



AMERICAN CENTER NEWSLETTER

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American Center

Colombo

April 2013

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American Center Celebrates International Women's Day



Christopher Teal, Director of the American Center welcoming the audience for the film festival and panel discussion.

spotlighting the stories of women in conflict zones from Bosnia to Afghanistan and Colombia to Liberia, placing women at the center of an urgent dialogue about conflict and security, and reframing our understanding of modern warfare. The audience had an opportunity to engage with the panelists each day and with Abigail Disney, the series creator, via Skype from New York. The discussions were chaired by Christopher Teal, Director of the American Center; Christopher Elms, Press and Information Officer; Douglas Ostertag, Vice Consul and Rachel Sorey, USAID.

The American Center hosted a film festival in celebration of the 'International Women's Day' by screening the five-part PBS television series 'Women, War & Peace' from March 4 - 8, 2013 followed by a panel discussion each day. This film-series is the most comprehensive global media initiative ever mounted on the roles of women in war and peace

Over 100 guests enjoyed the film festival and discussions, which were in collaboration with the National Peace Council and Regional Center for Strategic Studies.

Upcoming Events

April 29, 2013, 4:00 pm

Presentation on "The African Sri Lankans: Culture, Community and Continuity" by Dr. Lionel Mandy @ the American Center Auditorium.

April 29, 2013, 5:00 pm

Viewing of live web chat with former supreme court judge Sandra Day O'Corner. @ the American Center Auditorium.

April 30, 2013, 2:30 pm

Presentation by Dr. Ajantha Perera on "Eco Comp: Lecture, Activity to learn and compete" @ the American Center Auditorium.

May 2, 2013, 4:30 pm

Viewing of live web chat with CNN's Lila King on "Citizen Journalism" @ the American Center Auditorium. The American Corner in Jaffna will host the same event as well.

May 7, 2013, 4:00 pm

Public lecture on "What role does journalism play in a free and open society?" by Peter Savodnik @ the American Center Auditorium.

For more details on any program please visit our facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/usembassycolombosl> or call 011 2498100.

Open Mic Competitive Poetry Slam Season X



Shailee Sunaina received certificate for the Judge's Choice for age 12 & under category from Christopher Elms.

The American Center hosted Poetry Slam Season X on March 28, 2013. The 40 poets who participated

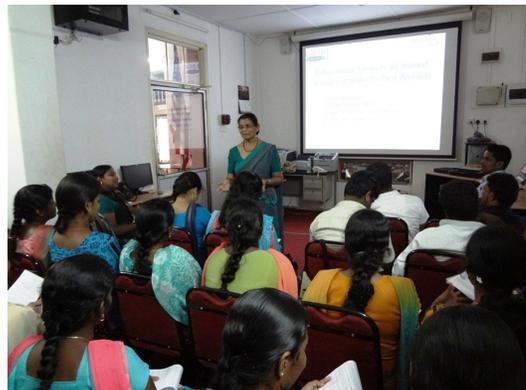
enthralled the audience with readings of their original works on school, love, their daily lives, and other themes. Christopher Elms, Information Officer of the U.S. Embassy, facilitated and presented the certificates and gifts to the winners. The American Center will continue to serve as a platform for talented young Sri Lankans to express themselves freely and creatively by hosting an ongoing series of poetry slam competition every other month.

Youth are encouraged to participate in Poetry Slam Season XI on May 30 at 3:30pm.

A video clip of the Poetry Slam Season X is available on U.S. Embassy's YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/user/USEmbassySrilanka>.

American Corner Jaffna hosted Explore Educational Opportunities in the USA

The American Corner in Jaffna hosted a series of programs from April 2-4 on 'Exploring Educational Opportunities in the USA' by Nelum Senadira, EducationUSA Advisor from the U.S.-Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission. Many school and university students and those who were interested in post-graduate studies attended these programs in Jaffna. If you would like to explore educational opportunities in the USA, stop by the EducationUSA Center weekdays from 10am-4:30pm or visit <http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com/>.



Nelum Senadira, EducationUSA advisor talks to university students at the American Corner Jaffna.

