

ALUMNI NEWS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO

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13TH SUJATA JAYAWARDENA MEMORIAL ORATION : ONE BELT ONE ROAD



Vice Chancellor Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake, H.E. Yi Xianliang, Ambassador of the Peoples Republic of China, Mr. Rajeev Amarasuriya, President and Prof. Nayani Melagoda, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

The 13th Sujata Jayawardena Memorial Oration was delivered by the Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka HE Yi Xianliang, on "One Belt – One Road" on 15th February 2017.

The inaugural address was delivered by University of Colombo Alumni Association President Rajeev Amarasuriya, which was followed by an address by the Vice Chancellor Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake. Prof. Nayani Melagoda then introduced the orator.

The Chinese Envoy explained the inception of the 'Maritime Silk Road' initiative nearly 2000 years ago which has developed into a stronger social economic relationship in present times. He went on to state that moving into the 21st century, an era

that is dominated by the themes of peace, development and cooperation, but continues to feature a complex international and regional landscape, a 'Maritime Silk Road' has become all the more important and precious as a symbol of peace, cooperation, openness, inclusiveness, mutual learning and resilience.

He said that regional integration is an unavoidable phase towards economic globalization. The flourishing cooperation in Asia has boosted peace and development in the region. However, compared with those in Europe and North America, regional cooperation in Asia remains inadequate, as evidenced in particular by the uneven development and poor connectivity

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ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FELICITATES VETERAN ALUMNI



At a very dignified and touching ceremony held during the 34th Annual General Meeting of the Association, eight distinguished veteran alumni of the University of Sri Lanka (which was predecessor to the University of Colombo) were recognized and felicitated.

They were veteran film actress Kala Keerthi Irangani Serasinghe, who graduated in 1947, writer and former President of the Dutch Burgher Union, Colombo, and Knight of the Order of Oranje-Nassau by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands Deloraine Brohier, who graduated in 1950, former Director/Secretary of Forbes and Walker Ltd and Chartered Accountant B.D.K. Saldin, leading intellectual and winner of the World No-Tobacco Day Award by the World Health Organisation in 2012 and Chairman, Sri Lanka

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13th Sujata Jayawardena Memorial Oration : One Belt One Road ...

among Asia's sub-regions, posing a considerable obstacle to deeper regional cooperation. The 'Maritime Silk Road' initiative, by linking South Asia, Southeast Asia and West Asia, will contribute to greater connectivity and complementarities across the sub-regions, and help the establishment and improvement of Asia's supply chain, industrial chain and value chain, thus bringing Pan-Asian and Eurasian regional cooperation to a new level. The 'Maritime Silk Road' initiative foresees infrastructure development and systemic innovation, which would result in an improved business environment in relevant countries and the region as a whole.

The 'Maritime Silk Road of the 21 Century' has been anchored on economic cooperation, and built on cultural and people-to-people exchanges. It foresees no interference in the internal affairs of the countries involved, nor does it seek to dominate regional affairs or secure spheres of influence in the region.

The event which was preceded by a formal ceremonial procession had a distinguished gathering which was attended by members of the academic community, eminent persons from the Public and Private Sectors and members of the Alumni Association. The Executive Committee is thankful to Past President, Advisor and Executive Committee Member Mr. Thilak Karunaratne (under whose Presidency the Oration was conceived) for providing leadership in its organization this year, as well as Mrs. Ramanee Amarasuriya, Past President, Advisor and Executive Committee Member.

The Alumni Association undertakes to build a Swimming Pool for the University

The Association has accepted the request and invitation of the Vice Chancellor to construct a swimming pool for the University of Colombo.

A swimming pool has been a long-felt need for the University of Colombo, which is the premier centre of tertiary education in the country.

This will be the largest project of the Association since the construction of the Hostel for Women Undergraduates at Buller's Lane, Colombo 07 under the presidency of the Late Mrs. Sujata Jayawardena.

In view of the enormity of the project, President Mr. Rajeev Amarasuriya was nominated to Chair the Project Committee

together with Past President Mr. Thilak Karunaratne as the Chair of the Finance Committee and Senior Member Mr. J.M.S. Bandara as the Chair of the Building Committee. The entire Executive Committee comprise the members of the project committee. All Members willing to support this initiative are requested to contact the Ex Co.

