

Ever Flowing Stream

News letter from Pravaham

June 2018

Dear Friends,

It is a joy to share with you the news from Pravaham.

Pravaham completes 25 yrs in its service to the community this year. God in His faithfulness is sustaining and taking forward the work of Pravaham ...an 'ever flowing stream' as its name indicates, continues to flow, overcoming obstacles, enriching and transforming lives as it touches.

We are planning to have our silver jubilee celebrations on the 17th of November 2018. Your presence and participation on this special occasion means a lot to us. Please plan to be with us on this special day and share in our joy.

Here are the highlights of the programs from Dec 2017 to May 2018:

Forty one students of the 14th batch of Pravaham community college completed 10 months of training and are now preparing for their examinations in June. It is a joy to see them blooming in every area of development.



The students and staff of Pravaham Community College under the direction of Mrs. Gita Dawson, friend of Pravaham, put up a beautiful cultural program on the 16th of December 2017 in which all the 41 students took part in dances, skits and drama.



All the guests including parents of the students, villagers and friends of Pravaham were spellbound seeing their performance. Anjala mother of Vijayalakshmi said "I never knew my daughter can dance so well..i simply couldn't believe that this is my daughter ... I am a proud mother today."

Rotaract Club of Pravaham community college was inaugurated on the 10th of January by Mr D.K. Manoharan, president of the Rotary club of Vellore Golden City Chapter and other office bearers of the club. Ms. D. Santhanam was elected as president, Ms. Monika as secretary, Ms. C. Roja as treasurer. Through the Rotract club Pravaham will have more avenues to serve the community.



69th Republic day was celebrated on the 26th of January 2018 at Pravaham Community College. Dr. Adela Paul, eminent educationist from Chennai was the chief guest.



Pravaham students danced to partotic songs and enacted a skit on voting with responsibility.

Work shop on effective methods of teaching Communication Skills was conducted on 19th Jan by Dr. Martha Bigelow, University of Minnesota, consultant to the US consulate.



Birthday Celebrations:

“I feel very happy and special today on my 17th birthday I had never cut a cake on my birthday before nor anyone sang birthday wishes for me”. Shared D u r g a w h o became emotional while cutting the birthday cake. Each month one day is set apart to celebrate the birthdays of all the



girls whose birthdays fall in that month.

Excursion to Chennai and to the historical town of Mamallapuram on 26th and 27th of February : The excitement of the students before going on the trip was indescribable .For many this was their first outing out of Vellore and the experience of seeing the sea and playing in the beach was something they h a v e a l w a y s dreamed of.



Roja, from Javadi hills said that it was the most memorable, exciting and enjoyable experience she ever had in her life.

Pravaham Staff Retreat :Pravaham staff had a 2 day retreat in Yelagiri on the 24th and 25th of November in Shalom Retreat center. They came back rejuvenated, refreshed and renewed to carry on the responsibilities assigned to them.



Reaching out to the community:

Diabetes awareness day was conducted on the 16th of November in Thimiri, Kavanoor, Palamathy and Chetteri villages. Nearly 274 villagers were benefitted through this program . Free blood sugar test was done on patients and 23 patients who were ignorant of having high Blood sugar levels were detected and referred to the govt. Hospital .



Rotaract club of Pravaham community college observed world cancer day by conducting cancer awareness program in Polur, Edaparai and Kalavaiputhur villages. There are 8 students from these villages studying at Pravaham. The villagers were so happy and proud to see their girls come back to the villages to conduct health check ups and give awareness talks on Cancer.157 people were benefitted by this program.



Eye Camp was conducted in Venkatapuram village by Pravaham and Rotary club of Vellore with the help of Agarwal Eye hospital ,Chennai, on the 17th of Feb 2018. 102 patients from the neighboring villages were benefitted from the program. Free cataract surgery was done on 27 patients.

International women's day was celebrated on the 29th of March 2018. 92 women mostly mothers of Pravaham students, women staff and students of PCC took part in the program. It was actually a day of outing to Pravaham for all the women.



They enjoyed the team games, good food along with talks on women's rights and beneficiary schemes available to them through the government.



Basic Counseling course was given to Pravaham students by Christian counseling center, Vellore, one of the renowned counseling training centers in India led by Dr.B.J. Prashantham, from 1st March to 24th March. It was very helpful for the students both personally and professionally.



Students had the privilege of receiving certificates from Dr. Kannagi Pakyanathan, Chairman, State Commission for Women, who was the chief guest and Mr.Rajan, the District Collector of Vellore, who made a surprise visit to CCC. Mrs. Meena Prashantham memorial lecture was delivered on the same day by Dr.Kannagi Pakyanathan.

School outreach Program: Program on sex education, sexual harassment and abuse was conducted in Venkatapuram School on 15th Feb 2018. Mr. Suresh and Ms.Ranjitha Social workers of Hope House Vellore and Rev. Devadoss were the resource persons.



