



AMERICAN CENTER NEWSLETTER

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American Center

Colombo

June 2011

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U.S. Embassy Participates in Grand Eastern Educative Exhibition in Kinniya



Niambi Young - Cultural Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy, Colombo in conversation with students in Tamil.

The Grand Eastern Educative Exhibition was held in Kinniya from May 23rd to 27th, 2011, at four schools in Kinniya; the U.S. Embassy's booth was located at the largest of the four schools, Kinniya Central College.

Over 30,000 participants attended the exhibition during the five days - mainly youth participants from all three ethnic

communities (Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim) expressed their appreciation for the materials and information provided at the booth. Participants included school students in the eastern province, university students, teachers and general public.

The Embassy exhibit displayed the diversity of American life and culture and included posters depicting life in the U.S., Islam in the U.S., and USAID funded projects in Sri Lanka.

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Upcoming & Current Events

Ceramic Walls



Exhibition of ceramic murals by Prasanna Kolambage.

The American Center in Colombo

is currently holding a murals exhibition featuring the work of Prasanna Kolambage.

The Exhibition runs until the July 20, 2011.

Entrance is free!

July 23, 2011:

Readers Are Leaders Club



Storytelling program and movie screening at 2:30 p.m. at the American Center

Auditorium.

June 28, 2011, 3:00pm :

The Poetry Club. Mr. Roger Morley will read poems from *Where the Sidewalk Ends* at the American Corner Kandy.

June 29, 2011, 5:30pm:

In honor of World Refugee Day, U.S. Embassy Colombo hosts a public lecture titled "Migrants are human beings too!" by Richard Danziger at the American Center Auditorium.

June 30, 2011:

World Environment Day commemoration event in collaboration with GLOBE program at the American Corner in Kandy.

Advanced Training in Nonviolence and Peace-Building for University Students



Opening remarks by Jeff Anderson, Director, Press, Cultural and Educational Affairs of the U.S. Embassy at the commencement of 5-day Advanced Training for university students.

The MLK (Martin Luther King) Conference for Advanced Training in Nonviolence and Peace-Building was held for university students from May 26

– 30, 2011, at the Subodhi Institute for Integral Education in Colombo. The students were from seven universities across the country. The opening ceremony of the conference was attended by Jeffrey Anderson, Director of the Press, Cultural and Educational Affairs of the U.S. Embassy, who welcomed the participants; and Glen Davis, Information Officer, who was responsible for the MLK Conference; Dr. Jehan Perera, Executive Director of National Peace Council; Johnny Mack, President of Communities Without Boundaries International; Fr. Mervyn Fernando, Founder of Subodhi Center; and several religious representatives who gave their blessings.

The in-depth training covered conflict resolution, theory and practice of nonviolence, and peace-building with interactive sessions including role-play in which students participated enthusiastically. Students from different ethnicities and across the urban-rural divide had the opportunity to interact,

and collectively presented analysis of case studies during group sessions in creative ways. Some of the key issues addressed included ragging at universities, and respect for diversity and other individuals. An interfaith dialogue with Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, and Islamic religious leaders was held on the last day of the conference, giving students insight into the role religion plays in nonviolence. During the feedback sessions, participants expressed their commitment and enthusiasm in continuing to network across universities and promote nonviolence and peace in the community.

The Public Diplomacy office collaborated with Communities Without Boundaries International



Section of the students attending the first day of advanced training in nonviolence and peace-building.

(CWBI), an International NGO based in the U.S. to conduct the 5-day advanced training and National Peace Council

(NPC), a local NGO for logistics.

This conference also provided an opportunity for youth to mix across the ethnic and regional divides, to come together for unified understanding and appreciation of one another's differences, and to be motivated to work for peace for all communities.