The Committee acknowledges with gratitude Mr. Thilan Koththigoda, lead Project Architect and Principal Partner, KWA Architects for agreeing to support this project on an honorary basis, together with KWA Architects, NB Consultants, Haritha Consultants, ARQS Consultants and Magic Morpheus Design Studios.

Women at the Helm - Evening with Mrs. Ramya Weerakoon



Mrs. Ramya Weerakoon the Chairman / Managing Director of Ramya Holdings Pvt. Ltd addressed over three hundred students at the Sujata Jayawardena Hostel, sharing her challenges during her journey as an entrepreneur.

She hailed from a conventional background and was widowed at a very young age. As a single parent she shouldered the responsibility of bringing up two daughters and worked against all odds to overcome difficulties thrown in her path and established a successful enterprise.

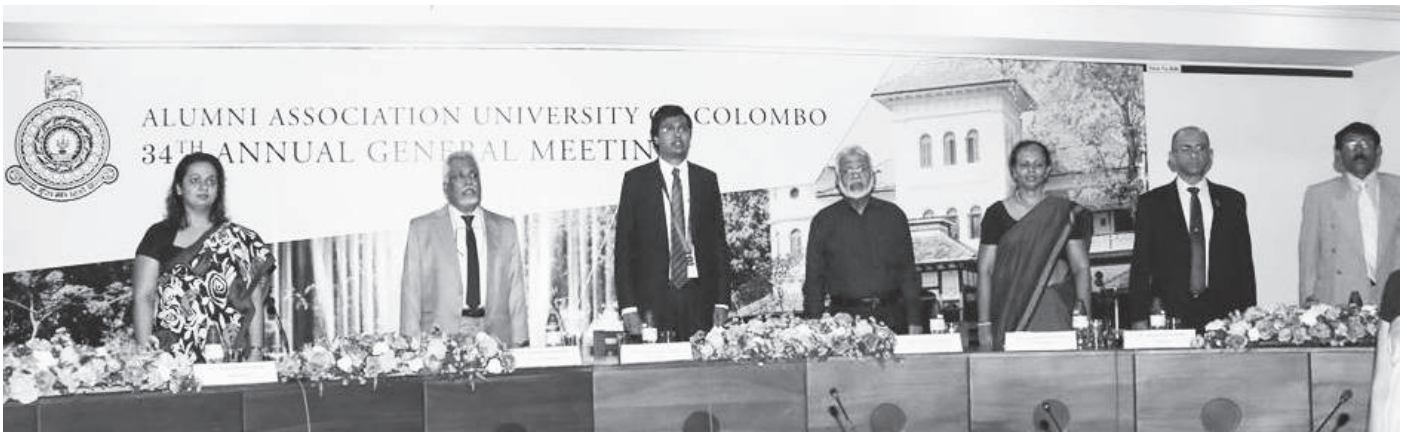
She ventured in to the business world in 1976 by manufacturing batik wall hangings and garments to the export market and later

diversified into exporting of handicrafts. In 1988 she entered the apparel industry by establishing Ramya Apparels.

Ramya Weerakoon is recognized and awarded locally and internationally for her achievements as an entrepreneur. She represents many organizations and chambers as the key personnel.

Mrs. Weerakoon also sponsored dinner for all the students who attended the programme. The Alumni Association is indeed grateful to Mrs. Ramya Weerakoon and our own Alumni Member Mr. J M S Bandara for organizing the event.

Annual General Meeting : President sets out a Three Year Plan for the Association



Ms. Ruwandhi Thanthrige (Secretary), Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake (Vice Chancellor), Mr. Rajeev Amarasuriya (President), Mr. Thilak Karunaratne (Chief Guest), Ms. Suranjani Wickremeratne (Vice President), Jithendra Gunatilake (Treasurer) and Mr. J.M.S. Bandara (Assistant Treasurer)

The 34th Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on 30th June 2016 at the Senate Hall at College House.

Rajeev Amarasuriya President Elect set out his three-year plan for the Association, focusing on the areas of Student Welfare Activities, Membership Development Activities and the involvement of more Young Alumni.

He briefed the membership on the formation of three Standing Committees to overlook these areas, with Student Welfare being co-chaired by Vice President Suranjani Wickramaratne and Assistant Treasurer J.M. Senanayake Bandara, Member Development being co-chaired by Secretary Ruwandhi Thanthrige and Mahesha Amarasuriya and the Young Alumni Committee being Chaired by Nayantha Wijesundera. He also mentioned that there was room for a fourth Standing Committee to look into the area of branding and promotions and an open invitation was made to the membership to join these Committees.