English Communication Skills Program for Gokulam Students



Students from Gokulam Home doing the placement test for English Communication Skills program.

On March 11, 2013, the second batch of students commenced the English Communication Skills program through the computer-based DynEd system at the American Center.

A group of girls and boys from Gokulam Home will attend regular computer-based practical sessions for the next six months to be proficient in English Communication skills.

This course is conducted free of charge by the American Center for less privileged students and offers them an opportunity to excel in English.

Social Media Workshops



Social Media workshop conducted for Virakesari journalists.

During March and April, the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy conducted several workshops on social media.

On March 7 and 8 the American Center's social media trainer visited Kandy. On March 7 he conducted a full day social media workshop for members of the Kandy Youth Council at the American Corner, Kandy. The workshop was titled 'Social Media Fundamentals' and the participants were awarded certificates after the workshop concluded. On March 8, he held a workshop for students at the Agricultural Faculty of the University of Peradeniya.



Workshop participants at American Corner Kandy.



Social media training for students of the Ceylon School for the Deaf in Ratmalana.

The U.S. Embassy conducted a first of its kind social media training for students of the Ceylon School for the Deaf in Ratmalana on March 11. The training, conducted with the assistance of a sign language interpreter, introduced students of the school to new social media tools and empowered their ability to connect with fellow members of the

deaf community. The students learned how to setup twitter accounts, received tips on using twitter to share their messages, and were shown a sign language video regarding social media which made the training interactive. The students also learned about language translation and typing tools such as Google Sinhala. The embassy will conduct follow up sessions with the school to ensure the students make the most of social media knowledge they acquired at through the workshop

One April 4 and 6 the American Center sponsored a two-day residential workshop for 30 participants on the impact of social media in the Chilaw City Hotel. The workshop had been organized by Sri Lanka Muslim Media Forum in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy. Christopher Teal, Director - Press, Cultural and Educational Affairs of the U.S Embassy Colombo graced the occasion as the chief guest and presented certificates to the participants. Media workshops were held at newspapers on April 5 and 23 about twitter for journalists. The successful workshop served as a platform to share their experiences with social media and learn the value of twitter in news gathering and dissemination.

If you would like to arrange a social media training for your institution, community or a student group, write to us through following email!
amcentersl@state.gov

Embassy Speaker Program at University of Kelaniya



A student presenting a token of appreciation to speaker Mr. Savodnik at the end of the lecture

On April 24, 2013, journalist and writer Peter Savodnik spoke to the English Department of University of Kelaniya on 'Investigative Journalism in the United States' as part of the Embassy Speaker program.

Nearly 80 students of the English Department attended the guest lecture and interacted with the speaker raising questions including on journalism ethics.

Mr. Savodnik has written for *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *GQ*, *BusinessWeek*, *Harper's*, *The New Yorker*, *Conde Nast Traveler*, *Wired*, *W*, *Time*, *The New York Review of Books*, *The Washington Post* and *Commentary*, among other venues. His article, "The Chessboard Killer," which was first published in *GQ*, was anthologized in *The Best American Crime Reporting 2010*.



Students listening to Mr. Savodnik's lecture

Poetry Reading and Discussion with U.S. Poet Laureate Natasha Trethewey



Christopher Elms, Press and Information Officer of the U.S. Embassy welcomed the audience for the viewing party

The American Center hosted a viewing party of a 'Poetry Reading and Discussion with U.S. Poet Laureate Natasha Trethewey' in celebration of African American History Month on March 11th. Natasha has been awarded multiple prizes for her four collections of poetry. She read selections of her poems and discussed literature, Black History Month, and race in American society. Natasha frequently writes about African American history and her own experience growing up in an interracial family.

Audience included university and school students, amateur poets, journalists and English language learners.



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<http://www.facebook.com/usembassycolombos1>

Fulbright Awards For Sri Lankan Citizens

Fulbright Professional Scholar Awards for 2014-'15

The US-SL Fulbright Commission invites applications from Sri Lankan professionals in the humanities, fine/performing arts such as music, theatre, writing, painting, design, photography, and, sports, journalism, law, sciences, paramedical services and business. They provide grantees an opportunity to gain exposure (through a project developed by the grantee) to the latest advancements in their respective fields of work in the U.S.

