

NSS Golden Jubilee Celebration, 24th September, 2019

To commemorate 50 years of the National Service Scheme (NSS) at St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata, a day-long seminar on the theme: 'Social Responsibility of College Students – Its Need and Relevance Today' was held on 24th September 2019 in collaboration with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the College. "Creating Men and Women for others", has been one of the missions of St. Xavier's College since its establishment in 1860. Engaging College students at the service of the less privileged and backward people has always been a way of life at St. Xavier's. However, this social commitment became more prominent under the leadership of Fr. Gerard (Babu) Beckers, SJ, in 1969 when the NSS was launched in the Country and in the College. Since then the social outreach initiatives of the College has grown in leaps and bounds touching numerous lives and creating positive impact on the society. For the last 50 years, the NSS motto of "Not me, but you", was the mantra of every NSS Volunteer in the campus. Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, SJ, Principal of the College reminded the students about the rich history of St. Xavier's College in his inaugural address. He mentioned great Jesuits like Fr. Babu Beckers, who used to accompany the students into the villages and work along with them. He motivated the students by saying, "Young students have maximum potential, maximum energy and maximum enthusiasm. If you channelize these energies constructively then surely the impact will also be constructive". He appreciated the NSS volunteers for their committed service throughout the year. He greatly acknowledged the dedication and hard work of Prof. Cheryl Francis, the Director of Social Work & NSS at St. Xavier's College. He congratulated her for receiving the Best Programme Officer Award from Calcutta University. Ms. Ratnaboli Ray, Founder & Managing Trustee, Mental Health Rights Organization was the Chief Guest for the Programme. "I feel so proud to be part of this iconic Institution", she expressed with all humility. "I am here to talk about how the youth (YOU) can contribute towards a more egalitarian and equitable society, how together we- the youth and the not-as-young but equally eager, can strive to remove inequalities in our societies". She stressed on three very important ways by which the Youth could contribute to the society – Self Development, Improving the Quality of Life of Peers and Donating Quality Time. The primary objective of the seminar was to encourage College students to engage in social causes, apart from their academic commitments, thereby becoming agents of social change. 230 students representing 23 departments from the main and rural campus at Raghobpur presented on the theme. The topics varied from Waste Management to Water Conservation to Child Marriage, to Transgender, to Menstrual Hygiene, to Substance abuse to lynching, to Gender equality. However, Mental Health and Mental Wellness was the favorite topic of more than 6 teams. As future plan, every team submitted a plan of action which would be taken up by their respective departments and coordinated by the NSS involving more students and faculty members. Mr. Chittapriyo Sadhu, General Manager, Save the Children NGO, who was the judge for the event, was overwhelmed by the response of the students. "I feel so delighted to see young people so interested to take up social causes. Your topics were very relevant and creatively presented". To appreciate the efforts of the students, prizes were distributed. The First position went to Mass Communication & Videography, The Second went to Commerce Morning Team 1 and Third to BA General, Rural Campus. Apart from this, special prizes were given to the Education Department for 'Most Disciplined', the Bengali Department (Rural Campus) for 'Most Enthusiastic', the Bengali Department (Main Campus) for 'Most Creative' and the Political Science department for 'Best Plan of Action'

The Programme concluded with a vote of thanks to the College Administration, NSS Board Members and the organizing team members. Miss Chandrima Biswas, a commerce student from the rural campus received the Best Student Volunteer Award for her dedicated service with NSS. St. Xavier's College has always focused on Rural Development. Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., Principal and Rector, St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata has added a new dimension to NSS by involving it in various programmes recommended by MHRD and UGC. To mention a few – The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan', 'Creating a plastic free campus', Water conservation etc. The NSS is working vigorously on creating awareness on the 'ill effects of Plastic', 'Keeping the campus Green & Clean', 'Say NO to Drugs', Gender Equality, Mental Wellness and the like apart from continuing its annual events like Blood Donation Camp, Shishu Mela, Village Education Programme and the Rural Work Camps. NSS also works in collaboration with various NGOs where the students are linked to provide necessary services. The Alumni Association has been extremely supportive in all the social outreach initiatives of the College. NSS works alongside with the Alumni Association and the Students' Council especially when it comes to responding to needs during natural calamities. "An army without arms" and the "Human Face of St. Xavier's" are some of the phrases used for NSS in the campus. The Department of Social Work and NSS has come a long way. But there are still

'miles and miles to go...' At St. Xavier's we are committed to build a just society. We are committed to live up to its Motto of Nihil Ultra! Nothing Beyond.



NSS RURAL CAMP 2019 on 10th October 2019

'Esho Gori Sabuj Prithibi' – Come let us create a Green World

The NSS Rural Camp commenced on 10th October 2019, with 43 eager campers, of which 26 were from the Raghampur campus and was held in Magurkhali and Raghampur villages of Bishnupur I block in South 24 Parganas. The inauguration ceremony had the august presence of Fr. Patrick Walsh, S.J. Jesuit Superior of Raghampur mission, Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J., Vice Principal of Raghampur campus, Fr. I. Jothi, S.J, Social Activist along with members of the Panakua and Kulerdari Gram Panchayat. The Theme of the camp was '*Xavier's Niti, Samajer Somriddhi*'

In his inaugural speech, Fr. Johnson Padiyara welcomed all the students to Raghampur campus. He encouraged the students to actively participate in the camp which included conducting village surveys and awareness campaign. Fr. Walsh reminded the students of the rich legacy of the Jesuit mission in Raghampur and its adjoining areas. He further motivated the students to make an impact in theirs and others lives through the camp.

The campers undertook extensive household survey in the abovementioned villages which are adopted by the College under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan. During the survey the students were overwhelmed by the warmth and hospitality of the villagers. One of the campers tearfully said, *"I am spoilt with choices and luxuries at home still I have never welcomed a stranger at my house, and here the villagers does not even have bear minimum, and they not just welcomed me into their homes with a smile but offered me breakfast as well."* Campers from the city were awed with the greenery around and decided to bring in a dash of green in their urban lives as well. On the other hand, they were appalled to witness the plastic pollution and dearth of drinking water in the villages.

Eager to do their bit for the villagers, on 13th October, the campers performed a street play on '*ill-effects of plastic on our ecosystem*' in Magurkhali village and on 15th October for the staff and students of Raghampur St. Paul's High School. On both days, there was immense response from the villagers and school children alike. It was encouraging and heartwarming to see the children both in the village as well as in the school joining the campers in shouting slogans like '*Plastic hatao, Prithibi bachao*'; '*Esho Gori Sabuj Prithibi*' and pledging '*Plastic byabohar korbo na, korbo na*'.

Along with the surveys and awareness campaign, the campers were also able to attend the following sessions:

- a) ***Exploring economic opportunities for self and community*** – The session was taken by Mr. Amalendu Pal, Director – Asian Institute of Poverty Alleviation. Through this session, the students were made aware as to how they could create economic opportunities not just for themselves but also for their communities.
- b) ***Social Analysis, the ideology and philosophy behind today's India and our way forward*** - This session was taken by Fr. Jothi, S.J. who was successful in being a catalyst in enabling the students to think critically of the socio-political situation in India. They were further encouraged to bring about positive change in themselves and the society at large.

Beside these, all the campers were divided into committees which worked together to make the Camp experience fun. The *Home Committee* worked hand-in-hand to keep the campus clean, the *Prayer Committee* ensured regular thanksgiving and worship, while the *Reporting Committee* chronicled the whole day's activities and learning, the *Entertainment Committee* without fail entertained all the campers every night, and the *Food Committee* members ensured food was served timely to all the students.

