EMPOWERING MINDS, TRANSFORMING LIVES...

BHARATA MATA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
BHARATA MATA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), THRIKKAKARA

"THE COMMUNIQUE"

NEWS LETTER OF BHARATA MATA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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ORGANISATIONAL VISIT

As part of their first-semester practicum, MSW students conducted observation visits to three prominent institutions on 27th and 30th November 2024, gaining practical exposure to diverse social work practices.



On 27th November, the trainees visited KRIPA Rehabilitation Institute, a leading center for individuals with physical and intellectual disabilities established in 1981. KRIPA's services, including vocational training, special education, and rehabilitation, reflect its mission of fostering independence and inclusivity. The visit highlighted the importance of affordable, holistic care and inspired the students to explore similar collaborative efforts.



The same day, the social work trainees visited Suhruth Sadan, a center dedicated to providing tailored care and support for individuals in need. The visit highlighted the importance of creating personalized interventions, further enriching the trainees' understanding of institutional social work.

Suhruth Sadan focuses on the welfare of women, children, the aged, tribal communities, and differently-abled individuals, fostering a sense of inclusiveness and ensuring holistic care for diverse sections of society.



On 30th November, the trainees visited the historic Boys' Hostel in Koonammavu, operating since 1886. Despite losing government registration in 2018, the hostel continues to provide care under the Varapuzha Archdiocese. This visit offered insights into the challenges and successes of supporting vulnerable children and reinforced the role of social work in advocacy and community-building.

SOUHRUDAM



On December 4, 2024, social work trainees participated in the SOUHRUDAM Program, a celebration of Kochi's senior citizens. The event featured cultural performances, interactive sessions, and opportunities for social connection, promoting well-being and inclusion for older adults.

Mayor M. Anil Kumar inaugurated the event, highlighting the importance of fostering intergenerational bonds and creating inclusive spaces for the elderly. The program successfully offered a vibrant and appreciative environment for senior citizens to share experiences and feel valued in the community.

LEEP 2024

The LEEP 2024 workshop (November 28-29) brought MSW students from BMSSW together with Mission Better Tomorrow to enhance leadership, entrepreneurship, and professional skills.

Key activities included a fireside chat with EY delegates on leadership and ethics, along with entrepreneurship sessions where students worked on business proposals and pitching ideas. These sessions fostered an entrepreneurial mindset, helping students develop problem-solving and communication skills.

On the second day, sessions on artificial intelligence, sustainability, and cyberspace secur-





ity provided insights into modern global challenges. While the workshop offered valuable skills, a deeper focus on how these concepts relate to social work values like social justice and community empowerment would have made it more relevant for the trainees. Overall, the event equipped students with essential tools for navigating the evolving landscape of social work.

BHARATHION 2024

The Bharata Mata School of Social Work, Bharata Mata College (Autonomous), successfully hosted Bharathion 2024, a two-day conference on December 12-13, 2024. The conference, themed "Buen Vivir—Co-Building and Fostering Innovations in Health for a Sustainable and Just Future," aimed to promote sustainable healthcare systems and innovative approaches in social work.



The conference featured keynote addresses by Dr. Lissy Kachappilly and Rev. Dr. Abraham Oliyapurath, emphasizing the need for sustainable healthcare systems and innovative approaches in social work. Panel discussions, technical sessions, and paper presentations were also held, covering topics such as innovative health models, behavioral systems approach, resilience, and reproductive rights. Eminent speakers, including Dr. Jyoshma Preema D'Souza, Dr. Hyacinth Udah, Dr. Mala Ramanathan, and Dr. Smitha Nair, shared their expertise and insights. The conference brought together a diverse group of participants from state, national, and international levels, fostering a rich exchan-





ge of ideas and perspectives. The conference also showcased the creative talents of social work trainees through various cultural activities. A musical drama, presented as a tribute to renowned Indian writer and film director K.J. Baby from Kerala, was a highlight of the event. The conference was collaboratively organized by the Department faculty, first-year MSW students, and BSW students, with the support of student coordinators Aswin Prasad and Ms. Fathimathu Sharafiya.

The conference concluded with a valedictory ceremony, where Dr. Arya L. Chandran delivered the concluding remarks, and the release of a comprehensive report by the Documentation Committee.

