



American Center Newsletter

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American Center

Colombo

May 2009

American Center In Action

American Center awards young writers from around the country in the "Learn About America" Essay Competition



Jeff Anderson, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy Colombo presents awards and certificates

In January 2009, the American Center introduced an Essay Competition titled "Learn About America" in coordination with the Junior Observer of the Sunday Observer to encourage young Sri Lankan writers to research America, its culture, people and values and share their thoughts with the Embassy. The monthly essay topics are divided into three age categories: 12-14 years, 15-16 years and 17-18 years, and each age group is given a different topic related to the United States. The American Center was overwhelmed to

receive hundreds of essays each month from students from all geographical areas in Sri Lanka and representing all ethnic groups.

In January and February, a panel of judges from the U. S. Embassy evaluated the essays and chose the first three winners for each age group in each month based on their originality, creativity and quality of writing.

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The American Center Celebrates Earth Day 2009 with a Lecture on Eco-Tourism



Mr. Ajanthan Shantiratnam speaks on developments of eco-tourism in Sri Lanka

In celebration of Earth Day 2009 on April 22, the American Center organized a presentation titled "The Development of Eco-tourism in Sri Lanka."

The presentation was connected with American Corner in Kandy through a Digital Video Conference (DVC).

The speakers were Mr. Ajanthan Shantiratnam and Mr. Kumar Senaratne of Jetwing Hotels, Sri Lanka. The speakers discussed the topic in regards to their experience working with Jetwing Eternal Earth Project developed for school children in Hunnas Falls in the Kandy district. The lecture was well attended with 25 participants in Colombo, including key persons in the environmental sector, hoteliers and youth who are interested in environment and eco-tourism.

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Upcoming Events

Artist of the Month Exhibition



Sarbjit Kaur, will display her paintings at the American Center from May 12th to June 12th, 2009.

Sarbjit Kaur hails from Pune, India. Having moved to Sri Lanka in 2006 she felt inspired to communicate her feelings, experiences and ideas through line and colour. Self-taught, she captures and translates the world around her onto canvas and paper using oils, watercolours and acrylic.

American Center and American Corners celebrate Earth Day



Students of the South Eastern University viewing the Earth Day 2009 poster on display at the American Corner in Oluvil

Earth Day is celebrated each year in the United States on April 22. The day is marked with

events to build awareness and appreciation for the environment and serves as a time to assess the work still needed to protect the natural gifts of our planet.

The U.S. Embassy donated sets of Earth Day posters to several institutes including the Central Environment Authority, University of Peradeniya, National Botanic Gardens, several schools, public and national libraries and the American Corners in Kandy and Oluvil, to mark the World Earth Day. The posters, which feature the theme of Pollinators and Pollination, describes the importance and need to protect pollinators, their role in agriculture, and the mystery of Colony Collapse Disorders in the bee population.

American Corner Kandy film screening for students of University of Peradeniya



On April 24, 2009 the American Corner Kandy screened 'The Color Purple' for the undergraduates of the English Department of University of Peradeniya.

The American Corner Coordinator I.M. Imthiyas organized the screening in consultation with Prof. Walter Perera who selected the award winning American film relevant for the English department students.

Learn about America. . . .

The Award Ceremony for the January and February Essay Competitions was held on April 27, 2009 at the American Center Auditorium and Mr. Jeff Anderson, Director of Press and Cultural Affairs, presented the awards to winners.

The top three winners in each age group category were awarded a certificate signed by Robert Blake, Ambassador to Sri Lanka, a selection of American literature, and a lifetime membership to American Center Library. The winners, together with their parents, family

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members, some school principals, Mr. Dinesh Weerawansa, editor of the Sunday Observer and Mrs. Marian Perera, editor of the Junior Observer, and Mrs. Kathleen Fox, Assistant Public Affairs Officer were present at this event. Winners will be highlighted in an upcoming issue of the Junior Observer.

