



# American Center Newsletter

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American Center

Colombo

September 2009

## American Center In Action

### Drama and Film Workshop "Beyond the Camera Lens"



Workshop participants pose for a group photograph

The US Embassy Colombo and Galle Film Festival organized a ten-day drama and film workshop in August 2009 conducted by Constance Tillotson, film director from Los Angeles, and Anoma Rajakaruna, short film producer and photographer from Sri Lanka at the Sarvodaya Higher Educational Institute in Bandaragama. The workshop

enabled forty participants between the ages of 11 and 17 from nine different districts throughout the country to learn and create alongside one another. Although the participants came from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and from low income families with little or no access to training in film and drama, they worked remarkably well together. Eight volunteers from local universities helped coordinate the groups and assist in translating. A Tamil film producer also participated to assist the Tamil-speaking children.

*Continued on page 3*

### Public Lecture on Higher Education in the U.S. at American Corner Male'



Students listening the lecture

The American Corner Male' organized a public lecture on 'Higher Education in the U.S.' for 22 students from different schools on August 4, 2009.

The discussions were conducted by Mr. Glen Davis, Acting Director, Cultural, Press and Educational Affairs and Mr. Mohamed Maleeh Jamal, the first Maldivian to study under the Fulbright Scholarship Program and currently a marketing

consultant in the Maldives.

Mr. Davis informed the participants about the U.S. educational system. In particular, he explained the advantages of studying in the U.S., the differences between U.S. education and European systems, the costs of higher education in the U.S., and the process of choosing and applying to a university or college. He noted that financial aid is available for international students but that students must seek it out.

*Continued on page 7*

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### Welcome Our New Ambassador



Newly appointed U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka Patricia Butenis presented her credentials to His Excellency, President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the Presidential Secretariat on September 17th.

Patricia A. Butenis was nominated by President Barack Obama as the U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Maldives on May 27, 2009.

*Continued on page 7*

## Editing Skills Workshop for Local Journalists



The U.S. Embassy and the U.S.-Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission held a two-day workshop in English Writing and

Editing Skills for Sri Lankan senior journalists on August 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at the Auditorium of the U.S. - Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission. The event was

held in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Chapter of the Commonwealth Journalists Association. Fulbright Scholar John Stifler conducted the workshop. Mr. Stifler recently completed six months of teaching Writing and English Literature at Peradeniya University under the auspices of a Fulbright fellowship. Mr. Stifler is a lecture writing in the Economics Department of the University of Massachusetts. Senior journalists and sub editors representing state and independently owned newspapers participated in the workshop.

## Young Writers from around the Country Receive Awards in the "Learn About America" Essay Competition



Winners of the Essay Competition held for March 2009 with Mr. James R Moore, Charge d'Affaires, of the U.S. Embassy Colombo. L-R: Father of Surani Wijenayake, Thasarathan Divakaran, Mr. James R Moore, Charge d'Affaires, M. S. Sajidha, Suvimali Jayasinghe, Nirmani Priyashanthika Samarasekera, Induwari Ranasinghe, Rasla Sawahir, Sachith Lakmal Wijesuriya, and Cousin of Tharaka Kasun Paliyawadana

The second batch of winners of the "Learn About America" Essay Competition held in the Junior Observer and conducted by the American Center received their awards on August 24, 2009, at the American Center auditorium.

The winners for March and April 2009 were awarded at this event. Mr. James R Moore, Charge d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Colombo graced the occasion and presented the awards to the winners. Since January 2009 this essay competition has been published in the Junior Observer section of the Sunday Observer in order 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 receives hundreds of essays each month from students from all geographical areas in Sri Lanka and representing all ethnic groups. A panel of judges from the U. S. Embassy evaluates the essays and chooses the first three winners for each age group in each month based on their originality, creativity and quality of writing.



Winners of the Essay Competition held for April 2009 L-R: Mr. Jeff Anderson, Director, Press, Cultural, and Educational Affairs of the American Center, Sachini Wathsala, Nora Sahida Thajudeen, Mr. James R. moore, Charge d'Affaires of U. S. Embassy, Colombo, Pamoda Thathsarani Karunaratna, Kaumadi Chathumanthi Sathyananda, Hafsa Zuhair, Dilan Chamara Silva and Mr. Glen Davis , Cultural Affairs Officer, U. S. Embassy, Colombo.

