



American Center Newsletter

★ ★ The ★ ★

American Center

Colombo

June 2009

American Center In Action

American Center hosts educational program for Eastern students



U.S. Embassy, Room to Read and Asia Foundation officials pose with a section of students participated.

May 20, 2009: The American Center Colombo hosted a reading camp, film screening and day out for 85 Tamil medium students, aged 11-16 years, from six schools in the Batticaloa district of the Eastern Province. The visit was part of a 4-day educational visit to Colombo and Kandy organized by the Sri Lanka Army to promote peace and reconciliation. This is the fifth program that the American

Center involved with the Sri Lankan security forces in their educational tour program for children in the East.

The American Center, in collaboration with Room to Read (R2R) Sri Lanka organized various activities such as book readings, a film screening and book donations to entertain the students. Each child received a Room To Read backpack filled with books from R2R's local publishing project. The Asia Foundation was also involved in this 5th program, donating valuable set of books and materials for the libraries of the six schools that attended the program.

Continued on page 5

Digital Video Conference (DVC) series on Education



The audience included approximately 60 students, academics, senior education officials and Policy Makers.

US Embassy Colombo together with Room to Read organized the fifth installation of its ongoing DVC series on education.

Mr Subir Shukla, Former Chief Consultant to the Government of India, joined with Dr. Karen Constagno, Co-Director of the University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College. Mr. Shukla, who spoke in person at the American Center in Colombo, and Dr. Castagno, connected via DVC, discussed Sri

Lankan and U.S. perspectives on Student Centered Learning program and participatory learning.

Following the event, many participants commented on the value of the discussion and the education series, remarking that it provides opportunities to look at education challenges with different perspectives and the possibility to form connections with American educators.

The American Center
Office of Public Diplomacy

US Embassy
44 Galle Road
Colombo 3
Sri Lanka

Telephone: 2498100

Telefax: 2498101

Email: amcentersl@state.gov

Web: srilanka.usembassy.gov

Good Bye Ambassador Blake



Ambassador Robert Blake completed his three year term of office in Colombo as the U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka.

Mr. Blake began his work as the U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives on September 8, 2006.

He has served at American Embassies in Tunisia, Algeria, Nigeria and Egypt during his diplomatic career.

Prior coming to Sri Lanka, he worked as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S.

Continued on page 5

A Public Lecture on Global Economic Crisis



A section of intellectuals attended the presentation

The American Center hosted a lecture and discussion on the Global Economic Crisis with Mr. Hasitha Premaratne, Head of Corporate Finance at

Brandix Lanka (Pvt) Ltd., an American company in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Premaratne discussed the factors leading to the crisis and how Sri Lanka is being affected. The audience included students, economists, members of the business community and journalists. An audience at the American Corner in Kandy also participated in the program, via a digital video conference. The discussion was the fourth installment in the American Center's monthly forum that highlights issues important to the US and Sri Lanka.

Discussion on Narcotics Law Enforcement via DVC



"Mr. D.P. Mendis, Chairman, National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) in discussion with the panelist from Washington D.C. Participants listening attentively in the background are from Sri Lanka Anti-Narcotics Association, Police Narcotics Bureau and NDDCB"

The American Center hosted a discussion between a panel of U.S. State Department officials and senior government officers and an NGO representative from Sri Lanka on narcotics law enforcement.

Mr. John Lyle from the State Department outlined the history and the objectives of the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report. He also informed the audience of new trends detected in dangerous drugs in Afghanistan and Iran. The Sri Lankan panelists Mr. D.P. Mendis, Chairman of the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB), Ms. Darshini Guniyangoda, Director of Sri Lanka Anti-Narcotics Association (NGO) and Mr. Eric Perera, Director Police Narcotics Bureau described the achievements, data status and informed of improvements in operational and treatment methods used in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Mendis in particular informed that there was 20% to 25% success rate in the rehabilitation of the drug abusers in Sri Lanka. The need for better control measures were discussed in detail.

Cities of Excellence English Language teacher Training Peace-Building Pilot Project



Participants and sponsors celebrate the completion of a successful project

From May 11-29 2009, Senior English Language Fellows Daniel Ringold and Frances Westbrook led a three week English teacher training program that focused on developing English teachers' knowledge of current communicative and student-

centered teaching methods. The 30 active and devoted teachers came from various secondary schools in Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Jaffna, and Polonnaruwa to participate in the program. During their time in Colombo, the teachers participated in workshops, led teaching practicums, and developed their skills to become trainers of English teachers in their home regions.

