

## **Seminar on “Community Mental Health:**

### **The Role of Social Workers” and M&P and CD Forum Inauguration**

On October 9, 2024, the School of Social Work at St. Joseph’s University held a significant event marking the inauguration of the Medical & Psychiatry (M&P) and Community Development (CD) Forum, combined with a seminar on “Community Mental Health: The Role of Social Workers.” The event took place in Xavier Hall at 1:30 PM and was graced by Dr. E. Aravind Raj, an Additional Professor from the Department of Social Work at NIMHANS, Bengaluru, who served as the chief guest. Ms. Tithi Banerjee, a 2nd-year MSW student, adeptly emceed the program.

The event began with a solemn prayer song performed by the 1st and 2nd-year MSW students, setting a thoughtful tone for the proceedings. Following the song, Aleena Saji, a 2nd-year MSW student, welcomed the gathering, expressing appreciation for the collaborative efforts behind the event. A traditional lamp-lighting ceremony, led by Dr. Aravind Raj and faculty members from the School of Social Work, marked the inauguration of the M&P and CD Forum. Student representatives from both forums joined in lighting the lamp, symbolizing the start of their commitment to community and mental health advocacy.

Following the lighting ceremony, Jenova John, another 2nd-year MSW student, introduced Dr. Aravind Raj, highlighting his contributions to the field of mental health. In a gesture of respect, Dr. Mary Princess Lavanya honored Dr. Aravind Raj with a felicitation. As part of the inauguration, Dr. Aravind Raj then presented badges to the newly appointed office bearers of the M&P and CD Forum. These leaders include:

#### **Medical and Psychiatry (M&P):**

- Jenova John, President
- Hanna Kuriakose, Vice President
- Gowri Nandana, General Secretary

#### **Community Development (CD):**

- Tithi Banerjee, President
- Tania Felix, Vice President
- Anagha Rajesh, General Secretary

Dr. Mary Princess Lavanya led the oath ceremony, formally inducting the newly elected office bearers into their roles. The main seminar session then began, with Dr. Aravind Raj providing an insightful presentation on “Community Mental Health and the Role of Social Workers.” The session was highly interactive, beginning with a unique activity where students acted out different mental health issues to enhance empathy and understanding. Dr. Aravind Raj shared valuable perspectives on the role of social workers in mental health, offering guidance on how social work professionals can impact community well-being. The presentation was enlightening and informative, enhancing the audience's grasp of community mental health.

The event concluded with an announcement of the winners of a poster competition held in observance of World Mental Health Day. Tithi Banerjee and Kurian Shijo, both 2nd-year MSW students, achieved first and second place, respectively. Dr. Aravind Raj awarded certificates to the winners. Finally, Aleena Jose, a 2nd-year MSW student, delivered the vote of thanks, acknowledging everyone's contributions. Dr. Shari Tess Mathew, the faculty coordinator, oversaw the event, ensuring its smooth and successful execution.

This seminar and inauguration marked a memorable day, enriching the knowledge and commitment of future social work professionals dedicated to making a difference in community mental health.

For the Images of Seminar on Community Mental Health, kindly refer to the Photo Gallery: <https://www.sju.edu.in/gallery/114>