He also highlighted several of the projects and activities lined up in this three-year plan. The Student Welfare Committee will spearhead the Mentoring Programme which was launched by the Treasurer Jithendra Gunathilaka, the establishment of a scholarship scheme, the conduct of an annual medical camp, and leadership programmes focusing on communication skills.

The University Partnership Programme was also identified to be launched during the year as an important fundraising activity and will provide a link between the university and the corporate sector.

He also highlighted the need to cater to the changing needs of the membership, including making the activities attractive for younger members.

Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Chairman Thilak Karunaratne delivering the keynote address proposed three new approaches for university education in Sri Lanka, which would be a paradigm shift in policy, rules and regulations and in effect a complete change in approach for university education. He emphasized the need

to encourage the culture of making endowments for universities which is presently virtually a non-existent practice in Sri Lanka. He said that we have, by our own standards, large corporates, banks, extremely large family-owned businesses and other commercial ventures not forgetting high-net-worth individuals who have the capacity to make these endowments.

Speaking at the event, Vice Chancellor Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake said that the university has been given 'Grade A' ranking by the Institutional Review conducted by the University Grants Commission. Among the key initiatives outlined were the addition of two new faculties to the University of Colombo, namely the Technology Faculty and Nursing Faculty, which the Vice Chancellor informed is expected to be ready for student intakes as early as next year. The Vice Chancellor also commented that the quality of teaching within the university was excellent as is the ability to learn amongst the undergraduates, given that it is the cream of the students who are admitted to the University of Colombo based on the high 'Z' score rankings obtained at the Advance Level examination.

The elected new Office-bearers for 2016/2017 were Rajeev Amarasuriya (President), Lakshman Keerthisinghe (Immediate Past President), Suranjani Wickremeratne (Vice President), Ruwandhi Thanthrige (Secretary), Dr. Naazima Kamardeen (Assistant Secretary), Jithendra Gunatilake (Treasurer), J.M.S. Bandara (Assistant Treasurer), Mahesha Amarasuriya (Editor) and Ajith Jayawardene (Assistant Editor).

The Past President Advisors remain as Tissa Devendra, J. Charitha Ratwatte, Thilak Karunaratne, Ramanee Amarasuriya and P.W. Senaratne.

The rest of the Executive Committee appointed were Prof. Gihan Wickramanayake, M.K. Gnanasekera, Milton Arandara, G. Wijemanne, Channa De Silva, Isuru Thilakawardena, Nayantha Wijesundara, K.D.R Siriwardena, D.H.W Kirinde and Ruhani De Silva.

The AGM was followed by fellowship and dinner in the garden at College House.

Energize to Excel Alumni Association of the University of Colombo Undergraduate Mentor Programme Launched



The Alumni Association of the University of Colombo launched its mentoring programme for the undergraduates of the University of Colombo. This programme consists of "One to One" sessions as well as group sessions that will help the undergraduates to acquire soft skills that are necessary for them to be more employable in the government and private sectors. The programme is designed according to the skills requirement identified by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

This programme was organized with able guidance & coordination by the Senior Student Counsellor, Dr. Mahees. The unique feature of this mentoring programme is that the programme will be conducted by reputed alumni of the University of Colombo at the student hostels. It is envisaged that this novel feature will increase the appeal of the programme for the majority of the undergraduates as it will be conducted in a very relaxed environment free of distractions, thereby achieving the student welfare objectives of the Alumni Association of the University of Colombo.



The programme was launched at the Girls' hostel located at Hewa Lane, Colombo 7, with Mr Pradeep Uluwaduge, Chief Human Resources Officer, LOLC Group attending as the principal resource person. The emphasis of the useful presentation made by Mr Uluwaduge was the skill set required if one is to succeed in the corporate / professional world. Head of Finance Operations, LOLC Group, Mr Jithendra Gunatilake also did an inspirational speech related to the same topic as Mr Uluwaduge. The session received good feedback from the Student Counselor's Office as well as the undergraduates.