In addition, the teachers followed activities and field trips to encourage peace-building between their communities. They also enjoyed a reception at the residence of DCM Mr. James Moore and a visit to the American Center for a film screening and library tour. The innovative program was a collaboration between the US Embassy, the Peace Secretariat, the Presidential Initiative for English and IT, the Ministry of Education, and UNESCO.

DynEd English Learning Program for university students in Oluvil



Students following the DynEd English Learning program

The American Corner Oluvil re-commenced the DynEd English Learning program on May 15, 2009 for the students of the South Eastern University in Oluvil, Ampara District.

The computer based DynEd English Language software until recently was not functioning and was re-installed on the initiative by the AIRC

in coordination with Mr. M.M. Rifaudeen, AC Coordinator. Mr. Rifaudeen organized a refresher teacher- training for the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) staff. Since then, 150 students have been enrolled for the DynEd program.

The DynEd program is very popular among the students who are mostly from the Eastern region of Sri Lanka and will help them in their education to a great extent. The DynEd program was launched in Sri Lanka with funding from USAID.

For more details contact:

Coordinator - American Corner
South Eastern University, Oluvil

Tel / Fax: (067) 2255160

American Corner screens "Barack Obama: Bio" for university students in Oluvil



The American Corner Coordinator Mr. Rifaudeen collaborated with the Faculty of

Political Science for the screening of the film 'Barack Obama: Bio' for students of the South Eastern University in Oluvil.

The film was screened on May 7, 2009 at the university auditorium which was well attended by nearly 70 undergraduates and some faculty members. As American politics is part of their curricula the undergraduates were happy to view the film.

Visit our American Corners



The American Corner
Kandy

The American Corner Kandy was established at the D.S. Senanayake Public Library as a cultural and information office for the people of Kandy. This is the only American Corner in the Central Province of Sri Lanka functioning as a resource center to the general public and more specifically to youth.

American Corner
First Floor,
D.S. Senanayake Public Library
Kandy
Tel: 081-222-3716



The American Corner
Oluvil

The American Corner was established at Oluvil to serve as a cultural and information center for the people of Ampara District. This is the only American Corner in the entire Eastern region of Sri Lanka functioning as a resource center to the general public and more specifically to youth.

American Corner
Main Library
South Eastern University
Oluvil
Tel: 067-225-5160

U.S. Government provides training scholarships for 500 youth in the East and North



USAID Mission Director Rebecca Cohn (right) presents an IT scholarship certificate to S. Vithyanathi of Batticaloa.

May 13, 2009: The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing training scholarships to 500 young people from the East and North through the Unlimited Potential Partnership program (UPP). Scholarships were awarded to 100 youth from Ampara, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Jaffna and Vavuniya districts.

USAID, the development agency of the U.S. Government, partnered with Microsoft and its UPP program to deliver high-quality technology instruction to students through a curriculum that is nationally recognized. Infoshare designed the curriculum for each of the four sectors and implements the program, while IDM delivers

technology instruction to the students. UPP also works with a host of other training partners including The Vocational Training Authority (VTA), MAS Institute of Management & Technology, Sri Lanka College of Journalism and other regional training institutes across the country.

This partnership demonstrates how the public sector can work collaboratively with private sector businesses to support economic opportunities in Sri Lanka.

UPP currently provides workforce training programs in three industries - apparel, media, and tourism, and courses in agriculture will begin soon. These four sectors account for roughly 39% of all jobs in Sri Lanka. And, as information and communication technology (ICT) is becoming increasingly important to these sectors, Sri Lankan companies require a workforce with strong IT skills to compete globally.

The goal of UPP is to establish the specially-designed ICT curriculum in more than 40 training centers across Sri Lanka, where UPP will train at least 11,250 people by February 2010. A total of 2000 scholarships will be available throughout Sri Lanka, with USAID providing 500 scholarships to youth in the East and North.

