

Department of Social Work: NSS & UBA

*Report for
the month
of
May 2021*

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

- i. **Departmental meetings:** The department staff had 9 virtual meetings this month. In these meetings the team discussed mainly about the implementation of the virtual summer camp that was scheduled from 17th to 21st May 2021.
- ii. **Submission of social credits of students:** On 28th May, the department submitted the fourth list of students (semester-VI) who completed their social credits to their respective Vice-Principals' offices. Around 25 students from across various departments have completed their social credits this month.

COORDINATION AND NETWORKING MEETINGS

- i. **Ration distribution:** Upon request of Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara S.J. (Vice Principal – Raghapur campus) on 10th May the department provided a list of 54 students of Raghapur campus who would benefit from monthly ration being distributed by Kalahriday. This list was prepared in consultation with the outgoing NSS volunteers of Raghapur campus and the contact persons from the villages.
- ii. **Prelim discussion for creating COVID-19 task force in adopted villages:** The department held discussion with village contact persons regarding creation of COVID-19 task force in all the adopted villages. The task force will comprise of SHG members who would undertake home visits to create awareness about COVID appropriate behaviour, supply cooked meal to COVID affected families, create a database of above villagers who need vaccination and liaison with panchayat members to ensure all the villagers are vaccinated. This initiative will be taken up after the lockdown is over. This task-force would undergo a formal training in association with the local administration. Fr. Johnson has assured full support to take this initiative forward. The process of forming this task force is in progress.

TALK SERIES - POSTPONED

- i. **Talk series:** On the 27th and 28th May, a talk series was planned for mainly semester IV students, namely, (i) “*COVID appropriate behaviours and myths & misconceptions about vaccination*” – Preparing the young brigade to fight COVID and (ii) “*De-stressing through Yoga and Meditation*” – Accompanying the young during the pandemic, respectively for the two days. On the first day, Dr. Bibek Maulik, MBBS, MD (Paediatrics) was the resource person while on the second day Mr. Adwitio Sengupta, a faculty of The Art of Living Foundation was the resource person. However, the series was postponed due to cyclone Yaas and the subsequent disruption of network. The talk series will be planned after the semester exams.

UNNAT BHARAT ABHIYAN – PROGRESS REPORT

- i. **Upload of UBA sheets:** All the remaining survey sheets of Bakeswar village were uploaded on the UBA portal. This resulted in the auto-generated report of Bakeswar village. Based on the report, the department will formulate the Village Development Plan for Bakeswar village.
- ii. **Virtual follow-up and monitoring of the organic kitchen garden for Shalpokur SHG members:** This month, the staffs were constantly in touch with the SHG members of Shalpokur village and closely monitored the progress of composting for which the women were trained in March. Over the last month, the women were empowered to take forward

their learning from the compost making training. On 17th May, the SHG members undertook the routine activity of mixing the compost pit. Early next month, before the onset of monsoon, the compost will be ready for use. The trainees will use the same while sowing for the upcoming season.

VIRTUAL SUMMER CAMP

“Walking together with young people, to build a hope-filled future” - UAP

The department of organised a virtual summer camp, the theme being, *“Walking together with young people, to build a hope-filled future”*.

This theme was chosen from among the four themes from the **Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus: 2019-2029**. At a time when the world is experiencing one of the worst pandemic in 100 years and India in particular, which has been devastated by the deadly second wave, we felt that this was the time when the young needed to be looked after well mentally, emotionally and psychologically. The young are affected the most as they are living with so much uncertainty and so much misery all around. This pandemic has left a lot of scars in the lives of the youth, ranging from witnessing job loss in their families, to being affected by the COVID-19 virus, to having lost a parent and much more.

Sensing the gloom that surrounded the young and wanting to give them a platform to re-discover themselves, a virtual summer camp was organised for the students (classes VIII to X) of Convent of Our Lady of Providence Girls' High School from 17th to 21st May 2021. The initial meeting was held with Sr. Josephine Melkias, FMM, Principal of the School, to know whether this camp was possible with her students. Her positive response set us in motion.

A registration form was sent to the children of classes VIII to X along with the camp schedule and they had to choose from the five activities – **Drawing, Singing & Dancing, Dry Cooking (without Flame), Art & Craft and Public Speaking**. A similar form was circulated among the College volunteers. A meeting was held with the volunteer groups where the rationale behind the camp was explained to them. This meeting also acted as a motivator which enabled the volunteers to get seriously involved. This was followed by demo sessions where the volunteers were assessed and guided on their preparations. A list consisting of materials and ingredients required for the activities along with guidelines were circulated to the participants prior to the camp.

Overall, **77 students and 37 volunteers** participated in the camp. Each day a teacher from the school joined the session. Each session began with a meaningful prayer, a few words from the School Principal and straight into the session. Feedbacks were an important part of the sessions conducted at the end, which reflected the positive impact these sessions had on the students and the volunteers.