On 15th October, Fr. Principal, Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J. in his valedictory address congratulated the students for successful participation of the camp and said, ***“Even though the camp has come to an end but today is the beginning of the change that each of you will experience. The selfless volunteering of countless NSS volunteers has resulted in the birth of the Raghampur campus”***. He appreciated the hard work and dedication of Ms. Cheryl Francis, Director of Social Work & NSS for the meticulous planning and implementation of the camp as well as for contributing towards creating *men and women for others*. He also congratulated Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee, Coordinator of Social Work & NSS along with the NSS Board members for the success of the camp.

The camp concluded with a meaningful camp fire night with dance, games and entertainment.





Department of Social Work & NSS November 2019

St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata as a Participating Institute of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA) attended the Gram Sansad and Gram Sabha meetings in its five adopted villages, namely Bakeswar, Debipur, Magurkhali, Raghabpur and Shalpurkur of Bishnupur I block, South 24 Parganas in November 2019.

Gram Sansad and Sabha meeting schedule:

Sl. No	Particulars	Meeting Date	Village	Sansad No
1.	Gram Sansad meeting	7 th and 17 th November	Bakeswar	6, 7, 8 and 9
2.	Gram Sansad meeting	13 th November	Debipur	9
3.	Gram Sansad meeting	13 th November	Raghabpur	12 and 13
4.	Gram Sansad meeting	15 th November	Shalpurkur	17 and 18
5.	Gram Sansad meeting	20 th November	Magurkhali	3 and 4
6.	Gram Sabha Meetings	28 th November	Panakua Gram Panchayat & Kulerdari Gram Panchayat	

Below is a report capturing the key issues that were discussed and highlighted during these meetings.

Main points discussed –

Representing St. Xavier's College Ms. Cheryl Francis in her address focussed on the importance of education and how the college has been instrumental in reaching out to the rural community. She further mentioned that the college would be working with the youth, women and children's group more intensively through training, awareness and other related activities that will benefit the village community.

Gram Sabha meetings of Panakua and Kulerdari Gram Panchayats

Date of meetings: 28th November 2019

Attending the Gram Sabha meetings of both the Panchayats have been very crucial and important for the college, as it would facilitate rural development initiatives of the College especially under UBA.

Please Note:

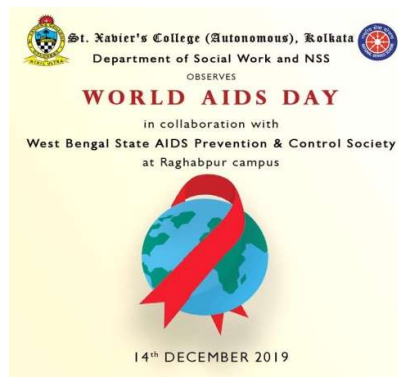
The College completed the survey of Debipur village and the survey data was uploaded in the UBA online portal which resulted in auto-generated analysis report. The College further made a summary of this report and identified key issues. These key issues, was further validated during the Sansad meetings. The College from 2020 will initiate programmes addressing these issues like quality supplementary education, mass awareness campaigns on environment, waste management and composting & alternative employment opportunities.



Department of Social Work and NSS: World Aids Day
3rd and 14th December, 2019

The department observed World AIDS Day on following dates in the month of December:

1. **1st December** – Around 41 volunteers attended a seminar organised by West Bengal State AIDS Control and Prevention Society in Swasthya Bhavan.
2. **3rd December** – A seminar on HIV AIDS was organised in collaboration with Child In Need Institute (CINI) at the college itself. Dr Rumeli Das, Assistant Director of CINI was the resource person for the seminar. Around 60 volunteers attended a seminar on that day. Through the seminar, the students became aware about HIV AIDS and how they can protect themselves from it. They were further made aware on the social stigma that is attached to HIV AIDS and how it affects women and children more. The students worked on various case studies and presented their findings during the seminar.
3. **12th December** – As a follow-up of the seminar on 3rd December, XMS in collaboration with NSS organised a Christmas carnival in Ananda Ghar on 12th December. Ananda Ghar is a home for HIV positive children. 32 eager volunteers (20 XMS students and 12 NSS Board members) reached Ananda Ghar, and organised various games, and sponsored lunch for all the children. The icing on the cake for the children was when two Santas (two students were dressed as Santa) came and distributed goodies to the children. Both the children and our students had a wonderful time together spreading Christmas joy among all.
4. **14th December** –A seminar on HIV AIDS was organised at the Raghobpur campus in collaboration with West Bengal State AIDS Control and Prevention Society. Around 63 students of the Raghobpur campus attended the seminar. Ms. Sumita Samanta, Deputy Director – Social Protection and Mainstreaming and IEC, of West Bengal State AIDS Control and Prevention Society was the resource person. Through her session, the students became aware about HIV AIDS and how they can protect themselves from it. Awareness was also created through folk media as well.





Department of Social Work & NSS **Monthly Report – January 2020**

Regular events:

Village Education Programme

This month the Village Education Programme focused on various contemporary issues such as swaachta, health and sanitation and right to education. A total of 70 students from across all departments participated in the programme reaching out to 293 children in the adopted villages. Below is the snapshot of the number of volunteers and children who benefitted from VEP:

Name of the Village	Number of Volunteers					Number of Children		
	Main Campus		Raghabpur Campus					
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Debipur	8	8	0	0	16	23	15	38
Nurshikdarchowk	8	5	0	0	13	21	24	45
Shalpukur	7	6	0	0	13	36	55	91
Bolorampur	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paikhala	16	12	0	0	28	72	47	119
Total Count for January 2020	39	31	0	0	70	152	141	293

Orientation to work in NGOs:

On 15th and 28th of January, an orientation for working in NGOs was organized for Semester IV students of all departments. The students were briefed on the rules, regulations and discipline that they need to follow while selecting and working in NGOs.

Below is the detail of the number of students who attended the orientation:

Department	Dates and number of students		Total
	15.01.2020	28.01.2020	
B. COM (M)	25	44	69
B.COM (E)	20	22	42
BMS	06	04	10
B.A	06	07	13
B.Sc	15	04	19
Total	72	81	153

Collaboration with Xavier Astronomical Society:

NSS in collaboration with Xavier Astronomical Society (XAS) will be holding sessions on science for the high school children of Jhajhra High School, near Raghampur campus. On 28th January, a meeting was scheduled with the headmaster of the school for potential partnership. During the meeting, it was decided that an interactive session will be held on 7th February 2020 which will be conducted by the members of XAS with the children under the guidance of NSS.

At Raghampur campus:**NSS Orientation**

On 15th January an orientation was scheduled to orient students about NSS and its activities. A total of 95 students participated in the orientation. The students got an opportunity to understand the ideology, history and evolution of NSS. The students were explained about the importance of social development the role of youth in it. After the orientation, 13 students enrolled as active volunteers in the department.

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

To take the UBA work forward, a series of networking meetings were scheduled this month. Below is a snapshot of the same:

Date	Activity	Objective	Place/Venue	Output
6 th January 2020	Meeting with MLA	To brief him about the progress of UBA project so far and to share the village development plan	MLA office	MLA was unavailable due to an emergency. However, his P.A was briefed and the progress report of UBA submitted. The MLA's office appreciated the work done so far and assured all possible assistance for future endeavors

9 th January 2020	Preparation of Village Map of Debipur	To better plan and implement village development plan (VDP)	Debipur village	Through Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) the village map was prepared wherein NSS Board members, panchayat members and village elders were present along with NSS staff
15 th January 2020	Meeting with GP members and village representatives	To discuss the VDP and the implementation plan of the same	Debipur village	Action plan was formulated on how to engage SHG members in implementing organic farming, waste management and water conservation projects with the participation of NSS volunteers
20 th January 2020	Meeting with the headmistress of Elokeshi Oikotan Balika Vidyalaya	To discuss potential partnership with the school	Elokeshi Oikotan Balika Vidyalaya	The headmistress was briefed about the department and activities will be planned after need assessment of the children

28 th 2020	January	Meeting with Kulerdari Gram Panchayat Pradhan	To strengthen association with Gram Panchayat	Kulerdari panchayat	The Pradhan assured support in all our endeavours in Debipur village.
		Meeting with GP members of Bakeswar village	To initiate Supplementary Education center at the Village To mobilize women members from the community for Women's Day Celebration	Bakeswar village	Panchayat members expressed their willingness and support in having supplementary education centre in their village



Department of Social Work & NSS Monthly Report – February 2020

Regular events:

Village Education Programme

This month the Village Education Programme was scheduled for only one Sunday on 2nd February 2020. The students prepared charts on right to education and explained the same to the children.