U.S. Government provides additional \$6 million in short-term relief to IDPs in northern Sri Lanka

May 12, 2009: The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), through the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), has donated \$6 million (Rs 720.5 million) for non-food aid assistance to provide short-term, life-saving interventions for IDPs in northern Sri Lanka. This is in addition to USAID's recent announcement of a \$15 million (Rs 1.8 billion) donation of food aid to the U.N. World Food Program.

USAID has granted the \$6 million to the United

Nations and non-governmental organizations. UNICEF has been given \$1.7 million (Rs 204.15 million) to support nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene projects in IDP centers across the North, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been granted \$880,866 (Rs 105.68 million) to support mobile health centers in Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya and areas of eastern Sri Lanka.

In addition, USAID provided \$3.5 million (Rs 420.26 million) to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) for an umbrella grant to quickly disburse funds for the most urgent humanitarian needs in the North and East.

The American people, through the U.S. Agency for International Development, have provided development and humanitarian assistance in developing countries worldwide for nearly 50 years. Since 1956, USAID/Sri Lanka has invested nearly \$2 billion to benefit all the people of Sri Lanka.

How to succeed in a U.S. University

(A Pre-departure Orientation on living and studying in the U.S. for undergraduate and postgraduate students departing to U.S. universities this fall)

- How do you maintain your F1 visa status?
- How can you survive your first year in U.S. society?
- What will U.S. academic institutions expect from you as a student/graduate and how can you avoid plagiarism, meet deadlines, and get good grades?
- How do you submit assignments/conduct research?
- How do you open a bank account, driving license etc?
- Meet returning Sri Lankan students and learn about their experiences

Learn all this and more before you leave for the U.S. this Fall from U.S. Embassy Consular Officers, U.S. Academics, and U.S. students in Sri Lanka. Learn about their experiences and ask them all the questions you have about living and studying in the U.S.

Date: July 17th, 2009
Venue: Taj Samudra Hotel
Time: 1:30 – 7:00 p.m.

For more information contact:

The US-SL Fulbright Commission
22, Flower Terrace, Colombo 7
Tel: 471-8744, 2564176, 2564153
Web: www.fulbrightsrilanka.com

American Center hosts *From page 1*



A memento was presented to outgoing Assistant Public Affairs Officer, Ms. Kathleen Fox by 23rd Division and Special Force

Eastern Command of the Sri Lanka Army who organize student visit programs from East, in appreciation of her contribution throughout the last year in making the program a success by hosting students at the American Center.

**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 June 17th, 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**

Good bye *From page 1*

Mission in New Delhi, India from 2003-2006.

He concluded his duties as the U.S. Ambassador for Sri Lanka and Maldives on May 20, 2009. On May 21, 2009, the U.S. Senate approved President Obama's nomination of Ambassador Blake to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, replacing Mr. Richard Boucher.

"Looking back on Sri Lanka's history, I don't know if I could have chosen a more eventful or defining three years to serve as Ambassador." said Mr. Blake during his final press conference." Ambassador Blake said in his final public remarks before leaving Sri Lanka. A complete transcript of this event can be found at: <http://srilanka.usembassy.gov/05-20-09.html>

We wish him all the very best in his new appointment!

Gay and Lesbian Pride Month Celebrates Diversity, Liberty



In New York's 2007 gay pride parade, participants carry a rainbow of colored balloons to symbolize diversity.

Events in 1969 New York's Greenwich Village launched a movement

In the United States, June is recognized as Gay and Lesbian Pride Month and, as in many other

diversity celebrations in the country, gays and lesbians celebrate their identity with events that include parades with colorful floats, marching bands and flags. At these events, parents, friends and families of gay Americans can often be found celebrating and supporting each other.

Although the annual parades in New York and Los Angeles on the last Sunday in June tend to get the most media attention, many communities around the nation hold parades, street festivals and educational, civic and social events. For many, Gay and Lesbian Pride Month is a time to celebrate diversity and civil liberties and rights.

Many workplace organizations acknowledge the contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) employees. One group, Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies (for employees of the U.S. Department of State, the World Bank and the Peace Corps, among others), hosts events on workplace equity and legal issues. According to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, nearly 90 percent of U.S. Fortune 500 companies (those with the highest revenues) have policies that include workplace protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation. The foundation reports that more than half of those large companies provide same-sex partner benefits.