"Ceramic Walls": Exhibition of Ceramic Murals



Deputy Chief of Mission Valerie Fowler visits murals exhibition at the American Center

A mural exhibition by the local artist Prassanna Kolambage is currently being held in the American Center in

Colombo. All the exhibits are made out of clay and as Prassanna is a great lover of nature, most of the art is focused on animals.

On June 8, 2011 the artist was honored in a reception held at the American Center. Deputy Chief of Mission Valerie Fowler and veteran journalist Mr. Edwin Ariyadasa were guests of note at the event.

Art lovers, friends, and relatives of the artists graced the event. Thirty-seven boys from the Bandaragama Dharma Chakra Padanama orphanage also attended. The exhibition is up until July 13th.

American Center and Local Artists Team to Lead Art Workshop for Kids



the featured Artists of the Month at various orphanages.

The June workshop was held at the Bandaragama

As part of the American Center's monthly Art exhibitions, the American Center organizes art workshops conducted by

Dhamma Chakra Padanama on June 14th, 2011. Thirty-seven boys between the ages of 6 and 17 took part in this workshop conducted by the artists of the month, Prasanna Kolambage and Sameera Kalupahana.

The full-day workshop consisted of two sessions. During the morning workshop, the boys drew with pastels and water colors and during the afternoon they created with clay. As the two artists excel in these mediums, the children gained a lot of knowledge on using water colors and clay to create beautiful works of art and sculptures.

Best Practices in ELT: A Two-Day Workshop for Access Teachers

In June 2011, the American Center organized a two-day workshop for all the Access Teachers in Sri Lanka at the American Center. The workshop was conducted by Vinodhini Reardon, the English Language Fellow based at the University of Sabaragamuwa. Access teachers from all thirteen Access Centers attended the workshop. The workshop focused on Cooperative Learning Techniques, Assessing Students in a Multicultural Classroom, Using Authentic Materials, and Writing: Assessment. Some of the teachers who participated



A teacher participated in the workshop with Vinodhini (left) and Niyambi, CAO (right)

had attended the Access training in the U.S. The Access teachers participated quite actively and requested to have similar workshops in the future.

Public lecture on "How to Feel Better" in Jaffna



Mandy was held at the American Corner Jaffna. Dr.

On June 19, 2011, a public lecture titled 'How to Feel Better: An American Perspective and Sri Lankan Perspective' by Dr. Lionel

Mandy is a Fulbright scholar and full-time lecturer at the Department of Africana Studies at California State University, and currently teaches Masters in Philosophy and Clinical Psychology at University of Colombo.

Mr. P. Arumaithurai, a clinical psychologist at the teaching hospital in Jaffna, gave an introductory talk entitled 'How to Feel Better: A Sri Lankan Perspective.' A Q&A session was held thereafter. The audiences seemed highly motivated by the very informative lecture and asked several questions which were answered by the speaker. The lecture was interpreted into Tamil.

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More Milk, More Income for Small Dairy Producers in Eastern and North Central Provinces



A young beneficiary receives a dump truck from USAID on behalf of the farmer-owned milk production group in her village, Rittheethenna in Batticaloa. USAID'S assistance will help increase dairy production and improve dairy farmers' incomes in the East.

June 21, 2011: Farmers in eastern Sri Lanka recently received milk storage cans and collection trucks that will help them improve their participation in the dairy value chain.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the development arm of the U.S.

Government, delivered the trucks to two farmer-owned milk collection centers in Batticaloa district and provided the storage cans to two milk producer groups in the Batticaloa and Polonnaruwa districts. According to Priyanka Dissanayake, USAID Project

Management Specialist, these investments are part of USAID'S Dairy Enhancement in the Eastern Province (DEEP) Project, a partnership with the U.S.-based Land O'Lakes and Sri Lankan CIC Agri Businesses.

According to USAID, DEEP helps farmers strengthen their position in the market by mobilizing them to organize into milk producer groups. It provides training and equipment so they can produce more milk and sell it at a better price. To date, forty-two producer groups have been created. The project is also standing up four milk collection centers which will be owned by the milk producer groups and will link producers to regular buyers of raw milk.