The winners, together with their parents, family members, some school principals, Mr. Jeff Anderson , Director, Press, Cultural and Educational Affairs and Mr. Glen Davis, Cultural Affairs Officer, were present at this event. Winners will be highlighted in an upcoming issue of the Junior Observer.

## Screening of Documentary "Inside the Meltdown"



Mr. Glen Davis, Cultural Affairs Officer of the U.S. Embassy Colombo, introduced the film .

The American Center hosted the screening of the Frontline documentary *Inside the Meltdown* on the U.S. economic crisis on August 19, 2009. Participants included prominent business leaders, bankers, economists and media personnel. Mr. Glen Davis, Cultural Affairs Officer of the U.S. Embassy Colombo, introduced the film and led a panel discussion with the participants after the screening. The panelists included Mr. Edward Heartney, Head of the Economic Section of the Embassy, and Mr. Ravi Abey Suriya, Head Strategic Business Development Unit of Hayleys Ltd.

The film investigates the causes of the worst economic crisis in 70 years and the response of the U.S. government. *Inside the Meltdown* chronicles the inside stories of the Bear Stearns deal, the Lehman Brothers' collapse, the propping up of insurance giant AIG and the \$700 billion bailout. The film examines with a critical eye the actions of Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke as they responded to the banking crisis.

The panel discussion was energetic. The audience directed a number of questions to both Mr. Heartney, who answered queries concerning the U.S. aspects of the crisis, and Mr. Abey Suriya, who addressed the global impact on Sri Lanka.

The program was an opportunity for the Colombo business sector to gain an insight into the origins of economic crisis and the U.S. attempt to resolve it. It also highlighted the importance of a free and professional media in exposing the crisis to public scrutiny and stimulating political action to respond to it. The discussion was covered by Lanka Business Online (of ART TV) and telecast to the public.

## Beyond the Camera Lens . . . . .

From page 1



During the workshop

a short film during the ten days. On the third day the children were given a tour of the studio and the make-up room of a leading private TV station named MTV in Colombo followed by a picnic lunch. On the same day, renowned film director Mrs. Sumithra Peiris, leading actor Mr. Ravindra Randeniya, and three upcoming young actors were invited for a Q & A session to share their

The participants were divided into groups of five. Each group wrote its own scripts, acted, filmed, directed, produced and edited

experience in the world of cinema with the participants.

A certificate presentation followed by a reception concluded the workshop. Then, the eight films were screened at the Punchi Theater in Colombo. The family members of the participants, sponsoring partners and the media all attended this event.

The media provided extensive coverage of the workshop and the final screening. MTV visited the camp one day and did a five-minute documentary on their 'Kid's First' news bulletin using one of the participants as a news presenter.

The films will be screened again at the Galle Film Festival in October.

Visit our YouTube channel to view short movies produced during the workshop:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/USEmbassySriLanka>

## American Corner Male' screens "Inside the Meltdown"



On August 3, 2009, the American Corner Male' hosted the screening of *Inside the Meltdown*, a documentary film on the global economic crisis. Participants included seventy students and four teachers from different schools in Male'. Mr. Glen Davis, Acting Director Press, Cultural and Educational Affairs of the U.S. Embassy

Colombo introduced the film and led a discussion with the participants after the screening.

The film investigates the causes of the worst economic crisis in 70 years and the response of the U.S. government. *Inside the Meltdown* chronicles the inside stories of the Bear Stearns deal, the Lehman Brothers' collapse, the propping up of insurance giant AIG and the \$700 billion

bailout. The film examines with a critical eye the actions of Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke as they responded to the banking crisis.

Participants found the film very interesting and informative. One of the participants said "I hope we could have more documentaries like this". Another participant said "Before watching the movie I knew nothing about the economic crisis. Now I know". One of teachers even asked for a copy of the film for her school library for further use.

The purpose of screening the film and then discussing it was to provide an opportunity for the students to improve their communication skills and to enhance their knowledge of issues impacting the world. After the discussions the students and the teachers talked individually with Mr. Davis and explored the resources available at the American Corner.

The program helped promote awareness of the economic crisis among Maldivian high-school students and teachers.