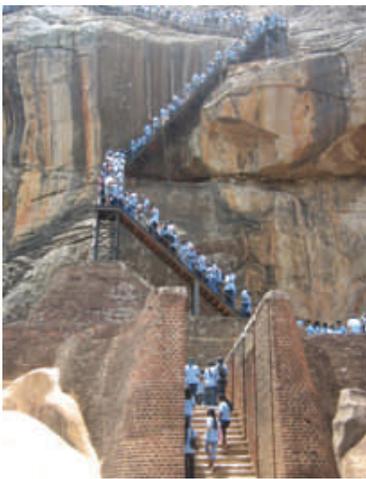
Photo gallery of winners available online at: http://photos.state.gov/galleries/srilanka/27226/essay_awards/



[Visit U.S. Embassy Colombo Facebook](#)

An American sail maker finds a home berth in Sri Lanka

As tourists arrive in Sri Lanka and peer out onto the sea from their hotel rooms, they may well imagine sailing on the lovely Indian ocean, but recreational sailing is not a common sight in Sri Lanka. Yet for the North Marine Group of Milford, Connecticut and its company North Sails, Sri Lanka is the best place on earth for manufacturing top quality sails and sailing products. Though it might appear to be a strange collaboration, for over 25 years the project has been pretty smooth sailing.



Members of the North Sails team climb Sigiriya on a company outing.

What started as a small sail loft in downtown San Diego is today the world's leading sail maker with operations in over 29 countries, producing technologically sophisticated, top performance sailing equipment. North Sails in Sri Lanka is one of the company's best success stories. Apart from its corporate accomplishments, the

company serves as a bridge between the two countries, combining the entrepreneurial values of the United States with the intellectual capital of Sri Lanka.

"Innovation and a positive, winning attitude" were the qualities passed down from the company's founder, Lowell North, from its inception in 1958. These qualities have become an integral part of the philosophy that drives the company's branches around the world. In Sri Lanka, it all began in 1984 when Eckhart Wagner, President of the North Sails Windsurfing (NSW) pioneered sail making in the country with the creation of NS Lanka in Katunayake. In the early 90's this division was sold out of the North Sails Group as its product line did not match the strategic goals of the company at that time. Soon thereafter, in 1996, Wagner founded a new sail making company called North Manufacturing.

At its inception, North Manufacturing Pvt. Ltd had a mere handful of employees. From an

operational aspect, start up was not easy as these were products that were not common to Sri Lankans. One of the first realizations for senior management was to move away from treating sail manufacturing as an art and develop a well-defined manufacturing process flow. Tom Whidden, CEO of North Sails noted that the prior successful manufacturing of windsurf sails in Sri Lanka proved to the North Managers that Sri Lanka's quality could not be beaten by any sail loft in the Western world. North Sails continues to invest in Sri Lanka due to the strong capabilities of its Sri Lankan work force and in order to offer its clients a high level of quality and the ability to grow quickly as necessary. Inexpensive labor, while an advantage, is not the reason why North Sails stays in Sri Lanka.

Today, North Sails' presence in Sri Lanka has grown to six facilities with over 850 employees and is now expanding in Biyagama for an even stronger future. Its operations and products are diverse: North Sails 3DL Lanka manufactures 3 dimensional sails using robotics and automation. Southern Spars International manufactures carbon fiber masts and rigging for boats. The original enterprise, North Manufacturing remains its largest operation, producing a diversified collection of marine accessories including bags, covers, flags and sports medicine products, along with every possible type and size of boat sail used internationally today.

Many of the sails for the world's leading racing products are manufactured right here in Sri Lanka. These include the downwind sails for the Italian "+39 Challenge team" boat that competed in 2007 Louis Vuitton Cup races, the qualifying series for the final 2007 America's Cup race. Downwind sails are made from specially designed Nylon fabric meeting specifications for racing sails. North Sails Group has powered ten of eleven teams that competed in recent Louis Vuitton Cup/America's Cup races. North Manufacturing has also been the primary supplier for Tour de France a la Voile, one of France's premier sailing events held each year, while Southern Spars is the sole global producer of Masts for the 49er Olympic Class dinghy.

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A Regional Center for Energy Efficient Lighting in Sri Lanka



Minister of Power and Energy Hon. W.D.J. Seneviratne and U.S. Embassy Charge d'Affaires James Moore chat after opening a two-day workshop on energy efficient lighting.

The U.S. Agency for International Development, partnered with the Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority (SLSEA) and the Lighting Research Center USA to create the new lighting center, known as the Regional

Center for Energy Efficient Lighting in Sri Lanka (RCEEL), the first of its kind in South Asia. The partnership also designed a workshop to promote energy efficient lighting technology, find innovative ways to apply new technologies, and encourage new investment in research and development.

U.S. Embassy Charge d'Affaires James Moore, Minister of Power and Energy Hon. W.D.J. Seniviratne, and Sustainable Energy Authority

Chairman Dr. Krishan Deheragoda officially opened the two-day workshop. The workshop brought together experts in lighting technology from the United States, Sri Lanka, and other countries in South Asia to help increase access to electricity, seen as a critical factor in economic development in the region.