As part of DEEP'S small grants program, Priyanka also handed over a check for LKR 960,000 to the farmers. Since 2009, the project has distributed small grants averaging LKR 20,000 to over 2,100 dairy farmers.

Grand Eastern Educative Exhibition in Kinniya

Décor items included a cutout of President Obama which was a major attraction among the visitors. Give away items were particularly popular amongst the students and included U.S.-SL partnership stickers, school time-tables, U.S. education fact



Group of students pose with President Obama's portrait

sheets, and American movies and documentaries.

Many students expressed their pleasure about the helpful information provided by the U.S. Embassy exhibit and were also pleasantly surprised by the

From page 1

American Officers' ability to speak their local language (Tamil). Facebook comments about the



Another group of visitors making comments on Embassy facebook page about the Embassy stall

exhibition were extremely positive and many students expressed their desire for a similar event in the future.

July 2011

July 9 - **The Sandlot** (1993, 101 minutes)

The Sandlot is a 1993 American comedy-drama sports film about a group of young baseball players during the summer of 1962. The film was filmed in Utah and directed by David M. Evans. It was released with the title *The Sandlot Kids* in Australia and the United Kingdom.

July 16 - **Apollo 13** (1995, 84 minutes)

Apollo 13 is a 1995 American drama film directed by Ron Howard. The film stars Tom Hanks, Kevin Bacon, Bill Paxton, Gary Sinise, Kathleen Quinlan and Ed Harris. The screenplay by William Broyles, Jr. and Al Reinert, that dramatizes the 1970 Apollo 13 lunar mission, is an adaptation of the book *Lost Moon* by astronaut Jim Lovell (the story's primary protagonist) and Jeffrey Kluger.

July 23 - **Percy Jackson & Olympians** (2010, 118 minutes)

Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief is a 2010 fantasy-adventure film directed by Chris Columbus. The film is loosely based on *The Lightning Thief*, the first novel in the Percy Jackson & The Olympians series by Rick Riordan. It stars Logan Lerman as Percy Jackson alongside an ensemble cast that includes Brandon T. Jackson, Alexandra Daddario, Jake Abel, Rosario Dawson, Steve Coogan, Uma Thurman, Catherine Keener, Kevin McKidd, Sean Bean and Pierce Brosnan.

July 30 - **The Music Man** (1962, 150 minutes)

The Music Man is a 1962 musical film starring Robert Preston as Harold Hill and Shirley Jones as Marian Paroo. The film is based on the 1957 Broadway musical of the same name by Meredith Willson. The film was one of the biggest hits of the year and highly acclaimed critically. In 2005, *The Music Man* was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant".

Reviews were drawn from www.wikipedia.org

Movies start promptly at 3:30pm every Saturday. Seating is limited and is first-come, first-served. Please contact the American Center at amcentersl@state.gov or at (11) 249-8146 with any questions.



Hubert Humphrey Fellowships for 2012-2013

The US-SLFC invites applications from suitable candidates for the Hubert Humphrey Fellowships for 2012-2013 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
- Law and Human Rights
- Natural Resources/Environmental Policy/Climate Change
- Public Health Policy and Management
- Public Policy Analysis and Public Administration
- Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (Teacher Training or Curriculum Development)
- Technology Policy and Management
- Trafficking in Persons, Policy and Prevention
- Urban and Regional Planning

The Hubert Humphrey Fellowship is specially designed for mid-career professionals to enable them to participate in a ten-month non-degree program of academic coursework and professional internship. In order to be eligible for a Humphrey Fellowship, applicants should:

1. Be citizens of Sri Lanka.
2. Possess a 4-year Bachelor's (special) Degree. Preference will be given to those with post-graduate qualifications.
3. Have a minimum of five years of professional experience by the 1st of October, 2011.
4. Be able to display personal initiative and an interest in the policies pertaining to their fields.
5. Be proficient in both written and spoken English.
6. Be below the age of 50 years by the 1st of October, 2011.

