

ALUMNI NEWS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO

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UNIVERSITY PARTNER RECOGNITION PROGRAMME



Seylan Bank PLC



Lanka Orix Leasing PLC



3CS



Nations Trust Bank PLC

The Executive Committee of the Alumni Association recognized and appreciated the Partners of the "University Partnership Programme". A plaque was presented to each Partner Organization at the 35th Annual General Meeting of the Association. The current partners under the "University

Partnership Programme" are Seylan Bank PLC, LOLC Group, Nations Trust Bank PLC, Deutsche Bank Sri Lanka and 3CS (Pvt) Limited. These private sector corporates have contributed in financial and non-financial ways to help the Association achieve its student development and welfare goals.

35TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION



Dr. Naazima Kamardeen (Asst. Secretary), Mr. J.M.S. Bandara (Asst. Treasurer), Ms. Ruwandhi Thantrige (Secretary), Senior Professor Lakshman Dissanayake (Vice Chancellor), Mr. Rajeev Amarasuriya (President), Hon Eran Wickramaratne (State Minister of Finance), Ms. Suranjani Wickremaratna (Vice President), Mr. Jithendra Gunathilake (Treasurer) and Mr. Sumanaratna Marasinghe (Head of Administration)

The 35th Annual General Meeting of the Alumni Association of the University of Colombo was held recently at College House, University of Colombo.

The Chief Guest was Hon. Eran Wickramaratne, State Minister of Finance. The AGM was also attended by the Vice Chancellor, Senior Prof Lakshman Dissanayake, Past Presidents of the Association, Academic Staff and Members.

Mr. Rajeev Amarasuriya President of the Association in his address provided an update of the principal initiatives undertaken by the Association in the past year. The President

had set out a comprehensive three-year plan in the previous year, with three identified focus areas of Student Welfare Activities, Member Development and the Young Alumni. He noted that one year into this three-year plan, there had been significant progress in the Student Welfare aspect with Mentoring Programmes, Leadership and Personality Development Programmes and English language programmes conducted with the support of the Alumni Partners. He thanked the Alumni Partners for coming on board to support these initiatives. Mr. Amarasuriya also updated the Association on the progress of the largest project undertaken which is to

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35th Annual General Meeting...

construct a fully-fledged professional swimming pool for the University. The design for this Swimming Pool Complex is by KWA Architects and its principal partner Architect Mr. Thilan Koththigoda, and he thanked them for coming on board on a honorary basis.

He also noted that in view of the multiple new initiatives undertaken in the year, the third limb of the plan which was to develop Young Alumni would be focused upon in the latter part of next year and in the year after.

Speaking at the AGM, the Vice-Chancellor Senior Professor Lakshman Dissanayake briefed the Association of the fact that the University of Colombo had consistently been ranked as the top University in Sri Lanka, and was gradually climbing higher in reputed international indices such as the Times Higher Education Ranking Index. He noted that this was due to the collective effort of students, academic staff, administrative staff and the Alumni. He noted that the infrastructure to promote learning and innovation was constantly being upgraded. Not only have new faculties and buildings come into being, but even the existing buildings and facilities have been upgraded. The

of US jobs are at risk from technological advances. Therefore, it is expected that Artificial Intelligence and machines will take over a number of routine human jobs in the future. The question therefore is whether Universities in Sri Lanka have considered what the future would be in 20 to 30 years. When a student embarks on a degree at a cost, will that degree provide him with a job or will that degree help him to differentiate himself from the rest, to enable him to secure good employment.

The Hon. Minister highlighted some of the challenges that are faced by the Universities today, in their attempt to teach the Generation Z who are continuously engaged in tweeting and blogging, but with little ability to listen comprehensively, absorb, summarize and evaluate. The ability to think and analyse are skills that will differentiate a student amidst technology. He further said that whilst on the one hand, there is tremendous emphasis for E learning, it is necessary to encourage academic face to face dialogue.

The University system has evolved over the years. Prior to the 1950's University education was the domain of the upper classes globally. Thereafter, women and minority ethnic groups entered universities and then universities provided global access. Whilst this is progress in terms of development and access, we do see a new threat currently where those who have a university degree block the pathway of others to receive university



renovation and beautification process of College House and the faculties is just one step in this direction.

Commenting on the activities of the Alumni Association, the Vice Chancellor remarked that he was very pleased to see the Association engaging in many activities aimed at enhancing the quality of the undergraduate experience. He was particularly gratified to note that the Association had come forward and provided leadership for the swimming pool project. As the only state university in Colombo, it is important for the University to have its own pool, in order to hone the skills of its swimmers, many of whom are extremely talented.