USAID provided up to \$800,000 (Rs 95.063 million) of initial funding for the Regional Center through its South Asia Regional Initiative for Energy (SARI/E) program. SARI/E promotes more efficient regional energy resource utilization, works toward transparent and profitable energy practices, mitigates the environmental impacts of energy production, and increases regional access to energy. SARI/E countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The Lighting Research Center (LRC) is the primary knowledge partner for the RCEEL and plans to provide technical knowledge, training and guidance on RCEEL activities. The LRC is part of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute of Troy, New York, and is a leading university-based research center devoted to lighting.

U.S. Government program strengthens local authorities in the East



Susan Ward, Head of the SuRG, presents the official agreement to Mr. S.Soundararajah, Chairman of the Verugal PS

April 30, 2009
The U.S. Agency for International Development is funding a two-year program called Supporting Regional Governance (SuRG) to strengthen local governance in conflict-affected areas of the East.

Participating local authorities from the Eastern Province recently signed a memorandum of understanding with SuRG to launch the partnership.

USAID started the SuRG program to help local authorities in the East administer their activities more effectively and respond to the needs of their

communities. In 2009, SuRG will work with 11 local authorities to increase public participation in local decision making, improve transparency in local government, and strengthen the relationships between different levels of government and elected officials. SuRG will expand the program in 2010 and work with an additional 14 local authorities from Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa District.

SuRG will provide training and technical assistance to Pradeshiya Sabha and Urban Council chairmen and elected officials, along with administrative staff. This program has received the support of the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils and the Eastern Provincial Council Department of Local Government and its representatives, the Commissioner for Local Government Eastern Province and the District Assistant Commissioners of Local Government.

SuRG will also train community groups on the roles and responsibilities of local authorities and the ways citizens can engage with officials to address community needs.

Free Group Advising for the Month of May

At Kandy American Corner :

Wednesday 6th 11:00 am - 1:30 pm

Individual Appointments.

2:30 pm onwards

Orientation Program as needed or Individual Appointments.

Thursday 7th 8:30 am - 10:30 am

Individual Appointments.

10:30 am - 1:30 pm

Orientation Program as needed or Individual Appointments.

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Special session / Writing a winning application essay / Financial aid awareness program as needed or Individual Appointments.

*American Corner, 1st Floor,
D.S. Senanayake Memorial Public Library
Kandy
Phone: 081 222 3716*

**THE UNITED STATES-SRI LANKA
FULBRIGHT COMMISSION**

Presents

A Seminar on

THE U.S. STUDENT VISA (F1)

Guest Speaker

Consular Officer

American Embassy, Colombo

Wednesday May 20th, 2009

From 3.00

(Signing-in begins at 2.45 p.m.)

At

US-SL FULBRIGHT COMMISSION AUDITORIUM
22, FLOWER TERRACE, COLOMBO 7

Charges: NONE

(Please register early, as accommodation is limited)

Contact

**2564153/2564176 or
studentadvisingsl@gmail.com**

An American sail maker

But it is not just about business.

North Sails is committed to fulfilling its corporate social responsibilities, particularly in developing the Biyagama-Malwana area. They look for employees from the local area to join their team and provide them with a sense of ownership in the company. Employees are supported by company-provided annual medical examinations, including special support for those who are vulnerable to medical risks. One of the initiatives contributing to the development of the immediate area is a mission for the development and support of an orphanage consisting of 32 orphans. North supports the orphans in education, health, sanitation, training and development, and encourages its employees to get involved in these programs.

Religion plays an important role in the day-to-day life of a Sri Lankan, and at North Sails religious

From page 3

beliefs and customs are a respected tradition. Among these are the annual *pirith* chanting ceremony and religious pilgrimage to Mahiyanganaya. The employees and local community enthusiastically join in the ceremonies every year and participating expatriates find that these events give them a deeper understanding of the Sri Lankan culture and beliefs.

Ultimately the strength of North Manufacturing is its people. North Sails strives to be the best in the world in whatever it does, and believes that its strength lies in empowering its employees to respond to challenges and manage change. By offering abundant training and developmental opportunities to its employees, it enables them to grow and lead. And in the process of doing so, North Sails continues to be a beacon of friendship and economic cooperation between Sri Lanka and America.

Attacking Journalists Hurts All Society, Democracy Advocates Say



The Committee to Protect Journalists reports that 41 journalists were killed and 125 were imprisoned in 2008.