Eligibility:

- Be a Sri Lankan citizen and have continuously resided in Sri Lanka for a minimum of 2 years

Fulbright Advanced Research and Lecturing Awards 2014-'15

The US-SLFC invites applications from Sri Lankan scholars who wish to pursue postdoctoral research and/or lecturing at a U.S. university or research institution.

Eligibility:

- Be a Sri Lankan citizen and have continuously resided in Sri Lanka for a minimum of two years up to the time of applying for this award.
- Possess a PhD from a recognized university.
- Demonstrate a clear rationale for conducting the proposed research/ teaching in the U.S.

Fulbright Master's Student Awards for 2014-'15

The US-SLFC invites applications from qualified candidates for the Fulbright Student Program for the academic year 2014 – 2015 in the following disciplines; Social Sciences & Humanities, Physical Sciences, Biological Sciences, Architecture and Engineering, Commerce and Management Studies.

Eligibility:

- Be a Sri Lankan citizen and have continuously resided in Sri Lanka for a minimum of 2 years up to the time of applying for this award.
- Possess a 4-year bachelor's from a Sri Lankan university. Those with degrees from non-Sri Lankan universities are welcome to apply provided they possess the equivalent of a 4-

- up to the time of applying for this award.
- Demonstrate aptitude and accomplishment in the field through professional involvement, awards received, achievements or output.
- Have a minimum of 5 years of experience in the area.
- Demonstrate commitment to developing this field in Sri Lanka and sharing knowledge with counterparts and the public in Sri Lanka.
- Possess a letter of invitation from a host institution in the U.S.
- Duration of award: 3 – 4.5 months (the minimum duration of the grant is 3 months)

Closing date for applications: October 1, 2013. Visit http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com/?page_id=3722 for more details.

- While applicants from all disciplines will be considered, preference will be given to candidates in the fields of humanities and social sciences.
- Age: The age limit in force hitherto is waived. However, all things being equal, an applicant who is near retirement would not be as strong as one who is several years away.
- Possess a letter of invitation from a host institution in the U.S. (guidelines below).
- Duration of award: 6 months

Closing date for applications: October 1, 2013. Visit http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com/?page_id=3725 for more details.

- year Sri Lankan degree. Applicants with 3-year degrees from Sri Lanka and India are required to possess a relevant post-graduate qualification (for example, a post-graduate diploma in a relevant subject).
- Be committed to reside in Sri Lanka on completion of the award for a minimum of 2 years.
- Possess at a minimum, 1 year of post-qualifying experience in the proposed field of study.
- Be below the age of 35 years on the 1st of October, 2013.
- Duration of award: a maximum of 2 academic years

Closing date for applications: July 30, 2013. Visit http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com/?page_id=3726 for more details.

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International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance



and school-based mine risk education supporting safe resettlement and restoring livelihoods among resettling communities.



April 4 marked International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance. School children in Puthukudiruppu, Mullaitivu participated in exhibitions and oratory, singing and drama competitions to mark the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance on April 1.

The activities which drew crowds from the local community are part of a larger program funded by USAID and the Department of State Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement and implemented by UNICEF. It provides community

Fulbright Awards

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Hubert H. Humphrey North-South Fellowship Program 2014-15

The US-SLFC invites applications from suitable candidates for the Hubert Humphrey Fellowships for 2014-2015 in the fields listed below. Candidates should be mid-career professionals in leadership positions with a commitment to public service and with the potential for professional advancement. They may be employed in either the public or private sector.

- Agricultural and Rural Development
- Communications/Journalism
- Substance Abuse Education, Treatment & Prevention
- Economic Development
- Finance and Banking
- Educational Administration, Planning & Policy

- Higher Education Administration
- HIV/AIDS Policy and Prevention
- Human Resource Management
- Natural Resources/Environmental Policy and Climate Change
- Public Health Policy and Management
- Public Policy Analysis and Public Administration
- Technology Policy and Management
- Trafficking in Persons, Policy and Prevention
- Urban and Regional Planning
- Law and Human Rights

Closing date for applications: October 1st 2013. Visit <http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com/?p=3736> for more details.

