

MADURAI

Active placement cells give fresh impetus to arts and science colleges

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Corporate houses from as far as Mumbai are now visiting arts and science colleges in the city and selecting a good number of successful graduates as their employees. The pay packets are also encouraging, according to the to-be-employees and placement officers.

Last year alone, close to 1,200 students from three arts colleges got offer letters from companies involved in banking, insurance, service, consumables, education, hospitals, aviation, tourism and IT sectors with an annual pay ranging from ₹1.20 lakh to ₹4.53 lakh. According to the colleges, 80% of the selected students expressed willingness, accepted the offers and joined six months ago.

Of late, arts and science colleges in the city have established placement cells on their campuses and these cells have been proactive.

Some of the early entrants like Thiagarajar College, The American College, Fatima College and Lady Doak College have been giving training to their students in the third year of the academic programmes, which gives them a platform to face interviews with confidence.

Thiagarajar College Principal D. Pandiaraja said that they established the placement cell in 2004. With the support of the management, they had a full-time Placement Officer, who

was primarily responsible for identifying trainers, resource persons and experts to teach the ABCs to the students. It helped the students face interviews with confidence. "The very fact that recruiters visit our campus regularly shows that arts and science colleges are not just in demand during the time of admissions, but are also giving right placements to the students," he noted.

Navapragadish, an alumnus of Thiagarajar College, said, "I got the great opportunity to be placed in Godrej in 2017. From day one, my college emphasised on career readiness and character development. Our placement training kick-started in the beginning of fifth semester. It included group discussion, core skills, aptitude, soft skill training, etc., This, along with my individual efforts paved my road to success. At the Godrej interview, I was tested on different skills – logical thinking, technical ability and communication skills. My oral communication played a key role in becoming a Godrej employee."

Interestingly, The American College has two faculty members in the Placement Cell designated to offer training to the students from UG and PG courses. "Our MBA and MCA students are most sought after by corporate houses and we have achieved 90% placement," said Principal Christober Davamani.

Lady Doak College (LDC) Principal Christiana Singh said that skill training was being given to students since 1994.

With more corporate houses and other private and public sector players looking for trained personnel, the placement cell prepared students in such a way that they attended interviews with ease, she said.

LDC Placement Officer Vidhya Lakshmi said that the students were taught not just in the areas of employers' expectations, but also about interview etiquette and communication skills. "This gives a good impression about the individuals and the college they represent," she noted.

A few HR professionals who visited campuses here said that placement cells in arts and science colleges were active. Many of the aspirants were bright here and a good number of students matched the ability of students passing out from engineering college, they added.

In the GST regime, commerce graduates were most sought after. Similarly, students in IT courses, Chemistry and Mathematics too were preferred. Many educational institutions in and around Madurai also looked for Sociology graduates to teach slow-learners and offer counselling to students in their schools.

Thiagarajar College Placement Officer Rajesh said that the number of applications sold out at the time of admissions had almost doubled from 9,000 to 16,000 in the recent past and one factor could be that more students were getting employment through the Placement Cell.

Fatima College Principal G. Celine Sahaya Mary said that every year 1,200 students pass out from their institution and a little over 50% of them got employment through campus interviews. Last year, 628 got offer letters.

“Our nutrition course programme is in demand and students are picked up by corporate hospitals. Likewise, 30% to 40% of the selected students were from English department as English teachers were in demand in educational institutions,” she said.

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