Media rights activists comment on World Press Freedom Day

If journalists are persecuted, imprisoned or killed, society as a whole is the victim, say media and democracy

advocates speaking in advance of World Press Freedom Day.

The United Nations highlighted the importance of a free media by establishing World Press Freedom Day in 1993, setting aside May 3 each year to remember slain and imprisoned journalists. This year's theme is the safety of journalists.

Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Karen Stewart told America.gov that "by attacking journalists you are attacking a very basic fundamental of a free society," the right of citizens to have free and open access to information.

"And without those freedoms you cannot have democracy," the former ambassador to Belarus said April 27. In Belarus, "the embassy worked very hard to support journalists in very trying, repressive circumstances with programs like legal assistance training and funding of external radio operations."

An independent media brings transparency and accountability to government — indispensable elements for a healthy economy as well as democracy, Stewart said.

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists reports that in 2008 some 41 journalists were killed while doing their jobs and 125 were imprisoned. A new trend, according to the organization, is "the arrest of Internet journalists — bloggers, Web-based reporters and online editors [who] now account for more than one-third of the journalists jailed around the globe."

Don Podesta, consulting manager and editor for the Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA), a part of the National Endowment for

Democracy (NED), also highlighted the importance of journalistic freedom.

Podesta, a former Washington Post reporter and foreign correspondent in South America, said Americans "have to promote free and independent media around the world, and that means protecting journalists, because you can't have robust democracies without them — it's that simple."

CIMA's main goal, Podesta said, is "to help journalists in the developing world by providing information, networks and research on the important role of media in sustaining democracies around the world."

A 2008 report compiled by CIMA/NED called "Empowering Independent Media" states that in many political settings, "violence against journalists is prevalent."

Some of the reasons for this include:

- Media laws are often weak and selectively enforced.
- Governments control and censor the media.
- Cooperation for access to information is lacking.
- Too few lawyers are willing to defend or protect journalists.

Carl Gershman, president of the NED, said, "If journalists are being harassed and even killed with impunity, then nothing we [nongovernmental organizations] do to improve their professionalism will be enough to ensure a free press."

The danger for the press, especially investigative reporters, is "greater today than ever, especially in Somalia, Iraq and Russia," Gershman said. "It is a difficult time with a lot of repression from governments fighting what they see as threats from an independent media."

As a show of bipartisan support for international press freedom, U.S. lawmakers set up the Congressional Caucus for Freedom of the Press in May 2006. The aim of the caucus is to advance press freedom worldwide by combating censorship and the persecution of journalists.

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Attacking Journalists. . . .

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The caucus is co-chaired by Senator Richard Lugar (Republican of Indiana), Senator Chris Dodd (Democrat of Connecticut), Representative Adam Schiff (Democrat of California) and Representative Mike Pence (Republican of Indiana).

In a press release, Dodd said, "Journalists and representatives of the press are on the front lines of freedom of information. When they are harmed or intimidated, the victim is not only them but democracy."

Schiff said, "Where there is no freedom of the press, there is no freedom." He added, "Journalists should not have to work in fear of governments throwing them in jail or harming them or their families simply for doing their job."

Read also "[Journalism Under Siege](http://www.america.gov/journalism-siege.html)"
<http://www.america.gov/journalism-siege.html>

Source: www.america.gov

Workshop for English teachers in Maldives



April 15-16, English Language Fellow, Daniel Ringold, conducted a 10-hour workshop series at Jalaluddin Secondary School on Kulhudhuffushi island in Northern Maldives.

22 English language teachers from 4 schools in the region participated in the workshops that focused on teaching methodology for a student-centered classroom.

**Room to Read & the American Center Present a Public Lecture Series
on
"Education - Investing in Future Generations"**

Topic : Importance of Teacher Training in order to Improve the Quality of Education

Speakers : **Mr. Subir Shukla**
Consultant to the Ministry of Education India
Dr. Karen Castagno
Associate Dean for Teacher Education, Rhode Island College,
United States (linked via Digital Video Conference)

Date : 5th May from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Venue : American Center Auditorium, Colombo 3

All interested parties are welcome!

RSVP: 011-2498106, 011-2498163 [Seating is limited]

Monthly Essay Competition



Learn about
America

ESSAY COMPETITION



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 publishing in Junior Observer of the Sunday Observer.