Name of the Village	Number of Volunteers					Number of Children		
	Main Campus		Raghabpur Campus					
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Debipur	5	6	0	0	11	13	13	26
Nurshikdarchowk	6	6	0	0	12	26	29	55
Shalpur	7	8	0	0	15	29	21	50
Bolorampur	4	11	0	0	15	13	17	30
Paikhala	11	0	0	0	11	22	14	36
Total Count for February 2020	33	31	0	0	64	103	94	197



Meeting with Rev. Fr. Pep:

On 31st January and 4th February 2020, a meeting was scheduled with Rev. Fr. Pep from Barcelona. On the first day, Fr. Pep was given an overview of the work the department undertakes. He visited one of the adopted village on 3rd February along with Ma'am Cheryl Francis. On 4th February he had an interactive session with NSS Board members understanding how social credits work and how it has impacted the NSS students over the years.



Shishu Mela 2020, Upholding the Rights of the Children

On 16th February 2020, 1086 children (617 girls + 469 boys) from 8 villages and 14 NGOs filled St. Xavier's College campus on Park Street to participate in the much sought after event – Shishu Mela organised every year by the Department of Social Work & NSS.

This year, with the theme being 'Child Rights and Child Protection', the 25th Shishu Mela ensured that apart from the children fulfilling their right to enjoyment, were also made aware about their rights, duties and protection from any form of violence. This awareness was not restricted to children alone, but was meant for all the 352 College students from 18 departments who helped to organize this Mela.

The Principal of the College, Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., welcomed everyone present. In his address he stated, ***"All of you have come to our home and we warmly welcome you. Enjoy yourselves. We want you to study well and the College is open for you always if you want to study further."*** He appreciated all the students, led by the NSS for their hard work. Fr. Jeyaraj Veluswamy, S.J., Rector, St. Xavier's College, was the Chief Guest for this occasion. He was extremely happy and motivated the children to make use of this beautiful opportunity. Along with him, Bishop Linus Gomes, aged 99 and who always steals the show, shared with the children as to how he, as a child never got such opportunities. He blessed the gathering and encouraged the children to enjoy themselves.

After the release of balloons concluding the inauguration, the children rushed to the 20 games stalls which were kept ready with games and prizes to be won. Apart from games, they participated in Sports and Art Corner. Special children, especially on wheel chairs, participated in the live stage performances conducted by the students of Xaverian Academy of Dance and Music. Post lunch, all other children put up cultural programmes to showcase their talents.

This year the NSS collaborated with Save the Children and World Vision, two major NGOs who work extensively for Child Rights and Child Protection. The follow up of this Mela would be to conduct awareness campaigns in the adopted villages and for the students of this College. The College is grateful to World Vision, Save the Children, ITC, Godrej Interior – Joka, SJC, Superton Foundation, Ganesh Sharbat and all those who came forward to support this cause.





UBA Regional workshop at IIT Kharagpur:

On 18th February 2020, five students (three from main campus and two from Raghbapur campus) along with Ma'am Cheryl Francis, Ma'am Sucheta Mukherjee and Ma'am Shrawani Jha attended a regional workshop in IIT Kharagpur. This is the first time, students were also invited to attend the workshop. The students were able to grasp the essence of UBA and understood the expanse of work involved. The five students who attended the workshop will be the core team to take the project forward in the villages. The workshop was facilitated by IIT Delhi (National Coordinating Agency). It was reiterated multiple times that faculty and students need to be involved in large numbers to take the UBA project forward.

XAS and NSS Collaboration:

To take the previous month's collaboration forward, XAS members have conducted a one hour needs assessment for class 10 students of Jhajra High School to see the level of understanding of the children about various components of science. The children enthusiastically participated in the quiz and as a follow-up of this, an interactive session has been planned by XAS in the college premises in March 2020.



Networking meeting with various government officials

On 25th February, Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee and Ms. Shrawani Jha met the Dr. T. K. Gupta, Chief Engineer of the Waste Management Cell, Department of Environment, and Government of West Bengal to discuss about disposing of plastics in the village. He appreciated the awareness campaigns the college students organized in the adopted villages last year. He further mentioned that there is no clear directive on disposing off plastic waste from the villages and suggested we meet the Joint Secretary of Panchayat and Rural Development as they are promoting model villages free of plastics. He already briefed the Joint Secretary about the outreach work the College has undertaken in the past.

On 28th February, Ms. Cheryl Francis and Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee met Ms. Sonali Dutta Roy, Joint Secretary of Panchayat and Rural Development to discuss about waste management and organic farming in the adopted villages. Ms. Roy appreciated the pro-activeness of the College in reaching out to the under privileged sections of the society. She suggested that the students can create awareness on 100% waste segregation in the villages, which will further contribute in encouraging women to compost and take up organic farming. Ms. Roy suggested that the Agriculture Development Office of the block should be contacted for handholding support and training regarding organic farming for the rural women. She assured of all possible support from her department in the future as well.

At Raghobpur Campus:

Seminar on Water Conservation

On 5th February 2020, a seminar on water conservation was held in the campus. Around 90 students were present for this interactive session. There were resource persons from Indian Institute of Training and Development (IITD), Mr. J.P. Poddar, Director (Director of IITD) and Mr. Jayanta Chatterjee (Training Coordinator of IITD). The students got an overview of various methods of water conservation both at household as well as community level. The students were also explained about various methods of rain water harvesting as well as its benefits.



Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

On 24th February 2020, the department organized village meeting with Self Help Group (SHG) women to discuss the village development implementation plan for Debipur village. Dr. Asim Mondal, from Kalyani University were also present to give an overview about organic farming to the 50 women present.

On 27th February, another meeting was scheduled with the village representatives and SHG members of Shalpurkur village. In both the villages the women expressed their willingness to undertake organic farming.