## The Joy of the Journey

In early August the US Embassy Colombo organized a seven-day drama and film workshop for recovering drug users at the Drug Rehabilitation Center (DRC) on Himmafushi Island in Maldives. Constance Tillotson, noted acting



Workshop participants pose for a group photograph

coach and film director from Los Angeles, conducted the weeklong workshop. The fifty participants were divided into eight groups. Each group then wrote its own scripts, acted in them, and worked as the film crew for the films during

the seven days.

On the final day all eight films were screened for the first time and each participant received a certificate at the Drug Rehabilitation Center in Himmafushi. Family members of the participants, partners and the media attended this event. Later in the year the films will be screened at the Olympus main theater in Male' and copies will be distributed to drug NGO's and schools. TV Maldives, the state media which provided media coverage has promised to take the best films and air them on National TV. In the meantime, they can be seen on YouTube at this address: <http://www.youtube.com/user/USEmbassySriLanka>

Activities like these help those in recovery develop the skills they need to return successfully to their communities. Acting, in particular, will assist them in re-assuming their various social roles. It teaches people to be creative, flexible, self-confident, and collaborative—all qualities important for good citizens.

## U.S. Government funds Sinhala and Tamil language training for eastern government officials



USAID funding prepared 21 trainers to teach Sinhala and Tamil to local officials and their staffs in the Eastern Province to provide better services to their communities.

August 24, 2009: The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing Sinhala and Tamil language training to elected government officials and staff from 11 local government authorities in

Eastern Province. Improved language skills will help them provide better services to the multi-ethnic communities they serve.

USAID is funding a three-year initiative to promote good governance and human security in the East entitled Supporting Regional Governance (SuRG). The goal is to build participatory and transparent local government and to improve responsiveness to local community needs.

Twenty-one trainers from the three Eastern Province districts completed a Training of Trainers (ToT) program conducted by the Official Language Department (OLD). The five-day program introduced participants to modern language training techniques, the Official Languages Policy, and the connection between language and culture. These trainers will now provide Sinhala and Tamil language training to 149 elected government officials and staff at 11 local authority partners in the Eastern Province.

Six trainers will conduct Tamil language training in early September for local government officials and staff from Thambalagamuwa Pradeshiya Sabha (PS), Seruvila PS and the Ampara Urban Council. Another 15 trainers will conduct Sinhala language training in Thambalagamuwa PS, Muthur PS, Verugal PS, Alaiyadivembu PS, Ninthavur PS, Manmununai West PS, Manmunai South-West PS, Eravur Town PS and Porativupattu PS. Local officials and staff will complete the Official Language Department course in early 2010, after 108 hours of instruction.

## United States Contributing \$6 Million to Support Demining in Northern Sri Lanka

August 19, 2009: The U.S. Government is contributing an additional \$6 million for demining activities in Sri Lanka's Northern Province to help people displaced by the conflict return to their homes as quickly as possible.

This funding, through the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political and Military Affairs Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (State/PMWRA), was granted to four non-governmental organizations (NGOs) currently working on demining activities in Sri Lanka. This additional funding is allowing the demining NGOs to increase their demining capacity and expand their work over the next twelve months. The demining process includes initial assessments of the land where mines may have been planted, technical surveys of minefields, clearing of mines and the destruction of unexploded ordinance.

DDG (Danish De-Mining Group), FSD (Swiss Foundation for Mine Action), Halo Trust and MAG (Mines Advisory Group) are sharing the award and using the funds to hire additional staff for survey teams and demining teams and to purchase new equipment to remove the mines.

In addition to this new funding, the Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) team, a group of U.S. military and civilian demining experts from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, U.S. Pacific Command, Special Operations Command Pacific, and U.S. Army Pacific visited Sri Lanka on June 22-26. The team met with a number of Sri Lankan government officials, members of the Sri Lankan military and representatives from non-governmental organizations involved with demining to identify how the United States can best assist the Sri Lankan military in its humanitarian demining efforts in northern Sri Lanka. The U.S. military, through U.S. Pacific Command, will provide equipment and training to the Sri Lanka Army for humanitarian demining in the Northern Province.

## Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15 to October 15



Maria Hernando of Fountain Inn, South Carolina and Margarita Metty, of Easley, South Carolina, perform a flamenco style dance for school children at Saint Josephs Catholic School in Anderson, South Carolina on September 23, 2005. The dancers both talked about Spanish history, flamenco and celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month.  
(© AP Images)

Hispanic Heritage Month honors the diverse people of Spanish-speaking backgrounds in the United States. From September 15 to October 15, a multitude of special programs, events, exhibits and Web sites celebrate the heritage, culture, spirit and extraordinary contributions of Hispanic Americans.

The celebration of Hispanic Heritage began on a national scale in 1968 with Public Law 90-498, which authorized an annual presidential proclamation making the

week of September 15 and 16 Hispanic Heritage Week. The designated week was selected to coincide with Independence Day celebrations on September 15 in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua and on September 16 in Mexico.

The 1968 proclamation called on the people of the United States, especially the educational community, to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies and activities. To encourage participation, in his 1974 proclamation President Gerald R. Ford called for schools and human rights organizations to participate more fully in the week. And in 1988 President Ronald Reagan repeated Ford's call for more recognition of Hispanic Americans by approving Public Law 100-402, which expanded the celebration to Hispanic Heritage Month running from September 15 to October 15.

Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority group in the United States, according to the Census Bureau. The Hispanic population is projected to nearly triple, from almost 47 million to 133 million, from 2008 to 2050, and will jump from 15 percent to 30 percent of the population.

Today, more than ever, Hispanic Americans play an integral role in shaping the American experience. They serve as leaders in government, law, business, science, sports, the arts and many other occupations. The influence of Hispanic culture is reflected in every aspect of American life, from politics to education to music and television.

*Source:* [www.america.gov](http://www.america.gov)

## Holidays in America: Labor Day Marks Appreciation of U.S. Workers

### Holiday also a day of activities and fun



United Auto Workers Local 3000 members and family ride a float in the annual Labor Day Parade in Detroit in 2007.

Labor Day, celebrated in the United States on the first Monday of each September, is the nation's official commemoration of its workers' contributions to national strength, prosperity and well

-being. It also marks for millions of Americans the

unofficial end of summer.

America's labor force is 154.5 million people strong, or about two-thirds of the working-age population. Men make up slightly more than half (53 percent) of all workers, according to the Department of Labor. One in ten belongs to a union.

The exact origins of Labor Day are unknown, but scholars typically credit either of two labor union officials -- Peter J. McGuire of the national carpenters' union or Matthew Maguire of a machinists' local in Paterson, New Jersey -- with the idea.

*Continued on page 9*

## Labor Day Marks . . . . .

*From page 6*

The first Labor Day was celebrated in New York City on September 5, 1882. The date apparently was chosen because it was about halfway between the July 4 Independence Day holiday and Thanksgiving (which falls in November). The occasion was marked by a parade sponsored by the Knights of Labor, an early U.S. labor organization, and about 10,000 workers marched.



China Goodson, 5, marches along with the Cleveland All-City Band, which her brother Chase was in, during the annual Labor Day parade through the streets of downtown Cleveland on September 2, 2005.

The next day's New York Times reported that "Those who rode or marched in the procession were cheerful, and evidently highly gratified with the display. ... The great majority smoked cigars, and all seemed bent upon having a good time at the picnic grounds." Banners called for "Eight Hours for a Legal Day's Work" and "Less Hours and More Pay."

The Knights adopted a resolution calling for recognition of the first Monday of September as Labor Day. By 1894, some 28 states celebrated Labor Day and in that year Congress adopted legislation establishing the legal holiday.

### The Unofficial End of Summer

The first proposal for the holiday suggested that communities hold a parade to exhibit "the strength and esprit de corps of the trade and labor

organizations," followed by a festival for the recreation and amusement of the workers and their families.

Many American workers see Labor Day as "their" holiday, an opportunity for rest, relaxation and fun. As The New York Times reported of the first Labor Day parade, "It was said that the absence of many members of the organizations was due to the fact that they preferred to enjoy the day in quiet excursions to Coney Island, Glen Island [resorts] and elsewhere."

Labor Day traditionally has marked the end of the summer, and in much of the country Americans crowd community swimming pools and beaches for one last dip, and gather for picnics, barbecues and parades.