The monthly essay topic is given under 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 are asked to write an essay with 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 other sources like the Internet. [America.gov](http://www.america.gov) is a very good internet resource with lots of 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, as well as lifetime membership to the American Center Library as well as 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 May are as follows :

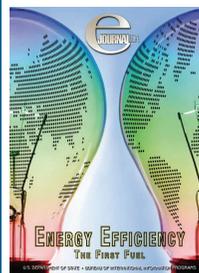
12-14 years : How has NASA contributed towards space exploration? How is space exploration important for the future? (500 words)

15-16 years : How does the United States help developing countries to improve lives and strengthen communities through international aid? Why is this important to countries like Sri Lanka? (750 words)

17-18 years : What are the similarities and differences between the higher education systems in the US and Sri Lanka? What lessons can they share? (1000 words)

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

eJournalUSA



Energy Efficiency: The First Fuel

Electronic Journal of the US Department of State

April 2009

Increasing the efficient use of existing energy supplies is widely acknowledged as the fastest, cheapest, and cleanest way to meet future energy needs. Energy Efficiency: The First Fuel examines the strong U.S. record of tapping efficiency as a resource, and the accelerated efforts by individuals, organizations, and governments to squeeze greater productivity from all energy sources.

Web access : <http://www.america.gov/media/pdf/ejs/0409.pdf#popup>

Lecture on Eco-tourism . . From page 1



Audience in Colombo

Kandy also had good attendance. The audience in Kandy interacted with the speaker during the Q&A session and were appreciative of the benefit of participating in programs conducted at the American Center in Colombo. This is the third public lecture in a monthly series of public lectures organized by the American Center.



Audience in Kandy

Every Thursday at 2.30pm

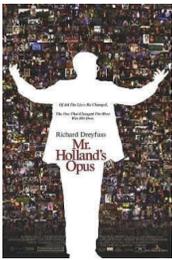
Entrance free!



May 7 - The Wizard of Oz (1939, Running time: 101 minutes)

The third and definitive film adaptation of L. Frank Baum's 1900 children's fantasy, this musical adventure is a genuine family classic that made Judy Garland a star for her heartfelt performance as Dorothy Gale, an orphaned young girl unhappy with her drab black-and-white existence on her aunt and uncle's dusty Kansas farm. Dorothy yearns to travel "over the rainbow" to a different world, and she gets her wish when a tornado whisks her and her little dog, Toto, to the Technicolorful land of Oz. Having offended the Wicked Witch of the West (Margaret Hamilton), Dorothy is protected from the old crone's wrath by the ruby slippers that she wears. At the suggestion of Glinda, the Good Witch of the North (Billie Burke), Dorothy heads down the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City, where dwells the all-powerful Wizard of Oz, who might be able to help the girl return to Kansas.

Won 2 Oscars. Another 4 wins & 8 nominations



May 14 - Mr. Holland's Opus (1996, Running time: 143 minutes)

A teacher belatedly discovers just how important his job really is in this emotional drama. Glenn Holland (Richard Dreyfuss) is a man with a deep love of music and a desire to write at least one piece of lasting significance. However, playing piano in cocktail lounges while he works on his own compositions doesn't pay the bills, so in 1965 he reluctantly accepts a job as a high school music teacher. Over the next 30 years, Holland is able to teach a great deal about both music and life to thousands of kids who pass through the various classes he leads and school bands he directs; however, he finds it easier to reach his students than his son Cole who is deaf, which drives a wedge between Glenn and his wife Iris (Glenne Headly). Mr. Holland's Opus is a showcase for a fine Oscar nominated performance by Dreyfuss and an engaging, heartwarming story.



May 21 - Stand and Deliver (1988, Running time: 103 minutes)

Edward James Olmos portrays the real-life Jaime Escalante, a no-nonsense mathematics teacher in a tough East LA high school. Given a classroom full of "losers" and "unteachables," Escalante is determined to turn his young charges' lives around. Drawing from his own cultural heritage, Escalante forms a bond with his largely Hispanic student body, by invoking the names of famous Spaniards and Latin Americans whose great accomplishments were predicated on their ability to learn. The students gradually come to realize that the only way they'll escape their own poverty stricken barrio is to improve themselves intellectually. As a result, the class' academic achievements soar dramatically, too dramatically for the Educational Testing Service, which is convinced that the class' high test scores are the results of cheating. The triumphant exoneration of Escalante's students provides Stand and Deliver with its rousingly upbeat conclusion.



