



KARMA YOGA

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENTIAL ACTION PROJECT

Highlights of the Journey: July-September 2018

About Karma Yoga

Great Lakes Institute of Management became a signatory to the United Nations . Global Compact's Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) in 2013

This Newsletter is published with the objective of sharing with others the way in which the institute imparts responsible management education among students.



KARMA YOGA INAUGURATION & ORIENTATION – PGDM'18

Karma Yoga orientation for PGDM 2018-2020 (Cheras) was held on 8th July 2018. The Orientation started with an invocation song sung by the students. Karma Yoga Head – Dr Arulsamy delivered the welcome address. The Founder and Dean **Dr Bala V Balachandran** spoke about the qualities of true transformational servant leader and the importance of safeguarding the freedom with responsibility to achieve holistic development. **DrVaidy Jayaraman** our Associate Dean inspired the students through his scintillating speech about the achievements of Karmayoga in the past in helping the most disadvantaged communities around the campus. The chief guest Dr PThamizoli took over and introduced students about Sustainable Rural Development through improvement in the quality of life with a lower intensity of resource use. He also spoke about the Life Long Learning for Farmers Initiative by Vidiyal Group and showcased a video about how this initiative works.

The milestones of Karma Yoga program since its inception was shared among the students with the view to help them to take up different activities during the course in Empowerment, Agriculture, Kitchen Garden, Science and Technology, Education (Spoken English), Health and Hygiene & Sanitation. The program ended with Village Representatives selection process and the students left with a sense of obligation and eagerness to give back to society.



KARMA YOGA SPECIAL INPUT SESSION – PGDM'18

Karma Yoga special input session for PGDM 2018-2020 (Cheras) was conducted on 19th August 2018. The special invitees Ms. Ashika Gurumath and Ms. Sharon Kumar who were invited to the KY session showed how their innovative ideas were successful in helping the society through mobilization of different stake holders. Their ideas of fund raising for building eco toilets in the slums that consumed less water gave new insights to KY students. Their commitment and perseverance towards these causes were indeed inspiring for the students.



KARMA YOGA SHARING SESSION – PGDM'18

Karma Yoga sharing session for PGDM 2018-2020 (Cheras) was held on 9th July 2018. The PGDM Students shared their experience and knowledge of their Karma Yoga village visits. The sharing session brought together people with the same role and interest to discuss and envision their village development such as Women Empowerment, Education, Agriculture, Employment and Health & Hygiene.



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

“BANDS OF HOPE & HAPPINESS” @ PULIKUNDRAM

The students write

The ultimate goal of Karma Yoga is to make villages self-sufficient and sustainable. With this goal in our mind and a resolve of bringing a change in society, Karma Yoga Pulikundram team started brainstorming on various ideas. As the friendship day was near, we came up with the idea of putting up a stall at our Institute to sell friendship bands made by villagers. We went to the village and discussed this idea with a few women in the village to check if they can take this up. They were very excited about the idea and were confident of making good bands. So, we gave them the materials required to make friendship bands. After few days when we went back to collect bands, we were surprised by the quality of the friendship bands they made beyond our expectation. Their work showed the villagers skills and capability in making goods of these kinds. The finish of bands and colour combination they chose were really commendable.

This initiative got a huge success, all bands got sold in a record 18 minutes. Students loved the bands. They bought in large numbers and appreciated the efforts put in by villagers. We shared the major proceeds to women who had put in their efforts and time in making such bands. With the remaining amount, Pulikundram KY team decided to buy books and clothes for children of the village. KY team felt a sense of accomplishment and achievement while successfully completing this initiative. With this success, the KY team is confident to plan more such activities and do everything they can to make the village self-sufficient.



BANGLE MAKING TRAINING AT NADUVAKARAI

Development needs employment and employment needs skills. So one step towards the development, on 05/08/2018, Sunday Naduvakkarai team organized a bangle-making training for Vasantham SHG . The team assembled all the women in an open area and with the help of the trainer, taught them Bangle Making using threads and decorative items. With the



use of this skill, employment will be generated for village women. The other team, which is enthusiastic about teaching were busy in teaching kids and covered basic sentence making using grammar and some basic arithmetical operations.

WOMEN'S EDUCATION @ SOORADIMANGALAM IRULAR COLONY

Karma Yoga team conducted special classes for the Vasantham SHG Members. Since many of the women were uneducated the students of KY taught them the alphabets and how to pronounce them. Then we helped them write their name in English and asked them to practice it. The willingness of the villagers helped us to facilitate the lessons and this session taught us important values such as patience and perseverance which will help us in our future endeavours.



THREAD MAKING TRAINING @ KUNNATHUR

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away” -Pablo Picasso

Kunnathur KY team organized a bangle-making training for the females of KY Village with the help of KY Staff. We assembled all the ladies in Anganwadi and taught them Bangle making using threads and decorating items. This skill can help them in self-employment. Two ladies from the same village are already good at making dream catchers and other handicrafts. We encouraged them to spread this art and told them we would help them to sell it.



