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Transforming Lives Through

NEWSLETTER

Diversity and Inclusion

JANUARY - APRIL 2021

Two years into the Pandemic has left persons with disabilities disproportionately affected. The youth, many of whom were laid off, had to come home to their families, none of whom had any source of livelihoods. These youth were doubly disadvantaged: Being disabled and being unemployment. They could not even get food for their families.

Many of our alumni volunteered for outreach and awareness around their homes by stitching and distributing masks or by cooking food and giving it to those with multiple disabilities. Our youth put the need of others over their own, despite their own difficulties. And they have been an inspiration for us.

We also realized we had to continue our work on skilling and connecting youth with disabilities to jobs during these COVID times since the ask from parents and youth with disabilities was "What we need is a Job."

College Connect Launched in Hyderabad



Guest of Honour: Mr Narendra Paruchuri- Chairman- SVP, Mr Jayesh Ranjan IAS- the Principal Secretary of the Industries & Commerce (I&C) and Information Technology (IT), Departments of the Telangana government, Mr. Murali Krishna Reddy.

Youth4Jobs launched its pioneering College Connect program in Hyderabad. Its objective is to create more awareness about the need for inclusive employment of Graduates with disabilities in companies across Telangana. Over the last 2 and half years over 750 educated youth with disabilities have been placed in companies like HSBC, JP Morgan and Accenture to name a few.

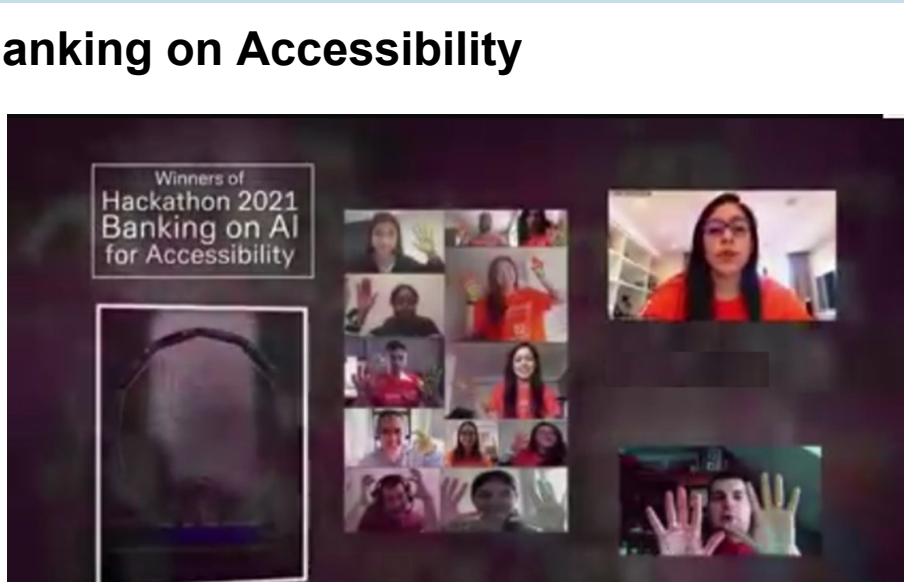
Y4J also works with companies to create internships and apprentices. The launch also included a demonstration by Dr. Akhila Surendran and Tools for Speech & Hearing Impairment and Locomotor disability by Dr. Akhila Surendran and Mr. Johan Dhinakaran - Neo Motion.

The virtual event was inaugurated by Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary of the Industries & Commerce (I&C) and Information Technology (IT) Departments of the Telangana government. Jayesh Ranjan congratulated the first-of-its-kind initiative taken up by the Youth4Jobs College connect team for launching the program in Hyderabad. He said that disabled, especially in the rural areas, are in dismal conditions with low education and employment levels. Government has progressive legislation and reservations in place. He advised Y4J to work along with the government organizations like TASK, Telangana Innovation Hub and assured his support to participate in industry and educational institutions meetings.

Narendra Paruchuri as Chairman, Social Venture Partners, Hyderabad, said they would work as funder-partners bringing their company networks to create an inclusive Telangana. Murali Krishna Reddy appreciated the efforts taken by Youth4Jobs college connect team. He emphasized it is the responsibility of each individual to support the differently able to improve their lives.