There is no federal law to protect gays or lesbians from workplace discrimination. A 1998 executive order signed by the president instructs all federal agencies to prohibit discrimination in employment because of sexual orientation.

Historical Roots of Gay and Lesbian Pride Month

The first gay pride parade was held in 1970 on the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion.

The Stonewall Rebellion, on June 28, 1969, in New York City, is widely considered to be the beginning of the modern gay and lesbian civil rights movement, not only in the United States but around the world. The National Park Service's Statement of Significance for the Stonewall Inn describes what happened. "In a pattern of raids and harassment of gay establishments, the New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn on the early morning of June 28, 1969. The reaction of the bar's patrons and of the neighborhood crowd that assembled in the street was not typical of such raids, however. Instead of quietly dispersing, as police had come to expect, the crowd rioted as arrests of employees and patrons of the Stonewall Inn were made. This raid and the riot that ensued led to demonstrations and conflicts with the police outside the Stonewall Inn, in Christopher Park, and along neighboring streets until July 3, 1969."

By the 25th anniversary, an estimated 500,000 people participated in the New York parade.

The Stonewall Rebellion is the "watershed moment" in the history of the modern gay and lesbian civil rights movement, according to Andrew Dolkart, a Columbia University architecture professor and preservationist who helped prepare the Stonewall Inn's nomination for National Landmark status. "Stonewall marked the first time that gays and lesbians as a group forcefully and vocally asserted their rights to equality under the law. The events of Stonewall opened the door for millions of gay and lesbian Americans to begin pressing for full and equal civil rights. Indeed, within a few short years of Stonewall, thousands of gay and lesbian civil rights organizations had sprung up all across America."

Controversial Issue

Gay rights is a controversial topic in the United States. Some American politicians from across the political spectrum march in the parades to show their sympathy with the gay community. Most people in the U.S. gay community and the large number of nongay Americans who are sympathetic to their cause refer not just to "gay rights" but more broadly to lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender rights.

Continued on page 7

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 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 the [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 June are as follows :

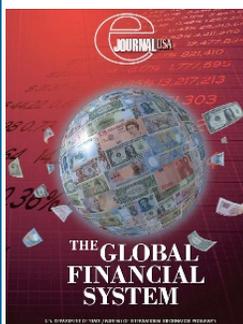
12-14 years : My favorite American author (500 words)

15-16 years : A historically important event in U.S. history (750 words)

17-18 years : The pledge of Allegiance – A symbol of America (1000 words)

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

eJournalUSA



Global Financial System

Electronic Journal of the US Department of State

May 2009

Experts describe the mechanics of the global financial system presenting their views concerning the cyclical nature of markets, the interdependence of global trade relationships, and the role of regulation.

Web access: <http://www.america.gov/media/pdf/ejs/0509.pdf#popup>

Gay and Lesbian. . . *From page 6*

Gallup polls have been measuring American attitudes toward gays for many years. As of 2007, the overwhelming majority of Americans (89 percent) believe homosexuals should have equal rights in terms of job opportunities. Three-fifths of Americans today believe homosexual relationships should be legal, as opposed to only one-third in the early and mid-1980s. Almost as many view homosexuality as an acceptable alternative lifestyle.

On questions concerning the moral acceptability of homosexual relations and same-sex marriage, the U.S. public is more evenly divided, according to Gallup.

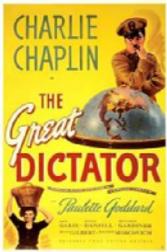
Younger Americans are far more likely to be tolerant and accepting of homosexuality.

Membership !

Residents of Sri Lanka aged 14 or older are welcome to join the American Center Library. Application forms may be obtained free of charge from the library during regular business hours. The completed form must be submitted along with two passport size photographs and the membership fee.

Every Thursday at 2.30pm

Entrance free!



June 4 - The Great Dictator (1940, Running time: 120 minutes)

Come heil or high water, Charles Chaplin is in the fight and the result is a celebrated classic honored in 2000 as one of the American Film Institute's Top 100 American Comedies.

The U.S. was not yet in World War II when Chaplin leveled his comedy arsenal at Der Fuhrer by playing the dual roles of Hitler-like Adenoid Hynkel and a Jewish barber who is a dead-ringer look-alike for der Nutsie. Puns, sight gags and slapstick abound as Chaplin skewers fascism, balancing his attack with poignant scenes of a ghetto in the clutches of storm-trooping terror. Immortal bits include Hynkel's besotted dance with a globe, the upside-down flight and Hynkel and a Mussolini-like Jack Oakie madly cranking their barber chairs higher and higher.

