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CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES OF WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, NAGERCOIL



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ABSTRACT

The Women's Christian College has stridden through ten years of yeomen service to the students and the people around accomplishing its purpose of enlightening and empowering the womenfolk. During its tenth year in 1983, the college had tread a step forward towards success and achievements with 65 teaching and 27 non-teaching staff. The college completed 25 years of remarkable service to the advancement of the womenfolk through education and enlightenment in 1998. It is a joyous occasion for commemoration as it has

completed 25 years of service in the field of women's education in this part of Kanyakumari district. All concerned with the College joined together on 13 June 1998 and celebrated the great achievement with the management and the staff and students of the college.

KEYWORDS

Women's Christian College Nagercoil, Adult Education, Career Guidance Cell, Co-curricular, Extra-curricular, Social Service, Home for the Homeless, Help to the Visually Challenged, Physically challenged, House for Houseless, Roof for the Roofless, Village adoption, Flood relief

RESEARCH PAPER

Introduction

In June 1973, all green and small, a seed by name Women's Christian College was planted. But bright and tall with sword-edged leaves and graceful flowers the tree has grown. All those who saw the tree grow and blossom admired it for its splendor. A span of twenty six years with tremendous growth in academics and in extra-curricular is what this college claims. The team of teachers under the able guidance of the Principal rise up to the new challenges thrown up by the world and produce women who shape themselves to the aspirations of the people around. This college is a centre not just too flash light which dazzles but a constant source of life-radiating rays.¹

Co-curricular and Extra - Curricular activities

In 1993, Mrs. Indira Alexander assumed charge as the Principal of this college. It was 21 years then since this college was started and it had student strength of 1700. In the University examinations of 1992 the college results were good. 62 of its students secured University ranks.² Extra-curricular activities were started in this college during the time of Principal Mrs. Indira Alexander. In the re-structured syllabus of Madurai Kamaraj University under Part-V, this college opted for the following activities: The N.S.S., N.C.C., Games, Library Science, Karate, Carnatic Music, Bharatanatyam and Hindi.³

The Part-V classes were run effectively and successfully by the college. When Sunder Singh the Director of D.D.E. and his members came to evaluate the Part-V classes in all the colleges of the University he remarked thus: "The Vice-Chancellor, Mrs. Vasanthi Devi's real spirit and dream about the Part-V classes has become a reality in this campus of Women's Christian College, Nagercoil". This is the only college in the University to offer Hindi under the part-V with special permission from the University.⁴

University Choir

The selection of the members of the University choir for this year was conducted in this college by the Director of Youth Welfare of the University and 13 students of this college were members in the University Choir.⁵

Radio Programme

The students won the first prize in Tamil skit and second prize in Radio drama. They presented Radio Programmes on All India Radio, Nagercoil, and won a number of prizes in intercollegiate competitions conducted by the University, the government departments and social service agencies.⁶

Committee for the disabled students

In 1994, this college formed a Committee for the disabled students consisting of 14 teaching staff with Mrs. Vasanthavathy as Co-ordinator. The objective of this Committee is to cater to the physical, financial and occupational needs of the disabled students of this college.⁷

Help to the Physically Challenged Students

It is a matter of great concern to care for the well-being of the physically challenged students of the college. Accordingly, in 1993-94 the college started a Committee for the Disabled Students consisting of 14 teaching staff, with Mrs. Vasanthavathy of English Department as Co-ordinator and Mrs. Suseela Bai of History Department as Treasurer. The objective of this committee is to cater to the physical, financial and occupational needs of the disabled students of the college.⁸

In 1993, 17 handicapped students have been identified, 5 visually handicapped students have been given treatment and glasses according to their individual needs. Three others were taken to Arvind Eye Hospital, Tirunelveli in April for laser treatment. 7 students with orthopedic problems were taken for consultation. Two girls were given physiotherapy regularly. One student has been fitted with a prosthesis. 4 students were advised to have surgery. Since these 3 girls were financially very poor the committee collected funds from the teaching staff to enable them to have the surgery.⁹

The students, i.e., the classmates, hostel-mates, and the teaching staff help the visually handicapped students in their academic pursuits throughout that year. They are serving as readers, scribes and also by recording their lessons in audio cassettes.