Monthly Essay Competition



Learn about
America



Essay Competition for School Children on the theme of Learn About America

The American Center has organized an essay competition for school children which is published in Junior Observer of the Sunday Observer.

The monthly essay topic is for children in two age categories 12-15 years and 16-18 years.

Each age group is given a monthly topic related to the United States of America and is asked to write an essay with a minimum word count. The students can conduct research for their essay at the American Center Library in Colombo, at American Corner in Kandy and Jaffna, or from sources on IIP Digital, a very good internet resource with information on the United States, its culture,

history, literature, politics, tourist attractions and much more.

The first three winners in each age group will be given a selection of American books, a lifetime membership to the American Center Library, and a certificate signed by the U.S. Ambassador. A prize giving ceremony will be held at the American Center Colombo every two months.

Essay topics for August/September are as follows:

12-15 years: What lessons can today's women learn from Rosa Parks, who is known as the "Mother of the Modern-Day Civil Rights Movement"? (minimum 500 words)

16-18 years: It is well known that Hillary Rodham Clinton was inspired to work in some form of public service after hearing a speech in Chicago by the Reverend Martin Luther King in 1968. Why do you see her as a good example of present day women who has charisma and political leadership? (minimum 1000 words)

Please see the Junior Observer of the Sunday

Essay Winners - August - September in 2012

Essay winners who received their awards on March 8, 2013 at the American Center. The essay competition was held in August and September in 2012.



Front Row: Left to Right- Ruwimal Yasantha Pathiraja; Yogarajah Krishanthaney and Rashmi Erandika Ratnayake. 2nd Row (Left to Right) - Amra Assath, Amanda Prabhavi Kandegoda; Sashith Udara Keragala; Mr. Christopher Teal - Public Affairs Officer at U. S. Embassy; Chanya Ranatunga, Nimani Vasana Hettiarachchi and Rashmi Erandika Ratnayake

Spectrum Dance Theater 's Sri Lanka Visit



Artists of SDT and Sri Lankan students performing at the DCM's residence.

In March 2013, Seattle based contemporary dance troupe Spectrum Dance Theater visited Sri Lanka. The visit was part of their South Asia tour under DanceMotion USA, a Department of State Cultural Exchange Program.

DanceMotion USA kicked off a week of activities in Sri Lanka with a workshop in Galle. Spectrum Dance Theater first learned traditional Kandyan and local harvest dances from students in the Southern Province. The troupe then showed over 150 students and teachers contemporary American dance moves. As part of the exchange, the troupe tried out some Kandyan dance and the students went on stage to try Spectrum's contemporary moves.



During the Galle workshop.

On their first day in Colombo, Spectrum Dance Theater visited the world-renowned Chitrasena Dance Company to learn traditional Sri Lankan dance. They conducted a workshop for Chitrasena's students, which was a great opportunity for them to learn about modern

American dance. While they were in Colombo, Spectrum Dance Theater conducted several workshops for dancing students of the University of Visual and Performing Arts Sri Lanka and Centre for Performing Arts at Dutch Burger Union.

On Friday, March 22 night Spectrum Dance Theater held its much anticipated dance performance at the Bishop's College Auditorium. The show consisted of a series of excerpts of some of Artistic Director Donald Byrd's finest works. The dancers mesmerized all in the audience with their graceful rendition. Hundreds of people gathered to see this live event, which was organized by the American Center Colombo together with DanceMotion USA. Dancers of the Spectrum Dance Theater performed



Performance at Bishop's College.

along with the students of the University of Visual and Performing Arts and Center for Performing Arts at the U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission's Residence as well.

Spectrum dancers visited local TV stations and participated in many television, radio, newspaper, and online interviews.