The College Connecting program plans to assess, train and place 100 educated youth with disabilities in quality jobs in the IT and financial sector in Telangana, said Meera Shenoy, Founder, Youth4Jobs. Y4J believes this can happen by building a platform where youth with disabilities, their parents, educators, companies, NGOs and government work together. The event was attended by about 75 participants & was a huge success.

Banking on Accessibility

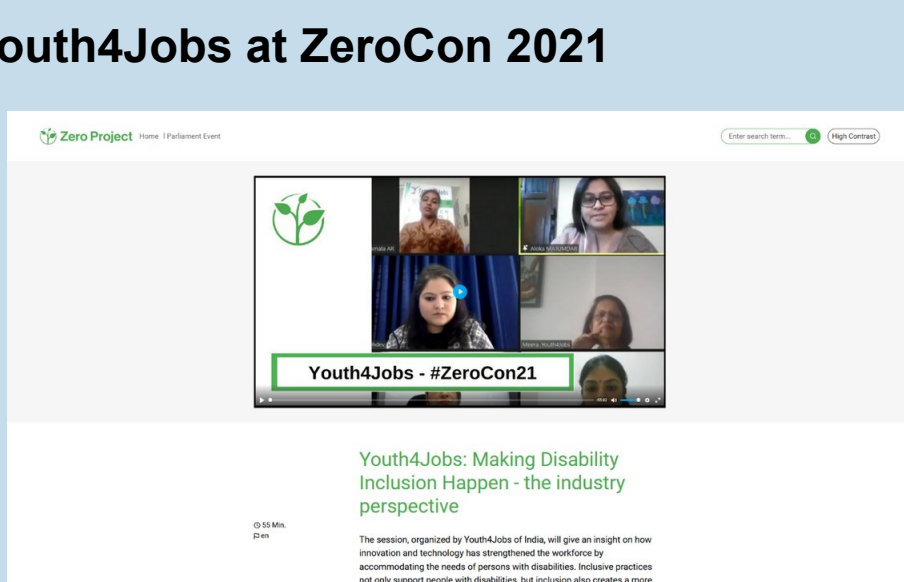


Any type of disability should not be a barrier for people to access the Bank's services and technology so that the services of the bank would be available and accessible to everyone equally and effectively, including to those who have a disability.

The hackathon was organized to yield creative solutions to challenges faced by persons with disability so that the services of the bank would be available and accessible to everyone equally and effectively, including to those who have a disability.

Recognising the potential of a large untapped consumer base, the bank teamed up with Y4J to organise a virtual get-together between bankers and persons with disability who spoke about the various challenges (online and offline), they faced in banks and the possible solutions that would greatly enhance their banking experience.

Youth4Jobs at ZeroCon 2021



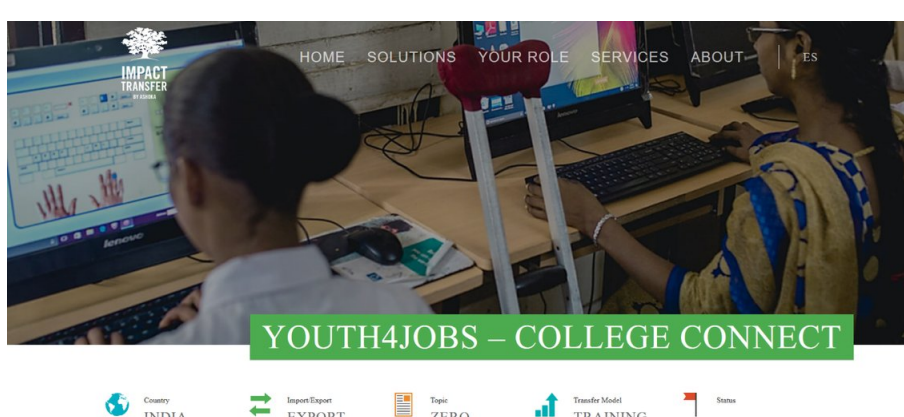
The session, organized by Youth4Jobs of India, will give an insight on how innovation and technology has strengthened the workforce by accommodating the needs of persons with disabilities. Inclusive practices not only support people with disabilities, but inclusion also creates a more accepting and supportive workplace for all the employees.