Labor Day begins the culminating phase of Major League Baseball's pennant race, and falls on the last weekend before the National Football League season begins.

Another tradition is the Muscular Dystrophy Association telethon. Held each year since 1966 and hosted by entertainer Jerry Lewis -- now 82 -- the telethon intersperses performances by major entertainers with requests for donations to fund the association's fight against more than 40 neuromuscular diseases. For 20.5 hours, a quarter-million volunteers around the country at local television stations monitor telephones to register pledges, which in 2007 totaled a record-setting \$63.8 million. More than 50 million North Americans watch at least some of the show.

**Source:** [www.america.gov](http://www.america.gov)

## Lecture on higher education . . . *From page 1*

Mr. Jamal also talked about his own experience of living and studying in the U.S. over two years and responded to several questions about the Fulbright programs.

The program helped promote awareness on education in the U.S. among Maldivian students.

## New Ambassador . . . *From page 1*

She was confirmed by the Senate on August 4, 2009 and sworn in on August 19, 2009. She is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, rank of Minister-Counselor.

Prior to this assignment, Ambassador Butenis served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad from 2007-2009. From 2006-2007, she served as Ambassador to Bangladesh and from 2004-2006 as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad.

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 [America.gov](http://America.gov), 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 September are as follows :

**12-14 years** : Washington D. C. - United States' Capital city (500 words)

**15-16 years** : History and importance of U. S. Labor Day (750 words)

**17-18 years** : Hollywood- The cinema of the United States (1000 words)

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

**IRC Director Speaks on Benefits of Reading to Young Children**

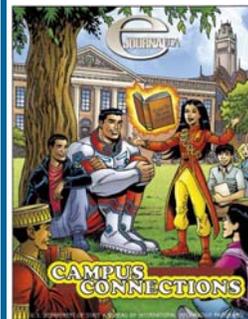
On August 4, 2009 Padma Bandaranayake, Library Director, delivered a presentation titled "Benefits of Reading to Young Children" at a graduation ceremony held for Grade 4 students of the Lyceum International School, Nugegoda. As the chief guest, she delivered the presentation to the students who graduated from grade 4 to grade 5 and their parents and teachers. In her presentation she emphasized the importance of reading to young children at an early age.

**Upcoming Events . . . . .**

**September 23:**

Public lecture titled "**Biodiversity of Sri Lanka**" by Mr. Vimukthi Weerathunga, at 5:30 p.m. at the American Center Auditorium.

**eJournalUSA**



**Campus Connections**

**Electronic Journal of the US Department of State**

**August 2009**

A globalized economy makes business and employment spill across national boundaries, so an education abroad is likely to make a young person better prepared for the world's future. Almost double the numbers of students travel abroad for an education today as compared with 20 years ago. Campus Connections examines the international study experience and its influence on individual growth.

**Web access:** <http://www.america.gov/media/pdf/ejs/0809.pdf#popup>

Every Thursday at 2.30pm

*Entrance free!*



**September 3 - The Greatest Man in the World** (1980, Running time: 51 minutes)

Only the off-beat humor of writing great James Thurber could bring to life a "hero" like Jack Smurch, Played by Brad Davis ("Midnight Express"). Fortified with only a gallon of gin and salami, Smurch bests even Lindbergh with the first non-stop, around the world flight. During the four days he's airborne, this unknown kid becomes a world hero. But, on the ground, a young reporter, anxious to tell the world about their new idol, learns Smurch is bad news. An arrogant, illiterate lout with a police record, Smurch's only interests are "parties, broads and dough." But the reporter is silenced and Smurch is locked up

until the press and politicians can make him into their kind of American hero no matter the cost.



**September 10 - The Sky is Gray** (1980, Running time: 46 minutes)

From Ernest J. Gaines, author of "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman", comes a deceptively simple, yet emotionally complex tale of a young boy's discovery of what it's like to be black in Louisiana during the 1940's. James, the boy in question, has a raging toothache that necessitates a trip to the dentist. His mother (played by Emmy-winner Olivia Cole), accompanies James to town on an eye opening odyssey where the boy gains valuable insights into poverty, racism and his own sense of pride. With an exciting musical score by Webster Lewis, this multi-award winning film explores a child's discovery that the world is a complicated

place....where things are never truly black or white....only shades of gray.