"IDHAYAM" RURAL CAMP



The BSW 2024 Batch, comprising 40 students and accompanied by 4 faculty members, embarked on a transformative rural camp experience at Payir, an NGO based in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, from 25/11/2024 to 30/11/2024. The "Idhayam" camp aimed to provide students with invaluable rural exposure, fostering a deeper understanding of social realities and cultivating practical skills in community development.

During the camp, students actively engaged in a variety of activities, including hands-on farming experiences, data entry tasks, and community interactions. They learned about various agricultural practices, from soil preparation to harvesting, gaining firsthand insights into the challenges faced by rural communities.



Furthermore, they interacted with local villagers, visited schools to conduct engaging activities for children, and explored the region's rich cultural heritage through a visit to the Arulmigu Uchi Pillaiyar Temple.



This immersive experience provided students with a unique opportunity to learn about the socio-economic and cultural realities of rural life.

Through meaningful interactions with the community, they developed a deeper understanding of social issues, honed their practical skills, and gained invaluable insights that will undoubtedly serve as a strong foundation for their future endeavors in the field of social work.

WORLD HUMAN RIGHTS DAY; RELATED TO OLD AGE



Bharata Mata School of Social Work (BMSSW), in collaboration with Signature Aged Care, hosted a meaningful session on December 9, 2024, to commemorate World Human Rights Day with a focus on elderly care. The event, held in the second-year MSW classroom at 1:30 PM, explored the unique challenges faced by senior citizens and emphasized their fundamental rights, such as equality, health, autonomy, and participation. The session highlighted systemic issues like ageism, neglect, social isolation, and economic insecurity, urging participants to consider the critical role of social workers in addressing these barriers.

Participants were introduced to actionable strategies, including advocating for policies that support senior citizens, promoting social inclusion, and coordinating with multidisciplinary professionals to enhance geriatric care. The collaboration provided attendees with a deeper understanding of the social, economic, and emotional hurdles faced by older adults, inspiring a commitment to uphold their dignity and rights. This session exemplified BMSSW's dedication to fostering informed, community-centric discussions, reinforcing the importance of collective action for elderly empowerment.

EXPERT LECTURE



On December 30, 2024, the Bharata Mata Venture for Organizing Inclusive Communities hosted an insightful expert lecture at Bharata Mata College, featuring Dr. Shani S.S., Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Student Affairs at The Apollo University, Chittor, Andhra Pradesh. The session, titled "Uncut Voices: Advocating Against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)," provided a comprehensive overview of FGM, its global prevalence, and the reasons behind its practice. Dr. Shani discussed the issue on an international scale and then focused on its occurrence in India and Kerala, shedding light on its hidden nature and harmful effects.

A key highlight of the session was Dr. Shani's personal experience as an FGM survivor. She shared her journey and now works actively to raise awareness and combat this human rights violation. With her first-hand account, she highlighted the trauma of FGM and the urgent need to eradicate such practices, even in the postmodern era. The lecture concluded with a Q&A session, fostering deeper discussions on the subject. This thought-provoking session provided invaluable insights into FGM and reinforced the importance of challenging harmful cultural practices and advocating for women's rights.

WORKSHOP ON "QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS IN SOCIAL WORK

The two-day research workshop on "Quantitative Analysis in Social Work," conducted on the 17th and 18th of December 2024, was a highly engaging and insightful event facilitated by Dr. Rahul S, Assistant Professor at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai campus. The workshop aimed to enhance the research skills of participants by focusing on the application of quantitative methodologies in social work. Day one began with an introduction to quantitative research methods, including foundational concepts such as sampling techniques, data collection strategies, and statistical tools. Dr. Rahul provided practical demonstrations of data analysis using statistical software, emphasizing the relevance of quantitative methods in addressing complex social issues.

The second day delved deeper into advanced topics, such as hypothesis testing, regression analysis, and the interpretation of statistical results. Participants engaged in hands-on exercises and group discussions, fostering collaborative learning and critical thinking. Dr. Rahul's expertise and interactive approach ensured that the sessions were both informative and accessible, making complex concepts easy to grasp.

The workshop concluded with a Q&A session, where participants had the opportunity to discuss real-world applications of quantitative analysis in their respective fields. .

Overall, the workshop was a valuable platform for learning and professional development, equipping participants with essential tools to conduct impactful research in social work.