Youth4Jobs Foundation had the honor to be part of Zero Project Conference ZeroCon21. Y4J was invited to host a session on workplace inclusivity titled "Making Disability Inclusion Happen: The Industry Perspective". The virtual Panel Discussion featured prominent speakers from leading companies that were making strides in workplace diversity and inclusivity.

[Hear from our expert panelists](#) on the challenges and possible solutions to increasing workplace participation of persons with disability:

- Ms. Shanta Vallury Gandhi - Head HR, CSR & Internal Branding, RBL Bank
- Ms. Gayathri Ramamurthy - Senior Director, Diversity & Inclusion Lead, Capgemini India
- Ms. Meera Shenoy - Founder CEO, Youth4Jobs Foundation
- Ms. Aloka Majumdar - Head of Corporate Sustainability, HSBC India

The Zero Project Impact Transfer program

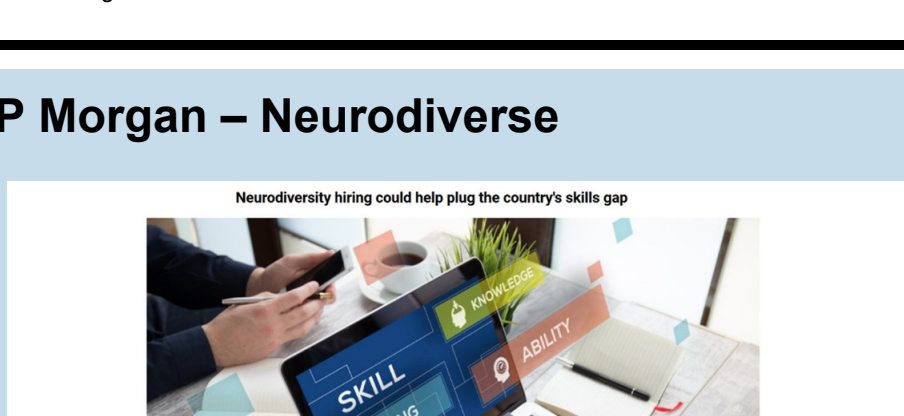


The Zero Project Impact Transfer program is a partnership between the Essl Foundation, Fundación Descúbreme and Ashoka. It supports organisations to replicate and transfer their social impact and innovation in other countries and contexts and thereby ensure a world without barriers. The goal of the program is to help proven innovations to spread so that we do not have to reinvent the wheel.

Participating projects undergo a six-month program with expert strategic mentoring, training and assignments in topics to support scaling, such as impact and business modelling and benefit from connections to partner organisations across the Zero Project, Fundación Descúbreme and Ashoka communities.

Y4J's College Connect Program was one of the few programs selected to participate out of over 100+ organisations from 20+ countries.

JP Morgan – Neurodiverse

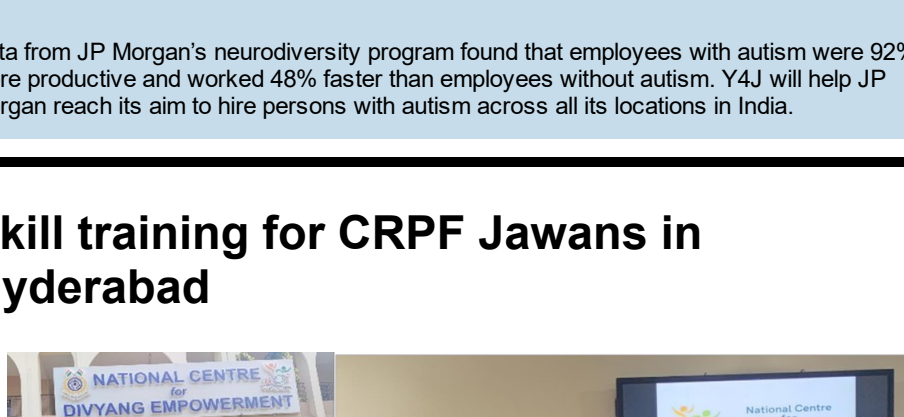


JPMorgan Chase launched its "Autism at Work" in July 2015 as a four-person pilot, which has since then scaled up to 80+ people in multiple roles across JPMorgan Chase businesses in six countries (U.S., India, England, Scotland, Brazil and the Philippines). JP Morgan in India partnered with Y4J to scale up their **Autism At Work** inclusive hiring program. Roles vary from technology functions, such as software engineering, application development, quality assurance, tech operations to business analysis and banking.

