Chennai. I want to take care of my sisters. Please pray for me. Thank you for supporting my studies at Pravaham. I will never forget your help."*

### **Pravaham students reach out to the deprived out of love and responsibility:**

**We are proud to place on record our deep appreciation to the students of the 2015-16 batch for donating Rs.77000 to Pravaham towards supporting the education of the drop out students from poor families like them. They have donated their one month's salary to support the work of Pravaham. Considering their family circumstances it is a great sacrifice they have made. This shows the impact Pravaham has made in their lives and the values they have imbibed during study at Pravaham.**

### ***Pravaham makes the dream of a student become a reality:***

Four students who were keen on studying further were selected and helped to appear for entrance examinations for Diploma in General nursing in reputed Nursing colleges in Vellore. We are very happy that one student, Saraswathi, passed the tests and was selected to study Diploma in General Nursing at the College of Nursing at Schieffline Institute Health research and Leprosy centre, Karigiri, Vellore.

#### **Saraswathi's dream comes true**

Saraswathi is the fourth child in a family of five children. Father is an auto rickshaw driver he studied up to class 5 and mother is an illiterate. Father sometimes drinks and does not give money home. They struggle to meet the ends meet with his earnings. Two sisters were married very young and elder brother is a school dropout. In spite of many struggles Saraswathi completed her class 12 with good marks. Her father couldn't afford to send her to college and with utter disappointment Saraswathi used to graze the goats to supplement family income. One day her father heard of Pravaham community college through the father of an old student Malini, R who studied at Pravaham and now working in Chennai. When Saraswathi's father told her that she can study at Pravaham community college, she jumped with joy. She was happy that she could study the Health assistant course at Pravaham and support her family. Never did she think that she can study higher than this....Pravaham enabled her dream of becoming a full-fledged Nurse come true. Saraswathi, after completing her course at Pravaham is now studying Diploma in General Nursing and Midwifery - 4 yr course at SIHR&LC, Karigiri.

We are deeply grateful to Mr. Victor Jayakaran, Director of Amazing Love Home for funding the four years Course.



#### **The 14<sup>th</sup> batch (2017-18) of Pravaham Community college:**

41 students were selected from the many applications received for the Community Education Program for the academic year 2017-18. Orientation Classes commenced from the 10<sup>th</sup> of August. On 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 2017 the 14<sup>th</sup> batch was inaugurated by Mr. Raj Lalwani.

*We were heartened to see the rippled impact of this program not only in and around Vellore district but also in the districts of the neighbouring states of Andhra and Karnataka. This year we had two students from Karnataka and two from AP. Almost all the students came to Pravaham by seeing or hearing about the difference this program has made in the lives of the students who have completed the course from their villages. From a village named Erumaram in Kancheevaram District one student R.Malini was enrolled in the program in 2015-16, and has successfully completed and employed in Chennai. Seeing the transformation in her life, 6 dropout students from the surrounding villages came and got themselves enrolled in Pravaham. Mr. M. Sekar father of a student from the same village says "Usually we get the girls married after they attain puberty but this is the first time we are sending the girls out of the village to study after seeing the changes in Malini's life after doing this course and how her family is doing well after she started working." Parents are convinced that Pravaham not only gives good training but also provides a secure and safe atmosphere for girls.*

### Health awareness programs and Medical camps:

In villages around Pravaham the number of Primary health care centres (PHCs) are limited and some of them do not have doctors or medical staff. Pravaham conducts Health awareness programs and medical camps at regular intervals in villages around Pravaham.

Pravaham started conducting Medical camps once every month on Pravaham campus from the month of June, 2017. Dr Winsely Rose and Dr Anuradha Rose volunteer their medical services and help in conducting the Camp. Pravaham students and staff help in taking height, weight and BP. Through these camps many patients from the villages Venkatapuram, Tanakulam and Krishnapuram were benefitted.



**Health awareness programs at Erumaram and Sozhamoor villages**



**Patients getting medical help at monthly medical camps at Pravaham**

Pravaham students also participated in a Health awareness camp conducted by the Tamil Nadu Government at Varagur. As Dengue fever is rampant in Tamil Nadu Pravaham staff and students are conducting awareness camps in the surrounding villages and also surveying villages around to find out if there are any fever patients and intimating it to district health officials to take action.



**District Collector Mr. Raman Visiting Pravaham stall at the Health awareness camp at Varagur**



**Pravaham students and staff conducting door to door survey**

## Activities of Pravaham Training and Retreat centre



**Family Counselling Program for the parents of our students** was conducted on the 22nd of April at Pravaham 37 couples attended the program were greatly benefitted..



**Student counselling and career Guidance program** was conducted on the 22nd of April for the students of class 10 and 12. Mr. K. Suresh, a motivational speaker, investment & Income Tax consultant, a volunteer at Rehabilitation centre and an Art therapist was the resource person. Mr. Suresh, a paraplegic gave his life story of how he overcame all the challenges being wheel chair bound and completed B.com and now pursuing a successful career. Mr. C. Ravi gave information on various vocational courses available for the students who have passed or failed 10<sup>th</sup>. Students were also informed on the various privileges given by the Government for the SC and ST students. Pravaham extended its support to the students in helping them with applying and finding admission in suitable courses



**Rural children's Summer Camp:** Summer camp for children from the neighbouring villages was conducted from 17<sup>th</sup> of May to 22<sup>nd</sup> of May. 102 children from ages 5 to 15 participated with full enthusiasm and keen interest.

**We request your prayers for.....**

- Phone connectivity
- Two more class Rooms for community college
- Committed staff
- Hostel to accommodate 50 students

**Thank You.**