



Loyola College's

National Conference on ICTs for the Differently Abled / Under privileged Communities in Education, Employment & Entrepreneurship 2009 (NCIDEE 2009)



Organized by

Dr. A. Albert Muthumalai S. J, Principal, Loyola College, Chennai.,

& Prof. J. Jerald Inico, Faculty In-charge, Resource Centre for the Differently Abled(RCDA), Loyola College, Chennai

in association with NASSCOM, Computer Society of India and Centre for the Internet & Society.

Sponsored by Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Tamilnadu State Council for Higher Education & Tamilnadu State Council for Science & Technology

The Report of National Conference on ICTs for the Differently Abled / under privileged Communities in Education, Employment & Entrepreneurship 2009 (NCIDEEE 2009) held at Loyola College on Dec 01-03, 2009



Report of Track 1 - Researchers / Academicians/ Innovators/ Scientists

Day 1 – 01-Dec-2009

Morning Session

The most awaited National Conference **NCIDEEE 2009** began on 01-Dec-2009 with the Inaugural function in the morning. Prof. G. Ramamurthy, Vice Principal, Loyola College welcomed the gathering. Rev. Dr. A. Albert Muthumalai, Principal, Loyola College, Chairman & Convenor of the Conference explained the theme of the conference. Rev. Dr. S. Peter Xavier, Secretary, Loyola College bestowed his blessings and felicitation. The





Resource Centre for the Differently-abled(RCDA).

Guest of Honour, Mr. Ram Agarwal, CEO Karishma Group of Companies spoke on the importance of Technology for the differently-abled and the tools for carrying out Information and Communication. The Chief Guest Dr. S. S. Singh, Technical Director NIC, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, elucidated the need to create more opportunities for differently-abled. The other dignitaries on the dais were Dr. K. S. Antony Samy, the dean of Students, Dr. Joseph Chandra, the Dean of Arts, Ms. Nirmita Narasimhan, Program Manager, CIS and the Conference Organizing Secretary Prof. J Jerald Inico, Faculty In-charge,

Then the conference was divided into three tracks for Scientists/ Innovators/Researchers/Academician, Web Designers and Differently-abled/ NGO's and conducted simultaneously.

Afternoon Session

The session started with a talk on “ICT Tools for Expression” by Dr. Rajan Varada from UNESCO. Dr. Sam Dharapurwala, Joint Director of Xavier’s Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged shared his views on the topic “Setting up Resource Centers”. Prof. Sudhir Krishnasamy from National University of Juridical Sciences spoke on “Constitutional and Legal Basis of disability Law”. Mr. Harish Kotian from RBI shared his ideas on “Building Communities Online”. It was a very informative session.



Harish Kotian from RBI shared his ideas on “Building Communities Online”.



Paper Presentation was organized during the second session of Day 1. Over the 36 papers submitted online, only 20 of them were selected for presentation. The researchers and academicians presented those 20 papers, mainly focusing on ICT, Health, Education and Employment participation for differently-abled, Rehabilitation of Disabled, Strategies to improve the standard of living of differently-abled, Development of facilities and roles of individual, NGO and Government for the empowerment of differently-abled. Dr. S. P.

Victor, Head, Department of Computer Science of St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai was the moderator during this session. Among 20 papers presented, *two papers* were selected to be the best papers. The paper titled **“Emotion Agent and Sound Agent for Differently-abled learners”** presented by *Mrs. R. Senthamarai of Aarupadai Veedu Institute of Technology* was declared **First Prize** and the paper titled **“Augmentative Communication in Intellectually Disabled Children with Cerebral Palsy”** presented by *Mrs. A .Turin Martina, Holy Cross College, Trichy-620 002* was given **Second Prize**.