Hon. Eran Wickramaratne in his Keynote Address congratulated the Alumni Association and the University of Colombo for the efforts made towards the development of the undergraduates and the University. Whilst the University should be proud of what has been accomplished, he posed the question whether the Sri Lankan Universities were geared for the future for another 20 years. He said that the future could be understood through science in spite of the constant volatility.

He shared his own experience working at the Citi Bank and said that the bank at the time was ahead of competition with the use of technology to their advantage. A few decades ago the life changing invasion of the internet was not anticipated by many. Similarly, one may not be able to foresee the changes that will take place during the next few decades. As per research, 50%

education. Education is a universal right and therefore should be accessible to all.

Hon. Wickramaratne concluded that universities must plan on how they could lead the way to the future by creating multi-disciplined curricula that break the silos between departments and between universities and industries, creating a balance between online and traditional learning models. He re-emphasized the need to invest in technology and provide a life experience to the undergraduates by creating a campus based university culture.

The Executive Committee for the year 2017/2018 comprises :- Mr. Rajeev Amarasuriya (President), Senior Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake (Ex Officio Vice President), Ms. Suranjani Wickremaratna (Vice President), Mr. Lakshman Keerthisinghe (Immediate Past President), Ms. Ruwandhi Thantrige (Secretary), Dr. Naazima Kamardeen (Asst. Secretary), Mr. Jithendra Gunathilake (Treasurer), Mr. J.M.S. Bandara (Asst. Treasurer), Ms. Mahesha Amarasuriya (Editor), Mr. Ajith Jayawardena (Asst. Editor) and the Committee members being Mr. M.K. Gnanasekera, Mr. Milton Arandara, Mr. K.D.R. Siriwardena, Mr. Isuru Thilakawardena, Mr. G. Wijemanne, Mr. Nayantha Wijesundera, Ms. Dayani Panagoda, Mr. Milad Mubarak, Mr. Senarath Attanayake and Mr. P.P.T. Mohideen.

The Past Presidents as Advisors would continue to be Mr. Tissa Devendra, Mr. J. Charitha Ratwatte, Mr. Thilak Karunaratne, Mrs. Ramee Amarasuriya and Mr. P.W. Senaratne.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO NEEDY STUDENTS A STUDENT WELFARE INITIATIVE OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CENWOR



The Alumni Association in partnership with the Centre for Women's Research (CENWOR) awarded 28 Scholarships of Rs. 20,000/= each to 28 students at a ceremony held at the Senate Hall recently.

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake attended the function as the Chief Guest, and the Alumni Association was represented by President Rajeev Amarasuriya, Secretary Ruwandhi Thanthrige and several other office bearers. Mrs. Girty Gamage and Dr. (Mrs.) Sujatha Wijethilaka represented CENWOR.

Speaking at the function, the Vice Chancellor focused on the responsibility of undergraduates towards Society and also encouraged more participation in the co-curricular and extra-

curricular activities available at the University. He thanked the Association for successfully completing yet another student welfare programme.

Senior Alumni Committee Member Mr. J.M.S. Bandara, Alumni Head of Administration Mr. Sumanaratne Marasinghe and Board Member of CENWOR and the Coordinator of Buddhist Global Relief Project (BGR) Mrs. Girty Gamage also addressed the gathering.

The recipients of these scholarships were selected through an objective process in consultation with the Student Counsellor's Officer, the Student Welfare Division and the Alumni Administrative Officer.

COMMUNICATION AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS PROGRAMME CONDUCTED BY "CORPORATE SKILLS"

Ms. Nirmali Hettiarachchi, along with Ms. Shyam Hettiarachchi, partners of "Corporate Skills" conducted a course on communication and employability skills at the University of Colombo. The undergraduates targeted for this programme was a group of final year students of the Faculty of Law. After a rigorous pre-evaluation, the selected students underwent 30 hours of intense training in key identified skills that would improve their confidence and help them to communicate and market themselves effectively in the corporate world. Both the

trainers and the students were very happy with the outcome, which should see University of Colombo graduates perform with outstanding success in their chosen careers. Based on the successful outcome of this course, it is hoped to conduct similar courses for students of the other faculties as well.

The Alumni Association thanks Mrs. Nirmali Hettiarachchi for kindly conducting this entire programme on a completely voluntary basis, and for providing study materials at her cost.