Department of Social Work & NSS

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan:

a) Network for UBA Project implementation:

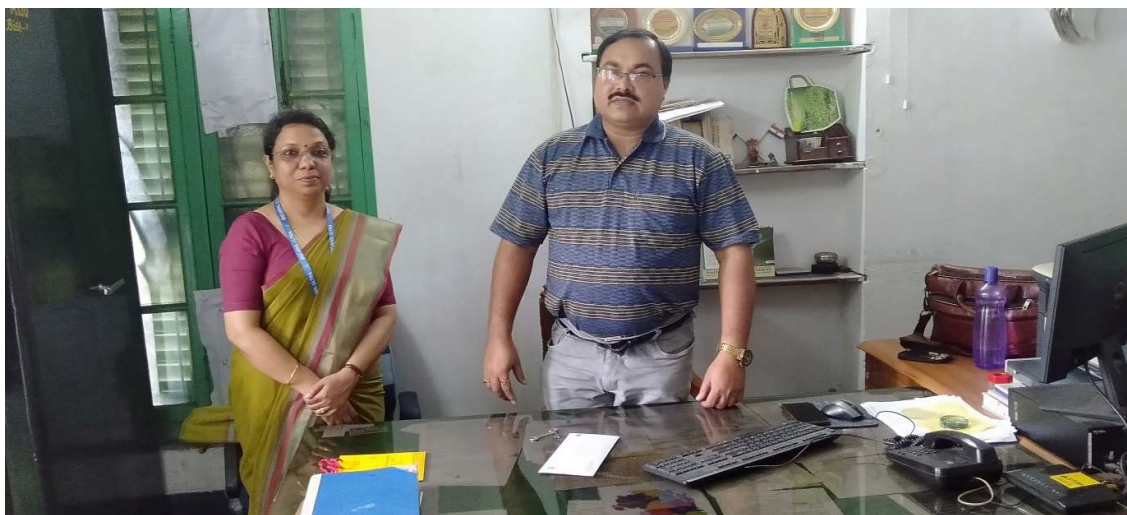
To take forward the implementation of organic farming in the adopted villages, Prof. Cheryl Francis and Mr. Abdul Hannan met Dr. Pritam Nandi, Asst. Director of Agriculture of Bishnupur I on **2nd March 2020**. Dr. Nandi assured of all possible support from his department to the college for implementing organic farming.

To initiate organic farming in the adopted villages, on 2nd March itself Prof. Cheryl Francis and Mr. Abdul Hannan met the Self Help Group (SHG) women of Shalpukur village. The women were motivated to undertake organic farming in their respective households and then eventually scale-it up at the community level as an alternative livelihood option.

On 4th March, Prof. Cheryl Francis met the Director of Seva Kendra to discuss potential technical partnership for organic farming in the adopted villages. Seva Kendra agreed to be the technical partner for a whole year wherein they will go to the villages and provide handholding support to the SHG members to set up organic farming in their households.

b) XAS and NSS Collaboration: An entry point for UBA initiatives:

Detailed report has been emailed separately on 2nd April



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK & NSS

COVID 19 Relief operations by St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Kolkata

COVID-19 Relief work was organized by St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Kolkata from the main as well as the rural campus. The College Principal Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, SJ, organized the relief operations within the city as well as in the villages. At the Park Street Campus, Fr. Principal along with the Vice Principals distributed relief materials on 10th & 12th April to about 500 families consisting of rickshaw pullers, families from the nearby slums and to the families of the evening and night school children. About 300 PPE kits were distributed to the doctors and health workers of a charity hospital with support from the College Alumni Association.

In our adopted villages, COVID-19 Relief operation work was organized through the rural campus at Raghobpur. In all, 1920 families, spreading across ten villages, including the UBA villages, were sponsored by the College. The distributions began from 27th March 2020. On 7th April, UBA Coordinator, Prof. Cheryl Francis along with UBA Cell member (invitee) Mr. Bobby Biswas, visited two adopted villages - Debipur and Shalpur and distributed relief materials to about 100 families. The 6 days long relief work was carried out by about 40 volunteers from the villages around the rural campus for packing and distributing relief materials. The Nepalgunj Police Force helped the initiatives and supported with all the necessary logistics. The relief operation greatly helped the villagers who were struggling to make ends meet. Hemanta Lobo, village contact person of Bolorampur village, said, *“the relief came as a blessing to the most marginalized families in Bolorampur village and we all want to express our heartfelt gratitude to the college administration”*. On the other hand, Jayati Nath, village contact person of Nurshikdarchowk village, ensured that all the children who attend the Sunday Village Education Programme got the ration beside other families who are always on the periphery as they do not have political allegiance.

A core team consisting of Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, SJ, College Principal, Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J., Vice Principal of Raghobpur campus, Prof. Cheryl Francis, UBA Coordinator, Mr. Sanjib Koner, the Secretary of Alumni Association, Mr. Dilip Mondol, MLA – Bishnupur Block I, Mr. Bobby Biswas, UBA Cell member (invitee), Mr. Bholanath Sardar, Panchayat Pradhan, Panakua GP, and Mrs. Rita Naskar, Panchayat Pradhan, Kulerdari GP were responsible to plan and implement the relief operations maintaining social distancing protocol.

COVID 19 LOCKDOWN: The NSS online Out Reach facility!!!

The whole world is under Lockdown trying to slowdown the COVID 19 pandemic spread, and the government and other social sectors, NGOs, Educational Institutions are attending to the fallout on a war footing. Known as the COVID warriors, doctors, nurses, medical staff, people supplying essential goods and commodities, our municipal workers, and some volunteers are battling it out and we salute all of them. The race for a vaccine is on and we hope for the best to happen soon.

We, the NSS family of St. Xavier's College Kolkata, decided to reach out to one another. Since the young are affected in a big way with lot of uncertainties about their future, we felt

that we should also do our small bit to strengthen them. During normal circumstances, this NSS group is engaged in social activities spread across five to six villages per week, apart from coordinating in house activities and programmes throughout the year. This NSS group consists of students belonging to various social and economic structures. We have students from the very rich communities to the rural students whose families depend on daily wages. In fact some of these students were prospective bread winners for their families post their graduation. We understood their plight.

So we began our outreach with the NSS Board members and the NSS active volunteers, a small core group of about 28 who form the inner circle, from both the NSS Units. We first formed a WhatsApp group on 4th April and soon we realized that students were being very formal and not opening up much. Then we decided that we would call them up individually and then see how it works. It worked! We started on 13th April and we are continuing the same.

Some students shared how their families were in doldrums with no income, leaving them with no means to buy their groceries or basic necessities. Some students whose family members were closely working in the frontlines were worried about the safety of their entire family. All the students expressed their fears about their examinations and not having enough books to refer for preparing notes. Some of the outgoing third year students were anxious about their future studies, admissions and job scenario. The students did share that their faculty members circulated notes etc. but few also expressed that they did not have online facilities at home and they shared their phone facilities with other members of their family too. We were told that some students, who had business related to essential commodities, were helping their parents to run their shops as they didn't have their workers. All of them were helping their mothers at home in the kitchen and taking care of general cleanliness.

Most of the students were pleasantly surprised to receive calls from us. It made them feel good and connected and also strengthened. Now they themselves call us and share about their feelings with us. In this way we have been able to connect with our small group and we hope to keep this going. In the process we have also updated the birthday list of all these 28 people on board and we have decided to celebrate them together over phone.

Apart from this, the NSS department has been coordinating with the Rural Campus for distribution of essential provisions to our adopted and nearby villages. We have also connected with the village contact persons through whom we coordinate all our rural outreach programmes. We have connected with some of our partner NGOs with whom we work and send our students for service.

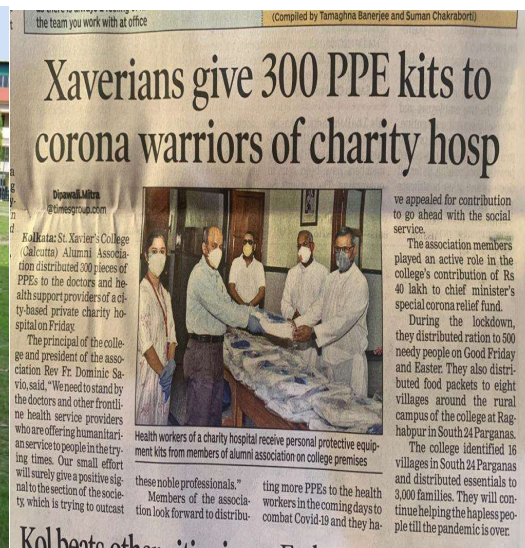
The Department of Social Work & NSS started working from home since 13th April from 10.00 a.m. to 12. noon formally from Monday to Friday. The day begins with Staff meeting on conference for an hour where we share about our experiences not forgetting to keep confidentiality and then we assign our tasks. However, we are available to our students throughout the day. We have also taken our support staff on board and they become part of our meetings once a week. Alongside, we have been working on the department reports.