Rural children's summer camp: five day summer camp for the children of surrounding villages was conducted from 14 th to 18th of May 2018. 102 children from the ages 5 to 15 attended the camp. They had craft, computers, spoken English, singing and storytelling sessions. Children had wonderful time learning many things which were useful to them.



Stories of impact:

Santhanam's impossible desire made possible:

I am santhanam from a village called Tajpura, in Arcot dist. I am the third in the family of three. My father deserted us when i was just 9 yrs old. My mother worked in a shop as as sales person and brought us up. We faced so many difficulties as i was growing up .Though my sister and brother studied up to 12th they couldn't continue their studies because of financial problems . Taking a big loan my mother got my sister married. My brother had to work to repay the loans. I was determined to pursue higher studies because I was always interested in equipping myself further and dreamed of getting a good and decent job.

My mother convinced me to work for one year to tide over financial problems and promised to send me to college after that .she did not keep her promise and I too did not have the heart to insist i went to college as i witnessed how my sruggled to make ends meet. And i continued to work till 7 years ... I did all kinds of jobs as a daily wage labourer in

factories and shops... lost all hopes of ever escaping from the routine. I gave up my dream... I knew it was impossible to fulfil.



How much ever I earned my famiy's financial problems were not getting over. I was dejected with

life.... at this juncture I met a friend who studied with me and she told me about Pravaham. She said she got a diploma from Pravaham and she is working and is very happy. She told me that in Pravaham they do not just teach a vocational course but also many things which are valuable to life. I made up my mind to go to this school come what may!!! To my surprise my mother also agreed because the course was almost free. In the beginning I was apprehensive how I will cope up after 7 yrs of gap in my studies. But everyone at Pravaham encouraged me. I soon gained confidence thanks to my teachers ...now I am the class leader and also doing well in my studies. I was even elected as the president of Rotaract Club of Pravaham community college. I am so grateful to Pravaham for believing in me and brought out many talents in me to light.



Bharathipriya shares her story :



I am *BharathiPriya* from Villanallur Village. I am the first person in my family to have passed class 10th. When I was 10 years old my father committed suicide because of many debts which he couldn't repay. My mother, a young widow with 3 children went to work as a maid in a business

man's house leaving us with my grandmother.

My grandmother struggled to give us 3 meals a daymany days we went to bed hungry. My mother's employer helped me to study up to 10th class. I completed 12th with good marks but ...no use...because of financial problems in my family, I couldn't go to college. Dejected I became bitter with life and very irritated with my mother and grandmother. All my life I had to suppress my desires...I never got anything that I desired ...the love of my parents... clothes that I like to wear.....good food. One day my mother's employer hearing about my plight sympathised with me and brought me to Pravaham to enroll in the Community Education Program. First few months I was not very happy but slowly the love shown by my teachers, friends and others in Pravaham changed me.

My anger towards my mother and grandmother are gone. I am looking forward to working after completing the course and helping my mother in educating my brother and sister. I would also like to build a house for my mother. I am grateful to Pravaham for giving me hope and enabling me to accept the realities of life. I want to thank all my sponsors for helping me to study in Pravaham.



Jayanthi's life will never be the same again....



Jayanthi, is a tribal girl from Periyamahur village, a very back ward area in the Hills of Javadi . Both her parents are illiterates and they have 6 children .Her father was addicted to drinking and died of incurable stomach ulcer leaving behind 6 young children and a sickly wife. Jayanthi's mother struggles to bring up her children with the income she gets from selling milk from the the 3 cows the family owns and

working as daily wage labourer in the fields. With the help of well-wishers in the community Jayanthi and her brother went to a tribal welfare school staying in the hostel. Jayanthi passed class 12 in spite of all the struggles and challenges she faced. She couldn't continue college studies because of the family situation. Disappointed with life, resigned to the life situation she took up work as a daily wage laborer in the field helping her mother make ends meet. One day a friend of the family told her mother about Pravaham and the training given there to equip young girls and place them in Jobs. Jayanthi's joined Pravaham community college . Initially she was restless, confused and shy to interact with others because her speech was not clear and her dialect of Tamil was very different coming from tribal area. Slowly she gained confidence as Pravaham team encouraged her and gave her opportunities to come forward to speak and read and sing. She was always worried about her family and her future but after coming here she gained confidence that she can not only stand on her own legs but also will be able to support her family. Her trust in God gave her peace and a clam spirit. She says “coming to Pravaham is like having a new life and new hope... my life will never be like before but holds more exciting opportunities for me. I have learnt many things which are important to lead a fruitful life”.



Please continue to pray for:

- Phone connectivity.
- Two more class rooms
- Van for transportation
- Hostel for 50 students
- Committed staff -Tutors, driver and maintenance staff.

Thank you for your deep commitment to the work of Pravaham. Your support, encouragement and prayers make it possible to bring hope and change to the lives of these girls.

Donations can be sent to:

Local Contributions :
PRAVAHAM
A/c no.10507878408
IFS code - SBIN0002203
State bank of India
Vellore Branch.: (02203)
Bagayam,.

Foreign Contributions:
PRAVAHAM
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With warm wishes,
Lucy Shyamsundar