Day 2 – 02-Dec-2009



Deliberations on Day 2 had OCR Round Table discussion chaired by Dr. Santanu Chaudry , IIT, Delhi who delivered a talk on *“OCR as a tool for visually challenged”*. Dr. C. V. Jawahar , IIIT, Hyderabad spoke on *“OCR Technology: State of the Art”*. Dr. Gurpreet Singh Lehal, Punjabi University, Punjab shared his expertise on the topic *“OCR Technology for Indian Scripts”*. Mr. Dipendra Manocha discussed on the topic *“Unicode & Braille-conversion Issues”*. The interaction of the participants during the deliberation and discussion

was phenomenal. A demo on Indian Language OCR was given by Dr. Tusar Batnaik & Team, CDAC, Noida. After the demo session a Panel Discussion was organized wherein the researchers shared their experiences in their respective field of research.

Day 3 – 03-Dec-2009

Third day proceedings mainly focused on TTS (Text To Speech). Dr. Hema Murthy, IIT, Chennai began the session with her impressive talk on *“TTS Technology”*. Dr. Kishore Prahalad delivered a speech on *“Unit Selection TTS”*. Mr. Dipendra Manocha and Mrs. Anu Bajpai from Sigma Science Tech shared their proficiency on *“TTs Requirement for the Visually Challenged”*. Dr. Das Mandal from CDAC, Noida and Santhosh Thottingal also shared their expertise on TTS. All the resource persons added value to their deliberations with



live demonstrations which certainly kept their session so alive and much impressive. The deliberations on three days conference have really laid up a platform to Academician/Researchers to join hands together to work more effectively in uplifting the needy people of the society.

Report of Track 2 – Workshop on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0

This Session was taken jointly by four facilitators:



Mr. Rahul Gonsalves - a free lance web designer, founder of the web designing company Pexlogue.

Mr. Manish Agrawal - Software Consultant at Sapient.

Mr. Prashant Verma – ICT Resource Centre, Delhi University.

Mr. Srinivasu Chakravarthula – Accessibility Lab Manager, Yahoo India!

Mr. Manish, Mr. Prashant and Mr. Srinivasu were highly inspiring as they were all visually impaired to some extent.

DAY 1:

Day one of the event was mainly an introduction into the programme. This session was done by Mr Manish of how to **differentiate a couple of terms** that are sometimes highly confused:

Impairment – Impairment occurs when an organ doesn't function properly, for instance, when one's eyes are partially or fully blind. **Disability** – This is the inability to do something. A disability may be created by impairment or the environment, such as darkness! Whereas **Handicap** – Is a human caused difficulty, when people are not cautious to create systems for people who are disabled. For instance, when tall buildings are built with only stairs but no ramps!



Mr. Rahul led the participants to learn **the various types of disabilities**, such as vision impairment, motor impairment, auditory impairment, speech impairment, all of which are in different scales, ranging from those who are partially impaired to those who are fully impaired.

Mr. Prashant showed the participants various gadgets and tools that those who are impaired can use. These gadgets include the head stylus and a track ball, for those who are paralyzed, a refreshable Braille display for the blind, a gear and a switch for those with cerebral palsy and display unit with a computerized sign language for the deaf!

The session continued in the lab, where the participants learnt the **factors that make websites inaccessible**.



DAY 2:

Day two began with a recap of day one. It was Mr. Manish who led us through the recap and thus brought us into focus with what we were discussing.

This was followed with the discussion of the WCAG 2.0 by Mr. Rahul. Participants were then divided up into groups, and given an exercise. The exercise was to see if they could design a fully

accessible website, composed of two web pages. It was an interesting experience as the attendants got to experience hands on what they were learning.

DAY 3:

The main theme for the last day of the conference was **Automated and Manual accessibility testing**. This session was taken by Mr. Srinivasu, who introduced us to a tool known as **wave**. Websites were then tested for accessibility, both manually (by a visually impaired person) and automated, by online tools such as wave.



CONCLUSION:

As Mr. Rahul said in a conversation during one of the tea breaks, making websites accessible is quite possible, because once you decide to do it, it “becomes a habit”. This was surely an interesting conference for all the attendees due to the high level of interaction, lab activities and the down to earth nature of the resource persons. It has inspired, shed light to many and made them aware of the importance of making their sites accessible to all.