Proposed Swimming Pool Complex for the University of Colombo



Meeting with some of the Student Representatives



The Alumni Association acknowledges with gratitude the following professionals for joining the Swimming Pool project on an honorary basis.



KWA ARCHITECTS



NB CONSULTANTS



ARQS CONSULTANTS



MAGIC MORPHEUS
DESIGN STUDIO



HARITHA CONSULTANTS

Notice - Alumni Office

The Alumni office is open from 9 AM to 3.30 PM on weekdays. For assistance please contact Mr. Sumanaratne Marasinghe Head of Administration on 0112506236 / 0773-822473 or email manager.alumnicolombo@gmail.com

Senior Professor Gihan Wickramanayake Passes Away



It is with great sadness that we inform of the sudden passing away of Professor Gihan Wickramanayake, former Director of the University of Colombo School of Computing. He was a long-standing member of the Executive Committee of the Alumni Association and was actively involved in most of its initiatives, and the Association will greatly miss him. May his soul rest in peace!

Demise of Exco Member Senarath Attanayake



It is with the deepest regret that we inform of the sudden passing away of Alumni Association Executive Committee Member, Uva Provincial Councillor and Attorney-at-Law Mr. Senarath Attanayake in August 2017. May he attain the Supreme Bliss of Nirvana!

Communication Skills and Leadership Programme in partnership with Deutsch Bank

A project by the Alumni Association of the University of Colombo in collaboration with Deutsche Bank Sri Lanka....

A 6-month Communication Skills and Leadership Programme for third and final year undergraduates at the Sujata Jayawardena Hostel Complex was inaugurated recently.

This is a student welfare initiative of the Alumni Association of the University of Colombo, in collaboration with Deutsche Bank, Sri Lanka, under the University Partnership Scheme.

The training will be conducted by the Sphere Academy and Consultants.

The Vice Chancellor, Senior Prof. Lakshman Dissanayaka, Alumni President Mr. Rajeev Amarasuriya, Chief Country Officer of Deutsche Bank Mr. Rohan Rodrigo, Warden of the Sujata Jayawardena Hostel Dr. Kumudika Boyagoda and Sphere Academy Managing Director Mr. Pradeep Yahampath spoke at the Inauguration. The vote of thanks was by Alumni Vice President and Student Welfare Committee Chair Ms. Suranjani Wickramaratne.

While addressing the function Vice Chancellor Prof. Lakshman Dissanayaka stated that students should focus their level best attention to enhance their English knowledge as it is an essential requirement towards building their future careers. He thanked the Alumni Association for initiating this programme in collaboration with Deutsche Bank.

Alumni President Mr. Rajeev Amarasuriya spoke on this valuable opportunity which was made available and the importance of enhancement of English Communication Skills.

Speaking at the Inauguration Dr. Kumudika Boyagoda thanked the Alumni Association for deciding to launch this series of programmes from the Sujata Jayawardena Hostel, and ensured the fullest cooperation of the management and the students towards making this programme a success.

Miss Ruwanthi Fernando, Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Asanka Ranhotty, Head of Trade Finance & Cash Management, Mr. Raily Tissera, Head of Human Resources of Deutsche Bank Sri Lanka and Executive Committee Members of the Alumni Association were also present at the Inauguration.



Alumni Exco Meetings in progress



Personal Effectiveness Workshops with Nations Trust Bank

Nations Trust Bank is another corporate to recently enter into a MOU with the Alumni Association of the University of Colombo, joining its University of Colombo Partnership Programme.

Under this partnership, Nations Trust Bank facilitates a series of Personal Effectiveness workshops and mentoring engagements for university undergraduates. The content for these workshops has been developed by internationally renowned Bridge Consultancy and is being conducted by an expert trainer in an interactive style of delivery. Two of the sessions under this programme were already conducted at the Nations Trust Bank head office in Kotahena. The next two sessions are scheduled to be held during the first quarter of 2018.

Selected senior management members from Nations Trust Bank, who are trained in coaching and mentoring, are also available during the workshops for students to network and

select as their mentors. They will engage in mentoring for a period of three months and this period could be further extended as well. Colombo Alumni President Rajeev Amarasuriya said the Alumni Association was particularly happy that through this partnership the selected students would benefit from a top notch programme developed by a world-renowned consultancy group, which was a great opportunity for our undergraduates..

The visioning and introspection exercises are expected to help the young undergraduates to better understand themselves and overcome inhibitions to pursue their aspirations.