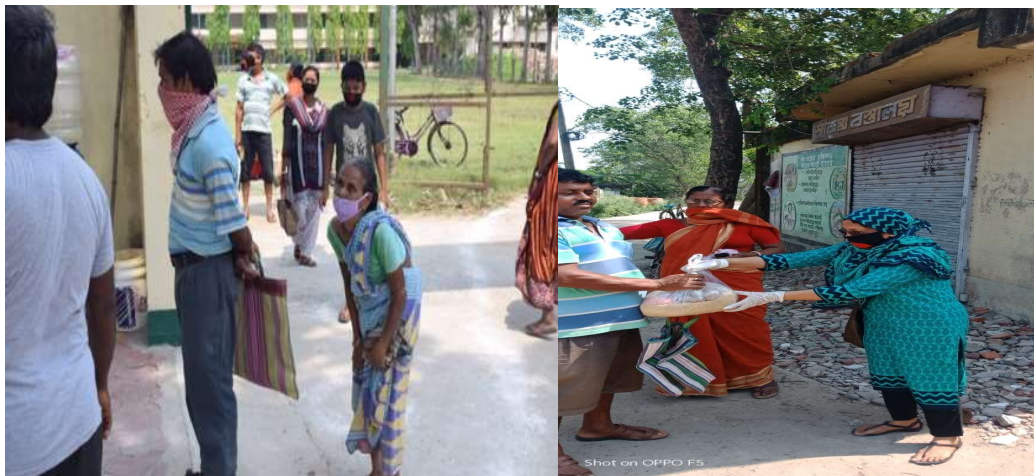
We all have our roles to play in times of crisis. No matter how big or small it is, it makes a difference and that's what matters. We are trying to make a difference to as many persons as possible. We are trying to burn one candle in one room which can provide some light to the

entire room. We hope that this too will pass and that we continue sharing our light with others. Of course post COVID 19, lots of candles will be required. So let's prepare ourselves.

FUTURE PLAN

We are planning out strategies on how to keep this outreach alive and how to train the NSS volunteers who could be actively involved post Covid 19. We are guiding them as to how they could take the awareness campaign of personal hygiene and other COVID 19 related precautionary measures in their immediate neighbourhood, their grocery shops and also digitally. The decision to formulate and implement further Action Plan for UBA related activities would be undertaken based on the recommendations and guidelines of the Government and after College resumes. However, the UBA Cell members are in constant touch with the village representatives and village contact persons and all other stakeholders to be updated with the latest happenings in their respective areas.





DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK & NSS

May, 2020

Awareness Campaign on COVID-19

On 2nd May, Rahul Mondal of B.COM from the Raghampur campus was able to conduct an awareness session about COVID-19 and the precautions to be undertaken to stay healthy. In spite of being in the midst of lockdown, he was able to implement this awareness campaign from his doorstep for the children in his immediate neighbourhood. The children as well as their parents were happy as they were able to learn about this contagion that has brought the whole world to a sudden halt. Rahul was extremely delighted when he saw one of the children who attended the session was trying to guide his mother on how to wash her hands properly with soap. Even a smallest effort in this crisis situation does give results.

Strengthening the NSS Core Team - Online Leadership Training and Skill Development

Every year the Department conducts an Orientation on Leadership skills for the newly formed NSS Board Members in the beginning of March. This year it was scheduled for mid March but unfortunately due to the lockdown, it could not be held. Nonetheless, that did not hinder the Department from planning the same workshop virtually for its core team of about 15 students from both the campuses. This training was conceptualised, designed and facilitated by Prof. Cheryl Francis and assisted by Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee and Ms. Shrawani Jha. The three week long training commenced on 11th May 2020. However, nine days into the training, Cyclone Amphan struck and caused trauma to the students and left most of the Raghampur students' houses damaged and without electricity for days. Hence, it was decided to postpone the training till our students are in a better position to participate and learn from this training.

It is important to note that in the nine days of the training, the students got an insightful input session on who is a leader, what are the inherent characteristics of a leader and how to be an effective communicator. The students also got an opportunity to plan a week long imaginary camp, for which they were divided into various committees (such as finance, logistics, programme development, fundraising and so on). The students acquired the skill of formulating programme schedule during this time.

The preparatory phase of the training programme commenced on 1st May 2020, wherein the idea of this workshop was floated among the students. Once the students expressed their willingness, they were given a task of planning a visit to COVID-19 affected location. They were given a choice of cities both in India as well as abroad. The students unanimously decided to visit Ahmedabad. Thereafter, they were divided into various committees who together brainstormed on the various aspects of the visit, ranging from booking railway tickets, applying for student concession, to raising funds for the visit, undertaking an in-depth research about the city and coming up with concrete activity plans which they would implement.

During the implementation stage of the training, which commenced on 11th May 2020, 2 webex meetings and 4 conference calls were scheduled with the students. An input session on ***Making of a leader*** was conducted by Prof. Cheryl Francis. During this session, the students brainstormed together on *who is a leader* and *whether leaders were born or made*. After the

session, the students understood that a leader also emerges, wherein a given situation forces leadership out of individuals. This they could relate to their own present lockdown situation where almost all of them had to take up leadership at home.

All the committees got an opportunity to present their assignments and shared the challenges they faced and how they overcame it. Based on this session, the next input session on ***How to be a good communicator*** was planned by Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee. The session elaborated on the key steps of being an effective communicator. The third important input session for the students was on ***Recognizing the leader within*** conducted by Prof. Cheryl Francis. This session helped the students to identify their leadership potentials. On the other hand the students in their respective committees worked on budget, logistics and programme schedule of the virtual visit to a COVID-19 affected place, which was debated and mistakes corrected.

On 19th May 2020, all the Raghampur campus Board members wanted an input session on ***How to prepare a programme schedule*** which was conducted by Prof. Cheryl Francis. After the session the students were given individual assignments of formulating a programme schedule, which they did successfully. During a feedback session, the students shared how they were able to put their learning from this training to practice in their respective families. Mimi from Commerce (Evening) said, ***“The two things I learnt from this training, is to take responsibility and to be the initiator and not wait for others to respond”***. While on the other hand Chandrima, a third year student from Raghampur said, ***“This training has been quite helpful for me so far as I have learnt how to communicate effectively, which I think will help me for years to come.”*** We hope to resume the training from mid of June, once our students are in a position to participate meaningfully.

Relief Operation for Cyclone Amphan : Gift a roof initiative

Cyclone Amphan, the strongest recorded storm in the Bay of Bengal, ravaged mercilessly the southern district of West Bengal on 20th May 2020. The cyclone made landfall at 165km/hr in the late afternoon of 20th May on the southern tip of Bengal. As the cyclone darted inland, it wrecked havoc to whatever lay in its path that included all the villages situated around St. Xavier’s College Raghampur campus. Most of the houses were badly damaged and needed urgent relief. The cyclone left the affected areas without electricity or network coverage.

A large number of students studying in the rural campus live in the nearby villages. Already they were undergoing serious financial crisis due to lockdown and family members losing their livelihood. Cyclone Amphan deteriorated their situation further.

In collaboration with the College Alumni Association, the College decided to reach out to its students who were most affected by the cyclone with relief aid. On 23rd May, the NSS sprung into action and one volunteer went around on a cycle looking for his college mates. He was able to reach to very few places due to inaccessibility. Meanwhile one Professor, along with another student went looking for other students for a few days consecutively and managed to locate a few more. Meanwhile at the rural campus, Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J., the Vice Principal brought together the Heads of various departments who prepared a list of affected students, along with photographs of the damaged houses, with the help of their respective Class Representatives. A few conference calls and meetings brought in more clarity and ensured smooth coordination of the whole effort. In association with the NSS department, a list of about 47 students and 2 support staff, who needed immediate relief, was prepared for phase I. These students reported to the rural campus in small numbers and submitted all

relevant documents to avail of the relief provided by the Alumni Association. An amount of Rs. 5000/- would be transferred to their bank accounts. A second list is being prepared under phase II, of another 50 students who would receive relief benefits in the month of June 2020.