Applicants are encouraged to collect the application form from www.fulbrightsrilanka.com or by writing to soraya@fulbrightsrilanka.com

The U.S.-SL Fulbright Commission
22 Flower Terrace, Colombo 7
Tel: 011 2564176

Closing date for receipt of applications is Thursday, June 30th, 2011. Only candidates short-listed for interviews will be notified.

Join the Fulbright Alumni Association of Sri Lanka (FAASL)

The United States-Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission is proud to launch the Fulbright Alumni Association of Sri Lanka (FAASL), which will draw together scholars, both American and Sri Lankan, who made their "Fulbright journey" under the Commission's auspices.

The Fulbright Alumni Association of Sri Lanka (FAASL) will be a network that will give alumni the opportunity to share their experiences and to draw from the wide base of knowledge, skills and resources that such a diverse academic and professional community will offer.

During its existence of over 50 years, the US-SLFC is proud to have provided more than 800 scholarship opportunities for Sri Lankan and American Scholars. The scholars who made the journey to each other's shores have been the recipients of a unique opportunity to understand and appreciate the nuances of the cultures of each country. This experience will be the common ground on which the Fulbright Alumni Association of Sri Lanka (FAASL) will help renew ties and foster new friendships.

You can download the membership application form from the Fulbright Commission's website at http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com/?page_id=605

<http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com>

U.S. Independence Day a Civic and Social Event



Americans mark the Fourth of July with parades, concerts, fireworks and other festive activities.

The United States celebrates its Independence Day on July 4, a day of patriotic celebration and family events throughout the country. In the words of Founding Father John Adams, the holiday would be "the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance. ... It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more."

The Fourth of July holiday is a major civic occasion, with roots deep in the Anglo-American tradition of political freedom.

A SUMMER HOLIDAY

Each year crowds of visitors flock to the National Mall — the grassy expanse between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument — for the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, which always takes place on two weekends overlapping the Fourth of July holiday.

Throughout the United States, Fourth of July fireworks displays are popular, from the spectacular exhibition on the National Mall to more modest fireworks shows in city parks across the land. In New York City, Macy's department store sponsors what it bills as the nation's largest July 4 fireworks display.

"The Fourth" is a family celebration. Picnics and barbecues are common. July is summer in the United States, and millions of Americans escape the heat at

beaches and other vacation spots. Independence Day is not among the legal holidays fixed on a Monday or Friday, but many employees use vacation time to create an extended weekend.

Construction of important public works sometimes begins on July 4. The Erie Canal, Washington Monument and Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (the nation's first) all broke ground on Independence Day. The date reflects a desire symbolically to stamp these projects as true civic improvements.

A CIVIC OCCASION

The Fourth of July is a time when elected officials and other public figures often give speeches extolling American traditions and values.

Independence Day has provided some of this nation's most stirring words of freedom. In 1788, Founding Father James Wilson addressed a Philadelphia gathering that was possibly the largest July 4 celebration in the young nation's history. He exhorted his fellow citizens to ratify the proposed Constitution. "A people, free and enlightened," he said, "establishing and ratifying a system of government ... A WHOLE PEOPLE exercising its first and greatest power -- performing an act of SOVEREIGNTY, ORIGINAL and UNLIMITED."

On July 4, 1852, the black journalist and abolitionist Frederick Douglass decried the evils of slavery, still prevalent in the American South at that time, but identified forces "drawing encouragement from the Declaration of Independence, the great principles it contains, and the genius of American Institutions in operation" that "must inevitably work The downfall of slavery."

Ninety years later, near the darkest moments of World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt reminded the nation that for the "weary, hungry, unequipped Army of the American Revolution ... the Fourth of July was a tonic of hope and inspiration. So is it now.... The tough, grim men who fight for freedom in this dark hour take heart in its message -- the assurance of the right to liberty under God -- for all peoples and races and groups and nations, everywhere in the world."