In the year 1994-95, two of the orthopedically handicapped poor students, Sobina and Subala underwent corrective surgery in Catherine Booth Hospital. Dr. Joel James did the operations free of charge and the hospital reduced Rs. 2,500 from the other charges. The committee also gave 2 steel chairs, clothes and utensils worth Rs. 1,000 to Sahina whose hut in Malikthinar Nagar was completely burnt down.¹⁰

Indira, a first year B.Com. Student who could not walk at all was taken to Dr. Joel James and now she is walking with the help of Calipar and Crutches. She was given physiotherapy for three months. The committee succeeded in getting sanction for an STD Booth, towards rehabilitation of the few visually and orthopedically handicapped outgone students of this college.¹¹

Logos (centre for the physically challenged)

In 1996-97, a sewing machine was donated to Logos, the centre for the visually handicapped. A physically handicapped girl was appointed to do the tailoring.¹² The Bishop as well as the

Kanyakumari Diocese graciously permitted this Committee to construct a small building at the south-east corner of the College campus to house the STD. booth, a lamination centre and a garment section. This centre for the handicapped was inaugurated by the Vice-Chancellor of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Dr. V. Vasanthi Devi on 18 March 1996. It was named as “Logos”. T.C. Sheila and Premalatha two of the former students of Women’s Christian College, who are visually handicapped were provided with jobs.

In 1997-98, a commerce student who needed plastic surgery due to arteriovenous malformation with local gigantism of the right hand was operated. The staff of this college generously contributed towards the cost of the operation.¹³

Help to the Visually Challenged

The students of Women’s Christian College help many others by reading out the notes for the blind students and helping them to understand the lessons easily. They also help the poor students of Home Church School by taking tuitions thereby enabling them to get good marks.¹⁴

Home for the Homeless

In 1987, the students of Women’s Christian College decided to build a home for Rs.10,000 for a homeless person on the request of the Governing Board of the College to build the house for a poor person in Viswasapuram and this project was completed during the summer in 1988.¹⁵

During 1989-90, under the idea of the Home for the Homeless, the students of Women’s Christian College built a house costing Rs.50,000 for a poor widow in Aralvaimozhi. The students also contributed money to build one more house costing around Rs. 25,000 for a blind young man named Arul raj. While all the students contributed money for these two noble projects, the College N.S.S. students contributed by way of manual labour to these projects.¹⁶

House for Houseless

In 1994-95, the hostel students of Women’s Christian College launched on a programme called “A House for a Houseless – W.C.C. Hostel Project” and raised money to build a house for one of the poor hostel attenders named Celin John in a small village near Kaliakkavilai. Within three months the project was completed and the house was dedicated on 26 February 1995. It was a day of achievement for the girls staying in the college hostel.¹⁷

Roof for the Roofless

This college believes in providing roof for the roofless. In 1998, a house was put up for the college sweeper Mr. Joseph. In 1997, the college community put up a fine concrete house for a poor, aged widow, in Sahaya Nagar, who earns her livelihood by cutting grass in the college campus. In 1988, the students also contributed Rs. 23,000 to build a house for the college

canteen keeper Jayachandra from Mobbs Street in Nagercoil. All that was needed for these projects to bloom was the right kind of motivation to the college community.¹⁸

The N.S.S. students of this college also built one more house for Mr. GnanaPrakasam the Marker of the College. Later during the time of Mrs. Indra Alexander, the tiled roof of his house was changed into a concrete roof.¹⁹

Generous Help

The World Council of Churches granted enough money to buy a Photostat machine and a Photostat machine was bought and a visually handicapped old student of Women's Christian College was employed. Then the Committee planned to build a room above the present building to accommodate that. This would provide job for a few more visually handicapped graduates. In 1998, this project was completed and the then Bishop Rt.Rev.M.I.Kesari of Kanyakumari Diocese dedicated the first floor.²⁰

In 2001, for the purpose of doing DTP work a new computer with a printer was purchased for the physically handicapped students (Logos) and was dedicated by Mrs. LalithaDevakatacham on 26 September 2001.²¹

Career Guidance Cell

The College started a Career and Guidance Cell for giving vocational guidance to students. This cell organized various programmes to the students for appearing in the competitive examinations in addition to self-employment programmes and seminars on job opportunities for the outgoing students.²²

Career Guidance Programmes

One special feature of this years' service has been starting a Career Guidance Programme by a team of 14 teachers under the leadership of Dr. Suseela Bai, Lecturer in the Dept. of History, exclusively for the physically challenged students of this college. 19 students were given coaching to make them competent enough to write the TNPSC, BSRB, Staff Selection Commission and other competitive examinations. Study materials and books have been bought for this programme. A community programme to warm the physically challenged young women of Kanyakumari District for competing in the above examination is being planned for the future.