Echoing Y4J's message that inclusive hiring is good for business, JP Morgan has experienced this first-hand. Neurodiverse people tend to have an affinity for technical or analytical types of work and in the right environment, demonstrate far higher levels of productivity than neurotypical employees.

Data from JP Morgan's neurodiversity program found that employees with autism were 92% more productive and worked 48% faster than employees without autism. Y4J will help JP Morgan reach its aim to hire persons with autism across all its locations in India.


Skill training for CRPF Jawans in Hyderabad



Our Team was invited to visit Visited CRPF National Centre for Divyang Empowerment (NCDE) Campus where our Alumni Srikant Alimela addressed an audience of two dozen Military Veterans who became disabled in the line of duty. These soldiers are the first batch to pass out of training from NCDE. Srikant shared his story with the soldiers and the team of NCDE, who noted what the human spirit is capable of when they are motivated and determined.

They gave us a tour of their campus, and expressed interest in partnering with Y4J to enhance their trainings, conduct disability sensitization workshops and to visit Y4J to learn more about our work. The NCDE campus is the 1st of its kind in India, inaugurated by Union Minister of State for Home, Sh. G. Kishan Reddy and Dr. A. P. Maheshwari (D.G. CRPF). NCDE aims to motivate and train soldiers in Life Skills, Computers and Para Sports.

Women's Day



International Women's Day
#CHOOSE TO CHALLENGE #IWD2021

Youth4Jobs

On International Women's Day 2021
Sri City, to:

- Celebrate Women's Achievements
- Raise Awareness About Women's Equality
- Lobby for Accelerated Gender Parity

On International Women's day, 8th March 2021, we invited an MNC (Colgate name to not be shared in public as per their request to Harsh) from Sricity SEZ to have a discussion with women with disabilities trained by Youth 4 Jobs Foundation and are currently employed with different companies. These women spoke about the challenges they faced as women having disabilities while pursuing their journey towards a dignified employment opportunity. Women with locomotor disabilities, visual impairment, speech and hearing impairment participated in the session and shared their experiences of working with firms like Radisson, Barrier Break, Essentia, etc.

Afreen Begum one of the trainees at Y4J said, women with disability are asked to stay home and not study which is wrong. You should not focus on what people say but on your ability. Some families do not allow women with disability to study and join college. I was asked to stay home as there were stairs in the college. But I didn't stop. I just stayed positive. I listened to them but I continued doing what I wanted to do. Thank you Y4J for supporting women with disabilities.

Chamundeshwari who is working at a restaurant at Bangalore said she is thankful for this opportunity (rest in telugu-video attached)

Corporate on the other hand spoke about what all they have done for inclusion of women at their company.

Disability Sensitization Workshops



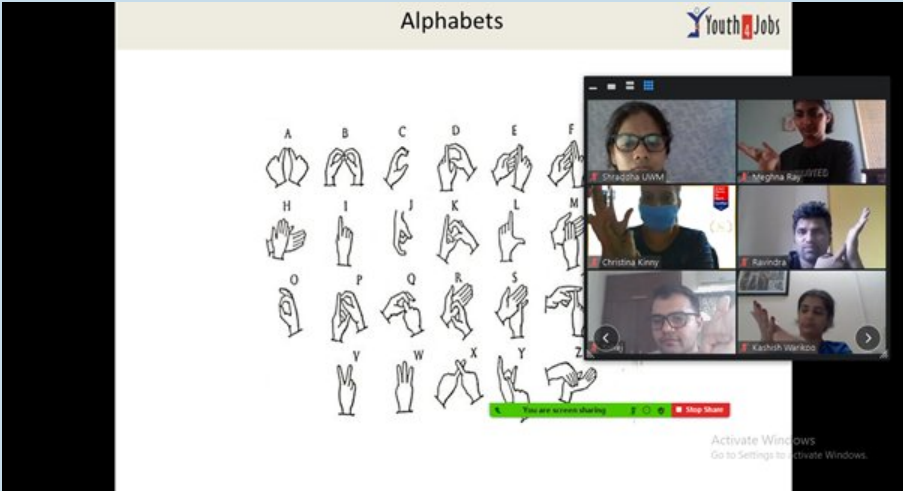
Y4J organised a series of fun-filled disability sensitisation workshops for Avery Dennison, United Way Mumbai, JLL and Kotak Bank. The sessions were aimed to spread Disability Awareness and Inclusion of Persons with Disability at the workplace. Besides sensitising the participants on disability etiquettes there was an insightful discussion among the participants on barriers for PwDs in entering the workforce and what simple solutions can be adopted to remove those barriers.

