



# ROOFS FOR THE ROOFLESS

Partnerships for Rural Integrated Development and Empowerment - PRIDE

## REFLECTIONS SHARED BY DR.DEVANESEN, MR.EMMANUEL AND MR.SEKAR AFTER THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COMMUNITY COLLEGE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT ORGANISED BY ICRDCE, CHENNAI AND MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, U.S.A.

This Conference as a whole was highly educative and interactive in a way that bridged the cultural gap between the USA and India. This was brought about by the well planned program and motivational leadership from Dr.M.S. Jacob, Director, Indian Centre for Research and Development of Community Education (ICRDCE), Dr. Xavier Alphonse,SJ, (the Father of the Community College movement in India) Dr. DeRionne Pollard, President, Montgomery College along with the excellent moderation by Mr.Anto Vincent former VP Ford, India.



**THE US EXPERIENCE-** We can learn a lot from the Community Colleges in the USA.

\*Community Colleges also known as Junior Colleges have been in existence for over 100 years in the US. Montgomery Community College was started in 1946! In 2013, 7.7 Million people attended US Community Colleges !!

\*In the 1920's and 1930's the purpose of Community Colleges was to develop the workforce to implement the decisions of the theoreticians produced by the traditional 4 year University degrees.

\*After the war many veterans joined Community Colleges to gain civilian working skills. They had left their studies and could not get admitted to traditional Universities.

\*Community Colleges are Government funded through a variety of ways. They still maintain and develop strong support from local Industrial Partners in their community. The Industrial Partners may be involved in funding buildings and programs as well. The Industrial Partners play an important role during the Needs Analysis and determining the curriculum. The Industrial Partners are part of the Advisory Boards and view the Community Colleges as a resource that helps to meet their developmental needs.

\*There is excellent vertical mobility for students to move from Community Colleges which are mainly 2 year courses to regular Universities and are given credit for the work completed at the Community College. This is a great advantage to many students because they are able to enter Community Colleges with minimum academic requirements and academic performance.

\*The Community Colleges have an emphasis on remediation. They re teach core skills and such things as ' learning how to learn'.

\*In 2015 President Barak Obama proposed to make Community College education free to many. His Plan is called ' America's College Promise'. Admission to College education is considered a RIGHT not a PRIVILEGE

## THE INDIAN EXPERIENCE

ICRDCE currently has 564 Community Colleges in 28 States of India. In addition there are University Grants Commission (UGC) and Vocational Training Centres. But the total number of students in Indian Community Colleges is only fifty thousands.

\*The US Colleges can learn a lot from the Indian 'Life Skills ' courses.

\*The major goals ,objectives and core values of the US and Indian Community Colleges are very similar such as teaching 'lifelong learning', empowering students, enriching the local community, seeking excellence through continuous improvement, innovation, integrity and stewardship.

\*There is a greater emphasis in India on serving the underprivileged sections of society than in the US. However, in the US also many students are taken from poorer sections of the community, multicultural backgrounds and may have poor spoken English. The US colleges also believe and experience ' that one student gaining employment can break the chain of poverty in the family'.

\*Community College courses in both India and US shift from teacher centered to learner centered courses. The Learning Pyramid demonstrated that average retention rates after 24 hours were as follows: Teach others 90%; Practise by Doing 75%; Discussion Group 50%; Demonstration 30%; Audio visual 20%; Reading 10%; Lecture 5%!!

\*The words of the Principal of Loyola College, Rev Joseph Antonysamy (an alumnus of Madras Christian College) struck a chord that we must share. He said Community Colleges bring LOVE, HOPE, & SKILLS. He went onto say that Community Colleges should be small in size and maintain a good relationship with the local community, parents of the students and the local industrial sector.

\*Finally an interesting comment came from Dr.Sanjay Ray, Vice President , Montgomery Community College. He said, " Dr. Chandran Devanesen was the first to dream about establishing Community Colleges in India in the 1960's and Dr. Xavier Alphonse has made the dream a reality". This was very exciting for the three of us from the **Dr.Chandran Devanesen Rural Communtiy College (CDRCC)**, Karanai village, Tamil Nadu.

**Dr. Dayalan Devanesen** AM, is the Director of Roofs for the Roofless the NGO that runs CDRCC

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