This college now runs a centre to teach typewriting and computers to the physically handicapped students of Women's Christian College. This was funded by the University Grants Commission's grant. This centre is situated near the college hostel. This centre has a very good Braille Library, three Braille typewriters, seven ordinary typewriters and two computers. The typewriting class training is given by a visually handicapped old student Miss.

Latha of this college. The computer class is taught by Miss Roji, a polio affected girl. During the holidays the hostel attenders and cooks are also studying in this centre.²³

There are three special scholarships available especially for the disabled students of this college. The first scholarship is given to a disabled student who gets first in English in the College. Another scholarship is given to a disabled student who gets first in all the subjects. The third one is given to the best student who stands out in extra-curricular activities.²⁴

Now it is almost 10 years since this centre “Logos” has been launched and there are 22 staff members in the Committee. Now the Committee is planning to celebrate a Decennial Celebration by inviting the old students also, so that it will be an encouragement to the people who are working in the Logos as well as to the disabled students who are studying in the college now.²⁵

Pongal was celebrated by the students on 17 January 1974. The students and staff brought vegetables and put them for sale. They could collect Rs. 9955.50 out of this enterprise. The amount was earmarked for the betterment of the poor non-teaching staff.²⁶

The Fine Arts Club of this college, staged a play and the net income of Rs. 5,046 by way of ticket collection has been set aside for the amenities of the non-teaching staff.²⁷

Village Adoption

The students who were interested in social work visited the Paaraiyadi village along with a staff member on Sundays and conducted moral classes for the children. The students also conducted sports for the children in the village and encouraged them to expose their talents. During the summer holidays the women’s work camp was conducted from June 11 to 18 at Paaraiyadi village and students from the college actively participated in it.²⁸

The students of Women’s Christian College donated an amount of Rs. 750 towards an endowment called the Annathanagam Memorial Endowment in memory of their college mate who died on that year in a road accident. They decided to utilise this interest to give a prize to the best student in Tamil studying in Class III.²⁹

Flood Relief

During the unprecedented floods in Tamil Nadu in the year **1977**, the students collected a large number of sarees for the women of the flood affected areas. They also donated Rs. 5,200/- to the flood relief fund.³⁰ There were some poor students studying in this institution. So the staff of this institution started one Poor Students Fund and liberally contributed to the fund. This money was utilized for the welfare of the poor students of this college.³¹

Adult Education

The college started Adult Education Centres and appointed a Coordinator for Adult Education. One of the centres is in the college itself. Here the semi-literate and illiterate contingency staff and casual labourers are taught.³²

The Planning Forum also conducted a Seminar on Adult Education and made an economic survey in Keeriparai village. This shows the student's interest in the welfare of the society around them.³³

Every month the teaching staff of the college contribute Rs. 5 each for the student aid. With this money the college provides mid-day meals to a few poor students and also gives monetary help to the needy students and thus helps a few womenfolk in the society by educating them free of cost.³⁴

The programmes in the adopted village Kamarajapuram were carried out in a great manner. Child Education and Adult Education Programmes in Kamarajapuram village and Aruguvillai village have also been started. Thus the students of W.C.C. show deep concern to the people of the community living around through the enlightenment they received from the college which empowered them.

Achievements

The college aims at developing the all-round personality of the students enabling them to make good use of every opportunity that comes their way. The students actively participated in the various college day competitions such as hairdo, *paattukkupaattu*, flower arrangements, fancy dress, cooking, Miss W.C.C. dances, light music and other literary events in both Tamil and English. Our main thrust is on the enrichment of the lives of the students.³⁵

Year by year this college witnesses more gold medals and more University ranks. In 1999, this college secured 4 gold medals and 50 University ranks. In 2000 it has increased to 6 gold medals and 57 University ranks. In the year 2000, 4 P.G. departments produced University ranks.³⁶

In the state-wide academic performance data gathered by the Commissioner of Collegiate Education, Chennai, college-wise, subject-wise and teacher-wise from all the 141 Government Aided Colleges in the state, this college is ranked 48th in the state, 5th in the University and 1st in Kanyakumari District. Due to the sincere efforts of the then Principal, Indira Alexander, staff and students of the college it has gone a long way towards this record of brilliant performance.³⁷

The blind students have fared well in the University examination. Ms. Sudha, II M.A. History has scored 69%, Ms. Janu of II B.A. History has got 63% and Ms. Sudha, I B.A. Tamil has secured 57%.³⁸

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