A synopsis of each session:

Day 1: Session on Drawing

On 17th May, a **Drawing Session** was conducted by the volunteers. The volunteers chose three topics for the session which were **(i)Telecommunication: Its use and significance; (ii)COVID appropriate behaviours and protocols (iii)Environment: Towards Sustainability.**

The volunteers first explained the topics to the children. They showed how telecommunications had become an integral part of our lives, especially during the current pandemic, when mobility was highly restricted. They showed how this mode helped to stay in

touch with extended families, friends and even with doctors. Then the volunteers helped the children draw various COVID appropriate behaviours which should be the 'new normal' and followed diligently. Lastly, the volunteers made drawings depicting our responsibility in safeguarding our environment which would be a stepping stone towards sustainability. **Eighteen children and twelve volunteers attended the session**

Day 2: Session on Singing and Dancing

On **18th May**, the children enjoyed the session on **Singing and Dancing**. The children learnt about the various *mudras* and then danced to a Rajasthani folk song. During the singing session, the children learnt to sing the famous song, **"Heal the World"**. The song aptly resonated with the current raging second wave in our country. The volunteers shared with the children how dancing and singing had lifted their mood and helped them to mitigate various disturbing and depressing situations. **Fourteen children and three volunteers participated in the session.**

Day 3: Session on Dry Cooking (No Flame cooking)

On **19th May**, a session on **Dry Cooking** was held wherein **twelve children and five volunteers participated**. The children got a chance to make three healthy drinks, namely, **Cucumber Detox drink, Watermelon cooler and Immunity booster drink**. They also learnt to make two types of Italian sandwiches – **Bruschetta & Crostini** and **Churmuri chaat**. At the end of the session, the children were encouraged to make these items for their family members and also for their neighbours as a goodwill gesture during the current pandemic. They were also encouraged to take some time out and invest in home gardening which was particularly therapeutic during depressing times.

Day 4: Session on Craft making

On **20th May**, **fourteen children** learnt to make various useful craft items from **ten volunteers**. In an effort to embrace the 'new normal' the children were taught how to make cloth face mask. The children enthusiastically made a bag with newspaper and decorated the same with colourful butterflies and paper flowers which they made during the session. They got a chance to make trendy bookmarks and paper wallets too. At the end of the session, the children were encouraged to gift these items to their family, friends and neighbours to cheer them up during trying times.

Day 5: Session on Public Speaking

On **21st May**, the last day of the camp, **nineteen children** smartly dressed in their school uniforms joined the session. Under the guidance of Ma'am Cheryl Francis, the session was action packed. **Seven volunteers** shared some tips based on their own experiences and enacted a role play which helped the children understand the various dos & don'ts to be kept in mind during public speaking. The children got an opportunity to ask questions and clear their doubts regarding public speaking. With this session, the camp came to an end.

Conclusion

The volunteers were pleasantly surprised to see the children's craft, drawing and dry cooking items were far better than their own creations. The enthusiasm and the eagerness with which the children participated in the camp were truly commendable. While conducting sessions the volunteers not only enjoyed but learnt many things from the children. As Siddharth Prakash, a volunteer rightly said, **"Even though there is so much sadness and anxiousness all around us, still seeing the children so eager to learn and participate in the sessions have truly motivated me to find meaning in whatever I do"**. This camp had given the volunteers an opportunity to reach out to young students and motivate them to pursue their hobbies.

This camp also provided a platform to the children to do things they enjoyed the most. Sara Shamim, a participant, enthusiastically shared after the drawing session, ***“I love drawing but in the last one year I hardly drew anything. I am very glad that I got an opportunity to participate in this camp”***.

All the school teachers who were present during the camp appreciated the efforts of the volunteers and congratulated the children for their meaningful participation. Ma’am Sharbani Chakraborty, one of the teachers of the school, emotionally said, ***“It’s so wonderful to see my girls perform and indulge in their hobbies, as its been over a year that we have seen them performing or being engaged in any co-curricular activities”***.

At the end of each session, the volunteers filled out a review form in which most of them shared how participating in the summer camp and conducting sessions for the children gave them some sense of purpose. For some volunteers it gave them means to find hope as, either there had been multiple deaths in the family within a month, or most of the family members had tested positive or the student himself/herself recently recovered from the virus and was trying to gain back the strength and hope. Some volunteers also expressed that participating in this summer camp motivated them to do something similar for other less privileged children.

A review form was given to the children as well after the camp was over, in which majority of the them opined that they wanted more such sessions conducted by the college volunteers. They suggested for sessions on personality development and tutorials in the future. All the participants expressed that all the sessions met their expectations and they enjoyed participating in the camp.