**September 24 - Barn Burning** (1980, Running time: 40 minutes)

Abe Snopes (Academy Award Winner Tommy Lee Jones) is a Southern tenant farmer whose unrelenting and violent nature proves to be his undoing in Pulitzer Prize Winner William Faulkner's "BARN BURNING". Snopes sets his employer's barn on fire when he thinks he's been treated unfairly. His son, Sarty, is horrified. Snopes escapes justice for lack of proof, but he and his family are told to move on. No sooner do they move than Snopes is offended by his new rich employer. Torn between trying to win his father's acceptance and his aversion to what his father will do, Sarty must make a decision and act

quickly. Written by Academy Award winning screenwriter Horton Foote, Faulkner's complex world of class divisions and hostile family relationship comes to life through a boy's attempt to liberate himself from hatred and poverty.

*Reviews drawn from DVD covers*

**For more details about after school movie screenings : Tel: 2498146 E-mail : [amcentersl@state.gov](mailto:amcentersl@state.gov)**

# Film Screenings at the American Center

American Center Newsletter  
September 2009

## September 2009 - Hispanic Heritage Month

### **September 1 - Stand and Deliver** (1988, 104 minutes)

Based on a true story, this inspiring production stars Edward James Olmos in an Oscar-nominated performance as a high school teacher who motivated a class full of East L.A. barrio kids to care enough about mathematics to pass an Advanced Placement Calculus Test. Not exactly a variation of *To Sir, With Love*, the film concerns itself with assumptions and biases held by mainstream authorities about disadvantaged kids, and Olmos's efforts to keep his students coolheaded enough to prove them wrong.

### **September 8 - American Me** (1992, 125 minutes)

Oscar nominee Edward James Olmos (see above) goes behind the camera in this epic depiction of thirty years of Chicano gang life in Los Angeles focuses on a teen named Santana who, with his friends Mundo and the Caucasian-but-acting-Hispanic J.D., form their own gang and are soon arrested for a break-in. Santana gets into trouble again and goes straight from reform school to prison, spending eighteen year there, and becoming leader of a powerful gang, both inside and outside the prison, while there. When he is finally released, he tries to make sense of the violence in his life, in a world much changed from when last he was in it.

### **September 15 - Crazy/Beautiful** (2001, 95 minutes)

When fate steps in and brings together two high school seniors from opposite sides of the track, it's something crazy/beautiful in this sexy, fun and energetic story of first love. Nicole (Kirsten Dunst) is the 17-year-old troubled daughter of a wealthy congressman who never met a rule she didn't break. Carlos (Jay Hernandez) is a grade A student with big dreams who endures a two-hour bus ride every morning to attend high school in an upscale L.A. neighborhood. Their innocent flirtations quickly develop into passionate love, but Nicole's self-destructive behavior threatens their relationship and puts Carlos' promising future in jeopardy.

### **September 22 - Frida** (2003, 123 minutes)

"Frida" chronicles the life Frida Kahlo (Salma Hayek) shared unflinchingly and openly with Diego Rivera (Alfred Molina), as the young couple took the art world by storm. From her complex and enduring relationship with her mentor and husband to her illicit and controversial affair with Leon Trotsky, to her provocative and romantic entanglements with women, Frida Kahlo lived a bold and uncompromising life as a political, artistic, and sexual revolutionary.

### **September 22 - Real Women Have Curves** (2002, 90 minutes)

This is the story of Ana, a first generation Mexican-American teenager on the verge of becoming a woman. She lives in the predominately Latino community of East Los Angeles. Freshly graduated from high school, Ana receives a full scholarship to Columbia University. Her very traditional, old-world parents feel that now is the time for Ana to help provide for the family, not the time for college. Torn between her mainstream ambitions and her cultural heritage she agrees to work with her mother at her sister's downtown LA sewing factory. Over the summer she learns to admire the hardworking team of women who teach her solidarity and teamwork. Still at odds with what her mother expects of her, Ana realizes that leaving home to continue her education is essential to finding her place proudly in the world as an American and Chicana.

*Reviews drawn from MSN movies, All Movie Guide and Encarta*

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](mailto:amcentersl@state.gov) or at (11) 249-8146 with any questions.