The objective of the Alumni Association of the University of Colombo is to conduct as many sessions as possible in all the faculties of the University of Colombo. Alumni members who are interested in joining the panel of mentors can do so by calling Mr. Sumanarate, Head of Administration / Coordinator Alumni Association on 0773-822473

This would be a good opportunity for you to contribute to your alma mater!

Meeting with the Office-Bearers of the Colombo CUFSAA

President Rajeev Amarasuriya on a recent visit to New Jersey, U.S.A. had the opportunity to meet and have a very productive discussion with the Office Bearers of the Colombo University Faculty of Science, Alumni Association of North America (CUFSAA) led by President Elect Mr. Chandana Gunathilake. He was also connected to a telephone conference with CUFSAA President Prof. L.M.V. Tillekeratne, and the CUFSAA has pledged its fullest support for the activities undertaken by the Alumni Association.

The branch Association hosts its website as www.cufsa.com



Update your contact details

Please write to us on <alumni.colombo@gmail.com> and update your contact details (mobile number and email address) so that we can keep you posted on upcoming events.

Contribute to Alumni News

Please share your thoughts and views with us. Send in your contributions to the Newsletter. Attn : Editor, Alumni News and email to alumni.colombo@gmail.com

FIVE LEADING CORPORATES PARTNER WITH THE ASSOCIATION

A highlight of the Association's activities this year was the launch of the University Alumni Partner Programme which would enable the Association to work closely with leading private and public sector organizations in order to provide opportunity for enhanced corporate sector involvement and support in the activities of the University of Colombo.

LOLC Group, Seylan Bank PLC, Nations Trust Bank PLC, Deutsche Bank and 3CS have recently joined this programme.

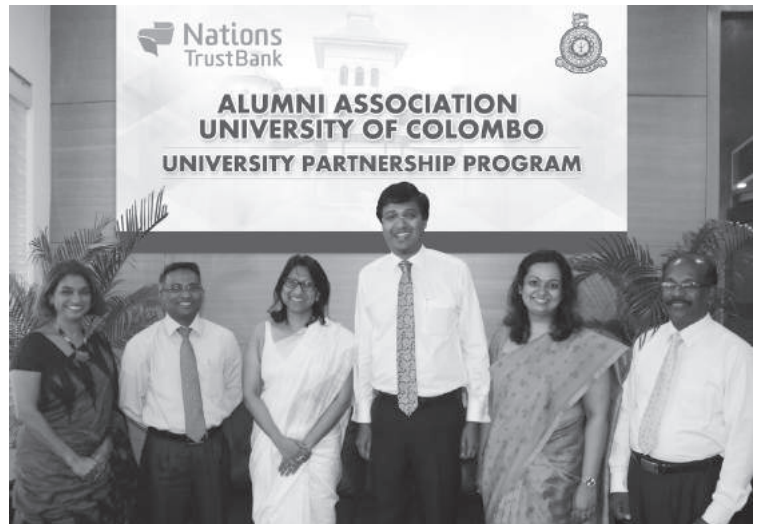
It is envisaged that the Partnership Programme will provide further impetus to the Association to carry out its Student Development and Welfare activities including Mentoring, Communication and Leadership Programmes, Career Guidance, Inspirational Talks, Health Programs and also member engagement and social activities.

Under this partnership, the partner organisations would play a role beyond traditional financial commitments and will nominate personnel who would be part of the Mentoring, Career Guidance and Soft skills development programs, thereby providing opportunity for corporates to directly be involved with the University of Colombo.

Under the MOU signed with NTB, a series of Personal Effectiveness workshops and Mentoring Engagements would be conducted for University undergraduates. The content for these Workshops have been developed by internationally renowned Bridge Consultancy and will be conducted by an expert trainer in an interactive style of delivery.

Selected senior management members from Nations Trust Bank, who are trained in coaching and mentoring, will also be made available during the workshops for students to network and select as their mentors, who will engage in mentoring for a period of three months and which could be further extended as well. The visioning and introspection exercises are expected to help the young undergraduates to better understand themselves and overcome inhibitions to pursue their aspirations.

Under the partnership with Deutsche Bank, two intensive 6 month workshops for two groups of 50 students each will be conducted to improve the business English communication skills of the undergraduate participants. The course content will include Language enrichment, Speech and reading enhancement, Speech fluency and idea formation, Pronunciation, Listening comprehension, Grammar, Vocabulary extensions, Effective dialogue, Facing interviews, Business discussions, meetings - presenting information, negotiating etc., and a certification will be provided upon successful completion of the programme. This project is chaired by Ms. Mahesha Amarasuriya.