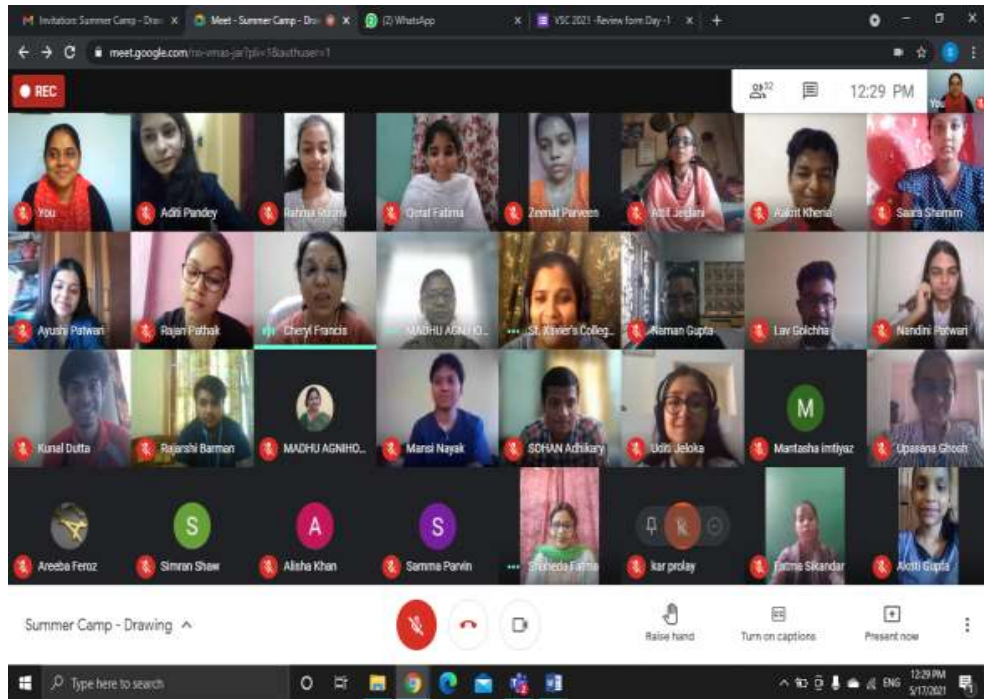
Thus it can be said that our effort of ***“Walking together with young people, to build a hope-filled future”***, was achieved to some extent. Through these interactive sessions, we were able to help them discover and rediscover their skills and talents. We gave them a sense of belongingness and assured them of our support, guidance and cooperation in future.

Acknowledgement

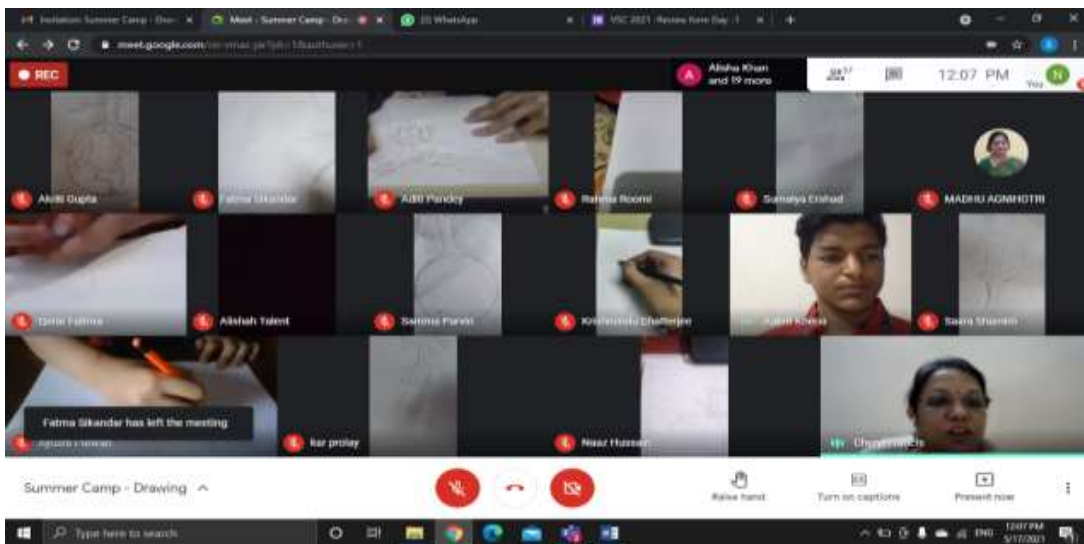
We would like to thank our Principal Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., for always encouraging, supporting and motivating us to do our best. We thank all our Vice Principals for always being there to guide us. I thank the Providence School Principal Sr. Josephine Melkias, FMM for agreeing to collaborate with us for this camp. Thanks to all the teachers of Providence School who participated in the session along with their students.