ARTICLES

TRAUMA, ADVERSITY, AND CRIME: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK IN BREAKING THE CYCLE

Trauma and adversity are critical factors that contribute to criminal behavior. Many individuals involved in crime have experienced various forms of trauma, such as abuse, neglect, violence, or poverty. These experiences can deeply impact mental health, behavior, and decision-making. Left unaddressed, trauma can lead to a cycle of crime and relapse. Social work plays a vital role in breaking this cycle by providing support, advocating for systemic change, and promoting community engagement.

Social workers are trained to assess the needs of individuals affected by trauma and adversity. Using a holistic approach, they consider the social, emotional, and environmental factors that shape a person's life. Social workers offer counseling, therapy, and other support services to help individuals process their trauma, build resilience, and develop healthy coping mechanisms. Trauma-informed care, a key approach in social work, recognizes how past trauma affects behavior and helps guide treatment. For example, a social worker might assist a person who has been involved in the justice system to understand how their experiences influence their actions, offering them empathy and tools for positive change.

In addition, social workers advocate for systemic changes that address the root causes of crime. This includes promoting access to education, mental health services, affordable housing, and employment opportunities.

Social workers work to reduce stigma around mental health and trauma and push for policies that create a more supportive environment for those affected by adversity.

Community engagement is also essential. Social workers collaborate with community organizations, local governments, and faith-based groups to create safe, supportive environments. By fostering social cohesion and promoting stability, social workers help prevent the cycle of crime from continuing.

In conclusion, social work plays a crucial role in breaking the cycle of trauma, adversity, and crime. Through direct practice, advocacy, and community engagement, social workers help individuals heal, overcome challenges, and become active, productive members of society.



Devika Santhosh
First Year MSW

SMILE PLEASE...

Dear friends, we live in a world increasingly shaped by self-interest, where the universe seems to operate at the fingertips of humans. Amid our busy lives, we often forget one small yet profound act: to smile. A smile is more than an expression; it's an action of love, a beautiful gift to others. Connie Stevens once said, "Nothing you wear is more important than your smile." This simple gesture holds immense meaning, especially in the realm of social work.

As social workers, we face questions like, what is your opinion of social work? Why did you choose this profession? Can only social workers perform social work? These queries may sometimes make us question if we're on the right path. However, we hold on to a core truth: social workers share a deep thirst to serve society and to effect meaningful change, whether for individuals or communities.

Social work is a nuanced art—working with individuals, groups, or systems to address challenges and create sustainable change. The idea reminds me of the saying: "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime." Social work embodies this ethics, promoting self-sufficiency and empowerment. As I advance through my MSW journey, it's clear that what we do makes a difference, and the choice lies in the type of difference we wish to make.

Social work, at its core, is about fostering change in the environment. A smile can be a powerful tool in this process, influencing individuals, groups, and communities. Breaking it down: S represents socialization, support, service, and social justice—the foundational characteristics of social work. M denotes the resources we mobilize, including men, money, materials, and the methods and tools integral to our practice.

I reflect the interventions and principles we uphold, such as individualization, integrity, and the importance of human relationships. L stands for the essential skills required, like active listening and leadership qualities. E encompasses empathy, emotional well-being, empowerment, and ethical standards that guide our practice.

Social work not only transforms the lives of others but also profoundly impacts the social worker. As Buddha said, "If you light a lamp for somebody, it will also brighten your path." Keeping a smile on our face helps navigate our social work journey with ease and effectiveness. It fosters healthy relationships, builds trust, and aids in solving problems while establishing rapport with individuals and communities.

A smile is a small yet significant step in the pursuit of social work success. As Martin Luther King Jr. beautifully put it, "The time is always right to do the right thing." Now is the right time to smile. So, let us embrace it—please, smile.



Deena Davis M
First Year MSW

ACHIEVEMENTS

Bharata Mata College (Autonomous) is proud to celebrate the outstanding achievement of Samson Saji, a first-year BSW student, who clinched the gold medal at the prestigious Indo-Nepal National Throwball Test Series Game.

Representing India with unmatched skill and determination, Samson's victory underscores his dedication to sports and the college's commitment to holistic development.

Congratulations to Samson and the Department of Physical Education for this incredible milestone, inspiring future athletes of Bharata Mata College.



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BHARATA MATA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

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