

Ullas Trust Conducts 14th Annual ‘Can Do’ Workshop for 3000 Students in Chennai

Launches Rural Chapters to Reach Students in the interiors of Tamil Nadu

Chennai, August 20, 2011: Ullas Trust, a Polaris Social Initiative, conducted its 14th Annual Workshop & awarded Young Achievers scholarships to 3000 students across 170 schools in Chennai. The “*Can Do It*” workshop was conducted by Arun Jain, Chairman & CEO, Polaris in the presence of dignitaries such as Mr. Sanjay Arora, IPS, Addl Commissioner of Police, Mr. R Anandkumar, IAS, Chennai Corporation & Mr. Sridhar Ganesh, Director-HR, Murugappa Group.

Ullas Trust was started by the employees of Polaris in 1997, to recognize academic excellence in students from the economically challenged sections of our society and nurture their “Can Do” spirit. Ullas focuses on High School students during the most vulnerable phase in their lives - adolescence. Ullas strongly believes that during this period, any positive intervention creates a huge impact in nurturing their dreams and aspirations.

To shape these young, fertile minds, Polaris employees run a unique weekend intervention program called SUMMIT, which comprises a personality development module and a technology skill development module. The SUMMIT Program is graded from Level 1 to Level 4, with Level 1 beginning for Class IX and finishing with Level 4 for Class XII. Between Standard IX to XII, each student undergoes at least 24 intervention programs in the form of SUMMITs and Annual Workshops that help in honing their self-confidence and ‘Can Do’ spirit.

So far, the SUMMIT programs were being conducted in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Hyderabad, where Polaris offices are located. Last year, Ullas reached out to 4000 students across India through the Summit programs.

Ullas has now started taking baby steps towards reaching the rural student base through its association with Vidyarambham Trust. As part of this association, students from Class VI, VII and VIII in chosen districts will undergo an Easy Learning English (ELE) program through interactive and fun methods such as discussions, questioning, conversations and group activities. The course would lay the basic foundation in spoken English for students and will serve as a platform for the students from these rural villages to participate in the Ullas Young Achievers program in the coming years.

Speaking on the occasion, **Arun Jain, Chairman & CEO, Polaris** said, “It is indeed a moment of pride for the entire Polaris family to witness the 14th edition of Ullas Annual ‘Can Do’ Workshop and Award Ceremony which has reached out to over 30,000 students nationally, since inception. Given the impact our programs have created in four cities, we have now expanded our scope to reach the districts in India through two major programs.

Our first program is the “Touch the Soil” program, through which our employees have been igniting young minds in the districts by organizing the Diary of Dreams workshop. The objective is to

encourage students to dream big and with conviction and start translating these dreams into action. This year, we have launched a major program by partnering with Vidyarambham Trust. Vidyarambham would support Ullas in enhancing the English language skills in 34 schools in the districts. This would serve as a launch pad to commence Ullas programs in these schools in the coming years.”

About Ullas Trust

Ullas Trust was started in 1997 with an aim to integrate the employees of Polaris with a larger community and nurture a “Can do it” spirit among the students. The Trust recognizes and rewards academic excellence through annual scholarships. The Ullas Trust has been organizing an annual workshop for the past 13 years, with the aim of exposing young minds to role models and achievers from the real world. Every year, the workshop culminates with the Trust awarding educational scholarships to students identified through a selection process from Corporation and Government schools in all districts of Tamil Nadu, Mumbai and Delhi. Going beyond scholarships, the volunteers in the Trust act as “Mentors” to the Ullas Achievers by engaging them regularly on interactive sessions. Over the last 14 years, Ullas Trust has awarded over 30,000 scholarships to young minds across India.

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