Report of Track 3 &4 – Capacity Building Workshop for the Differently Abled.

RESOURCE PERSONS

1. Ms.Vidhya, Enable India, Bangalore.
2. Mr.Santhosh Kumar, Enable India, Bangalore.

DAY – 1 (01.12.2009)

Track 3 and Track 4 together organized at Saulier Hall, Loyola College at 2 .00 PM Resource persons started first day session with “Self Introduction”. The training programme was more interesting and innovative way to the participants. The training was totally participants centered. Through the training the hindrance of knowledge about the society was avoided. About 37 Visually challenged students were trained on the first day. The training was led by Ms. Vidhya and Mr. Santhosh Kumar, Enable India, Bangalore. The visually challenged were taught the basics instructions to follow in day to day life, Opportunities in Education and Employment. The training went up to 5.30 PM.



DAY – 2 (02.12.2009)

The session for Track 3 & 4 Started at 10 AM on 2nd December 2009. The resource persons conducted Brainstorming session among the participant about Thinking power. After the brainstorming session they conducted Group discussion. Goal setting was the major objective of the group discussion. All the members were shared their short term and long term goal in their life. Individual and Group games were organized to understand the mobility. Participants were actively participated and they learnt many tips for their mobility in their day to day life.



The participants were taken through theoretical and

special practical training on the use of the white cane. They were introduced to the handling of the cane, how to direct it to identify objects ahead, walking on level grounds, crossing gutters and climbing of staircases. That training enabled the participants to be self-reliant and independent of guides who at times create problems for them when there is a misunderstanding. Participants realized that the white cane is part and parcel of all visually-impaired adding that it acts as their guide.

DAY – 3 (03.12.2009)



challenges for visually challenged.

Third day was very special day, ie World Disabled Day. On that day the main focus was Self Observation. Participants were shared their Strengths and Weakness among themselves. That exercise was more helpful to the participants to do SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities & Threats) analysis. Personal skills, Technical skills, and Communications skills were taught through interesting games. Resource persons oriented about the Opportunities and

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Let's recognize the visually challenged for their 'abilities'
let them not be identified by their 'disability'
let's not see them as 'disabled', but 'differently abled'
We need to understand... We need to accept... We have to acknowledge...
We must show them the way...
lead them from darkness to light.....
Let our Light Shine !



CONCLUSION



NCIDEEE 2009 Conference created the awareness about the employability of the Visually Challenged and thus plays a catalytic role in bridging gaps to create an inclusive environment and thereby achieve Social Integration. Using their superior listening skills and retention power, they are able to produce better results in certain fields of activity such as music, data entry, telemarketing, call center jobs, medical transcription, food tasting, assaying (fragrances, essential oils and extracts etc),

counseling and physiotherapy. NCIDEEE2009 conference really paved the way through the training and support for the visually challenged to excel in their life.

Feedback of Track 3 & Track 4

By Balanagendran: A visually challenged III B Com student

The national level conference on ICTS for the differently-abled under privileged community in education employment and entrepreneurship:

Those were the immaculate days in the life of every differently-abled students. The students of Loyola college were on cloud nine because, on those three days we have learnt a lot about life, hard work , challenges and various skills. The



programme was conducted by the both the experts from Enable India namely:

1. Vidya
2. Santhosh

Both of them took over the three days with various workshops and some live skills training. Thus several activities took place on those three days which are as under:

✓ The first session took place on Tuesday i.e., [1/12/2009] in the afternoon. On that day they spoke on various **employment opportunities such as:**

- Human resource manager [HR] in this case they mentioned one person named Vinoth Benjamin, who is working as a HR manager in TCS, so that we would be able to get some knowledge about employment opportunities in MNCS.
- They then mentioned us about the opportunities available in fields like help executive and the required qualifications for those posts, also the areas in which we have to improve ourselves.
- Another post in which a visually challenged person can work is medical transcription, provided we should be a good communicator in English.
- They said that a visually challenged person can also become an IAS, IFS, IES, ETC. for eg., Mr. Dharamaraj , IES director ministry of finance Mumbai. They gave us various tips about various fields in which a visually challenged person can work.