We want place on record all the technical support received from Dr. Madhu Agnihotri, HOD, IT (Commerce Morning). It would not have been possible to organise this virtual camp without her constant guidance and presence.

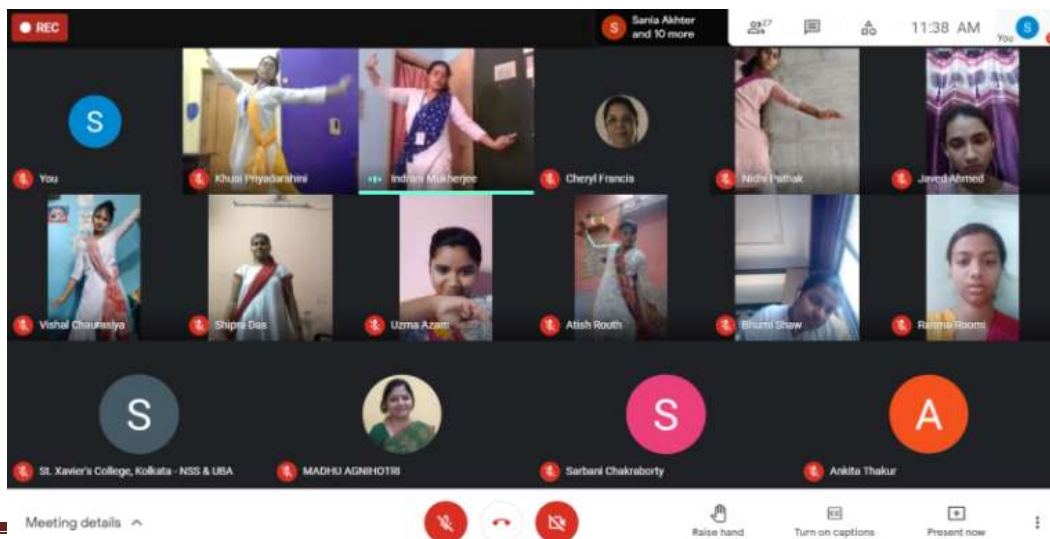
Organising Team: Ms. Cheryl Francis, Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee and Ms. Shrawani Jha



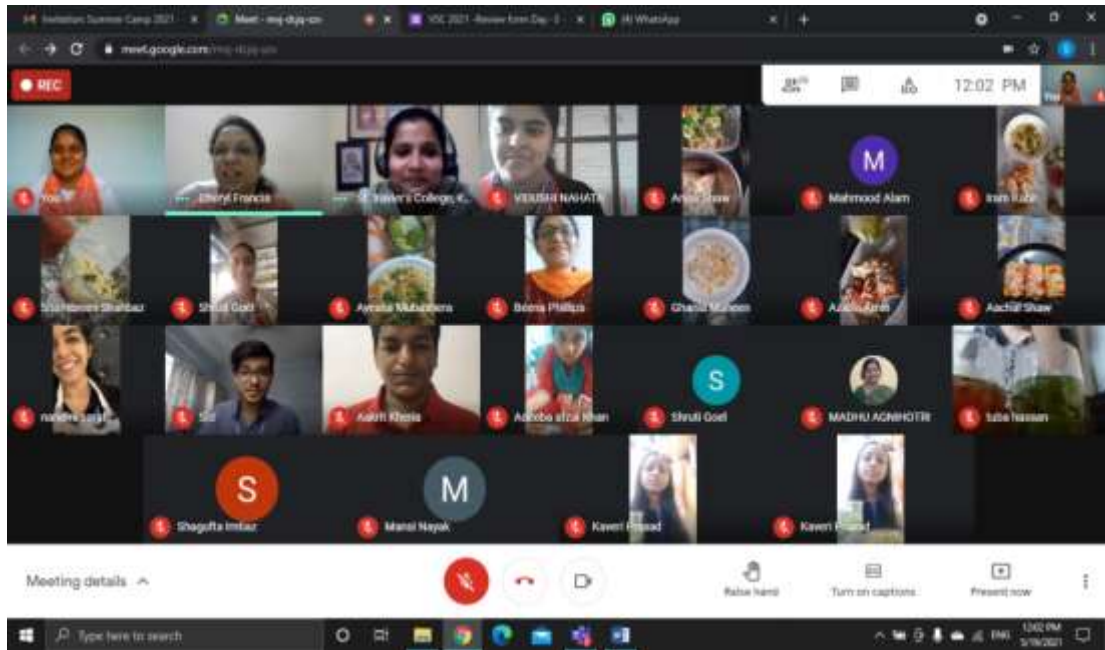
GROUP PHOTO DRAWING SESSION



SINGING & DANCING SESSION



DRY COOKING SESSION



FOLLOW-UP OF ORGANIC COMPOST MAKING