May 28 - A League of their Own (1992, Running time: 116 minutes)

To achieve the incredible you have to attempt the impossible. Penny Marshall's popular 1992 comedy sheds light on a little-known chapter of American sports history with its story of a struggling team in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. The league was formed when the recruiting of soldiers during World War II resulted in a shortage of men's baseball teams. The AAGPBL continued after the war (until 1954), and Marshall's movie depicts the league in full swing, It's a conventional Hollywood sports story but the stellar cast is delightful, and the movie's filled with memorable moments, witty dialogue, and agreeable sentiment.

Reviews drawn from MSN movies, All Movie Guide and IMDB

For more details about after school movie screenings : Tel: 2498146 E-mail : amcentersl@state.gov

May 2009 - Academy award winning films

Every Tuesday
at 6.00pm

May 12 - Slumdog Millionaire (2008, 120 minutes)

Accused of cheating and desperate to prove his innocence, an eighteen-year-old orphan from the slums of Mumbai reflects back on his tumultuous life while competing to win 20 million rupees on India's Who Wants to Be a Millionaire in Danny Boyle's inspirational drama. Jamal Malik (Dev Patel) may not have a penny to his name, but that could all change in a matter of hours. He's one question away from taking the top prize on India's most popular television game show, but as with everything else in Jamal's life, it isn't going to be easy. Arrested by police under suspicion of cheating, Jamal is interrogated by the authorities. The police simply can't believe that a common "slumdog" could possibly possess the knowledge to get this far in the game, and in order to convince them of how he gained such knowledge, Jamal begins reflecting back on his childhood. As young boys, Jamal and his older brother, Salim, lived in squalor, and lost their mother in a mob attack on Muslims. Subsequently forced to rely on their own wits to survive, the desperate siblings fell back on petty crime, eventually befriending adorable yet feisty young Latika as they sought out food and shelter on the unforgiving streets of Mumbai. Though life on the streets was never easy, Jamal's experiences ultimately instilled in him the knowledge he needed to answer the tough questions posed to him on Who Wants to Be a Millionaire. And though Jamal makes a convincing case for himself, one question still remains: why would a young man with no apparent desire for wealth or fame be so determined to win big on a national game show? Of course, it won't be long until everyone finds out the answer to this burning question, because as Jamal sits down to find out whether he will be rich beyond his wildest dreams, 60 million viewers remain transfixed to their televisions eager to see if he'll correctly answer the final question.

Won 8 Oscars, another 76 wins and 28 nominations .

May 19 - Crash (2004, 112 minutes)

Issues of race and gender cause a group of strangers in Los Angeles to physically and emotionally collide in this drama from director and screenwriter Paul Haggis. Graham (Don Cheadle) is a police detective whose brother is a street criminal, and it hurts him to know his mother cares more about his ne'er-do-well brother than him. Graham's partner is Ria (Jennifer Esposito), who is also his girlfriend, though she has begun to bristle at his emotional distance, as well as his occasional insensitivity over the fact he's African-American and she's Hispanic. Rick (Brendan Fraser) is an L.A. district attorney whose wife, Jean (Sandra Bullock), makes little secret of her fear and hatred of people unlike herself. Jean's worst imaginings about people of color are confirmed when her SUV is carjacked by two African-American men -- Anthony (Chris Bridges, aka Ludacris), who dislikes white people as much as Jean hates blacks, and Peter (Larenz Tate), who is more open minded. Cameron (Terrence Howard) is a well-to-do African-American television producer with a beautiful wife, Christine (Thandie Newton).

Won 3 Oscars, another 42 wins and 66 nominations.

May 26 - Million Dollar Baby (2005, 132 minutes)

Frankie Dunn (Clint Eastwood) is a veteran boxing trainer who has devoted his life to the ring and has precious little to show for it; his daughter never answers his letters, and a fighter he's groomed into contender status has paid him back by signing with another manager, leaving Frankie high and dry. His best friend and faithful employee Eddie Dupris is a former fighter who Frankie trained. In his last fight, Eddie suffered a severe injury, a fact that brings Frankie great guilt. One day, Maggie Fitzgerald enters Frankie's life, as well as his gym, and announces she needs a trainer. Frankie regards her as a dubious prospect, and isn't afraid to tell her why: he doesn't think much of women boxing, she's too old at 31, she lacks experience, and has no technique. However, Maggie sees boxing as the one part of her life that gives her meaning and won't give up easily. Finally won over by her determination, Frankie takes on Maggie, and as she slowly grows into a viable fighter, an emotional bond develops between them. When a tragedy befalls one of the three characters, each comes to a decision that shows how the relationships in the film have changed them.

Won 4 Oscars, another 45 wins and 29 nominations.

Reviews drawn from MSN movies, All Movie Guide and Encarta