Across the nation, civic leaders of even the most humble station echo these words, and their audiences give thanks for the freedom and liberties that the founding generation won for all Americans.

Source: www.america.gov

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 three age categories 12-14 years, 15-16 years and 17-18 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 Corners in Kandy and Oluvil, 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 US Ambassador. A prize giving ceremony will be held at the American Center Colombo every two months.

The Eisenhower Fellowships Association of Sri Lanka has co-sponsored this month's competition. The association will provide cash awards of Rs. 30,000, Rs.20,000, and Rs. 10,000 for first, second and third place respectively in each of the age groups.

Essay topics for June-August are as follows :

Commemorating President Eisenhower

12-14 years: President Eisenhower was well known as a good leader in both the political and military arenas. What lessons can you learn from his life in becoming future leaders? (500 words)

15-16 years: Dwight D Eisenhower was the thirty-fourth president of the United States of America, serving from 1953 to 1961. He was very concerned with promoting peace and equality. In 1959, President Eisenhower had the first-ever meeting between an American President and Soviet leader. Discuss his role as a promoter of peace while serving as the president. (750 words)

17-18 years: Choose any quotation made by President Dwight D Eisenhower and explain why it is important for today's youth in Sri Lanka. (1000 words)

Please see the Junior Observer of the Sunday Observer for more details.

Using Music and Drama in the Classroom



Students doing a role-play encouraged by Outreach Officer, Hector Gonzalez at the American Corner in Jaffna

On June 15, 2011 the American Corner Jaffna hosted an event titled 'Using Music and Drama in the Class Room' by the Outreach Officer, Hector Gonzalez of the U.S. Embassy for school students in Jaffna. This interactive program was attended by forty-eight students from five schools who were

accompanied by their teachers. The session was translated into Tamil by Mr. Baskar for the benefit of those who were not fluent in English.

Mr. Gonzalez' has a degree in playwriting from New York University. He has written and directed two plays for children, as well as two short films.

The students enjoyed the interactive session led by Mr. Gonzalez who encouraged them to perform impromptu and do role-plays. This interactive program provided Jaffna students the exposure on American perspective in the use music and drama in the classroom effectively.

The students had much fun and the session also enabled them to communicate freely their experiences in their community.

Film Screenings at the American Center

July 2011 - A Journey through American History

July 5 - 1776 (1972, 166 minutes)

Historically informative but playful musical about the signing of the Declaration of independence. Much of the dialogue comes from diaries, letters, and memoirs written by the actual historical figures; the singing and dancing, however, probably doesn't.

July 12 - Beloved (1998, 172 minutes)

Ghosts, literally and figuratively, haunt a former slave in the years following the Civil War. Based on Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, directed by Academy Award winner Jonathan Demme, and starring Oprah Winfrey and Danny Glover.

July 19 - Ragtime (1981, 156 minutes)

American plunges headfirst into the twentieth century in this colorful film from Academy Award-winning director Milos Forman. Screen legend James Cagney came out of retirement to take a role in the film. The film was nominated for Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay.

July 26 - All the King's Men (1949, 109 minutes)

Inspired by the life of Louisiana governor Huey Long, this classic film follows the transformation of an idealistic young lawyer into a corrupt politician and demagogue. John Wayne turned down the lead role when he deemed it unpatriotic to criticize the government; today the film is considered a milestone in cinema and was added to the Library of Congress's National Film Registry in 2001. All the King's Men was the 36th film to get more than six Academy Awards nominations. It was the Winner of 3 Academy Awards.

Reviews were drawn from www.amazon.com

Movies start promptly at 6:00pm every Tuesday. Seating is limited and is first-come, first-served. Please contact the American Center at amcentersl@state.gov or at (11) 249-8146 with any questions. Entrance free !

