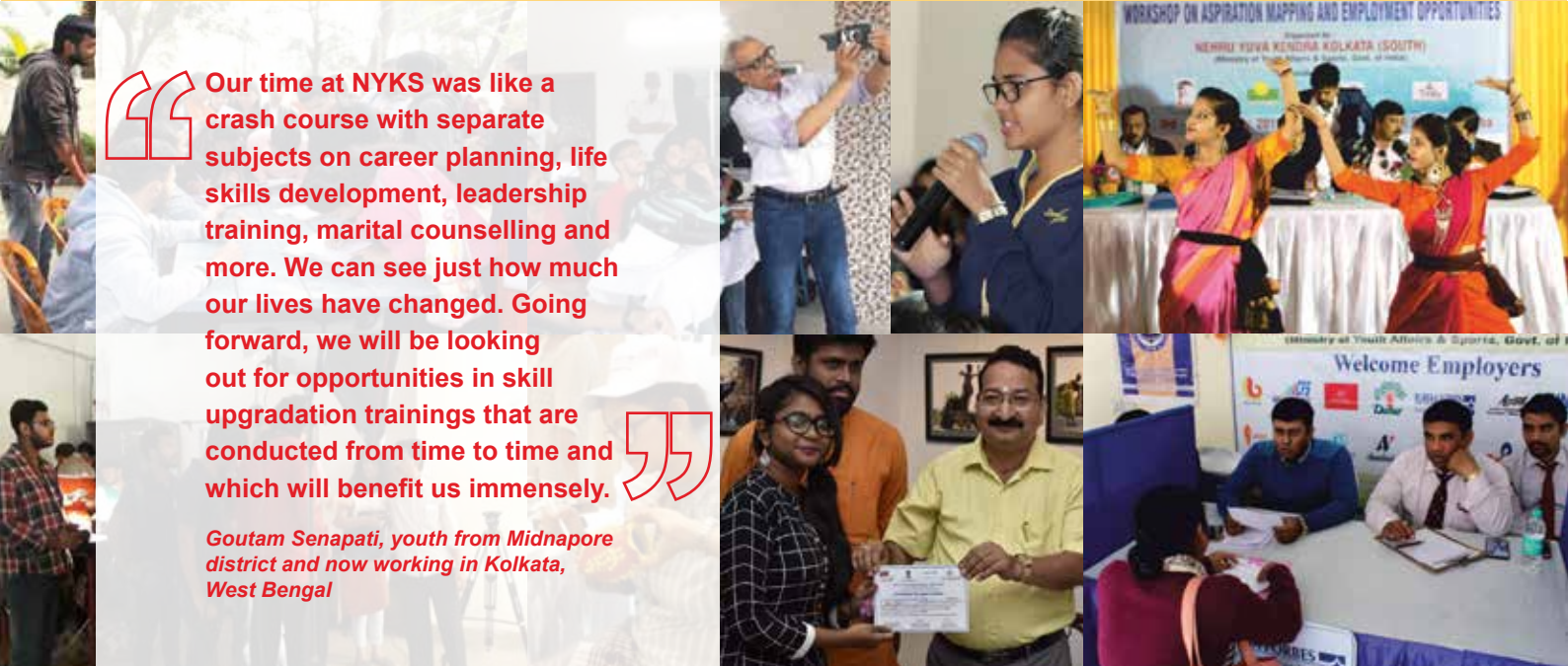


“ Our time at NYKS was like a crash course with separate subjects on career planning, life skills development, leadership training, marital counselling and more. We can see just how much our lives have changed. Going forward, we will be looking out for opportunities in skill upgradation trainings that are conducted from time to time and which will benefit us immensely. ”

*Goutam Senapati, youth from Midnapore district and now working in Kolkata, West Bengal*



23-year-old Goutam Senapati comes from a small village in Midnapore district in West Bengal. He belongs to a family that lives on daily wages. Growing up, he experienced the erratic incomes in his household, exploitation by job contractors, mounting debts, and acute shortage of basic needs and food. The only ray of hope for these families is for youth to acquire education and secure jobs to provide for their families.

When Goutam along with two of his friends, Papia Paloi and Sanjita Roy were promised a job with perks, they immediately set out for the new phase of life. Little did they know that they were signing up for bonded labour in network marketing jobs. Apart from a gruelling schedule, there were restrictions on going out, meeting people or contacting their own family members. Their phones were monitored and they were given sub-standard food and accommodation. After four months of suffering without pay, all three of them decided to escape to Kolkata. On reaching, they contacted their friends who guided them to the Nehru Youth Centre in Howrah where they met Manoj Roy, Programme Coordinator of Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS).

It was such a relief for the trio to see a friendly, open and vibrant set up and learn about how the NYKS Centre would help them get their life back on track. A daily plan was shared and the agenda for the next four weeks rolled out. This included formal classroom instructions with soft

skills training, instructions via audio-visuals, role play and other interactive mediums. Some of the sessions took up important social issues which opened their eyes to many of their own regressive mindsets and attitudes such as domestic abuse.

Goutam and his friends were clear victims of exploitation. They are now enabled by Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and partner with UNICEF to actively support many similarly lost and disillusioned young people. They are on the right track after receiving skill development training and can see economically productive futures for themselves. At the time of the interview, they were undergoing the training and were actively seeking jobs.



Left to right: Ms. Papia Paloi, Mr. Gautam Senapati & Ms. Sanjita Roy