It was encouraging to see the professors of the Raghampur campus who worked hard to connect with their students in spite of challenging situations. The Class Representatives too supported this whole initiative with total commitment. A total number of 9 Professors and about 10 students from the Raghampur campus were involved in this noble initiative coordinated by the Department of Social Work, NSS & UBA.

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

In the exiting pandemic situation, field work activities under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan came to a sudden halt. Therefore, the department utilized the time for planning and documentation work.

During this time the annual reports from December 2018 up to April 2020 was finalized and uploaded on the UBA portal.

On 4th May 2020 Prof. Cheryl Francis, Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee & Ms. Shrawani Jha participated in a virtual meeting conducted by the UBA for the Participating Institutions under the Regional Coordinating Institute, IIT Kharagpur. In the said meeting representatives from NCI, RCI, and PIs came together to share and discuss about the initiatives undertaken by them for prevention and mitigation of the COVID-19 pandemic in the adopted villages. As a takeaway from the meeting PIs were encouraged to continue relief operations as well as to plan and prepare Village Development Plan and Project Proposal on the same.

The report on the initiatives of the relief operation undertaken for COVID-19 along with Media appraisals for the same has also been prepared and uploaded. A project Proposal on the making hand sanitizer was prepared in collaboration with the Dept. of Microbiology. The project is aimed at producing hand sanitizer and distributing the same to the adopted village community members.

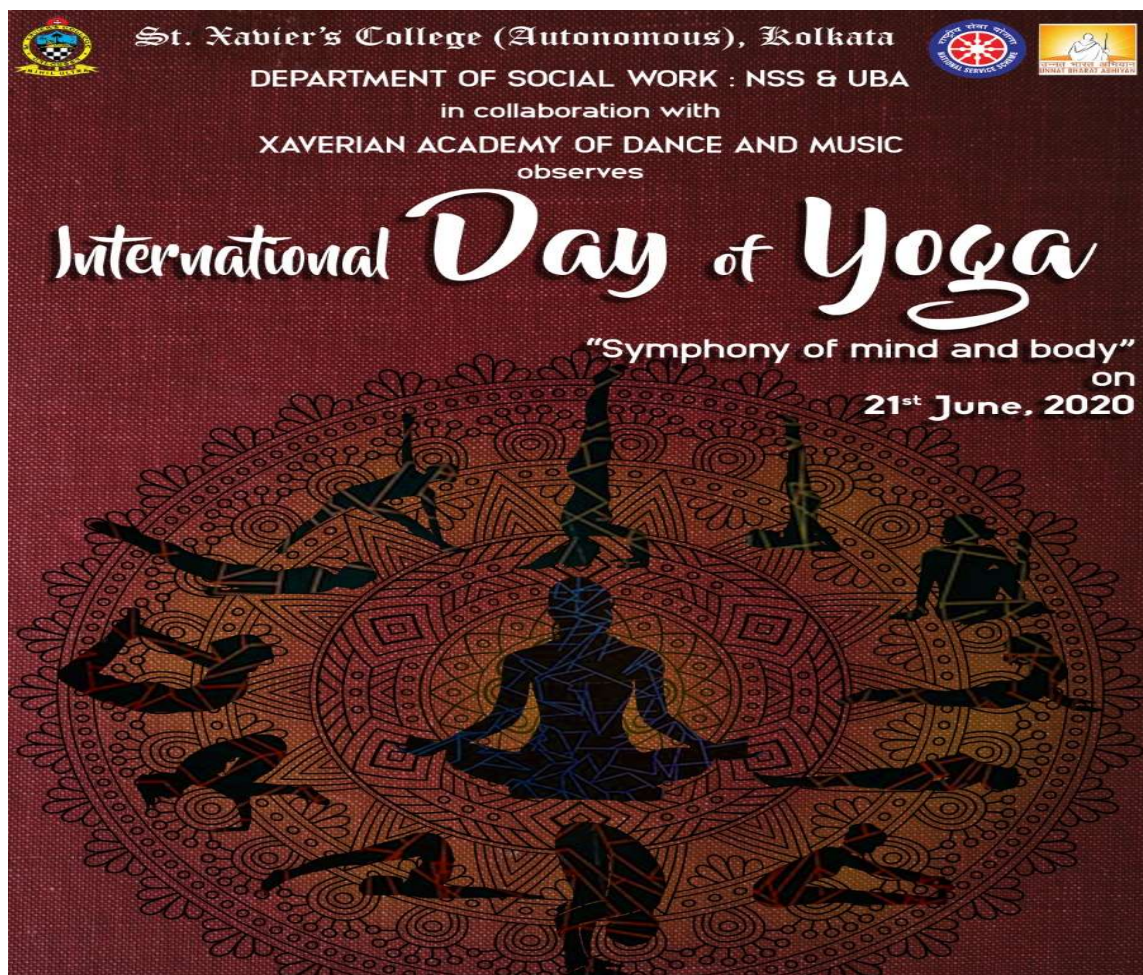






International Day of Yoga **21 June, 2020**

St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata Department of Social Work: NSS & UBA, in collaboration with XADAM (Xaverian Academy of Dance & Music) will be observing International Day of Yoga. Yoga from time immemorial has been instrumental in maintaining and promoting both physical & mental well-being. Hence, during this current period of uncertainty, it is only imperative to fall back on to this age old practice, so that the mind and body is in synchronisation with one another.



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK: NSS & UBA

Strengthening the NSS Core Team - Online Leadership Training and Skill Development

Following a brief break to recover from the emotional and physical turmoil caused by Amphan, the students were glad to resume the leadership and skill development programme on the 8th June. The programme resumed with a feedback session of the Raghampur students on their assignment of preparing a programme schedule, followed by a short recap of the programme so far.

In the last week of the training programme, the students got an insight on **Stress Management** through a peer sharing session facilitated by Prof. Cheryl Francis. During the session, the students were encouraged to share how they were coping with their stress. This not only made them feel better (to talk about it) but also helped their friends to take example. In the current situation where everything is virtual, it was important for the students to learn how to schedule online meetings for both their personal as well as professional needs. Therefore, Ms. Shrawani Jha conducted a practical session on “**How to schedule a Webex meeting**” for the students. Then they were given the task of scheduling a Webex meeting, which everyone could do successfully.

The leadership programme came to a close with a session on **Decision making** for which Ms. Anne Prabhu, a Mumbai based Executive and Life Coach, trusted advisor to start-ups, SMEs, Indian Conglomerates and Multinationals, was invited as a resource person. It was a very interactive session and Ms. Anne stressed on the importance of being self-aware, mindful and analysing the situation before taking any decisions. She also highlighted the fact that it was important to lead oneself first before leading others.

During a feedback session, the students shared that this leadership training served as a boon to them both personally as well as professionally. Amidst the lockdown and especially when everyone was neck deep in uncertain and trying times, this opportunity to interact with the whole NSS family as well as learn life skills through this training has definitely boosted the morale of the students. As Sahil Samuel Ahmed the NSS President rightly said, *“I always feel more positive after attending each session. This has been one of the best training I have participated in and am certainly trying hard to put into practice the concepts learnt during the session.”* Shubham Vaidya, an outgoing student from Commerce (Morning) said, *“My main learning from this session is how to say a smart ‘No’ in both my personal as well as professional life.”*

Relief Operation For Cyclone Amphan : Gift A Roof initiative

In continuation to the relief operation that was initiated last month, this month a second list was prepared with 29 students from Raghampur campus and 4 staff of St. Paul’s High School, Raghampur. This second list was sent to the College Alumni Association for the transfer of funds.