Around 150 participants were sensitised through these workshops. The workshops also included learning basic Indian Sign Language to enable them to communicate with their Deaf colleagues directly.

The overwhelmingly positive response to the workshops prompted United Way Mumbai to organise a Disability Sensitization Workshop specifically for 22 of United Way Mumbai's NGO Partners, working across different sectors.

4 Follow-up workshops were also organised for JLL which have garnered great praise from all the participants, especially in learning Indian Sign Language with many participants willing to learn Indian Sign Language.

Virtual volunteering



Volunteers from United Way of Mumbai took part in a Virtual Volunteering Session on Financial Literacy. The session was attended by 50 candidates and aimed to empower the candidates with the right knowledge on Financial Independence, Spending vs Savings etc. In return the candidates taught the volunteers basic Sign Language signs and sentences which they practiced together.

Job Hunting in Covid Times



In face of the pandemic many recruiters have frozen hiring for over a year. Undeterred we decided to undertake the challenge of scanning the local markets across the country (including tier 2 and tier 3 cities) where there was a large presence of our trained candidates.

Local Market Scanning involves reaching out to and tapping into local opportunities within Micro and Small Businesses (MSMEs), that are located close to the homes of the youth with disabilities, that have been trained by us. We focused on MSMEs because even though many large businesses had stopped hiring, a number of small businesses, for e.g., small manufacturers, were still hiring.

An exhaustive Market Scanning exercise was conducted across India in multiple phases over 5 months. Over 1800 companies in 40 towns across India were contacted. The teams found that a number of employers were supportive of our cause, acknowledging that persons with disabilities had suffered the most during the pandemic period, as a normally unwelcome job market had become even less inclusive for them during this crisis.

Yet despite several rejections, our team was able to generate over **400** job opportunities for youth with disability.

PLACEMENTS IN COVID TIMES

Srinivas Goud Placed in HSBC



Srinivas has Locomotor Impairment since birth and uses crutches to walk. It never made Srinivas feel disheartened. All that Srinivas looked forward was to build a financially stable livelihood for himself and his family. He has two elder brothers, and one younger sister all are working. He was very ambitious about his career and personal life too. His Parents worked as daily wage laborers at a farm but are no longer able to work due to their advanced age.

Srinivas faced many challenges during his education. It took a lot of personal efforts, hard work and help from his brothers and sister for completing his B. Tech.

Srinivas was placed a CTDA Analyst with an annual CTC of nearly INR 1.9 lakh. Within 8 months of joining he was promoted as a "Configurator" with an annual CTC of INR 2.1 lakh. He is currently in line for another promotion as Assistant Manager with an annual CTC of Rs. 4 lakh.

Srinivas said "I am indeed a beneficiary with this program since my life has been twined entirely now compared prior to Y4J-WISE and after Y4J-WISE. I submit my heartfelt gratitude to Youth4Jobs".

Benita Beck placed in Ujjivan Bank

A 24-year-old, Benita is very polite and determined. She comes from Bhitha village which is 20 Km far from Ranch, Jharkhand. Benita was affected by polio during her childhood days, that left her leg disabled.



She never let her disability get in her way of pursuing education. Her father works on a farm while her mother works as a domestic help which supports the family of 5.

Benita obtained her diploma and began job hunting. The recruiters never bothered to look at her ability beyond her physical disability. The constant rejection and being jobless made her very demotivated. Benita learnt about Youth4jobs placement-linked training program. Having no other alternative Benita enrolled in the training. During training it was observed that she was very keen to learn new things. On completion of her 2 month training she was shortlisted for interview with Ujjivan Small Finance Bank as a Cashier. She successfully secured her placement with an annual CTC of Rs.3 lakhs at Jamshedpur.

Thus Benita is now the primary earning member of her family and taking care of the entire family. Benita is able to support not just her parents and siblings but also a whole family of own. Her job has not only made her employed but also raised her socio-economic status of her family within the community.

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Youth4Jobs Foundation