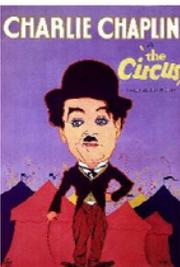
Great comedy meets great filmmaking passion in The Great Dictator.



June 11 - The Kid (1921, Running time: 68 minutes)

One heaves rocks through windows. The other happens by in the nick of time to offer his services as an expert window repairman. It's a system that works. So everything else about this beloved Charlie Chaplin classic whose blend of laughs and pathos changed the notion of what a screen comedy could be.

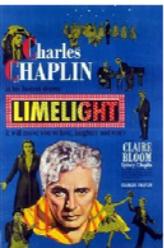
For the first time as a filmmaker, Chaplin stepped into feature-length storytelling with this tale of the down-but-never-out Tramp (Chaplin) and the adorable ragamuffin (6-year-old Jackie Coogan) who, rescued as a foundling and raised in the School of Hard Knocks by the Tramp is his inseparable sidekick. Memorable scenes include a lesson in table manners, the bully brawl and the Tramp's angelic dream.



June 18 - The Circus (1928, Running time: 70 minutes)

At the first-ever Academy Awards Ceremony, Charles Chaplin was honored with a special statuette "for versatility and genius in writing, acting, directing and producing The Circus" And it went without saying, for again bringing laughter to packed movie palaces across America.

When we first meet Chaplin's Tramp in this comic gem, he's in typical straits: broke, hungry, destined to fall in love and just as sure to lose the girl. Mistaken for a pickpocket and pursued by a peace officer into a circus tent, the Tramp becomes a star when delighted patrons think his escape from John Law is an act. Classic highlights include a frenetic fun-house sequence, the Tramp turning a magic skit into mayhem and his teetering tightrope walk while monkeys cling to his head. This is comedy without a net!



June 25 - Limelight (1952, Running time: 137 minutes)

A young dancer wants to know if the white-haired gentleman who saved her life is Calvero, the great music hall comedian. " I was" the gent replies.

Charles Chaplin's Limelight is a glimmering homage to what was, a proud look at a bygone entertainment era and a bittersweet tale of an artist passing the torch to a new generation. Chaplin portrays Calvero (the "Tramp Comedian" per an old theatrical poster in his room) who rescues a distraught ballerina (Claire Bloom) from suicide and mentors her to success. Among the film's comedy highlights is a musical routine that's anything but routine in the hands of legend Chaplin and stone-faced Buster Keaton. The extraordinary score by chaplin, Raymond Rasch and Larry Russell earned the screen legend his only competitive Oscar.

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

June 2009 - Best Picture Nominees

Every Tuesday
at 6.00pm

June 2 - Boys Don't Cry (1999, 118 minutes)

Based on a true story, this drama was adapted from the life of Brandon Teena, born Teena Brandon, a woman who chose to live her life as a man and suffered tragic consequences as a result. In 1993, 20-year-old Brandon (Hilary Swank) leaves Lincoln, Nebraska for the nearby community of Falls City, where she sports a crew cut, favors jeans and boots, and is regarded as a man by most of the people in town. While Brandon's friend Lonny (Matt McGrath) warns her that sexual outsiders aren't looked upon kindly in Falls City, she develops a reputation for being something of a ladies' man, and is soon living with a single mother named Candace. But when Brandon meets teenage Lana the two become romantically involved almost immediately. Brandon makes friends with Lana's mother and a burly ex-con named John. Won Oscar, another 41 wins and 27 nominations.