Film Screenings at the American Center

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May 7 - All the President's Men (138 minutes)

It helps to have one of history's greatest scoops as your factual inspiration, but journalism thrillers just don't get any better than *All the President's Men*. Dustin Hoffman and Robert Redford are perfectly matched as (respectively) Washington Post reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, whose investigation into the Watergate scandal set the stage for President Richard Nixon's eventual resignation.

May 14 - Good Night and Good Luck (93 minutes)

Good Night, And, Good Luck takes place during the early days of broadcast journalism in 1950's America. It chronicles the real-life conflict between television newsman Edward R. Murrow and Senator Joseph McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee. With a desire to report the facts and enlighten the public, Murrow, and his dedicated staff - headed by his producer Fred Friendly and Joe Wershba in the CBS newsroom - defy corporate and sponsorship pressures to examine the lies and scaremongering tactics perpetrated by McCarthy during his communist 'witch-hunts'. A very public feud develops when the Senator responds by accusing the anchor of being a communist. In this climate of fear and reprisal, the CBS crew carries on and their tenacity will prove historic and monumental.

May 21 - Shattered Glass (94 minutes)

Michael Kelly (Hank Azaria) is the first editor of "The New Republic" with whom Stephen Glass worked. When Kelly finds something questionable in one of the stories submitted by Glass, Stephen is able to explain it away, and the incident is glossed over. When Kelly is fired by the publisher, Chuck Lane (Peter Sarsgaard) takes over under difficult circumstances, as the staff is loyal to Kelly and resentful of Lane. Still, Lane perseveres, occasionally crossing swords with Stephen Glass. All comes to a head when a reporter from another publication questions the veracity of one of Stephen's stories. An inside investigation by an anguished and angry Chuck Lane clearly shows that Stephen's story is not fact based but, rather, an elaborate deceit, false from beginning to end.

May 28 - Page One: Inside New York Times (92 minutes)

Page One: Inside the New York deftly gains unprecedented access to The New York Times newsroom and the inner workings of the Media Desk. With the Internet surpassing print as the main news source and newspapers all over the country going bankrupt, PAGE ONE chronicles the transformation of the media industry at its time of greatest turmoil. It gives us an up-close look at the vibrant cross-cubicle debates and collaborations, tenacious jockeying for on-the-record quotes, and skillful page-one pitching that produce the daily miracle of a great news organization. What emerges is a nuanced portrait of journalists continuing to produce extraordinary work under increasingly difficult circumstances. At the heart of the film is the burning question on the minds of everyone who cares about a rigorous American press, Times lover or not: what will happen if the fast-moving future of media leaves behind the fact-based, original reporting that helps to define our society?

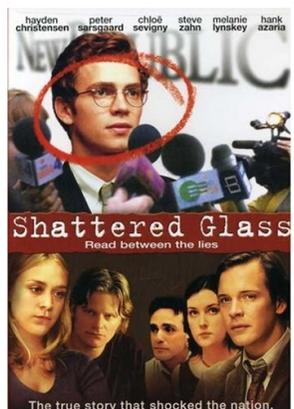
Movies start promptly at 6:00pm every Tuesday. Entrance free!



david strathairn
patricia clarkson
george clooney
jeff daniels
robert downey jr.
frank langella

we will not walk in fear of one another

good night,
and good luck.



"A GOTTA-SEE-DOO" "VITAL AND FASCINATING"

"ENTHRALLING AND INSPIRING - I CHEERED INSIDE"

"RIVETING" "ESSENTIAL VIEWING FOR NEWS JUNKIES"

"IT PROVES THERE ARE SOME REAL JOURNALISTS LEFT"

"A WORTHY PRODUCTION" "A WORTHY PRODUCTION" "GRIPPING"

"THE BEST FILM ABOUT THE NEWSPAPER BUSINESS SINCE ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN"

"STARTLINGLY UP-TO-DATE" "RELEVANT ON MANY LEVELS FOR THE AMERICAN SKEW"

THIS YEAR, THE BIGGEST STORY IS THEIR OWN.

PAGE ONE

INSIDE THE NEW YORK TIMES