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

This month, 90 household survey data have been uploaded in the UBA reporting portal for further analysis. Beside this the staff attended two webinars which was collaborated by National Coordinating Institute (NCI) – IIT Delhi. Below is a synopsis of the webinars:

- a) **International Webinar on Science and Engineering for Nature Conservation** scheduled on 5th June 2020: The Webinar was divided into two sections – (i) Industry and Environment and (ii) Sustainable Development Vs Developmental Engineering. The sessions focused on advocating for incorporating the environment sensitive developmental ideas for any form of socio-economic development. For example, rejuvenation of rivers or other water bodies through preserving biodiversity around it or by developing or conserving wet lands. Several industrial representatives spoke

about ways to incorporating environment friendly development plans. Such as the real estate industry can promote and ensure construction of green building which has amenities such as rain water harvesting units, installation of solar panels and having a significant patch of greenery incorporated in the plan. Representatives from ASSOCHAM also spoke about the same and also shared about an initiative called GEM (Green & Ecofriendly Movement), which is sustainability certification programme for construction of buildings in an eco- sensitive way.

- b) **National Webinar on Role of Technologies in Rural Areas for Skill Development, Livelihood for Atmanirbhar Bharat** scheduled on 16th June 2020: During the introductory speech, Prof. Virendra Kumar explained how it is getting compulsory for faculty and staff to be involved in UBA. Faculty promotion will depend on the number of hours, the faculty has spent on outreach work. Also students will soon have to undertake outreach work for 2 credits. All the sessions elaborated how one can go local for the benefit of the nation. Dr. Acchal Mittal, Head, Structural Engineering, CSIR-Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee took a session on ***Contribution of CSIR-CBRI Technologies in Housing and Skill Development*** wherein he explained that sustainable technologies focused on four focal points namely- (i) Affordability, (ii) Sustainable and energy efficient technologies, (iii) Labour intensive, (iv) Rural centric economic model. Prof Vivek Kumar, Professor, Centre for Rural Development and Technology, IIT Delhi took a technical session on ***Karigar Aur Kutir Udyog and Skill Development***, highlighting that higher education & technical institutes can have a major role in knowledge intervention and technical innovation to revive the handicraft industries and skill development of the artisans. He also added that pandemic situation has resulted in the migration flow back to the rural areas which can be utilized as a scope for the revival and strengthening of this sector as a whole. The session on ***Processing Agro-Residue to Value Added Products*** by Prof. Priyanka Kaushal from IIT Delhi lay focus on correlation between energy and human development. She also spoke about Biomass Conversion and scope for technological innovation in sustainable and efficient utilization of the energy resources. Dr. Vandit Vijay (IIT Delhi) during his session on ***Energy Self-Sufficiency in Rural Areas using Biomass: A model of Gram Urja Swaraj*** gave an insight into the scope for energy self -sufficiency in rural areas using locally available energy resources. He emphasized that there is need for Local Energy Planning keeping in mind 4As- Accessibility, Acceptable quality, Affordability, and Adequate availability. This local energy planning is to done with the respective rural community to make it more practical and efficient and most importantly sustainable. He also shared about a project based on same approach, conducted at IIT Delhi.

Potential Collaboration for Outreach with Various Organisations

a) **Rotary Club Calcutta South Circle**

An interesting development took place on 5th June 2020. The Rotary Club Calcutta South Circle expressed their desire to become an associate partner with SXC-RGP Campus in the social outreach programme. Initially, they would like to offer 4/Rickshaw or 5 tailoring machines to the needy in a participatory model with the stakeholders.

Through a teleconference with Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J., the Vice Principal of Raghbapur campus and the Rotary Club President Mrs. Amrita Paul and Secretary, Mr. Jayanta Chattopadhyay, it was suggested that the Rotary Club could donate a few

sewing machine to one SHG. The members of the SHG could be trained in making low cost but effective masks which could be packed and sold. It would also provide an alternative source of income for the SHG members.

A meeting with the Rotary club members, SHG representative and the Social Work department of Raghampur campus, maintaining all COVID-19 protocols and guidelines, **will be held after 20th June 2020, to take this plan further.** This partnership with Rotary Club and one SHG will become a model in the process of sustainable development and a step towards Atmanirbhar Bharat.

It was decided by Fr. Johnson, the Vice Principal and Ms. Cheryl Francis, the Social Work Director, that a team be formed consisting of staff and students who would plan and implement this programmes. Ms. Cheryl also suggested that this matter needs to be communicated to Fr. Principal so that we are able to work formally with RC.

b) World Vision India

On 13th June 2020, Mr. Joachim Campoo, Programme Manager – Programmes of World Vision India emailed the Department seeking its expertise and resources to conduct online classes for underprivileged children residing in slums. To make concrete meaningful impact, a zoom meeting was scheduled on 18th June 2020 which was attended by Prof. Cheryl Francis, Ms. Shrawani Jha and Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee from the Department and Mr. Joachim Campoo, Ms. Preety Ekka, and Ms. Mercy Jishing from World Vision India.

After this initial meeting, it was decided that World Vision will work out the modalities and send a formal request to the Department, which we received on 24th June 2020. At the onset of this collaboration, the Department staff will be the resource persons and gradually students will be trained to take up sessions under the guidance of the staff. These sessions will begin from next month.

Symphony of Mind and Body: Observing International Day of Yoga on 21st June 2020

Yoga from time immemorial has been instrumental in maintaining and promoting both physical & mental well-being. Hence, during this current period of uncertainty, it is only imperative to fall back on to this age old practice, so that the mind and body is in synchronization with one another. Therefore, the Department in collaboration with XADAM (Xaverian Academy of Dance and Music) observed International Day of Yoga on 21st June 2020, through a video presentation. The students demonstrated various yoga asanas. The video was uploaded in the official facebook page of the college as well as was posted on the college website.

In the beginning of June, when the Department reached out to its student with a suggestion of observing International Day of Yoga virtually, the response was overwhelming. The students were excited to not just observe International Day of Yoga but to practice Yoga regularly for their physical and mental wellbeing.

Mentoring Social Worker Internship Students

Ankita Kumari, a MSW student of St. Xavier's University, interning with our department was assigned to volunteer online for an NGO, Society for Indian Children's Welfare (SICW), this

month. Under the guidance of our staff, Ankita prepared progress reports of 15 youth who received sponsorship through SICW. She was also assigned the task of preparing success stories for the organisation as well. This assignment has given Ankita opportunity to interact with the youth and get an insight into their struggles and challenges. This experience has also made Ankita more sensitive. It provided her an opportunity to continue her field work training. Expressing her gratitude to the Department Ankita said, *"I am gaining more confidence to talk professionally with the beneficiaries and this assignment is further improving both my writing as well as my presentation skills"*.

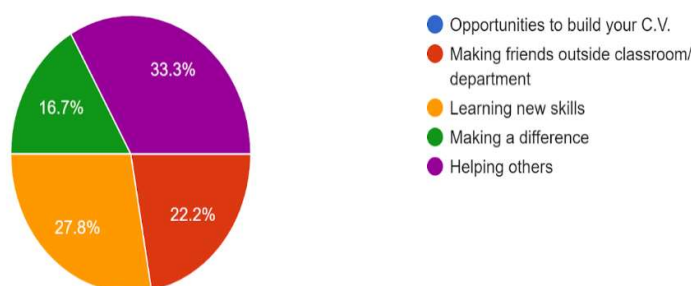
Experience of Students Who Are Part of NSS core team

Since its inception in 1969, the Department has been meaningfully contributing towards the Jesuit mission of *'creating men and women for others'*. Over the years, thousands of students who internalised the NSS motto of *'Not Me, But You'* continue to be humane and responsible citizens. The Department initiated a short survey for its core team to understand the experience of a Xaverian, to be part of the core team.