NTB Bank Consultant and Bridge Consultancy Resource Person Keshini Jayawardena, NTB Bank DGM Legal and Administration Theja De Silva, NTB Bank Chief Executive Officer Renuka Fernando, Alumni Association President Rajeev Amarasuriya, Alumni Association Secretary Ruwandhi Thantrige and Alumni Association Head of Administration Sumanaratne Marasinghe.



LOLC Chief Human Resource Officer Pradeep Uluwaduge confirming the partnership with Alumni President Rajeev Amarasuriya in the presence of the Vice Chancellor Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake, Jithendra Gunathilake, Treasurer of the Alumni Association and Ruwandhi Thantrige, Secretary of the Alumni Association.

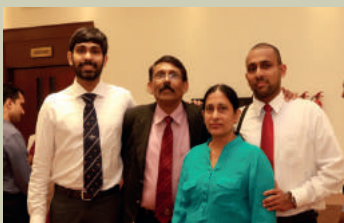


Seylan Bank Chief Marketing Manager Gamika Silva confirming the partnership with Alumni President Rajeev Amarasuriya in the presence of the Vice Chancellor Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake, Chamil Sumathipala Executive Officer Marketing, Seylan Bank and Ruwandhi Thantrige, Secretary of the Alumni Association.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



13th SUJATA JAYAWARDENA MEMORIAL ORATION : ONE BELT ONE ROAD



THE PULSE OF CLOUD COMPUTING WITH BIOINFORMATICS AS AN EXAMPLE



A programme on Cloud Computing was organized by the Association in collaboration with the University of Colombo School of Computing (UCSC) on the 27th of February at the University of Colombo School of Computing. The programme was conducted by Dr. Enis Afgan, a research scientist in the Taylor Lab at Johns Hopkins University and Dr. Nuwan Goonasekera, a research fellow in the Victorian Life Sciences Institute at the University of Melbourne.

The programme provided a brief introduction to Cloud Computing, emphasizing its conceptual underpinnings, and advocated for its use in various domains with specific examples from Bioinformatics as well as highlighting some research activities currently underway to deliver a state-of-the-art Bioinformatics platform on the Cloud.

This programme was coordinated by Executive Committee Member Mr. Milad Mubarak.

ALUMNI OFFICE TO ALSO FUNCTION AS A BOOK COLLECTION CENTRE

On the proposal made by Senior Executive Committee Member Mr. J.M.S. Bandara and further conceptualized by Ms. Dayani Panagoda, Ms. Ruwandhi Thantrige and Mr. Milad Mubarak, the Executive Committee decided that the Alumni Office would also function as a collection centre to collect books which can be spared and given to the Library of the University of

Colombo or such other relevant institution. From the feedback received, this new facility has addressed a long-felt need to have an efficient and effective process for collection of books for donation.

The first donation of a set of valuable books in near new condition was made by Mr. J.M.S. Bandara.



HEALTH CAMP 2017



The Association organized a Health Camp in collaboration with the Lions Club of Colombo Stratford City on 18th February 2017 at the University Premises, for the undergraduates and minor staff of the University. The programme comprised of several presentations including on “Healthy Eating & How to avoid Diabetes” delivered by Dr. Shahan Ajmeer, Consultant Surgeon Bandararanaik Memorial Ayurvedic Research Institute at Nawinna Maharagama; “10 things Highly Successful People do in their 20’s and Practical Tips to follow” delivered by Dr. Charuni Senanayake, Master Coach (IIC&M), Master Mentor (IIC&M); and “Mental Health and How to deal with Stress in Education” delivered by Ayurveda. Dr. Saman S. Hettige,

Managing Director “Manasa” Ayurveda Hospital and Specialist in Ayurveda, Psychiatry, Acupuncturist, Homeopathy.

The medical screening covered Eye Care, Dental Care, Blood Pressure and Blood Sugar testing and Skin Care including free consultation with specialists. Nearly 50 prescribed spectacles were also distributed at a special function subsequently held with the Vice Chancellor in attendance.

The project was coordinated by Mr. Gunasiri Wijemanna, Ms. Suranjani Wickramaratne and Ms. Ruwandhi Thanthrige.