KY STALL @ PAISA VASOOL EVENT

Karma Yoga team diligently participated in the Great Lakes Paisa Vasool event. A part of this money was used to help the village women to meet their basic requirements like food, health and child education and the remaining is re-invested to carry on the future activities of the program like procuring raw material . The team was proud that Karma Yoga stall made **an impressive sale of Rs.10, 34**. To encourage, our Founder and Dean **Dr Bala V Balachandran** made the first buy at our stall.



JEWELLERY MAKING WORKSHOP @ PUDUPATTINAM

The Pudupattinam Karma Yoga team conducted thread making workshop for Vasantham SHG at Mariyamman temple.

The workshop was started at 9 am in the morning. Initially, the team had trained the women in *MASALA* making wherein two external trainers were invited to demonstrate the process to the women. The *masala* business was already saturated with more than 7 different players all offering high margins to distributor and low price to consumers. The Karma Yoga team decided that the SHG must focus on developing a business that was scalable and that involved low costs of production.

On 23rd September, Ms.Susi (Resource Person) was invited to teach the women about the techniques of Jewellery making with thread and paper. The event was a great success as the women participated with a great deal of interest and enthusiasm. In the first session, the women learned to make earring and bangles. The women are looking forward to the next training session wherein the focus will be on designing neck pieces.



STUDY MATERIAL SUPPORT AT KOTTAIMEDU

On 16/9/2018 (Sunday) Kottaimedu team conducted the educational activity for the development of children. As a part of the educational activity, KY team donated study materials to 24 local community children. The funds for materials were mobilized from our team. The kids were very enthusiastic to receive them and their eagerness to learn was evident in their faces. It was truly a joyous moment for our entire team when the villagers expressed their gratitude for helping the kids and contributing in their learning process.



SPECIAL DRAWING CLASS @ AMMANAMPAKKAM

On 29th July, a French artist Mr. Philip visited the village Ammanampakkam. An architect by profession and an avid traveller Mr. Philip came over to teach drawing and interact with the kids of the village. Karma Yoga team along with children were amazed to see his collection of artworks. He interacted with children whole heartedly and taught them the basics of drawing. He tried to understand their language and made them draw a scene portraying the village. Along with children, it was a great experience for us to listen to his stories and how he manages work-life balance. He was an example for all of us to pursue our hobbies along with our career.



INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION @ KUNNATHUR



The Karma Yoga Kunnathur team excited to reach the school to attend the Independence Day Celebration on 15-08-2018 with colourful environment and many meaningful plays on national integrity. As requested by Headmistress, we gave the dictionary to all the children. The strength of the school is 70 and it was a good opportunity for us to tell kids about attending the spoken

English classes. We also spoke to teachers who wanted to help us in educating children through Sunday classes. This visit helped us to create a bond with kids and we enjoyed our visit. Our KY visit to school ,which is not possible on Sunday gave us a chance to interact with other kids and teachers. We are expecting for such visits in future.

DR.BALA V BALACHANDRAN'S MERIT SCHOLARSHIP

On 02.09.2018, Sunday Dr. Bala V Balachandran Charitable Foundation had given merit scholarship to Government school toppers. These awards are based on a student's academic achievements for both boys and girls securing the first and second place in the 10th and 12th state board exams in the school level. The merit scholarship was given to the students belonging to 9 villages by our Founder and Dean **Dr Bala V Balachandran and Ms Vasantha Balachandran**. Finally, he encouraged students to study well and come up in life through education.



DRAWING COMPETITION @ NADUVAKKARAI

Karma Yoga Naduvakkarai team had initiated a surprise drawing competition for the kids in the village. The phase 1 of the competition was conducted on the same day for some kids with a motive of drawing more kids for phase 2. The team was delighted to see the young participants wielding the colors provided to them. The cessation of the competition was followed by sweet distribution to all the kids who were present there and were informed about the attractive prize to the winner of phase 2, which will happen in the following Sunday (23-9-2018). For phase 2, kids were given the option of starting the work in their home because the prize is meant for the best drawing and the theme is to draw anything they come across the village.



RANGOLI COMPETITION @ VENGAMBAKKAM

The Vengambakkam Karma Yoga students organized Rangoli competition for Women. Rangoli is the finest art for the Indian rural women. 32 women and children participated and received the prizes.