An online survey was conducted titled, *'Experience of being an NSS Core Team Member'*. Eighteen respondents comprising of the board members, advisors and outgoing students from both main as well as Raghampur campus participated in this survey. A total of 8 questions were framed to understand how the Department functions and how far it is instrumental in nurturing potential youth leaders. Below are the findings of the survey:

1. What appeals to you most about NSS?

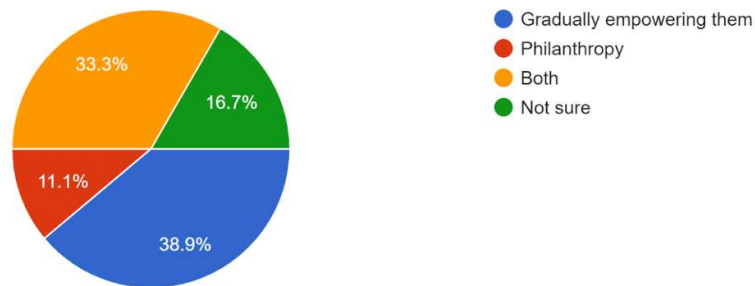
18 responses



33% of the respondents said that the main motivation for them to join NSS was the opportunity they got to help others. The Department with a lot of dexterity guides the students in formulating activities providing them ample opportunities to help others in need. Another appealing point of joining NSS was to learn new skills, which was pointed out by 27.8% of the respondents. Therefore, it can be concluded that the students joined NSS for both personal as well as professional development.

2. What's the best way of helping the underprivileged?

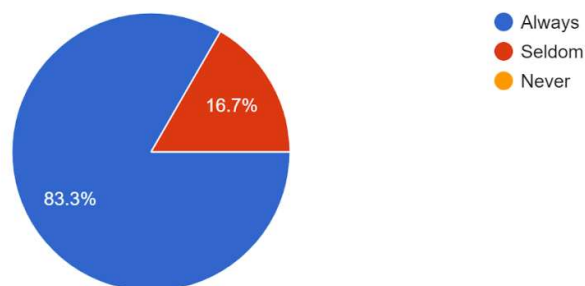
18 responses



As shown in the chart above 33.3% of the respondents believe that a mixture of philanthropy and gradual empowerment of people was the best way to help the underprivileged. Whereas, majority of them i.e. 38.9% believe that gradual empowerment of the underprivileged was the best way to ensure development of the underprivileged.

3. How often are you involved in the planning of department's various activities?

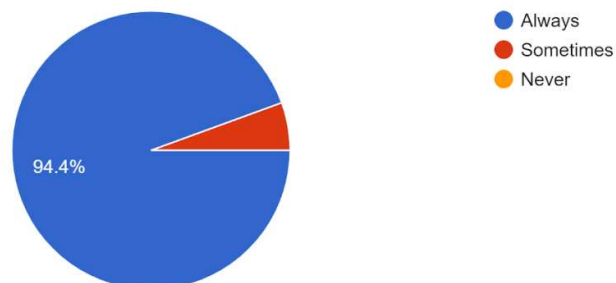
18 responses



It is evident from the chart given above that NSS Board Members were involved in the planning process of the various activities conducted and undertaken by the Department as 83.3% of the total respondents have said that they were always involved in the planning process. Therefore, it can be inferred that NSS Board Members were encouraged to participate in planning process thereby building their skills of planning and implementation of any activities or events.

4. How often department welcome volunteers and encourage them to get involved in activities that interest them?

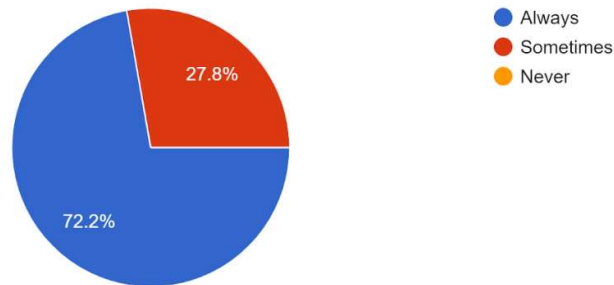
18 responses



When asked, whether the NSS Board members and volunteers were encouraged to take up or get involved in the activities of their interest, approximately 95% of the respondents said that they were provided the opportunity to get involved in the activities that interested them. It is important to note here that the Department helped the students enjoy the work that was assigned to them.

5. How often does the department provide opportunities to its students that nurture leadership qualities?

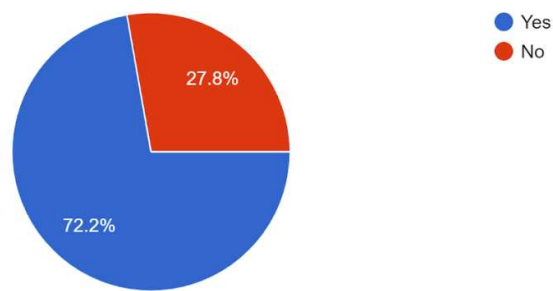
18 responses



It was heartening to see that 72.2% of the respondents agreed that the Department provided ample opportunities to its students to evolve into youth leaders.

6. Would you ever consider being a youth leader in the near future?

18 responses



It was very encouraging to see that 72.2% of the respondents have said that they would like to become a youth leader in the future. However, it is important for the Department to identify the reasons/factors that caused 28% of the respondents to opine that they do not want to be youth leaders in the future.

7. If yes, what are the steps you will take to be a leader?

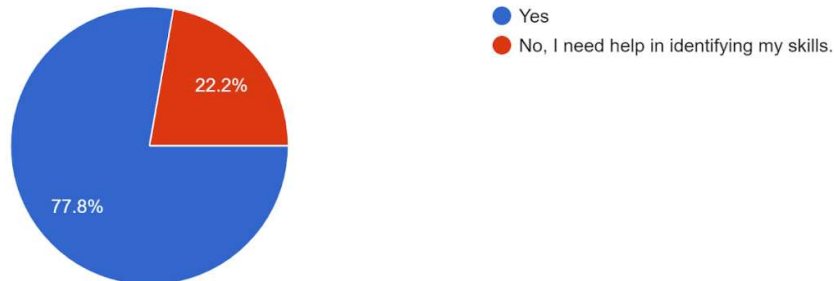
Below are the key responses for the above question:

- a. They would motivate their team members to participate actively in decision making.
- b. They will also ensure clear communication between and among the team members.
- c. They also said that they would become such leaders, who would undertake actions which would serve as an example for the team to learn and follow.

- d. Setting goal, delegating tasks to the team and being creative and positive were some of the other steps mentioned by the respondents.

Can you identify your own skills and then Utilize it as a leader?

responses



It can be seen in the chart given above that approximately 78% of the respondents were confident that they could identify and utilize their leadership skills by themselves, whereas 22% of them felt that they would need assistance in identifying and implementing such skills in them and ways of utilization of the same.

Action points

Below are some of the key action points which the Department would undertake in the future:

1. Organise bi-annual leadership and skill development workshop for the core team
2. Provide more opportunities to the student to nurture leadership skills and be confident to be youth leaders in the future
3. Organise personality development workshop for the team
4. Undertake such survey for the core team to better cater to the needs of the students

Conclusion

The Department has got an insight on the students' perspective on how it benefited them to be part of the core team. All the responses have been constructive and would help the Department to function more effectively in the future.