THE FORMATION OF THE NEW ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

It is with pleasure that we announce the establishment of the new Alumni Association in New South Wales, Australia, which we understand is the first ever in the State of NSW.

We congratulate the new Association in New South Wales and look forward to working together in the achievement of our common objectives.

The new Association had its first General Meeting in October 2016 and since then the membership has grown steadily to nearly 100 members, representing all of the faculties at the University.

The Association also hosts a web site <https://cuaansw.org.au>

NEW ALUMNI HEAD OF ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Sumanaratne Marasinghe has joined the Association as Head of Administration.

He has a B.A. (Hons.) in Economics from the University of Peradeniya, a Diploma in Business Management from the National Institute of Business Management, and is an Associate Member of the Institute of Bankers.



He has 33 years of experience in the Banking Sector, with his last appointment being as an Assistant General Manager of the Bank of Ceylon.

The Association warmly welcomes Mr. Sumanaratne Marasinghe.

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Alumni Association Felicitates Veteran Alumni...

Medical Council Prof. Carlo Fonseka, former Chairman of the Public Service Commission and Salaries Commission and founder President of the Alumni Association of the University of Colombo Tissa Devendra, who graduated in 1952, the award winning writer and Gratiaen Prize winner with Carl Muller Lalitha K. Withanachchi, Emeritus Professor of Economics and President of the Economic Association, Prof. A.D.V. Indraratne and Agriculture Culture Specialist, researcher and author Dr. C.R. Panabokke, who graduated in 1949.

OPENING OF THE ALUMNI OFFICE



The Association has set up an Administrative Office in the College House Premises. This Administrative Office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on all weekdays. Head of Administration Mr. Sumanaratne Marasinghe functions from this Administrative Office. Members are invited to visit this new office and be connected with the activities of the Association.

New Alumni Office Contact Details

Tel. : 0112506802 / 0773822473

E-mail : manager.alumnicolombo@gmail.com

SUPPORTING THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED

A Disability Audit has been carried out within the university premises by GIZ-FLICT (a bilateral project working with the Ministry of National Dialogue to address factors that marginalize individuals, groups and/ or communities), in order to do necessary modifications to facilitate access to the differently abled.

The Audit covered all Faculties of the University and also the

College House and the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Parking Areas, Gymnasium and the New Arts Theatre to assess if they were wheelchair accessible and facilitated other requirements such as railings etc along with recommendations for improvements. The suggested changes will be carried out by the Alumni Association in conjunction with the University of Colombo. The project is headed by Ms. Dayani Panagoda.

Member I.D Cards and Benefits

Members are reminded that they are entitled to obtain Member I.D. Cards, upon application to the Head of Administration, together with a passport size photograph and payment of a processing fee of Rs. 500/=.

The presentation of a Member I.D. Card is required to access Member Benefits including access to the grounds for walking and reference access to the Library (Electronic Resources).

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. TISSA DEVENDRA



The Association proudly extends its good wishes and congratulations to founder President Mr. Tissa Devendra on being bestowed with the title "Deshamanaya". The Executive Committee is happy to record that Mr. Tissa Devendra, as the Founder Past President and Advisor, is a regular attendee at the Executive Committee Meetings of the Association.

SUJATA GEE SENDEWA

The Sujata Gee Sendewa was an evening of music and song organised by the Alumni Association for the undergraduates of the Sujata Jayawardena Memorial Hostel. Over three hundred students attended the evening of entertainment and fellowship. The professional musicians were sponsored by Senior Member of the Association Mr. J.M.S. Bandara while Prima Kottu Mee

and Admo Solar were the other sponsors to provide dinner for the students. The Academic Warden of the Hostel Dr. Kumudika Boyagoda, the former Warden Dr. Dilhari Atygalle, and Executive Committee Members of the Association were also present.



Scholarships for Women Undergraduates in Collaboration with CENWOR

In collaboration with the Centre for Women's Research - Sri Lanka (CENWOR), the Alumni Association has facilitated the provision of an annual stipend to deserving women undergraduates with funds from CENWOR.

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 Mr. Thilak Karunaratne, Chairman and Managing Director of Multiform Chemicals (Pvt) Ltd and Past President of our Association, for sponsoring the Alumni News since its inception, including this issue.

Alumni Association Felicitates Veteran Alumni



University Alumni Partners




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