The Association extends its appreciation to Ms. Keshini Jayawardena representative of Bridge Consultancy for pioneering this project and for her very valuable input during the programme and to Mr. Adeesha Perera (Head of Sustainability of NTB) for the support extended.



Law Faculty Induction



The Alumni Association of the University of Colombo organized an Induction Programme for the new entrants of the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo. The aim of this programme was to focus on the importance of soft skills and prepare the students to take over future positions in the corporate world. This was conducted by Mr Milad Mubarak of the Alumni Association under the Patronage of Dr. Nazima Kamardeen – Alumni member and Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo. The discussion revolved around the meaning and purpose

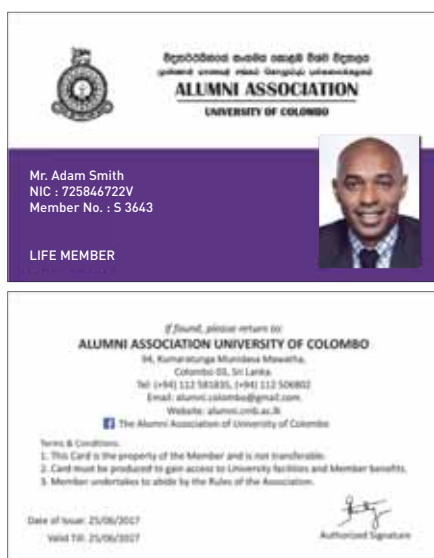
of the Alumni Association and the projects carried out by the Association including the benefits to its students. Mr. Mubarak explained the current business environment and expectations from the employees of the corporate world together with the importance of soft skills and how to enhance and improve them, in order to gain a competitive advantage.


Since the students' feedback was very positive the Association hopes to conduct such programmes in the future as well.

Membership Card

Have you collected your Alumni Identity Card yet? If not please visit the Alumni Office between 9.00 AM to 3.30 PM on weekdays.

The Alumni Identity Card entitles you; access to the University Ground for Walking and reference access to the Library (Electronic Resources)





UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO

Alumni Association University of Colombo

14TH SUJATA JAYAWARDENA MEMORIAL ORATION

"SabkaSathSabka Vikas: Together We Progress"
India-Sri Lanka Relations
In light of India's "Neighborhood -First" Policy



Delivered by
His Excellency Taranjit Singh Sandhu
High Commissioner of the Republic of India

On Tuesday, 3rd April 2018 at 5.30 P.M.
at the BMICH

For Invites Contact:
 Head of Administration - Alumni Association
 Alumni Association Administrative Office
 College House, University of Colombo

Tel : 2506902 / 077-3822473 (Mr. Sumanaratne)
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 Colombo 03,
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University Alumni Partners



Executive Committee 2017/2018



Seated (From left to right) : Dr. Naazima Kamardeen (Asst. Secretary), Mr. J.M.S Bandara, Mr. Tissa Devendra (Past President/Advisor), Mr. Jithendra Gunathilake (Treasurer), Ms. Suranjani Wickremaratna (Vice President), Mr. Rajeev Amarasuriya (President), Senior Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake (Vice Chancellor and Ex Officio Vice President), Ms. Ruwandhi Thanthrige (Secretary), Mr. Thilak Karunaratne (Past President /Advisor), Mrs. Ramanee Amarasuriya (Past President /Advisor), Mr. Sumanaratne Marasinghe (Head of Administration)

Standing (From left to right) : Ms. Mahesha Amarasuriya (Editor), Mr. K.D.R. Siriwardena, Mr. M.K. Gnanasekera, Mr. Milton Arandara, Ms. Dayani Panagoda, Mr. Milad Mubarak (Asst. Treasurer), Mr. G. Wijemanne

Absent : Mr. J. Charitha Ratwatte (Past President /Advisor), Mr. P.W. Senaratne (Past President /Advisor), Mr. Lashman Keerthisinghe (Immediate Past President), Mr. Ajith Jayawardena (Asst. Editor), Mr. Isuru Thilakawardena, Mr. P.P.T. Mohideen.

Thank You... The Editor and the Assistant Editor of the Alumni Association of the University of Colombo together with the members in the Executive Committee wish to extend a very warm thank you to Multifarm Chemicals (Pvt) Ltd and its Chairman and Managing Director and Past President of our Association Mr. Thilak Karunaratne, for sponsoring the Alumni News since its inception, including this issue.


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 The Alumni Association of University of Colombo