GENERAL MEDICAL CAMP AT IRULAR COLONIES

Vittilapuram and Sooradimangalam Irular Colonies were adopted by Great Lakes KY team. The community people have to go quite a distance in case of any medical emergency. It was felt that a medical camp will help the villagers to understand their health conditions. In this situation on 16-09-2018 (Sunday), Great Lakes Institute of Management associated with PRIMS hospital organized the general medical camp at Vittilapuram and Sooradimangalam Irular Colony. As a preparatory work, students have distributed medical camp pamphlets in advance to their respective villages. Totally 78 villagers benefited through these medical camps. Most of them are women and children. Finally, they were extremely happy and were praising the KY team's effort and the continuous support. Through this camp, both the teams Vittilapuram and Sooradimangalam made villagers to understand the importance of being disease-free so that they can lead a healthy life.



FIRST ODF VILLAGE in the Region - PERUMALCHERRY COLONY

Dr.Bala V Balachandran Charitable Foundation has sponsored 41 toilets through Karma Yoga village for the people of Perumalcherry Colony. The main aim is to improve hygiene and eradicate open defecation. Karma Yoga students habitually educate the community on the dangers associated with open defecation.

On 03-09-2018, Sunday 41 toilets have been handed over to the house in Perumalcherry Colony by our **Director Shri V Sankaran and Associate Dean DrVaidy Jayaraman** of Great Lakes Institute of Management. In this occasion MrVaradharajan, Thasildhar of Thirukalukundram gave the awareness talk to the people. On that day Perumalcherry colony has been declared as an Open Defecation Free (ODF) village. Mr Subaash, Mr Purshothaman, Mr Ramasamy , Dr Muthuraj, and Mr Jayaprakash from Great Lakes attended the event.



AGRICULTURE

KITCHEN GARDEN @ KOLLAMEDU and KUNNATHUR

The Karma Yoga teams Kollamedu and Kunnathur initiated a green project in their villages in order to sustain them to grow some of the vegetables in their barren land so as to have and eat fresh from their own cultivation. In the process, the students conducted a survey for forming kitchen garden and discussed with the villagers. The teams initially worked manually with ploughing and sowing the field with the seed of Brinjal, Ladies Finger, Spinach, Cucumber, Beans, Bitter Melon and more. We also educated them on the importance of cleaning and having their own fresh farm rather than buying from the shop. Through this Kitchen garden support, many of the families got benefited



RACING COMPETITION AT VENGAMBAKKAM

Vengambakkam KY Team conducted a racing competition to the local children. 10 children were actively participated and got the prizes. After this, we taught spoken English classes to the small children to enhance their learning skills.



ROAD SAFETY AWARENESS

Ayapakkam Karma Yoga team initiated road safety awareness campaign at main junctions in ECR namely Kalpakkam and Ayapakkam. The team as part of the visit distributed road safety pamphlets to two-wheeler and auto drivers. The campaign was well received by the commuters and some people even responded that they will wear helmets regularly and maintain the speed limit while driving.



SHARING OF EXPERIENCE



When courage and compassion come together for a cause, the impact is no less than heroic. Volunteering has impacted my life in many ways, teaching me to be more thoughtful and to take on more leadership roles. Being a part of Compassionate Cheras, we also got an opportunity to serve people. Through KarmaYoga, I was blessed to continue my volunteering work along with my studies. I am assigned as a Village Ccoordinator of Vittilapuram Village, Tamil Nadu and got a chance to make a change at the most basic level.

We observed and learnt a lot through our initial experience by understanding various problems and situations faced by the villagers and society as a whole. We always strive to empower the villagers so that they can solve their own problems and be self-sustaining. This experience helped me transform as a person and allowed me to learn about more of transformational leadership. Even though I had a linguistic barrier, the community never let me feel it. We talk with actions and broken Tamil. These are indeed the best moments, which I will cherish throughout my life. Currently, we are doing many activities which needs teamwork to leave an impact. I am blessed with a team and a mentor who are aligned towards a common goal to work towards the problem of the community. As a team, we also have a lot to achieve. I would like to conclude by saying that youth of this generation are trying to learn and do everything they can to be different, but very few are doing everything they can to make a difference. Being a volunteer, our acts of kindness may be small but the impact they have on the society is huge.

"Small acts when multiplied by millions of people can transform the world"

Karma Yoga has been a wonderful journey with so many learnings. It is an amazing chance I am getting to bring out a change in people's lives, no matter how small that would be. If you want to change people's lives you first have to be a part of it, you have to understand their mindset, their problems because then only you can truly help them. This Karma Yoga initiative is one such opportunity for us to get involved with the people, to develop a better understanding of their struggles in order to help them. Every Sunday morning we look forward to meeting the kids and teach them, in such a small amount of time they have become an important part of our lives. Each week when we meet them and spend time with them, we not only teach them, but we also learn from them and those learnings are invaluable and priceless. Looking at their smiling enthusiastic faces further inspires us to do what we can to make their lives better and to help them rise and shine.



For more images..,

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uN_8I5jISpc6i8M2xJdIGPmw0Ta7JZHI?usp=sharing