June 9 - A Beautiful Mind (2001, 135 minutes)

The true story of prominent mathematician John Forbes Nash Jr. is the subject of this biographical drama from director Ron Howard. Russell Crowe stars as the brilliant but arrogant and conceited professor Nash. The prof seems guaranteed a rosy future in the early '50s after he marries beautiful student Alicia (Jennifer Connelly) and makes a remarkable advancement in the foundations of "game theory," which carries him to the brink of international acclaim. Soon after, John is visited by Agent William Parcher (Ed Harris), from the CIA, who wants to recruit him for code-breaking activities. But evidence suggests that Nash's perceptions of reality are cloudy at best; he is struggling to maintain his tenuous hold on sanity, and Alicia suspects a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia. Battling decades of illness with the loyal Alicia by his side, Nash is ultimately able to gain some control over his mental state, and eventually goes on to triumphantly win the Nobel Prize. Based loosely on the book of the same name by Sylvia Nasar, A Beautiful Mind (2001) co-stars Paul Bettany, Adam Goldberg, Anthony Rapp, Christopher Plummer, and Judd Hirsch. Won 4 Oscars, another 27 wins and 49 nominations.

June 16 - Seabiscuit (2003, 141 minutes)

For his sophomore effort, director Gary Ross re-teams with Tobey Maguire and William H. Macy, stars of his directorial debut Pleasantville, for this depression-era sports drama about the legendary racehorse, Seabiscuit. Unlike 1949's fictionalized The Story of Seabiscuit starring Shirley Temple, this version attempts to present a factual account of the story, which centers around the three men who saw the famed horse to victory. Jeff Bridges stars as Charles Howard, an entrepreneur who owns the unlikely racehorse. Howard teams with partially blind boxer-turned-jockey Red Pollard (Maguire in his first performance since annihilating the 2002 box-office in Spider-Man) and horse trainer Tom Smith (Chris Cooper fresh off his best-supporting actor Oscar for Adaptation). Together, the three work to help the famed horse to several symbolic victories that helped to inspire a downtrodden 1930s America. The supporting cast, headed by Macy, includes Elizabeth Banks (Spider-Man) and real-life jockeys Gary Stevens and Chris McCarron. Nominated for 7 Oscars, another 4 wins and 32 nominations.

June 23 - Brokeback Mountain (2005, 134 minutes)

Ang Lee's adaptation of E. Annie Proulx's story Brokeback Mountain stars Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger as young cowboys named Jack Twist and Ennis Del Mar. Each of them is hired to corral sheep on the title location and they soon bond very closely. Their platonic relationship explodes into a physical one, but eventually the two are separated when their job comes to an end. Although the two follow different life paths -- one becoming a father of two and the other marrying into a successful business -- they have a reunion years later. Each is affected profoundly by the rekindling of their old feelings for each other. Those feelings lead each to consider what continuing their hidden relationship would cost them. The screenplay was written by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana. Won 3 Oscars, another 78 wins and 64 nominations.

June 30 - Milk (2008, 128 minutes)

Academy Award winner Sean Penn takes the title role in Gus Van Sant's biopic tracing the last eight years in the life of Harvey Milk, the ill-fated politician and gay activist whose life changed history, and whose courage still inspires people. When Milk was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977, he made history for being the first openly gay man in American history to be voted into public office. But the rights of homosexuals weren't Milk's primary concern, as tellingly evidenced by the wide array of political coalitions he formed over the course of his tragically brief career. He fought for everyone from union workers to senior citizens, a true hero of human rights who possessed nothing but compassion for his fellow man. The story begins in New York City, where a 40-year-old Milk ponders what steps he can take to make his life more meaningful. Won 2 Oscars, another 33 wins and 44 nominations.

Reviews drawn from MSN movies, All Movie Guide and Encarta





Carving 60 years of Friendship

The American Center is
turning 60!
Join the
U.S. Embassy
in celebrating the 60th
Anniversary of the
American Center
in Colombo.

To mark the occasion, the
U.S. Embassy is holding
a sculpture competition
open to the public.

The Embassy invites local artists to submit their work on the theme: "**Carving 60 years of Friendship**". Selected entries will be displayed for the public at the American Center starting in August 2009. A panel of Sri Lankan and American judges will select the winning entry. The winning sculpture will be displayed permanently at the American Center and the artist will receive an award of Rs. 100000/= and a certificate signed by the U.S. Ambassador.

Applicants must submit sculpture entries and a CV between 8:00am – 5:30pm (Mon-Thu) or 8:00 am to 12:00pm (Fri) to the American Center, 44, Galle Road, Colombo 03, on or before the competition closing date of June 14, 2009.



For further information please
contact the American Center
at 2498106 or 2498163
or
email us at: amcentersl@state.gov

