



UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION - USA
Newsletter March 2024

A Year of Major Accomplishments

The association is proud to have made significant progress towards its goals of providing opportunities for fostering camaraderie among alumni and helping current students and their educational activities in 2023, the fourth year since its inception. The association has contributed over SLR 3,800,000 to three worthy causes at the University during 2023. The Annual General Meeting was a fun filled event that included cultural performances, sing-along, and dancing attended by over 200 alumni, family, and friends.



Drums - presented by Peradeniya alumnus Indika Aththanayake's Troupe at the get together.

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Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on July 6, 2023. During this meeting, the accomplishments and progress made from 2022 to 2023 were presented, including activities planned for the rest of the year 2023. The meeting was concluded with a drum entertainment session conducted by Dr. Suren Lewkebandara, a Pera alum (81's science) residing in Houston, TX.

Meet the executive committee for year 2024-2025.

UPAA-USA Executive Committee (2024-2025)				
	Name	Position	Faculty	Batch Year
1	Channa Bambaradeniya	President	Science	1991
2	Udaya De Silva	Treasurer	Engineering	1984
3	Gamini Dharmasena	Secretary	Science	1981
4	Ravi Ranatunga	Vice President	Science	1980
5	Dananjaya Rajasinghe	Asst. Secretary	Agriculture	2011
6	Asha Perera	Asst. Treasurer	Science	1996
7	Jayantha Amarasekera	Past President	Science	1974
8	Parakrama Abeyratna	Comm. Member	Arts	1974
9	Ravi Amunugama	Comm. Member	Science	1991
10	Ananda Desilva	Comm. Member	Science	1980
11	Geewananda Gunawardena	Comm. Member	Science	1972
12	Dimuthu Jayawickrama	Comm. Member	Science	1988
13	Sanath Megalle	Comm. Member	Science	1980
14	Sujeewa Perera	Comm. Member	Science	1994
15	Mahinda Ranasinghe	Comm. Member	Science	1993
16	Yasmin Ranasinghe	Comm. Member	Science	1974
17	Iffaz Salahudeen	Comm. Member	Science	1977
18	Vincent Sandanayaka	Comm. Member	Science	1980
19	Aruna Weerasooriya	Comm. Member	Science	1985
20	Pubudu Wimalasiri	Comm. Member	Science	2009

Studentship Awards (Funds for Needy Students)

We liaised with the Alumni Association of University of Peradeniya (AAUP) and its student welfare group and awarded NINE studentship awards to needy students, one from each of the nine faculties. Each student was given Rs. 5000 per month for a 12-month period. These students were vetted by each faculty representative for their needs, and a list of names was provided to us by the AAUP.

Contribution to the Center for Environmental Studies (CES)

We have donated Rs. 225,000 to the University of Peradeniya Center for Environmental Studies (CES) for the Environmental Awareness Competition held among school children in the Central Province in October 2023. The funds donated by us were used to award three cash prizes for the winning schools that secured first, second, and third places in the competition.



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Funding for the Physics Department to Upgrade the Physics Lab

The Physics Department of Peradeniya University was in dire need of help to purchase much-needed teaching materials. Many instruments were either broken or completely outdated, making it difficult for the faculty to provide quality teaching. The department approached the Association for financial support to purchase much-needed equipment. We reached out to the Physics and other alumni in the USA and were able to purchase most of the requested equipment worth more than \$10,000 and shipped to the faculty.



Laboratory and audio-visual equipment donated to the Department of Physics.

Annual Gathering 2023



Our 2023 Annual Get Together and Fundraiser was held on September 2nd in Rockville, Maryland, with the participation of approximately 200 Pera alums. The event started with a Meet and Greet ("Thela") session over appetizers and drinks, followed by fun filled entertainment, singing along, and dancing with a live band playing Pera and Sri Lanka songs. Fundraising was supported by contributions from individuals and several corporate partners as well as attendees purchasing UoP memorabilia. During the event, we introduced Dr. Channa Bambaradeniya, who was elected by the Executive Committee as our President for 2024.

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Cake cutting by two most senior and junior members in attendance.



Sinhabha performance by Pera alum Indika attananyake

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Maname act by Pera alum Indika Atthanayake and Dharshi Jayawardena

A Webinar for University Students at Peradeniya: Planning for Higher Studies in the United States

We have received a growing number of inquiries from University of Peradeniya undergraduate students expressing strong interest in exploring higher education options in the USA. For this we have conducted an information session, a workshop on "Applying for Graduate Studies in USA" which was held on Sunday August 27, 8 am (Sri Lanka Time) via a Zoom call. More than 150 undergraduate students from all nine faculties at UoP participated in this session. The workshop was led by Prof. Roshan Gunasekara, Department of Chemistry, Yale University, and it included a panel discussion with four current and former professors from different disciplines. The webinar was also broadcast live on YouTube.



Projects already activated for this Year:

1. Increase the number of scholarships from 9 to 18 - students have already received the scholarships.
2. Zoology dept project - already delivered \$2000 worth of equipment.
3. Helping Physics dept teaching load - actively looking for Physics alumni and feel free contact us if you would like to help.

2024 Get-Together in Arizona

Save The Date!



ARIZONA '24

University of Peradeniya Alumni
Association (USA) Invites You To The

Annual Get Together & Fundraiser



Sept
1 | **2024**

Come and join us

Villa Tuscana
1915 W.Guadalupe Road,
Mesa, AZ 85202

www.upaa-usa.org

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Mesa Arizona - many other things to do...

A visit to Mesa-Phoenix area also provides an opportunity to get a glimpse into the ancient traditions of Hopi, Navajo, and Pueblo tribes: there are many museums, art galleries, and other attractions. A visit to the Grand Canyon will need more than a day, but there are many other activities like scenic drives and hikes available within a few hours' drive. The Red Rocks formations in Sedona, the Desert Botanic Garden, and Montezuma Castle are some places to keep in mind while in the area.