✓ The second day started at 10 a.m. in Saulier hall. During that session, they taught us how to interact with new or unknown people. They gave us practical exercises by dividing us into pairs.



✓ The second session of the second day was about brain storming. They divided us into groups and gave a topic and asked us to give 50 good qualities and 50 bad qualities of that object which helped us to know about our own creative ability. Mainly it helped us to find out, how much knowledge we got about that particular object. They mentioned that it was the starting point which leads us to the development of our own personality.

✓ The final session of the second day was about mobility training. They gave us various tips to tackle traffic, society, the people, and the situation and so on. And they gave a practical walking training and they revealed the important keys for visually challenged persons.

- ✓ The third and final sessions took place on Thursday [3/12/2009]. On that day, they wanted to know about our own ambition and accordingly they gave us some advice. Both of them disclosed the steps which are required to develop our network and other awareness through, various sources such as eye way news and through SMS services and bookshare.org , so that the session avoids the hindrance of knowledge certainly, which helps to develop our personal technical and communicative skills.

The Celebration of ‘The International Day for the person with Disability’ and the Valedictory Function- NCIDEEE 2009

The Celebration of ‘The International Day for the person with Disability’ and the valedictory function of NCIDEEE 2009 was took place on 3/12/2009 at 4’O clock at Bertram Hall, Loyola College, Chennai with grand audience. Smt. Kannegi Packianathan I.A.S. Special Secretary, Government of Tamilnadu, was the chief guest and MR. Dharmarajan I.E.S. Director, Ministry of finance, Mumbai was the guest of honour. The



function was started with a welcome address by Prof G. Ramamurthy, Vice Principal, Loyola College then the report of



the national conference on ICTs for the differently abled under privilege communities in education employment and



entrepreneurship 2009 held on Dec 01-03, 2009 was recalled. The report states the various activities done during these days for the Scientists/Academicians/ Researchers/ Innovators and followed by the report on exclusive workshop on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 and finally the workshop done for the differently abled students/NGO's. The other dignitaries on the dais were Sri. S. Ramasamy, Chairman, Computer Society of India, Chennai Chapter, Dr. K. S. Antony Samy, the dean of Students, Dr. Albonse Raj, Vice Principal, Prof S. Amal Raj(Tamil Department), and the Conference Organizing Secretary Prof. J Jerald Inico, Faculty In-charge, Resource Centre for the Differently- Abled(RCDA).

Smt. Kannagi Packianathan IAS spoke of the famous personalities specially she discovered the life histories of differently abled people those who were created a mark in the world such as Hellen keller, Beetha Owen and so on and she said a story about a differently- abled poet and she said that no human in this world with full of perfection and full of sources every one is a challenged person in one way or another. The guest of honour, Sri. R. Dharmarajan IES, he himself a Visually Impaired, he spoke about various sources that are available for the differently abled people to gain awareness.



Then the delegates and the resource persons were awarded with certificates by Prof G. Ramamurthy and Sri. S. Ramasamy. The historical achievement of Loyola College was recalled by the delegates and the valedictory function ends with a nice vote of thanks. Heartfelt thanks was expressed to all those who were helped directly or indirectly for the successful execution of the conference and the special thanks was expressed to the co-organizers such as NASSCOM, COMPUTER SOCIETY OF INDIA(CSI) and the Center for Internet and Society[CIS] and the sponsors like The Ministry of Social justice and Empowerment, Government of India, Tamilnadu State Council for Higher Education(TNSCHE), Tamilnadu State Council for Science & Technology (TNSCST), Eagle Software India Pvt Ltd, Steria India Pvt Ltd, Cognizant Technology Solutions Pvt Ltd, Smart Training Resources, Arasan Group of Companies, JCD Prabhakaran and others too. The program ends up with a resolution to start up a new department to exclusively to study on disability.

