

**San Diego State University (SDSU) study abroad program on “Hands-on Exploration of Indian Culture, Health, Sustainability and Environment” from 4th January 2020 to 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at Delhi/Agra and Xavier University, Bhubaneswar.**

San Diego State University (SDSU) and Xavier University, Bhubaneswar have entered into a co-operative agreement (CA) in 2016 and agreed to cooperate in academic exchanges, program development and research. As part of this CA, the SDSU study abroad program was jointly offered by Xavier School of Sustainability, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar. Study abroad programme was started in the year 2016 wherein two undergraduate students, Paul Luat and Amanda Pham visited Xavier University, Bhubaneswar. I am happy to share that this year Dr. Zohir Chowdhury an Associate Professor in Environmental Health at San Diego State University and 17 undergraduate students, 12 females and 5 male student pursuing graduation from diverse backgrounds such as Public Health, Sustainability, Communications, Statistics, Eng Computer, Psychology, Health Science, Drama, Food & Nutrition, And Biology participated in the Study abroad program **“Hands-on Exploration of Indian Culture, Health, Sustainability and Environment”**

The course was divided into two components: a short orientation and laboratory component at SDSU followed by two weeks of international travel in India. Academic and cultural sessions were conducted in this two-week program at Delhi/Agra and Xavier University, Bhubaneswar.

IRC, Xavier University students took out SDSU students for a friendly ice breaking session and were introduced to traditional Indian cultures and festival. Students learnt to decorate kites and celebrate Makar Sankranti. The SDSU students responded sportingly by teaching our students a popular dance Cha -cha-Cha. These activities were carried out by the team to help broaden horizons and lift the veil of stereotypes to create and support a friendly environment boosting cross cultural collaborations. Students also played cricket match with School of Sustainability students to get flavor of Indian sports. The SDSU students were introduced to the traditional art of 'Palm Painting'. A session on Sustainable Behavior was conducted by Vice Chancellor of Xavier University, Bhubaneswar Dr. Fr. Antony R Uvari, S.J with SDSU students and he strongly encouraged students to adopt a tree or a plant at XUB. The Study Abroad Programme is jointly lead by Prof. Elizabeth Abba, Associate Professor, School of Sustainability, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar and Prof. Zohir Chowdhury, SDSU, California, USA. With the support and participation of the Dean of School of Sustainability, Prof. Sutapa Pati and all School of Sustainability faculty and students, this annual programme is becoming a way to connect the two cultures and institutions together. The two-week study abroad program has allowed SDSU students to experience India's rich culture, understand environmental problems and its various efforts in Sustainability.

SDSU students presented their learnings in India and shared about American Culture in a Gallery along with MBA Sustainability Management on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020. The theme for the gallery this year was “Desh Videsh” and it kept up to its spirit of showing the best of both the worlds. The event showcased experience of SDSU students living in India for 15 days.

The programme marked its end with a cultural night thrown by the performances of the students of Xavier University, Bhubaneswar and SDSU on the 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2020. The students from both universities were excited and made this night a grand one. This year and ahead, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar and SDSU together look forward for more and more such “Living Memories!”

